matter and ask, is the work for which we pay in the interest of the people of the province? The court of quarter sessions of the peace, a court which we obtained with the English law in 1792 has now for many years been shorn of the powers granted by the statute 59th Geo. III, 1819, those powers being transferred to the county councils.

The magistrates in quarter sessions can no longer levy and collect rates and assessments, build gaols and court houses, construct roads and bridges or other public works; it can no longer legally manipulate the county funds in any way. It might be added by way of retrospect that when the power of the purse went, the prestige of the court went also, but legislation of late years has been unfavourable to this court in other respects, as its name implies, it used to sit quarterly, it is years since it was decreed that a session every six months would amply supply the public needs. Then the establishment of the county judges criminal court 32, 33 Vic. ch. 35, still further withdrew work from it, and the introduction and gradual extension of the police magistracy (32,333 Vic. ch. 32) in various local municipalities has still further contracted its sphere of action, and now there is little doubt that if statistics were procured by the legislature it would be found that with the exception of such a place as the city of Toronto perhaps, there is little or nothing to justify its continued existence in the province, while the enormous expense incurred in juries and otherwise is a serious burden upon an already overburdened public. Nine tenths, we may say, nineteen twentieths of the light local criminal business of this country is now discharged by the county judges criminal courts and police magistrates, and if the jurisdiction of the county judge was made absolute—(indeed several classes of offences are triable in that way; sec. 32 33 Vic. ch. 32 sec. 2: and we find in 39 Vic. ch. 21, 40 Vic. ch. 4., and 47 Vic. ch. 42, provisions under which the "jurisdiction of the magistrate is made absolute in the province of Prince Edward Island and British Columbia and in the District of Keewatin"—in all cases, without the consent of the person charged) there is little doubt that judging from the manner in which the summary judgments of these courts are now received by the public, that perfect satisfaction would be given.

In this connection let us draw attention to the following statement procured by me in the year 1890 from the clerk of the peace and clerk of the county court of the county in which I reside—

List of cases tried at general sessions by jury 1886 to 1890 both inclusive: 1886, June, four, Dec. two; 1887, June, none, Dec. four; 1888, June, four, Dec. two; 1889, June, one, Dec. one; 1890, June, one, Dec. two; Total twenty-one in five years.

County court: 1886, June, three, Dec., none; 1887, June, one, Dec., one; 1888, June, three, Dec., three; 1889, June, none, Dec., none; 1890, June, none, Dec., none. Total eleven in five years.

A total of thirty-two cases in five years for both courts.

Let me now ask attention while I refer to a portion of the expenses incurred in connection with the trial of these thirty-two cases, all paid by the direct taxation of the people. At each of these joint courts during the five years, 72 jurymen were in attendance. A careful abstract of the accounts in the county in which I live as made by me shews as follows:— commencing with the last quarter of 1887— selecting jurors December quarter, $124.50; clerk of the peace services, jurors' books, &c., $159.86; sheriff's fees, summoning, &c. $128.20.

1888, March quarter— Clerk of the peace services $60.00, sheriff services $115.60.

1888, June quarter— Clerk of the peace services $12.00, sheriff services $130.20.

1888, September quarter—Clerk of the peace services $25.75, sheriff services $112-90.

Thus we have for selection, $124.50; Clerk of the peace, $266.61; and Sheriff, $487.80— in all $878.91, or three dollars and five cents each for two hundred and eighty-eight jurymen, the number required for all courts during the year. Then follows the cost of their attendance, that is, what they are paid. December quarter 1887, Quarter sessions and county court $683.40. March quarter 1888, Queen's bench $547. June quarter of 1888, Quarter sessions and county court $400.30. September quarter of 1888, Queen's bench $380.30.

Taking the amounts here given for December and June we find an average payment for each jury man of $7.51 or total cost to the county for each jury man of $10.56. This statement, however, must not be taken as correct to-day, as recent legislation gives the juror $2.00 per diem instead of $1.50 as formerly.

These figures establish the fact that the thirty-two cases referred to, so tried during the five years, cost the county two hundred and thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents each for jury expenses alone. It will be apparent also that every argument against the existence of this court of quarter sessions applies equally to the county court.

While on the subject of juries let me advert to my recollection of the time in which our present system of selecting those bodies was adopted. In the general public opinion of that day, it was a measure forced upon the government of the day by the difficulties in which it found itself placed by the multiplication of county officers incident to the changes which followed or emanated from the introduction of what is familiarly known as responsible government with its new ideas and change of system, and in this connection perhaps no change which ever took place in the country was more far reaching in its effects than municipal institutions. Numbers of people who have hitherto been debarred from interference in public affairs now found occupation, the transference of the powers hitherto vested in the magistrates in quarter sessions which began to take place somewhat about 1842 culminated in the general municipal act of 1850, a measure designed to absorb all the local government business of the country, but at the same time involving an expenditure which is ever and always increasing, and is now reaching a point which must attract public attention and legislative intervention.

When I was a young man taking part in the public business of the country, there were but nine sheriffs in this province, nine clerks of the peace, nine district judges &c., all at that time very desirable offices with sufficient emoluments, but when the new order of things was introduced, anxious aspirants for office, (their name was legion) constituted themselves warm advocates for the extension of local government amongst the people, and chiefly through this means the people were urged to build gaols and court houses, and apply to be set off, to which application the government had to yield, and the usual staff of officers was appointed. The consequence of this, in many cases most precipitate action, might not have been felt if these offices had afforded their occupants a means of living, but the dreams of expectant sheriffs and clerks were not realized, the fees and emoluments which had not supported nine sheriffs &c., were sadly insufficient when they came to be divided among forty. The calls for assistance were loud and continuous, the government had created them and must now sustain them, consequently the tariff of fees had to be overhauled and new fees established, and thus the jury law came into existence; a law which at one bound gave the sheriff about $500 a year, and the clerk of the peace about $300; and all of it designed by its projectors to come out of the pockets of the people by direct tax. Some sort of plausible excuse had to be found to satisfy the people that the change of system was in their interest, vague charges and suspicious hints as to the failure of justice in former times by the packing of juries by sheriffs, were thrown out and dilated upon by interested parties, themselves in office or in search of it, and by such means the public mind was made ready for the new law and its leading announcement, namely, that the true measure of a man's intelligence is his position on the assessment roll. Subsequent legislatures have striven to amend this act in some respects, but its main feature of making provision for the support of county officers still exists in full force.

The statute of 1846 enacted that all such expenditures in the administration of criminal justice in the province should be a charge upon the consolidated revenue of the province. See the last clause of the act in these words "Together with all other charges relating to criminal justice payable to the foregoing officers, specially authorized by any act of the legislature, and immediately before the ninth day of June, 1846, payable out of county funds."

That some efforts were made from time to time to have the government adhere to the plain meaning and directions of the statute is well known, and the shuffling course of the government is well seen in two orders in council or circulars numbered 5 and 6, one dated 6th. March 1863, the other 6th. August 1863, in which the law officers of the crown eat their own words in a most amusing manner.

It was a matter of consequence to us as between ourselves and Lower Canada that this law should have been honestly carried out, the neglect to do so placed us at a serious disadvantage with our—at that time—partner, now however we are in changed circumstances, we stand alone, and it is not of much consequence how the expenses of criminal justice are paid so as they are not in excess of the