

come so leisurely down to Westminster Hall where many very anxious suitors are waiting in order to learn their fate as to the new trials, which if refused, may lead to ruin. The dignitaries think otherwise, and so they breakfast very pleasantly at the expense of the holder of the Great Seal, who may never have the pleasure of entertaining his contemporaries again, under which gloomy prospect he is sustained by the certainty of a retiring pension.

The commencement of the legal year is a great event in the eyes of young barristers who have just been called, and the country cousins who have come up to town to see the sights. To witness the Lord Chancellor and the Judges going down in procession, is only second to witnessing the Lord Mayor's show. Country cousins have seen two judges on circuit accompanied by the High Sheriff and his chaplain and perhaps also by "javelin men," but to see no less than twenty-one judges all in their full-bottomed wigs and ermine, cheerful and contented like well fed men going to their amusement, gives a country cousin a very different idea of the law than he entertained in the country. The very knowing ones never care to see the whole bench of judges, but to witness the new judges going for the first time to Westminster Hall, and as the judges of the Court of Exchequer approach, the gaze of the curious is naturally directed towards the new Lord Chief Baron,* Sir Fitzroy Kelly, who late in life, after more than forty years practice at the bar, has ascended the judicial bench, from which a variety of contingencies had contributed undeservedly to exclude him. The length of Sir Fitzroy's Kelly's life at the bar is such that he had seen all his contemporaries either seated on the bench or removed altogether from the scene. Sir William Follett, the most gentlemanly and successful advocate, and Sir Cresswell Cresswell, the most sarcastic of judges, were called about the same time and were competitors for the honours of the bar with Sir Fitzroy Kelly, Sir Frederick Pollock, and Sir Frederick Thesiger. In their prime at the bar they represented a brilliant age, bril-

liant so far as the law ever can be. Their names are associated with the great criminal and civil trials which live in the memories of the present generation. There are few who have not heard, and many who have read the trial of Thurtell for the murder of Weare, but few remember that the present Lord Chancellor was one of the counsel on that trial. We remember how Sir Frederick Pollock defended Frost, Williams, and Jones against a powerful bar, led by Sir John Campbell and Sir Thomas Wilde. Sir Fitzroy Kelly was counsel for Tawell, whose trial first proved the use of the telegraphic wires in the detection of crime. In every shipping case of importance, the name of Sir Cresswell Cresswell appeared, and whenever a high-minded and chivalrous style of advocacy was required, Sir William Follett was sought by both parties. The names which figure to-day in our reports are the names of inferior men who have not had the great advantages enjoyed by the great advocates we have named of being concerned in the great trials of the last generation.

In contrast to the long and solid length of service at the bar, which is closed by a well-merited elevation, comes the promotion of Lord Justice Cairns, who, at a comparatively early age, leaves the contentions of the forum for the statuesque position of Justice in the Court of Appeal. No ordinary man ought to have succeeded a judge so profound and so original as Sir James Lewis Knight Bruce; and Sir Hugh Cairns is not an ordinary man, either as a lawyer, an advocate, or an orator. In a parliamentary career of only fourteen years he took the highest place ever occupied by lawyers in the House of Commons, and in the same period he won his way to the front rank of his profession. A very high order of intellect is required at the equity bar, and only men of the highest intellectual calibre ever attain the highest eminence. Sir Hugh Cairns had to make his way in spite of the fact that Mr. Bethell, Mr. Roundell Palmer, and Mr. Rolt were all before him in the race, and all enjoyed eminence, and deservedly so, too, before his claims were even considered by the attorneys. There is something, however, in parliamentary success which leads on to fortune. A man who can make the

* This was written in November of last year.