

an arbitrary power, (necessarily given them for the purposes of temporary justice,) which they are often required not to be shy or delicate in using; and whose patience is often put the severest trials, by the perverseness or insolence of those who are brought before them. This does not indeed, apply to simple justices of the peace,* but to such as are constantly, as police-magistrates, or regular quarter-sessions gentry, called upon to exercise the functions I have been remarking on; but it is upon these general grounds I object against any such being exalted to the supreme judgement seat, both in civil and criminal cases. These are general arguments against the appointment I am censuring; but, I consider it as my public duty to censure it likewise, on account of the knowledge I have, both personally, and from information, and public report, of the unfitness of Mr. Fletcher to be a judge. He is, I believe, as good a lawyer, as study and knowledge of the written law can make him, without the rationale of it. Verbose, intricate and mysterious; possessing industry of research, and acuteness of perception, sufficient to make rather a shewy than a useful, exhibition of his forensic acquirements. So far, it will be said, nothing has been shewn in this respect, to cry out against; but he has one besetting sin that totally disqualifies him for the situation of a judge, which ought to have effectual, as it has frequently almost, ejected him from that of magistrate. In one word he is an habitual drunkard. I make no apology for this round assertion. I have seen instances of it myself. All who know any thing of his conduct whilst he enjoyed the situation of commissioner for Indian affairs, in conjunction with the Hon. W. B. Colman, can bear witness to the glaring debauchery of his conduct during that mission, and which compelled his dismissal from it, before its object was terminated. Numberless instances of a misbehaviour, approaching to lunacy, which is to be attributed to the prevalence of this darling vice, in this, now "honourable judge of the Inferior district of St. Francis," must be within the knowledge and recollection of the inhabitants of Quebec, during the time of his possessing a seat on the policebench. A natural arbitrary disposition, fostered, and invigorated by his station as a chief of the constables, runners, and thief-takers of the metropolis of Canada, has been rendered, at times, ferocious, ungovernable, and unbearable, by the stimulus of strong drink. I speak out; but I call all Quebec to witness that I speak out nought but what they all know. If such a man as this, my lord Dalhousie, has been recommended to you, and represented as fit to sit

* I do not, gentle reader, by "simple justices of the peace," mean, justices who are simple justices (of which I fear there are a vast number in Canada,) but such as are simply justices, without being police magistrates, or of the quorum.