

to recover a debt by law except through bribery. If a debtor has money or patronage, and refuses to pay, it is difficult to obtain the payment even of an acknowledged note of hand through the process of the law, and it generally takes years to accomplish.

It is, however, greatly to the praise of the Brazilians, that it is not often necessary to have recourse to law for this purpose. The greatest injustice occurs in the Orphans' Court; but the Court of Findings and Losings is one of the most singular in this respect. It takes charge of all things lost and found, making it the duty of a person finding any thing to deposit it with the judge. The loser, to prove property, must have three witnesses to swear that they saw him lose it, and three others, that they saw the finder pick it up, otherwise it remains in deposit. To show the working of this system, a gentleman of Rio found a bank-note of four hundred milrees (about \$250). The owner went to him and claimed it, proving satisfactorily to the finder that the identical bank-note was his, upon which the finder gave it up. The Judge of Findings and Losings heard of the circumstance, sent for him, and asked a statement of the case, which the finder unsuspectingly related. The judge praised his honourable conduct, and was punctiliously polite. The next day, however, he issued an order for the deposit of the money found; and because it was disregarded, the finder, a respectable foreign merchant, was arrested in the street and sent to prison, to be confined with common criminals. The jailer, however, having private apartments for those who could pay for them, he became his guest, and was preserved from the disgust of being a close prisoner, and the companion of degraded and depraved wretches. Before he could regain his liberty, he had to pay the amount found, the decision being the forfeiture of a like sum, together with the jailer's fees, &c.

The justices of the peace for each district are elected by the people, four at a time, to serve as many years by turns, substituting one for the other, when sickness or other circumstances prevent either from serving. They have final judgments in amounts not exceeding sixteen milrees. In cases of civil process, they act as mediators to effect a compromise and reconcile difficulties. Their political attributes are to preserve the peace in case of riot or disorder among the people, and they have a right to call on the national guard or military police to aid them, who must act under their direction. There is no civil police, and no imprisonment for debt. Trial by jury was at first limited to political offences and violations of the liberty of the press, but it is now extended to criminal cases, and in some instances to civil suits. Sixty persons compose the jury, and forty are necessary