

and in some of the lower provinces, a large meaning is given to them which includes all kinds of circumstances which might possibly happen to render the covenant useful; and that advantage we already possess, and it is one which those who write upon the Torrens system laud it for very much indeed. I think that the system being once in force in the North-West Territory, it will be found simple and easily worked; but I would not have ventured to ask the House to take my assertion had I not verified my own view by very considerable discussion with a gentleman who has resided in that part of the world for some years as Stipendiary Magistrate, and who is himself a very good lawyer. I refer to Mr. Richardson, who was formerly in the Department of Justice. Before taking the responsibility of presenting this measure to the House for consideration, I summoned that gentleman down from that part of the country, and we talked over the whole subject, and he quite satisfied me that the system could be worked, and worked easily, in the North-West Territories; and he said not only was he persuaded of that, but that the Council who governed the North-West Territory were of that opinion also.

There is, as hon. gentlemen know, a Council, composed partly of gentlemen nominated by the Crown, and partly by elected members who enact laws for the North-West. A project of this kind was submitted to them last year, but they were not able to make any great progress with it for want of time, and for want of legal members in the Council, although Mr. Richardson was there, and the consideration of it was postponed; but it elicited a strong expression of opinion from the Council that a measure of this kind could easily be worked in the North-West Territories. I have endeavored to describe the change which it would produce. Now, with reference to the working of the system in the North-West Territories, we propose to divide the country into four Registration districts, Assiniboia, Alberta and two districts in Saskatchewan. The country further to the north, towards Peace River, has not now any white population, and no patents and no transactions in land, and we do not propose at present to make any disposition

with regard to it. But we propose to take these four registration districts and deal with them. These districts have been formed by Order-in-Council, and their boundaries have been established by Order-in-Council with the force of law. They are called now "districts" but they are intended to, and will no doubt, be eventually provinces, and the system which we are introducing in those districts which are to become provinces will, we think, be that which is likely to be adopted, and must of necessity be adopted (in the first instance at all events) by the inhabitants of those districts when they do become provinces. We propose to make each of these districts a registration district. There are registrars there now who are quite competent to discharge the duties which this Bill will impose upon them. Three of them are lawyers, who are quite competent to discharge the duty of registering titles, inspecting, and giving certificates of ownership. We have provided for an appeal from them to the collective body of Stipendiary Magistrates of the North-West, who are, three of them, gentlemen of the legal profession, and who will constitute for practical purposes a very fair Court of Appeal for such titles as are likely to come in question for the next few years. Of course, in that new country, the titles are not likely to be very complex for some time. The gentlemen of whom I speak as forming the Court of Appeal would be Mr. Richardson, formerly a barrister of Ontario of good standing, very well known to many hon. gentlemen in this House, and who was once in the Department of Justice, and I think those gentlemen who came in contact with him there will have formed a high opinion of his ability, as I have done; another is Mr. MacLeod, a gentleman from Ontario, and of large experience in the North West and also a very fair lawyer. The other is a Mr. Rouleau, a gentleman from Quebec, and who also enjoys a fair reputation as a lawyer in that province. The titles not being very complicated, for some time to come at all events, I think a court so constituted would be, for practical purposes, sufficient, and an appeal to them, so far as this Bill is concerned, we propose to make final. Another feature of the Torrens Bill is this: that a small fine is paid into