

respecting the District Courts were consolidated. By this Act these courts were constituted courts of record, and were empowered to hold plea in matters of contract from forty shillings to fifteen pounds; and, where the amount was liquidated or ascertained either by the act of the parties or the nature of the transaction, up to forty pounds; also in torts to personal chattels, when damages to be recovered did not exceed fifteen pounds, and suits on bail bonds in the District Courts to any amount.

By 4 William IV., cap. 7, these courts were given jurisdiction in replevin where the value of the goods did not exceed fifteen pounds.

The next Act of any importance was 8 Vict., cap. 13. By s. 5 the limit "*from* forty shillings" was repealed, and the jurisdiction was increased to £25 in cases of debt, covenant, or contract; to £50 in cases of contract or debt on the common counts where the amount was ascertained by the signature of the defendant, and also in matters of tort relating to personal chattels, where the damages did not exceed £20, and where title to land was not brought in question.

This Act in one way reduced the jurisdiction; for, though by 2 Geo. IV. a plaintiff could go as high as £40 where the amount was "liquidated or ascertained either by the act of the parties or the nature of the transaction," yet by 8 Vict. it required the "signature of the defendant" to go beyond £25.

By 12 Vict., cap. 66, it was provided that, though the total of all the counts exceeded the jurisdiction, yet if the damages laid at the conclusion of the declaration did not exceed the jurisdiction no demurrer should be allowed.

By 13 & 14 Vict., cap. 52, jurisdiction was given up to £50 in cases of debt, contract, or covenant, and to £100 where the amount was ascertained by the signature of the defendant (still nothing about the "act of the parties"), and in tort relating to personal chattels, where the damages claimed did not exceed £30, etc.

By 16 Vict., cap. 119, equity jurisdiction up to a certain amount was conferred on the County Courts, but it was not favourably received, and was afterwards repealed by 32 Vict., cap. 6.

By 19 & 20 Vict., cap. 90, jurisdiction was given in all "personal actions" up to £50, and in "all causes or suits relating to debt, covenant, or contract, where the amount is liquidated or