

speedily made, great confusion and serious consequences to important public and private interests must ensue. The indexing and recording of deeds in many instances are very imperfectly done, and in a short time the books will be in such a state as to render the titles to property very uncertain. A long period of careful attention to our records and the prudent management of them heretofore has established confidence in them, and it is now a matter of the greatest importance that the same prudent and sedulous attention should be bestowed upon them. So accustomed are we to confide in our records that the ordinary prudence manifested in the keeping of other valuable papers is scarcely deemed necessary in the case of deeds. Nothing but a wanton neglect of duty can bring confusion in this or any other office of the kind in the State. The Constitution and laws of the State, have made ample and liberal provision, and the emoluments allowed, are such as to command the services of competent men. The number of men employed in and about this office as shown in the returns to the Comptroller of the Treasurer, indicate no stint of help or stint of compensation. The committee were forcibly struck with the total want of suitable checks and safeguards upon the finances of this office, and believe a more rigid accountability would be of great advantage. Several weeks of close application would have been required to enable the committee thoroughly to examine and point out such remedies as would have sufficed. No time was devoted to the office of Register of Wills, and therefore upon this branch of their inquiries have nothing to report. The law which has finally passed, prescribing a wholesome check upon these offices, and an other one visiting severe penalties for a misuse of public monies by those whose hands they may pass through will it is hoped effect some good.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

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