

vindication of the book which in the future will be his chief title to fame. Sir John was thirty years of age before he was called to the bar, and up to that he had been in business. His business experiences, perhaps, suggested to him the production of a book on one of the most important branches of commercial law. The success of the book still further determined the bent of his legal studies and practice. He became a good commercial lawyer, but he never gained any great reputation in other branches of the law. His mind wanted that breadth and clearightedness which are essential to the intellectual equipment of a great lawyer, who is to lay down propositions of universal application. He will never take the place filled by James, Willes or Jessel, but will always be known as Byles on Bills, a result to which the 'artful aid' of alliteration conduces. Many are the stories told of Sir John Byles when at the bar and on the bench. His horse figures in several of them. When he was at the bar he had a horse, or rather a pony, which used to arrive at King's Bench Walk every afternoon at three o'clock. Whatever his engagements, Mr. Byles would manage by hook or by crook to take a ride, generally to the Regent's Park and back, on this animal, the sorry appearance of which was the amusement of the Temple. This horse, it is said, was sometimes called 'Bills,' to give opportunity for the combination 'there goes Byles on Bills;' but if tradition is to be believed, this was not the name by which its master knew it. He, or he and his clerk between them, called the horse "Business;" and when a too curious client asked where the Serjeant was, the clerk answered with a clear conscience that he was 'out on Business.' When on the bench, Mr. Justice Byles' taste in horseflesh does not seem to have improved. It is related of him that in an argument upon section 17 of the Statute of Frauds he put to the counsel arguing a case, by way of illustration. 'Suppose Mr. So and So' he said, 'that I were to agree to sell you my horse, do you mean to say that I could not recover the price unless, and so on. The illustration was so pointed that there was no way out of it but to say, 'My lord, the section applies only to things of the value of 10*l*.' a retort