

culties arising from the English law, and they were delighted with the suggestion of Sir Robert Torrens that there was no occasion for these long forms, and that the passage of land from one person to another might be made as simple as a transfer of bank stock or the transfer of a ship from one person to another: and he said the way to do that is to allow every person who has land, if the land has already been patented—that is if a patent from the Crown is already existing—to put his land under the Torrens system if he pleases, but as to those titles which come out after the passing of the Bill to insist upon their being placed under the Torrens system. If you want to sell land under the Torrens system you make a short memorandum of the sale. You go to the Registry office and surrender your certificate of title and memorandum of sale, and the Registrar issues a new certificate to the vendee and he has the title, and this certificate is made good against all the world by statute. That is the way the title passes from hand to hand. If the vendee wishes to sell he goes back to the Registrar, surrenders his certificate and a new certificate is granted, so that the title passes from person to person. very much in the same way as a bill of sale of a ship, the certificate of ownership being produced, the sale is endorsed on the certificate of ownership, only in the case of land the certificate of ownership, if the land is sold, is given up and a new certificate is granted. That is the Torrens system, and it is the system which was introduced into all the colonies in Australia, New Zealand, in the Singapore settlements in the Straits of Malacca, and the evidence in the works I have referred to is strongly in favor of it. It has worked well in regard to cheapness, in regard to security of title which has resulted from it, and in every respect it has given satisfaction to the people, and has made land more valuable by diminishing the difficulties of transfer, and has made it more useful as being a subject with which any one could deal, though not a man learned in the law, very safely and securely. The objection seems to me, with reference to titles which have been patented anterior to the Act; they do not come under the system unless the owners desire it, and the two systems are

there running on parallel lines, the ordinary system of conveyancing under the English law more or less tempered by local enactments, and the Torrens system. So, if you have to do with land granted prior to 1857, which was about the time Mr. Torrens began his agitation (although his Act was not passed until 1859 or 1860) you find yourself with the English law, and all the difficulties about title which you would expect to accompany their system of conveyancing; and if you are dealing with lands patented after the passing of the Act, you are dealing with the Torrens system, making everything plain. I hear that the Attorney-General of Ontario, my friend Mr. Mowat, proposes to introduce the Torrens system into some parts of Ontario and not into the whole province—that he proposes to introduce it into the County of York and into the City of Toronto, but not elsewhere in the Province of Ontario, and he proposes there to allow both systems to run along on parallel lines. It is difficult to know how to deal with such a subject where the titles which are outstanding are numerous, and I do not venture to pronounce an opinion upon the course which Mr. Mowat has taken. I have the greatest possible respect for his judgment and for his knowledge of the law, and for his earnest disposition to endeavor to do that which in his judgment is best for the country. Happily, so far as this Bill is concerned, and so far as the North-West Territories are concerned, we are not driven to the dilemma in which he is placed. There are so few titles outstanding now in the North-West Territories that I without hesitation adopted the plan of making it compulsory that all titles were to be placed under the Torrens system. I obtained returns from the Minister of the Interior showing that up to the 31st July last only three hundred titles had been issued in the North-West Territories. Of course there were a great many more in Manitoba, but in the Territories there were up to the 31st July last only 300 issued. It was manifestly the best course to pursue to place all the titles under the Torrens system, and that this Bill proposes to do. There are other points in this measure which will necessarily engage the attention particularly of the legal men of the House when the Bill is in Com-