

the Tory M.P. for New Shoreham. But his politics were impotent to destroy his privilege as Treasury devil; and in 1868, on the death of Sir William Shee—less known as a judge than as the advocate that offended Palmer—Hannen received simultaneously the vacant justiceship and the honour of knighthood. He was made Judge-ordinary of the Court of Probate, in succession to Lord Penzance, in 1872, and three years later was raised to his present position—the Presidentship of the newly-constituted 'Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Division.'

Sir James Hannen's conduct of the Parnell Commission is probably the episode in his public career that posterity will remember most vividly. In the stormy debates that preceded the appointment of the commissioners, when the qualifications and impartiality of his colleagues were bitterly questioned or denied, no shadow of doubt was cast on the perfect competency and integrity of the President. His demeanour at the great inquest amply justified this forbearance. Determined that his court should not become a cockpit for party railleries or a parade ground for the exhibition of sensational but irrelevant evidence before the galleries, Sir James Hannen kept the work of the commission strictly within the lines prescribed by statute, and made Sir Richard Webster and Sir Charles Russell alike feel the pressure of his guiding hand. The Report is before the world, and speaks for itself; but the few sentences with which Sir James Hannen closed the public labours of the commission are not so well known, and are yet eminently worthy to be recorded. When Sir Henry James concluded his elaborate address, the President said, in tones that are indelibly impressed upon the memories of his audience: 'And now I have to congratulate the counsel who are still before us on the completion of their arduous task, and to thank them, and those others to whom such thanks are due, for the untiring industry and conspicuous ability which they have placed at our service, and for the great assistance we have derived from their labours. Our labours, however, are not concluded. We must bear our burden yet a little longer. But one hope supports us. Conscious that throughout this great inquest we have sought only the truth, we trust that we shall be guided to find it, and set it forth plainly in the sight of all men.'

As a judge, Sir James Hannen possesses in union and harmony the three indispensable judicial qualities of patience,