

The Bill provides that in the event of judgment being obtained in the old country, the trustees will not be compelled to come to this country to enforce that judgment. I think members admit the desirability of our being able to participate in these loans from those trustees, and the only condition under which the Home Government will consent to cur accomplishing that object is that set forth in Clause 3, which says:

For the purpose of this section "final judgment, decree, rule, or order" means, in case of appeal, the final judgment, decree, rule, or order of the ultimate Court hearing the appeal.

Without in any way limiting the foregoing provisions of this section, it is hereby declared that, in the case of such Western Australian Government securities as are colonial stock to which the Imperial Act intituled "The Colonial Stock Act, 1877," applies, the Colonial Treasurer shall, without further appropriation than this Act, forthwith pay in London whatever sums may from time to time be required in order to enable the registrar of such stock to forthwith comply with any judgment, decree, rule, or order with which, under section twenty of the Imperial Act aforesaid, the registrar is required to comply.

I think the provisions of the Bill commend themselves to the judgment of members, in view of the benefits anticipated to arise therefrom.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:44 o'clock until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 7th November, 1900.

Payment of Members Bill, second reading, in Committee, third reading—Perth Electric Tramways Lighting and Power Bill (private), second reading (moved), adjourned—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAYMENT OF MEMBERS BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Rt. Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time. It is a very short Bill, and hon. members will have no difficulty in understanding its intention. Its object is to provide an honorarium for members of Parliament. This matter of the payment of members, or the payment of an honorarium to members of Parliament, has been a vexed question in the colony if it has not been in every other colony in Australasia. It was not carried into effect at once or readily elsewhere, but it has been the result of development of political ideas. In every colony of Australasia, except this one, payment of an honorarium to members of Parliament is in force; and, as I have said, this is the only colony at the present time that does not pay its members. Hon. members know very well my views in regard to this matter. I should have been glad if this colony could have managed to go along, for some years at any rate, without members receiving any honorarium for their services. I think the fact that people in the colony are willing to come forward for election, and give their services to the State without any payment, is one that should receive our approbation; and I may say that up to the present time in this colony there has been, speaking generally, no dearth or lack of candidates for seats in the Legislature whenever seats became vacant. I think it is a higher and more dignified political status for a man to occupy in his country when he is elected by his fellow colonists, by the people amongst whom he lives, and is willing to serve those people and the people of the colony generally without any remuneration; but

in this matter the world no doubt has progressed, and we too have progressed. There were many services in those ancient days which were honorary, and performed by distinguished citizens without fee or reward; duties which were reserved for those more influential and learned. Many things were done in olden times which are now done by persons for reward, and by persons who are less learned than the persons I refer to. It has become the fashion in this colony, and throughout Australasia, not perhaps to such a large extent in the mother country, for every man, whatever may be his qualifications or learning, to think he is fitted to be a member of Parliament, a law-maker at any rate. It has also become the fashion amongst a large number of people to think that those who make the laws in the Parliament of the country should be paid. While I in the abstract am opposed to payment of members, I thoroughly recognise, in a colony like this, where people are not overburdened with wealth, where we are all working people, having our own livelihood to make, there are practical difficulties in the way. Still we must confess, whenever there is a vacancy in the Legislature, there are plenty of people most anxious to secure the approbation of their fellow colonists by being elected to this particular office, that is to become a member of Parliament.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** There were 18 unopposed seats at the last general election.

**THE PREMIER:** I do not believe that was because there were not many people willing to take the seats, but perhaps because those who held the seats had a good hold on them, and there was not much chance of success for anyone else.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** That might have been the case.

**THE PREMIER:** At any rate there are difficulties in the way of election in this colony which are not found perhaps anywhere else in Australia, owing to the immense area of the country, for anyone to get before the constituents in the northern part of the colony takes up so much time: even where we have railway communication, it is a tax on people to go far. That argument is in favour of payment of members, and I must confess

