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CONVEYANCING SYMBOLS.

The subject of conveyancing has occupied the attention of the Legislature and the legal profession in England for the past century. The Real Property Commission appointed in 1829, at the instance of Lord Campbell, and of which he was the head, has shewn, in its monumental three volumes, not only the need for reform, but the nature of the reforms which were proposed, and its labours were singularly fruitful, for many of the enactments they proposed were in the next few years adopted, and, while the nature of estates and interests in real property was thereby considerably modified, the practice of conveyancing was, by the abolition of fines and recoveries and by other important reforms, practically revolutionized. Some of these reforms have been adopted in Ontario—one is tempted to think without much reflection—and when, later English changes have been adopted, they have also been followed by partially similar enactments here. Compare the English Conveyancing Act, 1881, with our conveyancing legislation of 1886. Even in recent years the subject has received much consideration in England, and in 1908 a Commission was appointed to hear evidence on the working of the Land Transfer Acts, which sat sixty-one times during two and one-half years, called eighty-four witnesses, and embodied the evidence in two large blue books and their own report in a third book of fifty-six folio pages. This shows how seriously the subject, not only of conveyancing, but of real property law in general, is taken in England.

In Upper Canada and Ontario there has been but little independent enquiry into the laws. We adopted the Yorkshire Registry laws of Queen Anne, and have amended and enlarged them at hazard since; and we also introduced the Torrens system, making it optional in a limited district and compulsory in some of our newer territories. It has not, however, been adopted as