

*To the 'Commons' House of Assembly of
Lower Canada, in Parliament Assembled.* 1818

Gentlemen,

I have taken the liberty of addressing you on the subject of the administration of Justice, and the Courts of Law in this Province.

To you Gentlemen, who place your Happiness in Liberty, and Liberty in the just and impartial administration of the Law, no apology will be necessary for the time, that the perusal of this Letter will occupy, or for the unimportance of its author.

As a Subject, I share equally with you in every benefit which your wisdom bestows, and whilst to the Common Stock of Happiness I am desirous of subscribing my Mite, you will fully sympathize with me in the difficulty of the undertaking, and in the just appreciation of my endeavours not leave me to regret the misconstruction of my motives.

If in the lenity of your own feelings you should think mine have been too much excited, and that my Pen has taken too bold an aim in apparently dictating, I entreat you to impute such errors only to the zeal for the cause I am advocating.

His Excellency's speech first directed my attention to this point, and as "a Stranger among us without partialities, with no object but the Public good," His Lordship I am sure will not consider himself degraded by so humble a labourer in the same Vineyard.

Though the Administration of Justice in every Country involves considerations of the highest importance, both to the Sovereign and the Community, yet in no Country but that of Canada did it ever form so great a portion of its Civil Expenditure.

It will be surprising to any one in the least acquainted with the ordinary routine of Government in other Countries, and scarcely to be credited in this, that the Expenses attending the administration of Justice alone absorb more than one Fourth part of its whole Revenue.

This fact admits but of three inferences 1st. a singular depravity and corruption in the people, 2nd. a defect in the Laws or 3rd. the most prodigal and superfluous application of money in the administration of it.

The first perfectly remote and unconnected, for the Records of our Courts refute any such position. The 2nd. and 3rd. arising out of and depending upon each other perhaps not untrue.

It can not be imagined, that in the development of this subject, ceremonious or partial investigation will either abridge the amount, or prescribe the remedy. A strict adherence to truth, through which alone this enquiry can be conducted or the abuses be displayed, though it may devote the writer to the Resentment of the angry or the power-