

been sued, and that the few good debts which it may be possible for me to recover, by giving long delay, would have been consumed in costs, to the profit of the said John Robinson Hamilton, esq., advocate, while the loss on my part would have been total. I calculate that this speculation, for it was nothing else, would have been worth some hundreds of pounds to the said John Robinson Hamilton, esq., advocate, in fees, costs and disbursements; and would have certainly led to the ruin of a number of inhabitants of the inferior district of Gaspé, where money is very scarce. I have very considerable claims against a number of individuals in the said inferior district of Gaspé, having entered into large speculations there as a trader; unluckily for me these speculations have turned out badly. The said John Robinson Hamilton, esq., advocate, the nephew of the said judge, practised as an advocate in the said inferior district of Gaspé, in the year 1830, and, having been elected a member of Parliament, he left off practising in the provincial court: this is to my personal knowledge. In the month of August, of the year 1834, he again came to settle in the said inferior district of Gaspé, for the purpose of there following his profession as an advocate and attorney in the said provincial court. He now resides at New Carlisle, in the county of Bonaventure, in the district aforesaid. I know these last facts from a number of persons, who have informed me of them.

Correspondence
respecting
Mr. Thompson.

Tuesday, 2 February 1836.

Joseph François Deblois, Esq., a Member of the Committee, being Interrogated,
answered:

I HAVE known the Honourable John Gawler Thompson, as judge of the inferior district of Gaspé, ever since his arrival at Paspébiac aforesaid, in the spring of the year 1827, at which time the said judge arrived at Paspébiac aforesaid, as successor to the Honourable Alexis Caron, provincial judge of the district aforesaid, who died in the winter of the year 1827. I went to the inferior district of Gaspé towards the end of August, in the year 1826, to practise in the said provincial court in my capacity of advocate and attorney. I have resided there ever since, with the exception of two intervals, when my duties as representative of the county of Bonaventure called me to Quebec. The common belief and public report is, that the said Honourable John Gawler Thompson is addicted to the immoderate use of intoxicating liquors to the present day. This opinion is but too true; for, from the arrival of the said judge at Paspébiac aforesaid, in the year before mentioned, until I left New Carlisle aforesaid, in October last, to come to Quebec, the conduct of the said judge was, to my personal knowledge, that of a drunkard. At the Carleton term, in the month of July 1827, I frequently saw the said judge drunk on the bench while the court was sitting; and I am able to say, that at those sittings of the court at which I cannot affirm that he was drunk, the said judge was certainly incapable of performing his judicial duties at such sittings, in consequence of the effect of intoxicating liquors. At the Percé term, in August of the said year, the said judge came there some days previously, for the purpose of holding the said court. He remained there in a constant state of drunkenness until the first day of the term of the said court. About an hour before the opening of the sitting of the court on the first day of the said term, I went to the said judge on business, in hopes of finding him sober, but I found him drunk. The first sitting of the court was opened about 10 o'clock in the morning, and the said judge was drunk upon the bench. Some causes were called on, and the sitting was closed after it had lasted about 15 minutes. On the second day of the said term, the judge being still drunk, the sitting of the court was opened, and (as far as I can recollect) closed again immediately without anything being done. On the third day there was no sitting of the court, in consequence of the drunken state of the said judge, who left the court the same afternoon to return to Paspébiac, which is about 22 leagues distant from Percé by sea. At Douglass Town term, in the same year, said judge was almost constantly drunk before, during and after the sittings of the said court, at the said term. I except three or four sittings at which the said judge, though not drunk while the court was sitting, was beyond all doubt incapable of deciding on the merits or demerits of the causes which came from time to time before the said court, and this in consequence of the immoderate use of intoxicating liquors. During the said year 1827, at the terms of the court above-mentioned, there were (that is, at the Carleton term) a certain number of actions in which some judgments were given. At the said term at Percé there was a great deal of business, and nothing was done. At the term at Douglass Town there was likewise a great deal of business, and a certain number of judgments were rendered. Almost the whole of these causes were *ex parte*. I was only employed in a few causes which were continued till next year. I except a few causes at the inferior term of the said year. The said judge had gone the circuit alone. In September of the same year, at the superior and inferior terms of the said court held at New Carlisle, the intemperance of the said judge was not manifested in so public a manner. I saw him, however, several times drunk while the court was sitting at the said terms; and a number of times in such a state as to make me doubt whether he was capable of administering justice to the parties. I ought to state that I saw him sober several times during the said terms, both inferior and superior, held at New Carlisle; but he was then unable even to sign his name, and was obliged to retire for some moments during the sittings of the said court, into a little room which is called the judge's, where he made use of a small bottle of spirituous liquor which he brought with him. I myself saw him drink once or twice during the said time, but I several times saw the little bottle empty after the sitting, the said judge having probably forgotten to take it away with him. There was much business at the terms of the court last mentioned. The inhabitants of the inferior district of Gaspé doubtless sustained much injury in consequence of the drunkenness