that local persons living in districts are not well enough off to come away from their homes to attend to their duties as members of Parliament, and neglect their own business without any payment. I am of opinion, however, as I said the other evening, that the electors of the colony are in favour of members being paid, and we know very well that this House is in favour of hon. members being paid. I think in this House, taken altogether, a majority are in favour of payment: a vote was taken the other day which clearly decides that question, and the result of that expression of opinion is that the Bill before hon. members is now submitted for the second reading. I regret myself that this question has had to be dealt with this session. I think it would have been better had we postponed it till after the general election. However, the Bill as it is placed on the table represents generally, I think, the views of a majority who sit on the Government side here. I may inform hon. members that it is a compromise of members sitting on the Government side. I do not mean to say that everyone on the Government side is in favour of the Bill as it is, but the Bill represents the views of the majority—it has been a compromise—of those who support the Government in the House. To those who look at the Bill closely, without any feeling of prejudice, it will be found a fair and reasonable proposal, and I will give some of the reasons why I think so. First of all I will deal with the honorarium which it is proposed to give to members of the Legislative Council. I am of opinion that at the present time, at any rate, members in the Legislative Council, representing as they do a particular class of the community, and a limited class too, I mean not so large a body of people as we represent, the franchise for the Legislative Council being restricted to the £25 householder and persons of that description, as the members of the Legislative Council are the guardians of property, the guardians of vested interests—practically they represent the persons who have property and who are householders down to the £25 limit and the £10 leaseholder from the Crown—the members of the Legislative Council should not require any honorarium at all. I think, too, that their position as repre-

sentatives of the householders and propertied class in the colony would be stronger and of greater weight in the counsels of the State if they were not paid. We do not know what their wishes are in regard to this matter, because the question has never been discussed in the Legislative Council. We know they passed a resolution generally affirming that they were in favour of payment of members, but it is impossible for any of us, unless we have got some private information which I have not got as to the views generally of members of the Legislative Council, to know how the members of the Legislative Council view this matter in detail. The Council passed a resolution that payment of members was desirable, and I may say in regard to that resolution, I think I should call it irregular and unconstitutional. That is in my opinion. It seems to me that unless it was intended as an abstract resolution—even then I question whether we can find on the records in many places a Legislative Council, which is not intrusted with the introduction of measures dealing with the finances of the colony, no power in fact to introduce any measure appropriating part of the revenue of the country—I think it unconstitutional for them to tell us, the people's House, those intrusted especially with the guarding and spending of the public funds, what to do with the money. I think it is for us to say how we should spend the public funds, how we are to suggest the appropriations of public funds; and then when we have done that, and when we have sent our views to the Legislative Council, under the Constitution they have the right at any time, in regard to a Bill appropriating moneys, to send it back to us with a suggestion. That is the power under the Constitution—it is an innovation in recent years for the Legislative Council to have that right—but no doubt that is the proper time for the Legislative Council to interfere with regard to financial matters. Until that happens, I give it as my humble opinion, not with any great authority, that it is unconstitutional for the Legislative Council to address the House in regard to the appropriation of public money. It seems, too, and that is the reason why I speak in this way—not with a view of finding

fault, that is farthest from my intention—that hon. members in another place who move these resolutions, and also those who control the House, should consider this matter, and see whether they are acting altogether in accord with the spirit of the Constitution in moving resolutions with regard to finance. Because it comes to this, that while the Legislative Council cannot originate any expenditure, they do the next thing to it: they bring pressure to bear on us, in some cases probably amounting almost to very strong pressure, in regard to matters of great public interest, in which we are very much interested ourselves, and before these matters come under their notice in the way the Constitution intends, in my humble opinion, that they should come under the notice of the House. This is only by the way. I have stated already that I think the Legislative Council should not ask—we have no evidence that they have asked for it themselves in any general way applicable to all members in the shape of a resolution—for an honorarium. We are willing to consider this matter in the light of the precedents established in other parts of the world, especially in other parts of Australia. I do not desire, because I have an opinion on this matter which may not be acceptable to others, to be obstinate or press my idea unduly: I am willing to be guided by the precedents elsewhere rather than follow my opinions in a matter of this sort. Take the other colonies of Australia, and in them I think we find our best guide, the guide I think we should have in this matter. If we take the other colonies as a guide, we find that in New South Wales only members of the Lower House, the Assembly as we are, receive an honorarium of £300. Members of the Upper House, who are nominated, receive nothing: they never have received any honorarium whatever. In Queensland it is the same: the Upper House is nominated, and the members of the Lower House, the Legislative Assembly, receive £300, and members of the Upper House never have received anything. In Victoria the members of the Legislative Assembly receive £300, and the members of the Legislative Council, although elected, have never received any payment. In South Australia, which is

