

of those letters, had I not strong reasons to think, that the collection of one penny of postage in Canada, by a deputy-post-master-general, is illegal and extortionary, and not warranted by the act 9 Ann Cap. 10, under which, the general post-office in London, claims a right of levying an internal tax upon the Canadas.

But what shall I say to you, and to the set who have joined you in the outcry, for the truly laughable and childish threats that were held out, of prosecution for having so sent such letters? and to the contemptibly ridiculous idea, that it was competent for the attorney-general, or a grand jury, to entertain the question. What! when you are yourself the delinquent, to set up a clamour as if you could prosecute the party injured? Tell it not in Gath! But neither you, nor Mr. Sutherland, it seems, either know the duties of your situation, or the laws under which you act. I will teach you one part of them.

The act of 6 Ann, Cap. 10, already referred to, states, sect. 40, that "Whereas abuses may be committed by wilfully *opening, embezzling, detaining and delaying of letters or packets*, to the great discouragement of trade, commerce, and correspondence, for prevention thereof, be it enacted, &c. that from and after, &c. no person or persons shall presume, wittingly, willingly, or knowingly, *to open, detain, or delay*, or cause, procure, permit, or suffer to be *opened, detained, or delayed*, any letter or letters, *packet or packets*, after the same is or shall be delivered into the general or other post-office, or into the hands of any person or persons, employed for the receiving or carrying post-letters, and before delivery to the persons to whom they are directed, or for their use; except by an express warrant in writing, under the hand of one of the principal secretaries of state, for every such opening, detaining, or delaying; or except in such cases where the party, or parties, to whom such letter or letters, packet or packets, shall be directed, or who is, or are are hereby chargeable with the payment of the port or ports, thereof, shall refuse or neglect to pay the same; and except such letters or packets as shall be returned for want of true directions, and where the party to whom the same is or are directed, can not be found; and that every person or persons offending in manner aforesaid, or who shall embezzle any such letter or letters, packet or packets, *shall for every such offence, forfeit the sum of twenty pounds*; the said penalties, &c. to be recovered, &c. And over and above such penalty, as aforesaid, every such person or persons, so offending as aforesaid, *shall be forever incapable of having, using, exercising, or enjoying, any office, trust, or employment, in or relating to the post-office, or any branch thereof.*"