

advantages which the present state of the Laws are not so well calculated to remove as they might have been. I will first call your attention to the Courts established for the trial of small causes in the country Parishes.—These Courts are intended, and no doubt have been of considerable use, to facilitate the collection of small debts; but the jurisdiction allowed them is too limited to be of material service to the country. £4 : 3 : 4 of a certain special description of debt may be collected in these Courts, but no action of *Trover* or *Trespass* can be brought before them, and many actions of debt of a particular character are excluded. From the complexion of the Act that establishes these Courts, it is very evident that the framers of it were under a full belief, that, in many instances, it would be executed by persons far from being acquainted with legal decisions, and probably they were but too correct in that opinion.

As the case now stands, the Townships are mostly situated at, from sixty to upwards of one hundred miles from Courts that are competent to administer justice in most cases requiring it. Under these circumstances it must be obvious at least, when the extent and unimproved state of the roads, in many sections of the Country, and frequent Ferrys to cross, are considered, that some further provisions, in regard to the administration of justice, are extremely necessary. The expense of collecting a debt of £5:0:0, in many of the Townships, amounts under the present system to four, five, and even six pounds, when no *defence* is made; and a controversy, on a subject of no more value than perhaps forty shillings, frequently leads the parties into the expense of twenty, thirty, or forty pounds; and though I would not say that such conduct is to the honor of the parties, yet it is a fact that such cases frequently occur.

It will be said that a portion of the Townships is now benefitted by the erection of the District of St. Francis, but the remote parts of that District are at a great distance from the Court. Under these circumstances, it cannot reasonably be doubted that some remedy ought to be applied. An inquiry, therefore, at once, presents itself, what that remedy should be? I would answer and propose as a temporary relief, until the public mind gets settled upon some plan of improving the whole system of the Judiciary, that a Circuit Court, to have jurisdiction and cognizance of all causes to the amount of fifteen pounds; Notes of hand, and all other special demands, to the amount of twenty-five or thirty pounds, to sit in each county, which is remote from the district, every three months, for the accommodation of all such counties, and this as often as necessary, during a part of every session, be constituted a Court of Quarter Session of the Peace, in connection with some of the neighboring Magistrates, for the purpose of trying all matters of inferior crime, proper to be tried by a Court of Quarter Session, especially cases on bail—to grant tavern and shop licenses—to homologate the establishment of Roads, and, in short, all the usual business of a Court of Quarter Session. Thus a single qualified Judge, with the assistance of the County Magistrates, would save heavy expenses to the contending parties, and do the business more expeditiously, inasmuch as the parties and witnesses would be near the Court. I would also hint, that a clause might be inserted in the act, that any person choosing still to bring his action before the Court of King's Bench, should recover no more cost, than might have been recovered before the Circuit or County Court, having jurisdiction of the same cause.