ation since that time had given universal satisfaction. He did not mean to assert that there were not cases in which perjury was committed, for perjury had been too often committed under all systems, but on the whole, the ends of justice had been better served by admitting the plaintiff and defendant to give evidence, although until a very recent period a strong prejudice adverse to the practice had existed. There were also many cases of persons charged with serious offences, which, if not technically criminal, were attended, on conviction, with severe penalties, who were admitted to give evidence on their own behalf, such as prosecutions under the local liquor laws, revenue prosecutions, and election trials; and some hon. members in the House owed their seats and their escape from being disqualified to the fact that they were allowed to enter the witness box, and, by a frank, straightforward and faithful statement, explain the circumstances which appeared to press most hardly against them. Before Parliamentary Committees of enquiry, and Royal Commissions, as well as in the cases he had mentioned, the penalty attached to a decision adverse to the persons charged was of a character quite as serious to them as was the punishment of imprisonment to a great many who were brought before the Criminal Courts; and, if men under those circumstances could be relied upon to tell the truth, and were not likely to commit perjury, he did not think it should be assumed too hastily that members of other classes, who were charged with offences that were in law held to be criminal, would be more likely to yield to the temptation to commit perjury. There were numerous cases in which, even supposing that the amendment to the law were not made as complete as he had ventured to suggest, it might be possible that the experiment might be advantageously tried; such for example as prosecutions for fraud, false pretences, embezzlement and all cases involving questions of account. He remembered the late member for Cardwell, while he disapproved of the proposed amendment of the law and expressed the opinion that the time had not come for its adoption, pointing out that the change proposed might be approached gradually by some such partial amendments as he (Mr. Dymond) had just referred to. The only other point to which he would allude related to an expression which fell from him a year ago, which had been commented upon at the time by some of his legal friends in the House and which appeared to have excited, if not irritation, at all events a little concern in their minds. That was, that he thought the adoption of the system would be conducive to a higher tone of morality in criminal proceedings. There was no member of the House, lawyer or layman, who had a higher opinion of the character of the bar than he entertained, and he would be grieved if anything he had said implied that members of the legal profession did not occupy in that respect not only a respectable but a most exalted position. By admitting persons charged with crime to give evidence, all temptation on the part of those entrusted with their defence to set up theories which might not be founded upon truth was removed. He thought that in many instances counsel would feel themselves constrained to adopt a different style of defence if they knew that they would rest the foundation of their defence upon the testimony of the person accused. He was aware that in Canada legal gentlemen did not usually follow what was called criminal law practice exclusively; it came to them in common with other branches of their profession and probably they did not enter so completely into the spirit of that business as those in Great Britain who devoted themselves almost exclusively to it. But he ventured to assert, from a pretty long observation in years past of criminal procedure in the mother country, that the system of defence adopted did not exercise an elevating influence upon the minds of counsel. It was in that sense, and in that only, that he ventured to make the remark which he did on a former occasion. He believed, in conclusion, that the proposition he had the honour to submit to the House would, if adopted, conduce to an improvement in the administration of justice and be more fair to those persons who unfortunately stood in the

Mr. Dymond.