

Correspondence
respecting
Judge Fletcher.

Does the judge of St. Francis merit and possess the confidence of the people of that district?—He does not.

Do the people at large in that district partake of opinions and impressions similar to those you have expressed to the committee?—I think they do more or less, according to the opportunity they have had of observing the judge's acts and character.

Is not the said John Fletcher, esq., reputed by the people at large in his district as unfit for his situation as a judge?—Yes, I think he is.

Wednesday, 24th February 1836.

George Kimball, Esq., again called in; and Examined.

Has the general conduct of the judge since he has been accused for the first time been the same, and such as to give room to complaints against his official conduct?—Yes.

Are there any written rules of practice in the courts of St. Francis? if so, by whom made, and by what authority?—In the provincial court the judge stated they should follow the rules of practice as established at the courts of Quebec, except such as have been altered and established by the judge himself; but in fact the judge follows no rule, except such as dictated by his caprice.

Was not the said judge in the habit of insulting people in open court, and in what manner?—Yes; he is in the habit of insulting the inhabitants of the country generally. He is almost daily in the habit of making use of expressions conveying the idea that the inhabitants of the district of St. Francis are very immoral, and are capable of committing almost any crime. He has frequently stated that they were like "brute men of the forest," that there is nothing too bad for them to be guilty of, that such conduct would be found nowhere else; and he has been in the daily habit of insulting the advocates in court, and at other places where they had occasion to transact business with him.

Has not the said judge frequently spoken with contempt, and in an ironical way, of the other tribunals in the province, and superior to that of St. Francis?—Yes, and has stated frequently that he is not bound by any proceedings or judgments of any superior court in this province, and that he should judge for himself in all cases. I have in some cases wished to proceed according to the decisions and proceedings in the King's Bench of the district of St. Francis; the judge has prevented it by ridiculing the decisions and proceedings of that court.

Does not the said judge speak with contempt of the laws which he is called to administer as a judge?—Yes; the judge says, that the French laws in force in this country were the laws of France at the time of Louis the Fourteenth, at which time there was the greatest debauchery and immorality in France that ever was in the world, and makes use of many other expressions of the same import, characterising the French laws in force in this province to be bad.

Monday, 29th February 1836.

Mr. Silas Horton Dickerson, called in; and Examined.

ARE you the person that petitioned the House of Assembly in 1829, complaining of the conduct of Mr. Justice Fletcher?—I am.

What further evidence can you give on the character and conduct of the said judge?—I have not had occasion to observe the conduct personally of Mr. Justice Fletcher very frequently since I first brought the subject under the consideration of the House of Assembly, as he has not since that time proceeded in the cases of contempt previously commenced against me, and left undecided; I could, however, mention one case as exhibiting his feelings and conduct towards myself in the year 1834. An action for debt on account was instituted against me in the provincial court; a great part of the account was for house-rent, charged at more than the actual value: there was no agreement as to the price to have been paid, nor did the plaintiff attempt to prove the value; in fact, he had no proof, and called upon me to answer upon *faits et articles*. In my answers, which were not rejected by the plaintiff, I stated the rent to be worth one-half that was claimed. I also adduced other testimony, which corroborated mine as to the value of the rent. I also stated in my answers that I paid certain sums to the plaintiff, the admission of which, with the rent it was proved to be worth, would have left a balance in my favour. My account was not allowed, except so far as was credited by plaintiff; the rate claimed for rent was allowed, and judgment rendered against me accordingly. I do not think that the conduct of the judge is better calculated to give satisfaction than it was previous to the bringing of the complaints before the House of Assembly.

What is the opinion among the great body of the people of that district at the present time of the character and conduct of the said judge?—I have frequent communication with the people in almost every part of the district; the opinion which generally prevails is, that Judge Fletcher is influenced in his decisions by partiality and prejudice, consequently, does not possess the confidence of the people of the district in his administration of justice. I have reason to know that a very great proportion of the people of the district wish on that account the removal of Judge Fletcher from the bench.

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