

to aid in making the law the servant of truth and freedom. Indeed, there was about him, as one of his contemporaries has recorded, a "kind of benevolent solicitude for the discovery of truth." Approaching his duties in this spirit, when called to fill the highest judicial office in England, and possessing much more than ordinary powers and attainments, he did not need the more brilliant qualities of some of his greater contemporaries to make of him the trusted and respected Judge that he became.

If we may trust Lord Campbell's narrative, Lord Thurlow enjoyed a reputation as a great Judge that he did not deserve. His immense self-confidence, his overbearing and often threatening manner, his oracular and contemptuous method of speech, awed those who came in contact with him and impressed them with a belief in his possession of powers which a critical consideration of his acts and utterances does not support. Yet even Lord Campbell, who, whether in the spirit of the impartial historian or for some other reason, finds little to praise in Lord Thurlow, admits the native vigour of his intellect and the influence which he could exert over the minds of men. And it could not well be that the man, alone of all others, of whom Dr. Johnson admitted that when he had to meet him "he should wish to know a day before," was otherwise than the remarkable being which, in his own day, he was certainly thought to be. But purely in his character as a Judge—and it is in this aspect that we are concerned with him—Lord Thurlow suffers by comparison with others. He had the opportunity of practice before both Lord Hardwicke and Lord Mansfield, but apparently the admirable example of judicial propriety which they set failed to impress him. Unusually fitted by nature to preside with dignity and to incite respect, he often failed to do either; and though the trespass of his undisciplined nature on the rules of strict decorum sometimes excites amusement, it transcends all notions of what should be expected from the first magistrate of a great country. It was hardly possible that so vigorous a mind and forceful a character should not have been reflected in judgments that command respect, but there is little to indicate that he imitated his great contemporaries in their ambitious