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ment. You must still leave in the Department of the Interior the right to deal with those lands as pure lands and one of the difficulties in connection with this question is that in retaining in the Department of the Interior the lands merely agricultural and passing over to another department the lands so far as mines are concerned you are divorcing the two and creating a bigger thing in that way.

The CHAIRMAN.—But why have you to leave the lands in the Department of the Interior? Are not all lands purchased under the Mines Act under the heading of Mining Land?

Mr. CONGDON.—You might make some provision of that kind, that when a certain thing occurs the land might be transferred to the Mines Department, but it would be difficult to say what lands should be transferred and what time they would be transferred.

Mr. W. R. SMYTH.—That is working out very satisfactorily in the province of Ontario. They have in the Department of Mines a Deputy Minister of Lands and a Deputy Minister of Mines.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not agree with that. I do not think it ever worked well. I do not think it is working well.

Mr. JOHN HERRON.—In my country it is different. There is a great deal of coal land which is agricultural land.

The CHAIRMAN.—It is a question that will take some working out.

Mr. ROWATT.—I assume that what you have reference to is this, that the disposition of mines and mining lands be brought under the Department of Mines and that department will deal with them in a scientific manner after they become mines.

The CHAIRMAN.—That is the idea.

Mr. ROWATT.—Our department, that is the Department of the Interior, is a department of lands, and the duty of the Department of the Interior is largely confined to disposing of lands. In the majority of cases it is not known where these mines are. The department after disposing of the surface to the Crown must necessarily dispose of what is underneath because when application is made for any mining rights it is necessary to consult the department in order to dispose of the surface. Looking at it in another way, minerals are of two kinds, base and precious. From all time in the Dominion federal lands have been disposed off with a reservation applying to gold, silver and platinum. Gold and silver are always reserved, but our department has issued 455,000 patents without making any reservation whatever. That is they convey to the person who obtains the lands all rights to them, the surface rights, the under rights, everything excepting of course the common law reservation of precious metals. Now, if an application is made for a patent the applicant must first consult the patents of our department in order to know whether the rights to the land are still vested in the Crown or whether some person by getting a patent for the surface has secured all the rights underneath with the exception of gold and silver.

Mr. CONGDON.—May I ask when these patents were issued?

Mr. ROWATT.—They have been issued since Confederation up to November 1, 1887. Our department is still issuing patents on the short form, that is reserving nothing to the Crown. Now when we receive an application we do not reserve any mineral excepting gold and silver.

Mr. CONGDON.—Are you issuing these in pursuance of rights arising prior to 1887?

Mr. ROWATT.—On mines before 1887. Suppose a discovery is recently made. The settler applies for a patent and suppose he was resident before 1887 he gets the short form of patent. It is impossible for us to know without examining all those patents what the rights of the Crown are in that land. Therefore you can see how closely