

## Private Bills—Divorce

Stick  
Stuart (Charlotte)  
Ward  
Weaver  
Weir

Welbourn  
Whiteside  
Whitman  
Winkler—60.

Motion agreed to and bill read the second time.

## BERNICE POMP GATES

**Mr. H. W. Winkler (Lisgar)** moved the second reading of Bill No. 18, for the relief of Bernice Pomp Gates, otherwise known as Bernice Frank Gates.

**Mr. R. R. Knight (Saskatoon):** I should like to comment briefly on this bill. I have no intention of opposing this particular bill, because it is one of the five or six bills, the evidence of which I have received. It is an unfortunate case like all these unfortunate cases. I have read the evidence, much against my inclinations, because I think it is my duty so to do. Before we pass these bills I think we should certainly consider the evidence, and we should have an opportunity to consider the evidence. Somebody told me five minutes ago that he had found a copy of the evidence of this particular bill upon his desk. I suggest to you, sir, that we cannot carry on a debate on foot-and-mouth disease, and at the same time be studying evidence in divorce cases. I think it would be reasonable for one to get the evidence at least in the morning, or at least twenty-four hours before he has to consider the bill itself.

I do not feel so bad about this bill because it is an uncontested case. No children are involved. It has to do with a very young Jewish couple in the city of Montreal in the province of Quebec. The only relief of course that these people can get is to bring the case to this house, and that is the way things have been done.

On the other hand, it is not the way that things have always been done, because in those very early divorce cases—I have looked into the matter—a good deal of time was spent upon them, and in one case it ran for one or two years. I suggest, sir, that the people who arranged this method of divorce certainly did not visualize these things coming in at the rate of 300, 400 and 500 a session. I think we have now reached the point where the task of our giving these things earnest consideration in this house is simply impossible. Therefore we have to make up our minds, in considering this among other bills, to do one or other of two things: either to go with the stream, to be blown along with the wind, to follow if you like, the path of least resistance, give no consideration to these things whatever and simply let them go through, or else we have to make some attempt to remove the consideration of these matters from this house.

**Mr. Speaker:** I think the hon. member is speaking now about the procedure on all divorce bills generally that are brought to this house. That is not in order at this time.

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Speaker, I shall return to the consideration of the bill itself and I shall only detain the house a moment. There is one thing about it that I did want to say, which I could have said equally about four of the other five bills of which we have the evidence, namely, that the investigators in this particular case, as in three of the other cases, or four out of the five, lied in regard to themselves and to what they were doing in order to obtain the evidence. Sir, I am not a lawyer. Perhaps lawyers are accustomed to this sort of thing in connection with the work they are doing, and see more of this sort of thing than I do, but to me it is a shocking thing.

In this particular case, sir, the investigator who interrupted these people said this, and I quote from the evidence:

I told him we were the housemen. I told him we had a complaint about room 101.

When I was speaking about a bill the other night I had the opportunity to say something of the same sort of thing. I might repeat that as a layman I would not be prepared to believe a man on his oath whom I could not believe when he did not take an oath. And yet I want to point out that it is only on the oath of the investigator in this particular case that the divorce will be granted, the oath of a man who lied when he was not under oath. However, as I said at the beginning, sir, since I have seen the evidence, since this case was uncontested, and since, if I can believe the investigator, which I would be loath to do, adultery was proven by the evidence, I have no intention of opposing the bill.

Motion agreed to and bill read the second time.

MARY MILDRED ANTOINETTE CASTONGUAY  
SMITHSON

**Mr. H. W. Winkler (Lisgar)** moved the second reading of Bill No. 19, for the relief of Mary Mildred Antoinette Castonguay Smithson.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, when I was on my feet a few moments ago, I referred to the fact that there were only a half dozen cases in connection with which the evidence was before us. I referred of course to the evidence actually being distributed. Since that time, indeed within the last two or three minutes, while my colleague from Saskatoon was speaking on the last bill, someone very kindly delivered to me copies of the evidence in connection with twenty more of these divorces.