

gest to him the dishonesty, and then deliberately break the contract and make a new one between the parties which neither of them ever intended or dreamt of, and which one of them at least would never have entered into had he known how plain words would be twisted. A rule has been laid down which, while aiming at preventing one iniquity, breeds many; and which, in the view of an ordinary business man, is an injustice and an absurdity.

Another matter of some little importance which might be dealt with is one of the relics of a practice which has come to us from England arising from a different state of law from that existing in this country. In England what is known as a solicitor's abstract is a matter of necessity. Here it is not so, as is proved by the almost universal custom of providing against a requisition for it. The law should provide that, notwithstanding any practice to the contrary, no solicitor's abstract shall be required to be furnished by a vendor to a purchaser unless expressly stipulated for, but that it shall be sufficient to furnish a registrar's abstract. This would save unnecessary expense and delay, and often prevent great injustice being done by some sharp practitioner who desires to put some unwary, or confiding, or ignorant vendor to annoyance, expense, and delay.

Leaving now the civil and going to the criminal phase of the law, it must be apparent to every one observant of the administration of criminal justice that the jurisdiction of the General Sessions is too limited. A police magistrate, on election by the party accused, may try a felony punishable by imprisonment for life. The General Sessions may, without such election, try the same class of offences. But misdemeanours punishable, in some cases, by at most three years' imprisonment, and in some by a fine, must be tried at the Assizes. The old theory, that only crimes accompanied by an actual or imminent breach of the peace could be tried at the Sessions, is exploded. The tendency of modern legislation is to look at the practical and not the theoretical side of things. What is wanted is speedy, economical, and substantial justice, without regard to time-worn and moss-covered principles, which should have no business and no place in this utilitarian age. If, as decided in the *Queen v. Levinger*, the Legislature of Ontario has power to create the Sessions a court competent to try forgery in certain cases, why should not the minor offences