**STOCK MEDICINES BILL 1939**

**Legislative Council, 24 October 1939, pages 1423-4**

Second reading

**The Hon. A. P. BLESING (Northern— Minister of Agriculture)—**This Bill is similar to legislation in force in Vic­toria and Queensland and has for its object the protection of stockowners who purchase stock medicines. Representations have from time to time been made to the Govern­ment that some stock medicines are being sold to stockowners which are valueless and that legislative action should be taken to control the sale of these commodities so that false or extravagant claims as to the efficacy of stock medicines should not be permitted. It is obvious that it is impossible for most pur­chasers of stock medicines to test the claims made for these commodities before administer­ing them to their stock, and the possibilities of stockowners suffering damage from the use of remedies which do not achieve the purposes claimed by the vendors are equally obvious. Parliament has passed a number of Acts to protect purchasers under similar circumstances. Instances of such Acts are the Stock Licks Act, the Fertilisers Act, the Pest Destroyers Act, and the Agricultural Seeds Act. In all these cases the justification for the legislation is that the purchaser cannot in the normal case prove the truth of the claims made in respect of the substance sold except at the risk of loss if his faith is not justified. If control is necessary in the instances mentioned similar control is clearly desirable in the ease of stock medicines. It is proposed by the Bill that all stock medicines must be registered but that before a stock medicine may be registered it is to be referred to an expert board to be set up under the Bill. The board will examine the stock medicine and the statement of the applicant as to the purposes for which the stock medicine may be used. If the board is of opinion that the claims made in respect of the stock medicine cannot be substantiated, registration will be refused. The effect will be that a stock medicine will not be registered and thus be offered for sale unless it is likely to be efficacious to cure or alleviate the conditions it is represented as capable of doing.

The clauses of the Bill provide as follows:— “Stock medicine” is defined by clause 3 to mean any substance or biological product which is intended to be administered to any stock for the purpose of preventing, alleviating, or curing any disease, or injury to stock; or improving the condition or increasing the working capacity of stock. Clause 4 provides that the Bill is not to apply to any stock medicine dispensed by a veterinary surgeon or compounded for any particular stock by any pharmaceutical chemist. In addition power is given to the Governor to declare that the Bill is not to apply to any stock medicine either generally or in any specified circumstances or quantities or part of the State. Clause 5 provides for the appointment of a Stock Medicines Board which is to consist of the Chief Inspector of Stock, the Government Analyst, and a bacteriologist appointed on the nomination of the Minister. Its function will be to consider applications for registration of stock medicines. Clause 7 requires every wholesale dealer in any stock medicine to apply for registration of that stock medicine. The application for registration must state the name of the stock medicine, the place of manufacture, and the prescription or composition of the stock medicine. In addition there must be supplied the directions for the use of the medicine and a statement of the diseases it is claimed to cure or alleviate. A fee of 5s. must accompany the application. Clause 8 provides that information supplied as to the prescription or composition of a stock medicine is to be treated as confidential by the department. The application for registration is, under clause 9, to be referred to the board, and it is only upon the recommendation of the board that the stock medicine is to be registered. Clause 10 provides for the method of registration of the stock medicine. Registration will continue in force until June 30 next after the registration. Clause 11 provides that every package of registered medicine is to bear the words “Registered under the Stock Medicines Act, 1939,” and that no package is to contain any other reference to the Act or any statement suggesting that it has been recommended or approved by the Government or by the board.

Clause 12 provides that six months after the commencement of the Bill it will be an offence to sell any unregistered stock medicine, or to sell under the name of any registered stock medicine any medicine which does not conform with the registered prescription. In addition it will be an offence to sell any registered stock medicine in respect of which any claim as to its efficacy is made other than those in respect of which it has been registered. Clause 13 provides for the cancellation of the registration of the stock medicine if the medicine does not conform with the registered prescription or if any claim is made as to its efficacy other than according to the registered particulars. Clause 14 requires every dealer to give notice to the chief inspector of his name and place of business. The purpose of this provision is to enable the department to have a record of dealers so that it will be able to police the provisions of the Act. The remaining clauses deal with matters such as powers of inspectors and the making of regulations, which do not require special comment. It will be seen that the general scheme of the Bill is as follows:—

If a person wishes to sell any stock medicine he must disclose its contents and submit the purposes for which it is claimed the medicine has efficacy. If the board is of opinion that the claims made by the wholesale dealer are capable of being substantiated the stock medicine can then be registered. It follows then that purchasers of registered stock medicines can have some assurance that they are purchasing a commodity that will reasonably meet their requirements. A registered stock medicine must be sold to conform with the registered particulars, and if the medicine fails to comply with these particulars the registration may be cancelled. Similar schemes in other States have worked satisfactorily and to the benefit of stockowners. This Bill should give the same benefits to stockowners in South Australia. I move the second read­ing.

The Hon. E. W. CASTINE secured the adjournment of the debate.