the only other colony on the continent of Australia, both the members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly receive £200, and I may say the members of the Legislative Assembly received payment long before the members of the Legislative Council, who are elected, did; but at the present time and for some time past, not for long, the members of both Houses have received an honorarium of £200. In Tasmania, at present both Houses are elected, like ours, and the members receive £100 a year each. In New Zealand, where the members of the Legislative Council are nominated, those members receive £150 a year, and the members of the Legislative Assembly receive £240 a year. I believe I saw in a newspaper the other day that a motion had been moved, I do not know whether it has become law yet, to raise the honorarium of members of the Legislative Assembly by £40; if that be so, very soon the amount for the members of the New Zealand Legislative Assembly will be £280 a year. I mention these facts to show that, although the Government introduce a Bill making a difference between the honorarium of members of the Legislative Assembly and members of the Legislative Council, there is nothing new in such a provision, and it cannot be said—I disclaim it absolutely as not present in my mind, where it never has been—that there is any desire on the part of myself or of my supporters, or as far as I know of anyone in this House, to treat members of the Legislative Council differently from members of the Legislative Assembly, except on the ground of what is best and what is right, giving due attention to the precedents which have been established in the other colonies. I think everyone will say at once that the duties of a member of the Legislative Council are not so arduous and not so constant as those of members of this House. Hon. members of another place do not sit nearly so long as a rule—I think about half the time occupied by members here; and all the financial affairs and all the troublesome matters connected with the government of the colony are debated here. The powers we have with regard to the finances are far more extensive than those of the Legislative Council. I think

I am right in saying their duties are not nearly so arduous—that is one reason; and their sittings are not nearly so long nor their powers so extensive in regard to money matters, although their powers are, in other matters, equal to ours. Moreover, the expenses in connection with electioneering and the obtaining of seats are, as a rule, much greater and the work of electioneering much more troublesome to members of this House than to those of another place. We have to appeal to the large masses of the people; whereas they are elected by a limited section, and have a tenure of office twice as long as ours. They have not the sword of Damocles hanging over their heads every day of their lives, in the shape of a dissolution. As soon as they are elected, they are there for six years, absolutely secure, and no power in the world, unless they themselves agree to it, is able to disturb them. They are there safe and sound for six years. Then they have honours thrust upon them. It has been said, "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." That is the case with the Legislative Council: they have the honour of being entitled to the designation "honourable"—I will not say entitled—by the fact that some few people have thought fit to elect them. In some cases the electors are very few indeed: I believe there are instances where this title has been conferred by twenty voters. All these things go to make the position of a member of the Legislative Council much less onerous and arduous than that of a member of the Assembly. Looking at Cape Colony as an example to which we may refer for guidance, I find members of their Assembly get only £1 per day for three months, and those who live out of Cape Town get 15s. more than those living in the city. It would appear that a townsman would get £100 a year, and a member in the country £160. In Natal there is no payment of members, but a travelling allowance to those who live in the country. However, our best guide is Australia, and I find that the highest amount paid as an honorarium to members of a Legislative Assembly in Australia is £300 a year, and the lowest, that of Tasmania, £100. The £300 rate prevails in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria;

so that we have chosen the mean between £300 and £100, and that plan has also the other advantage of being the same rate as is paid by our nearest neighbour, South Australia. I have heard incidentally that some members of the Legislative Council seem to think the honorarium to members of both Houses should be the same. There is no reason why hon. members should not have that opinion if they choose; but we have had no public expression of opinion in regard to it. We are, officially, absolutely in the dark in regard to this measure. I am not in the dark in regard to the views of members on this (Government) side of the House; but officially, in regard to other hon. members of this House and to members of the Legislative Council, I am absolutely in the dark as to what view they will take of the Bill. I may say, however, that if anyone had told me a year or two ago that the Legislative Council of this colony would be anxious for payment of members, I should not have been inclined to think that person was correctly diagnosing the minds of members of the Council. I should have thought we should have passed the Bill through this House several times, and that it would have been rejected each time by the Legislative Council. I should have thought we should have had great trouble with the Council before they would have agreed to the Bill. That has been the case, I believe, in nearly all the Australian colonies. The Legislative Assembly have been anxious, and the Legislative Council have not been anxious, for payment of members. Therefore I should have expected that the conservative body, who have with so much care been erected in our Constitution in order to protect property, would not have been very eager that we in this House should be paid; and I certainly did expect we should have some difficulty in inducing them to agree to our being paid at all. I absolutely disclaim any intention of saying one word or of doing anything which would be in the slightest degree objectionable to hon. members in another place. If we pass this Bill and send it up to them for their consideration, they will no doubt either pass it or will do what they like with it under the powers they possess; and if they do not agree to the amount of the honorarium,

