

*UNLICENSED CONVEYANCERS.*

In September of last year a report was presented to convocation by a special committee of the Law Society of Upper Canada on the subject of unlicensed conveyancers. The report recommended legislation providing for the licensing (or at least recognising as a class having some rights) of persons who, at the time of the passing of the Act had been accustomed to transact conveyancing business. Copies of the report and of a draft bill founded upon it were sent to the county law associations throughout the Province for their consideration. The County of York Law Association referred the matter to their committee on legislation, and that committee has reported that "it cannot see its way to recommend the licensing of the unlicensed conveyancers, believing that if the proposed Act were passed, it would be in practice ineffective, and likely to lead to further encroachment upon the lawyer's field." We understand that other Associations approve of the suggested legislation.

There are many who think that the passing of such an Act as above indicated would be a serious mistake — that they would no longer be unlicensed conveyancers, but would have a recognized legal status, from which they never could be dislodged; that the effort to confine the privilege to those who are at present transacting such business would certainly fail and that the legislature would be forced to establish a general system of licensing conveyancers, or to continually pass special acts enabling certain named persons to practice. These unlicensed conveyancers are generally influential men in their own neighbourhood, who take an active part in elections, and several hold seats in the legislature. We have seen in the past that a number of persons, notwithstanding the opposition of the Law Society, obtained special acts enabling them to practice law. Is it likely that the legislature would be more firm in resisting the demands of this large and influential class demanding the less important right to act as conveyancers? Would it not be better not to interfere with their right to draw conveyances, but try to make it unlawful and punishable by fine to charge for their services? If legislation on the lines indicated could be obtained, unlicensed conveyancers would soon disappear. On the other hand it is said that the class