

(2.) The limitation of the Hours within which marriages may be solemnized, (from 8 a.m., to 4 p.m.), has been complained of, especially by persons who have emigrated from Scotland, where they were accustomed to the frequent celebration of marriages in the evening. Assuming that the guards against clandestine marriages contained in the Act operate effectively, it does not appear to me that there would be anything very objectionable in altogether expunging the provision relating to hours ; but as I have reason to know that there are decided differences of opinion on the point; and even that some would prefer a still further limitation of the hours ; I think that this matter also should be left to be brought into prominence by those who wish for a change.

11. I would, finally, take this opportunity of inviting special attention to the necessity for a new Registration Act, in place of the Ordinance of 1847, (Session 8, No. 9). Up to the year 1854 the Marriage Law of the Colony was contained in two Ordinances, viz., that just referred to, and the Marriage Ordinance, (Sess. 8, No. 7.) By the Act of 1854 the latter Ordinance was repealed, but the former was left untouched, except in so far as the provisions of the Marriage Act practically over-ride its provisions. The result is that part of the Registration Ordinance operates as law, and part does not. This state of things, anomalous in itself, and not unlikely, if continued, to lead to confusion and perplexity, evidently calls for such a remedy as would be afforded by a Registration Act which, (in addition to the introduction of any improvements that may be judged advisable in the system of Registration of Births and Deaths,) would fulfil the necessary condition of being in harmony with the Marriage Act in all its parts.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
your obedient humble servant,

JOHN B. BENNETT,  
Registrar-General.

PS.—I shall have the honor of addressing to you a separate communication on the second subject mentioned in your letter,—viz. : irregularities in proceedings under the Marriage Act.

J. B. B.

To the Honourable  
the Colonial Secretary.