

Private Bills—Divorce

I have read little, I shall admit, of this evidence; but I have read enough to convince me that these investigators as a class are not people to whom I would care to lend money or whose word I would care to take in any particular case.

An hon. Member: Parasites.

Mr. Knight: "Parasites," my hon. friend has suggested. These are the boys who sneak around in the middle of the night and put match sticks against bedroom doors, who sneak around with bits of sticky tape, that sticky stuff—

An hon. Member: Scotch tape.

Mr. Knight: —and stick it on the doors.

Mr. Dickey: Jealousy will get you nowhere.

Mr. Knight: No one has proved to me in this case that that scotch tape was not removed and another piece put on in its place. I see no evidence to prove that. They say that the scotch tape was there at nine o'clock and that it was also there at twelve. So be it. They said they had looked once in a while to see if the scotch tape had been removed; but in so far as they were concerned, it was still there.

Mr. Stick: Was it put over the key hole?

Mr. Knight: I should like to draw to your attention the manner in which this investigator regarded the telling of the truth or the telling of a lie in this particular case. This is his method. He knocked at this door, as the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart has said, and he lied to start with. He said: Look, I was here two days ago staying in this room. I left my overcoat here. Can I come in and get it?

An hon. Member: It was a raincoat.

Mr. Knight: All right; it was his raincoat. That was a lie to start with, and it is a lie that is apparently condoned in this kind of thing, and is the regular method of doing business. I suggest that investigators who start out on premises of that sort are people whose word should not be taken in any court, I do not care whether it is a court of parliament or whether it is a special court in the matter.

I should like to say that there are peculiar things about this court. This is a peculiar, underhand way of getting a divorce through the back door. Personally I can never see the difference, as a question of conscience, between the setting up of a divorce court in a province and doing it honourably and in a manly fashion and the condoning of the granting of divorce by the House of Commons

by a back door method. As far as I am concerned, that is only splitting hairs and making too fine a distinction for me to appreciate it. May I say that I wholeheartedly respect the opinions of those who oppose divorce upon religious grounds or by reason of their conscience, or on both grounds. I believe that there are a number of the people on the government side who are most sincere in that regard. There is, however, one easy and obvious way by which they could prove that sincerity. When I see and hear some of these hon. gentlemen over there on the government side who object to divorce—and may I reiterate that I respect their views and opinions—croaking out of one side of their mouths "carried, carried" when one of these bills come up, and croaking out of the other side of their mouths "on division", then I begin to wonder about that concern. As far as I am concerned those two things are contradictory terms. I am not stating that the same man says "on division" who says "carried, carried." But I am saying that some of these people over there say "carried, carried" with the object of getting the bill through with the least amount of trouble, while some others are saying "on division". As the Minister of Public Works said the other day—and he said it quite sincerely; and I am quite sure that he does so—he votes against every one of these bills. But he has not the opportunity to vote against every one of these bills. All he does is to say, "on division, on division" while his friends croak, "carried, carried, carried."

Mr. Sinclair: It is a free country.

Mr. Knight: There are other things that I should like to say about this bill. As the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart has said, divorce in this country exists; divorce exists for the people of Quebec and for the people of Newfoundland, because they get divorces through this back door method. As I say, I cannot see the difference between having their divorces granted in a proper and regular way, whereby the children would be looked after and other things would be done, and condoning divorce and shouting "carried" or not opposing them.

I am going to say to my sincere friends—and may I say that I say that with no sarcasm and with all the good will in the world—including the Minister of Public Works, that if he wants to show his active and sincere opposition to divorce, he can gather around him five like-minded people on the other side of the house and they can hold up these divorce bills until the cows come home, and not another divorce bill will pass this house.