

SIR GEORGE JESSEL.

got through about a tenth of his work. He was also apt to be intellectually overbearing. He was fond of exposing the errors of others, but he never admitted a doubt of the correctness of his own opinion. His phrase, "Of course all judges believe that they are right," has passed into a byword; and Sir George Jessel was the mental antipodes of Lord Eldon, great lawyers as both were, and in some respects not unlike one another. History does not record that Sir George Jessel ever admitted that he was wrong. When his attention was called to the fact that the Court of Appeal had overruled his decision, he said: "That is strange; when I sit with them they always agree with me." This was generally true, as there were few judges whom the Master of the Rolls could not carry with him. Whoever sat with him, the Court was generally considered to consist of the Master of the Rolls. Some of his defects were perhaps due to his having, during most of his career at the bar, practised before a very mild judge in the same Court in which he afterwards sat on the bench. Many members of the bar will remember his first appearance in the Court of Queen's Bench after his appointment as Solicitor-General. It was to oppose a rule for a *mandamus* to the Commissioners of the Treasury to allow the county of Lancashire certain costs in criminal cases which had been disallowed. "The Court of Queen's Bench hasn't the power to do anything of the sort," said the Solicitor-General, in peremptory tones; "it can't do it." The colour was seen gradually to rise in the face of Chief-Justice Cockburn, and at last he spoke: "Whatever the Court of Queen's Bench can or cannot do, Mr. Solicitor, it is accustomed to be addressed with respect." The Solicitor waited until he had reached the end of the thread of argument which he had in hand, when he mentioned that he really did not mean to be disrespectful. After two years as law officer, he was eight years a judge of first instance, when the office which he filled was permanently added to the Court of Appeal. He died at the age of fifty-nine, and after little more than nine years' service on the bench; but he will undoubtedly take a very high rank among the judges of England. Some judges have established a reputation for knowledge of real property, others for knowledge of commercial law, others for knowledge of equity; but there was hardly a branch of law in which Sir George Jessel did not distinguish himself, and he was thus the

fit judicial representative of the reforms introduced by the Judicature Acts.

The different courts that were sitting at the time of the death of Sir George Jessel were adjourned out of respect to the memory of the deceased, with appropriate remarks by the different Judges. The following is the report in one of the papers of what was said in Mr. Justice Chitty's Court:—

Mr. Justice Chitty, on taking his seat, was overcome with emotion, and was for some time unable to say anything. On recovering himself somewhat he addressed Mr. Waller, Q.C., as senior member of the Bar present, as follows:—"The sad and shocking news of the Master of the Rolls' death, is, I regret to say, too true. I can scarcely trust myself to speak of the sad event. In him I have lost, and many of those who practise in this court have lost a real friend. To the public his loss is almost irreparable. The extraordinary swiftness of his apprehension, his complete mastery over facts and law, his grasp of principles, and the marvellous certainty of his judgment, mark him out as one of the most illustrious judges that ever sat on the English Bench, and will render him famous amongst his great predecessors in the high office that he bore. There was one quality for which he was not so generally known—I mean the true and genuine kindness of his disposition. I cannot trust myself to say more. The circumstances of this court are peculiar. Many of the Bar to whom I am addressing these few feeble words practised habitually in the court where he presided at the Rolls, and I am sensible that neither they nor I could properly conduct the business on the day of his death; and it is, therefore, out of respect for his memory, and grief for his loss, that I feel constrained to adjourn the court."

Mr. Waller, Q.C., replied on behalf of the Bar.

SIR SAMUEL MARTIN.

He was twenty-three years one of the now expiring race of barons of the Exchequer; and he possessed a character which would have been prominent in any station of life, and which, from his having so little of the conventional judge about him, made him a very marked figure on the bench. A large framed, carelessly dressed man, speaking plain common sense in homely language, and with a