

Mr. MEIGHEN: There is registration of bills of sale, but we do not take any bill of sale; the animals are ours.

Mr. McKENZIE: But the title is vested in the farmer?

Mr. MEIGHEN: No, in the board.

Mr. McKENZIE: Well, the possession is in the farmer?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes.

Mr. McKENZIE: In our province the presumption of ownership goes with possession; but before you go too far with the presumption you look up the registry of deeds, and if there is nothing on file there in regard to the property concerned, you have a right to suppose that it is the property of the person who holds it in possession. In Nova Scotia you cannot be safe in following any other course unless there is some agreement to the contrary. There is a pernicious system with respect to the sale of pianos, organs and that sort of thing which is creating havoc in our province because of the fact that the paper which is taken by way of security is not put on file; but apart from that, everything has to be dealt with under the Bill of Sale Act.

Mr. PETER MCGIBBON: It may be a good thing for the Government to put a man on 100 or 150 acres of land, well stocked and equipped, and to protect him so that he can defy the public, but it seems to me that it does not tend to improve the moral standing of the man who goes on the land.

Mr. MEIGHEN: We are simply protecting the goods we sell; any other goods are liable. If we did not protect our own goods the case would be hopeless, for we are carrying this scheme out in every part of Canada.

Mr. PETER MCGIBBON: The protection is confined exclusively to the goods furnished by the Government?

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is confined to our goods.

Mr. MORPHY: What security does the minister take in respect to the ownership exercised by the Government?

Mr. MEIGHEN: As I said a moment ago, we do not take any security.

We purchase the goods and sell them to these men, and we have a system of stamping them in such a way that any one on investigation can see they are ours. What

[Mr. McKENZIE.]

we hold out to the whole country is this warning that every man in the district will know who is a soldier settler. It will not be very long until they get to know that as regards that soldier settler a special law exists, and they must take care in dealing with him not to rely for security on goods to that soldier by the Government. I do not think there will be any difficulty; there has not been so far, and this has been in effect since the 11th of February, and has worked very well.

Mr. MORPHY: Is there any section in the Bill dealing with stamping?

Mr. MEIGHEN: No, but that is the practice.

Mr. PEDLOW: I believe this will create a dangerous situation for the mercantile and professional interests. Any person wishing to do business with a soldier settler would take it for granted that his security was gilt-edged, because there would be nothing on record in the registry office to show to the contrary, and I do not know by what means they would trace up the settler's standing. I fail to see any reason why the Government should not register the documents which affect the title to the property. Why should it not be placed on record in the registry office in the various provinces? I think that would be in the interest of the settler as well, because if there is any doubt in the mind of the general public as to his general stability or title to the property it would affect the settler prejudicially. I certainly think it would be in the interest both of the settler and of the mercantile and professional interests to have some system of registration whereby the exact title could be ascertained by those desiring to know.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I think that the hon. member ought to take special pains to see that no merchant is under any apprehension in that regard, because the board is absolutely determined that it is not going to undertake these obligations as trustee for the public, and expose the settler to exhibiting the Government's goods as the basis of the credit to him. The board has received ample warning in this regard. There is evidence abundant that myriads of people were simply hanging by the wayside waiting for this scheme to come into operation, expecting that they would be the real beneficiaries thereby. Why, we have cases, and more than one, of agents who have sold a cream separator to a sol-