

(See paper A, hereto annexed.)

On my first visit to the office in question, I found the books, registers and documents deposited there, and confided to the care of the Registrar, in a state which shewed the utmost indifference, with regard to their preservation and safety from accidents by fire.

I had, in consequence, the honor to submit to Your Excellency a preliminary Report, the effect of which has been to give the public at least the assurance that the papers, &c., deposited in the hands of the Registrar of the County of *Montreal* were in a place of safety.

Such are the facts which I have been able to ascertain from personal observation and the voluntary answers of Mr. *Weston*; for I was not authorized to examine witnesses on oath.

As to the consequences which result from the actual condition of the Registry Office for the County of *Montreal*, they are very numerous and very serious. But that to which I must first allude is the unpopularity of the system, which is now looked upon in the same point of view by its former defenders, and by its adversaries.

I shall not be accused, I hope, of wishing to persuade Your Excellency that there are not persons who would desire to see the Registry system finally established in this part of the Province; for my assertion relates only to the imperfect Ordinance which introduced it, and to the still more imperfect manner in which that law has been executed.

Another injurious consequence of the bad administration of this office, is the uncertainty of the result of the searches which are made there.

(See Mr. *Weston's* answer to the 10th Question which I put to him.)

Although this answer has reference only to the proceedings of Mr. *Dowling* and his Deputy, it is easy to see that the searches have been rendered more difficult, more complicated, and more tedious, by the immense accumulation of work in arrear since Mr. *Ryland's* assumption of the office.

These searches are, moreover, very expensive, and the certificate which results from

them inspires so little confidence, that people continue to apply to the Court of Queen's Bench for the ratification of most of their title deeds.

I have not been able to ascertain the amount received by the Registrar annually for these searches, nor the whole of the income of the office; for Mr. *Ryland*, who is absent, has possession of the books which would have given me the information. (See Mr. *Weston's* answer to my 27th question.) But these searches amounted, in one or two instances, to £13 or £15. Under the present system, how much will they amount to in twenty years?

I will conclude this Report by declaring to Your Excellency that, in my humble opinion, the Ordinance of the 4th *Vict.*, cap. 30, has imposed a burdensome tax upon the inhabitants of this Province, and has not procured them any advantage. This law is very badly executed in the County of *Montreal*; had it been perfect, that circumstance would have rendered it hurtful.

It is insufficient, obscure, and contradictory in many of its provisions; it is premature, and by no means in harmony with pre-existing laws; the realization of its preamble is impossible without numerous and important changes in our laws.

I will allow myself to add, that the machinery of the Registry Offices requires to be examined. For it is, in my humble opinion, susceptible of great improvements, which, by simplifying it, would facilitate its working.

As to the present condition of the Office for the County of *Montreal*, it renders necessary the employment of Commissioners to examine and regulate the labours of the officers who have until now had the management of it. It would be very dangerous to allow a state of things which may occasion the greatest injury in the affairs of the citizens to subsist any longer.

Two methodical and experienced persons would suffice for this enormous task.

In conclusion of this Report, I request of Your Excellency to allow me to submit, in the accompanying notes, the changes which, according to me, would facilitate the searches to be