

the Government of the correctness of the register, which is practically an insurance of the title of the very best description.

Mr. Hunter graphically describes the disadvantage of the present system of conveyancing, and asks: "What would stock-brokers say if before they could sell £1,000 stock or consols, they had to show to whom the stock had belonged for the last forty years—to show that all duties which had accrued to the crown during that period had been paid? That every person to whom the stock had descended by death during that period was legitimate? That no former owner had acquired the stock by voluntary gift; and, if the actual sellers were trustees, if the purchase money could only be paid to them in person, or to their bankers. Would ten per cent. be considered a sufficient remuneration for this? Would not the necessity for such proofs put a stop to ninety-nine per cent. of the business of the Stock Exchange? Why should owners of land continue to be liable to these disabilities which owners of no other class of property are under?"

But though Mr. Hunter discourses so eloquently on the evils of the system of land transfer at present prevailing in England, we look in vain through the catalogue of remedies which he proposes for one that will effectually get rid of that greatest defect of all, viz., the necessity of investigating the "chain of title." The "chain of title" is the principal source of all the trouble and difficulties attending land transfer under the English system, and it is only by some system of registration of title, similar to that devised by the late Sir R. Torrens, that that defect can be effectually remedied.

OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

LEGAL machinery was very long in reaching what may be called thorough working order after the long vacation. First came the circuits, which were confined for the most part to the clearing of the gaols, and then the general election, which kept a great number of leading men away from the Courts. These two facts must form my apology for postponing this letter, which, indeed, comes to this that, except the *Stead* trial, which was unsavoury, there was nothing at all to write about. This is said on the supposition that Canadian circles would not be keenly interested in the discussion of obscure points in our new franchise law. The sum total of the decisions may be said to consist in the fact that the legislature was, by no means for the first time, frustrated in its intentions by reason of bad drafting. It enfranchised some classes by accident and equally involuntarily left others without votes. Perhaps the most comic case was that of the undergraduates of Oxford and Cambridge. Their enfranchisement was described as *un fait accompli*, but, lo and behold, when the terms of their tenure were examined, it was found that the work had been insufficiently performed.

This is an era of new men. We have in Lord Halsbury a Lord Chancellor who attends far more closely than his predecessor to judicial work, who is by no means averse to the giving of silk gowns, and whose one failing is an obvious tendency to nepotism. The result is that there is an opportunity of studying the rise of new men in leading business, and it cannot be denied that some of them are showing great promise. Foremost among them are Mr. Ffrench, Q.C., of the Northern Circuit, whose opinions upon points of election law are quoted with almost the same respect as that which is paid to the