

*Divorce*

5; not in directory, unknown, respondents, 19, correspondents, 45; moved, not at that address, respondents, 16, correspondents, 18; sent to place of work and unknown, respondents, 1, correspondents, 2. That is a total of 38 respondents and 70 correspondents. Six correspondents and respondents appeared as witnesses and therefore were not involved in our inquiry. That accounts for the 114 cases. This is the type of job that a proctor would do.

In this regard, Mr. Speaker, we must give credit where credit is due. The Senate committee, itself, has made much more specific rules in relation to the sending of notice to the respondent and correspondent. We still feel, however, that we are dependant upon the province of Quebec to license the bailiffs who are handling these cases. We recall the Eccles case which the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fulton) has had under advisement for two years and about which he has failed to do anything. In this particular case the respondent had never appeared at the address shown on the form. According to the janitor who had been at that place for a number of years, there had never been anybody of that name at that particular address. I believe this is the sort of thing about which a proctor could do something; this is a field in which the proctor would serve a very valuable purpose.

If we are going to continue with the Senate divorce mill, then we are going to have to provide the same protections that a court affords the public. I believe the amount of money that is collected from these divorce petitions would warrant the maintenance of this officer who would be appointed by the governor in council. He would be paid a sufficient amount to make it unlikely that he would be involved in any of the shenanigans that currently take place, not only the Senate divorce mill but the divorce mills throughout Canada.

The second part of this bill relates to the taxation of costs. We know, and it has been widely established, that the price of a parliamentary divorce will run anywhere from \$1,000 to \$20,000. We feel that the proctor should have a right to decide the amount that can be charged for the various services needed at the various stages of the divorce proceedings. He would have the right, for instance, to limit the amount paid to investigators, to legal counsel and to others involved in the case. For this reason, we believe that the proctor should have some powers in the taxation field.

There is another point which I should like to make in connection with the appointment of a proctor. This term may be new to most Canadians, but I am quite sure that in the very near future there will be a public

proctor attached to the parliamentary divorce petition section and that this will prove to be of advantage to all concerned. I suggest that we should ask something further of the proctor, and this will apply only if we see fit to give the Senate jurisdiction over parliamentary divorce and the power to grant a decree absolute. If this procedure were established, then in my opinion the proctor should have an obligation to report to the House of Commons through the Speaker any changes that he believes would be in the interests of the public. This divorce procedure has changed very little over the years. It is quite true that the Senate has established standing orders for the operation of the divorce committee. They have set up a red book which outlines the requirements of parliamentary divorce procedure. I feel the proctor should have an obligation to report to the house through the Speaker, when the estimates for legislation are considered, those changes that he feels should be made with regard to taxation and the method of processing the bills of this type.

I feel that the Queen's proctor would serve a very valuable purpose. He would allow those of us who are concerned about the abuses of our divorce procedure to free our minds of this worry. We would, in effect, be hiring him to act as our consciences in connection with divorce procedure.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, this seems to me to be the reverse of the coin which was exhibited during the course of the debate yesterday on the same subject matter. At that time we were seeking some alternative method of dealing with this very difficult problem which has been inflicted upon the parliament of Canada. I would take it that today this bill would indicate that parliament would have acquiesced in carrying the burden of these divorce cases. At this time, I would be reluctant to adopt that particular point of view. However, if we should have to accept this position for some time, then I want to examine this bill in the light of that situation.

It seems to me that when we look at proposed legislation we must search in detail to find what benefits we hope will accrue from it and look at what mischief it is intended to cure. I would assume that the intention of this legislation is to prevent the abuses of this procedure that we have seen in the past, the obvious abuses of the opportunity to come to parliament and obtain relief in the form of a divorce. There have been abuses, and I think that that fact has been established from time to time. In so far as the establishment of a parliamentary proctor is concerned, I think we have to go back a little farther than the hon. member did.