I have no doubt they will take an early opportunity of letting us know, in the ordinary way, what are their views. And for myself, and I believe for everyone else, I may say that any representations from that House, especially in regard to a matter vitally affecting themselves, will receive that respect and consideration to which they are entitled. I think it would be lamentable if any feeling whatever were introduced into this House or another place in regard to a matter of this sort. No feeling whatever should enter into this discussion, and as far as I can see there is no room for it. No doubt we are engaged upon an important and I think a rather delicate business. There is one thing on which I feel sure everyone will agree with me, that if we are engaged in an important and very delicate business, the utmost good taste should be observed by every speaker. We must remember that we have our rights and privileges which we intend now, and always I hope, to exercise; but we must also remember that the other Chamber also have their rights and privileges; and so long as they exercise them in accordance with the Constitution, we have no right whatever to complain. They have just as much right to complain of our carrying out our constitutional duties in the way we think best, as we have to complain of their so doing. If either House overstep the limit of the Constitution, the other House have a perfect right to call attention to the breach; and I think that will be done. If anything I ever say in this House overstep in any way the limits of the constitutional privileges of those in another place, I hope my attention will be called to it; and *vice versa*. When this Bill does reach another place, I can only say, if any representation be made to us, we will consider it; and I will go further, and say we shall be very glad indeed if it be possible for us to agree with that representation. I hope, however, the proposals contained in this Bill, which I think are reasonable and are based upon precedent, will meet with acceptance. These proposals, in fact, go further than the legislation of the three greatest colonies of Australia — Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. It may be said, of course, that there are Legislative Councils which are nominee houses. The Victorian House is, however, elected.

But the mere fact of his being nominated does not make a man rich. I believe there are a great many poor men acting as legislative councillors in Queensland and New South Wales. It could not be otherwise. Have we always had conservative Ministries in power? No. We have had men in power of all shades of political opinion; and we may depend upon it they have not always chosen rich men for the Council. Go to New Zealand: there again we have a difference between the two Houses; and we know very well a great many in that Legislative Council are men who have been engaged in manual labour. Did we not read about a man who, when he received his commission as a member of the Council, was rivetting a boiler, and who asked the messenger from the Premier to put the commission down the manhole of the boiler so that he might receive it?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I hope he was doing the work well.

THE PREMIER: My point is, the members of the Upper Houses are not all rich men; they are drawn from the working classes of those colonies, just like those elected to the Lower House—perhaps not to the same extent, but to an extent sufficient for my argument; and I therefore hope that what has been the custom in those three colonies—that is, not to pay anything to members of the Upper House—will be remembered when we desire to pay to such hon. members an honorarium less in amount than that to be paid to members of the Legislative Assembly; I hope it will be remembered that we have no desire in any way to insult members of the Legislative Council. I should like to say a word about Clause 2, and the time from which the payment of this honorarium is to date. I may say this also is the result of discussion, and is in itself what is considered by us a reasonable compromise. Hon. members know that I was opposed to this matter being dealt with during the present session. I thought the members of the next Legislative Assembly might deal with it after an expression of opinion from the electors; and I even went so far as to say we should have a referendum of the electors on the question. That was not the opinion of the majority of the members of the House; and I think as we are to pass the Bill this session for the payment

of this honorarium, we shall not be doing wrong by letting the members of this House draw their honorarium from the beginning of the present session. If there be any small benefit to be derived from this Bill, I shall be very sorry indeed to deprive hon. members of this House of that benefit, because they have served this country, many of them, for very many years, at great expense and loss to themselves as far as money is concerned; and if this honorarium is to be paid, I say by all means let those now members of this Chamber, many of whom have grown almost grey in the service of this colony, enjoy any little advantage which may accrue. I shall have the support of almost everyone in this House when I say I do not think it is desirable, though it may happen, that a Bill of this kind should occasion party conflict, either among ourselves or between this Chamber and another place. By all means let us avoid controversy with regard to this Bill; at any rate, any heated controversy. By all means let us try to deal with this matter, as it affects the Legislative Council, without any feeling whatever, save a desire to do what is best and right, having regard to the condition of the colony and to the precedents established in the other colonies of Australia. I think this is an occasion on which we can reason these matters out very calmly, and I think this is the proper time for their solution. It is a time when we should try to be unanimous rather than divided. In conclusion, before I move the second reading, I should like to say I know the members on this (Government) side of the House will consider I have fulfilled my obligation in regard to this Bill. I hope hon. members will think, too, that I have done my best to fulfil the promise I made the House the other evening, and that my utterances will meet with their approval. I beg to move the second reading.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): As the Premier says, the question is one of considerable importance to the country, and even to Parliament. But the step we are now taking is one which, I think, has the approval of the colony at large. As far as the Bill itself is concerned, I must confess to a considerable amount of disappointment;

because I do not think it bears on its face that sincerity of purpose which I expect from the Government on a question of this character. It seems to me that if this Bill is sent to another place in its present form, it can have only one fate, and that is rejection.

MR. MONGER: A very good fate too.

