

House do pass thereupon." Under this Rule it is clearly necessary that any measure purporting to impose a duty on the people, should be introduced in the first place by Resolution of the Committee of the Whole House. On that point there can be no doubt whatever. Now the only question that arises is whether this Bill, if passed, would or would not impose an additional tax on the people. This question was raised soon after the Bill was introduced, possibly on the second reading, and then the hon. mover stated distinctly to the House that it would not impose any additional burden, that it required no additional stamps to be attached to any instrument whatever, and that he introduced it merely for the purpose of removing doubts which had arisen in some of the Courts as to the value to be attached to the re-stamping of foreign bills of Exchange accepted in this country. He stated—and nobody seemed to contradict him, and none of the lawyers in the House did so—that it had been the practice, and this was again stated this evening, that where parties in this country received foreign bills of exchange which had not the required stamps in the first instance, to put on double stamps; that suits had arisen on notes and bills so stamped and that some doubt existed in the Courts as to whether this putting on of the double stamp did or did not give validity to the note. If that were so, this would be merely an explanatory Act, which did not create any new burden, but simply defined what the law was. It occurred to him that the matter stands in this way; if this Bill now before the House provided that certain stamps should be attached to foreign bills of exchange in certain cases, that in other cases double stamps might be affixed, and that unless in the first instance a proper stamp were affixed, or unless in the other case double stamps were affixed, the note would be valueless, then he thought that it would impose a tax on the people; but as it stands at present, the penalty was clearly inoperative. If a foreign bill of exchange comes into the hand of an innocent holder not stamped at all or insufficiently stamped, it is valueless, absolutely valueless, and if the

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doubts that are entertained are well founded as to the right to put double stamps on, then he cannot possibly render that valuable, and it cannot certainly, to that individual, be a tax or burden, that he may make that which the law declares otherwise worthless, to have a fair value by a certain operation. The question was one rather for a Law Court than for a Speaker of the House of Commons to determine. It was very much to be regretted that this Bill was not, in the first instance, introduced by Resolution, and if he had then been consulted on the subject, he would have advised it; but as the matter now stands, he could not perceive that if the Bill passed it would impose any burden on anybody. The only persons who would pay the duty were the persons relieved by affixing the stamps to the bill, and who would thus be enabled to collect the face value of the instrument.

*Amendment read the second time and agreed to.*

*Bill read the third time and passed.*

#### LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

[BILL No. 40.]

(*Mr. Kirkpatrick*)

#### THIRD READING.

*Bill considered in Committee, reported, read the third time, and passed.*

#### BUILDING SOCIETIES LAW AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL No. 55.]

(*Mr. Gibbs, South Ontario*)

#### SECOND READING.

*Bill read the second time.*

#### LOAN OF 1876.

#### ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order for resuming consideration of the proposed motion of Mr. McCarthy, for an Order of the House for statement respecting the loan of 1876, *read.*

MR. CARTWRIGHT: I do not propose to detain the House further with the discussion of this point. I will simply say that I have no objection to the 1st, 4th, 5th, and 6th items of this loan; the 2nd and 3rd I cannot agree to, for the simple reason, in the first