

PROGRESS OF THE TORRENS SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION.

IN a former number we made some reference to the operation of the Land Titles Act, and the Report of the Master of Titles for the year 1887, presented to the Legislative Assembly at its recent session, enables us to refer more in detail than we then did to the progress which has been made in developing this system of registration of titles. From this report we learn that in the city of Toronto and county of York a very gratifying advance has been made in the amount of land brought under the Act. The volume of business in each year since the Act came into force shows a steady increase. During the first six months of its operation 46 applications were made for registration, of which only 6 were granted, the value of the property registered being \$60,250. In the following year, 44 applications were made; 42 applications were granted, and the value of the property registered was \$983,189. In 1887, 51 applications were made, 49 were granted, and the value of the property registered was \$1,105,929, making the total number of first registrations up to the end of 1887, 99, and the total value of the property registered, \$2,149,368. This, we are inclined to think, is a very satisfactory showing, and says a good deal for the confidence of the public in the advantages of this new system of registration. The fees received in the office during the past year, amounted to \$4,307.51, so that there is every prospect of the office of the Master of Titles being very shortly entirely self-sustaining.

Most of the property brought under the Act was intended to be laid off into building lots and placed upon the market, and the proprietors have, no doubt, experienced the manifold advantages the Torrens System presents for handling property of this character effectively, avoiding as it necessarily does so much of the delay and expense which the old system involves.

The idea of registration with a "*possessory title*" merely, does not appear to be acceptable. During the past year no applications were made for registrations on that plan. We suppose people who register, do not see any great advantage in going through all the bother and expense of registration, to find out that, after all is done, their title is still open to question. Naturally enough, if they register their titles at all, they wish to get the full benefits of registration. The only likelihood of registration with a "*possessory title*" becoming popular, is when the fees for that mode of registration shall have been reduced to the smallest possible amount. We do not see why any contribution to the assurance fund should be exacted on any such registration. In such cases the benefits of registration are purely prospective, no present blots or difficulties in the titles are removed; in fact, the title is, to all intents and purposes, just the same after, as it was before registration. The only advantage offered is, the prevention of further difficulties arising in the title, by interposing an official scrutiny on all subsequent dealings with the property. These future benefits should be paid for by fees on future transactions as they arise, and should not be charged for, it seems to us, at the time of the first registration.