THE PREMIER: I do not think we should anticipate that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hon. members who desire to see this Bill rejected on a question of this sort are, in my opinion, taking the very best means of securing that end. Whether this be so or not, we have to discuss the question as it is now before us. Some members in another place may say that the Bill partakes of the nature of insult, because it proposes to pay or to give an honorarium of only half the amount that is paid to members of this House. I want to speak on this subject from a standpoint that the Premier has not yet taken, but which to me is the whole of the question: I want to say, right out, that I do not think £200 a year, or £300 a year, or £500 a year an adequate return for the labour which hon. members give in the service of their country in this House.

THE PREMIER: We cannot afford it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I do not think any House of Parliament pays the value of the services which members render.

MR. MONGER: How much do you want?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I do not think that in any of the colonies or in any part of the world where payment of members is made to representatives, it is given or intended to represent a payment for the work done. I am free to say there are hon. members whose services have been and are worth to this country far more than any payment that may be or can be made in a form of this character; and I think payment of members is not a question of wages. I resent the idea completely, that it is a return for work done; and I say it is not intended for that purpose in any Parliament, if I understand the question aright. The one thing it is intended to do is to give to the people of the country the ability to select from amongst themselves the person or

persons they desire to represent them in Parliament. It is, in other words, a means of keeping the door of the Legislative Chambers open to every man who has a right to vote for a member. It is a question of a great principle, and is not a question of payment for work done. I say it is a question of a great principle, which says that no man shall be excluded from the legislative halls simply because he happens to be poor. Parliaments have endeavoured to stand by this principle to the extent of giving what they, in their wisdom, have deemed a sufficient amount to allow almost any ordinary man to be selected as a representative if the people so desire. Hon. members will not be prepared to say that £200 or £300 a year is sufficient to pay them, if money is the only question. If money were the only question, I would not give my services to this House for £200 a year or £1,000 a year; and other members can say the same thing.

THE PREMIER: You are too rich, perhaps.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I am not rich: that is not the point. There are other questions that bring us to this House and have brought us here in times past, and all these influences exist whether there is payment of members or there is not. If there were no other question, will hon. members say they would be able to fill this House simply from men to be selected by the people for £200 a year? It is not a question of salary or remuneration, or payment for work done. The principle I hold is that we want to open the door of this Chamber to every man in the community whom the people desire to send here to represent them. The question presents itself in this country now as to whether £200 a year is an adequate sum to open that door. I do not think it is. £200 a year is less than the wage of an average miner. I want to suggest to this House that as mining is our primary industry, it is a safe standard to go by; and I say many intelligent miners who rise above their fellows and perhaps become bosses of a shift, if they have energy and ability sufficient, will certainly receive over £200 a year in payment for their labour. For this large mass of the people in our colony we want to open the door by means of which they

may come into this House, if it is the desire of the people that they should do so; and we propose in this Bill to give only a sum of money that is less than a miner's wage. The principle which makes payment of members an important thing to me is entirely destroyed, if you make the amount so low that the mass of the people from whom we desire to select representatives cannot avail themselves of the opportunity.

**THE PREMIER** : How do they manage in Tasmania, then ?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** : Circumstances in Tasmania are different, no doubt. The next position that is a disappointment to me is that if the Government—and I understand this is not only a Government measure, but a measure that is the result of a caucus of Government supporters—if they grasp the position and look at it from the standpoint I take, then one of two things must take place in regard to the Legislative Council. Either the Council must have the same honorarium for its members that is proposed to be given to the members in this House, or else, to be consistent with the principle that has been suggested, the Bill should offer to that House no payment whatever. If that House is to be accepted as a property House, as a House representative of a party in the State, then it should be a sufficient answer that they have a wide enough selection from the people they represent to fill that House with representatives such as they desire. But I want to suggest that Parliament, after all, on all measures consists of two Houses of Legislature; and if we are to get such legislation on the statute book as the people desire, we must have representatives of all the people not only in this Chamber, but in another place.

**THE PREMIER** : They cannot all vote for members in another place, at any rate.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** : Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that the electors of the Legislative Assembly select men who will pass certain legislation, and that the representatives of the people send that legislation on to another place; then because the representatives there are elected from a different class of people, that legislation cannot pass through that House. Thus the will of this House and

of the people will be thwarted. What is intended by payment of members, as I understand it, is that the doors of that House, as well as of this Chamber, shall be thrown open to all the people in this colony; that, in other words, it is a representation of all the people, from representatives chosen by all the people, in the interests of all the people. That is the idea which underlies the principle of payment of members. Take New South Wales, for instance: it is true the Legislative Assembly there is paid £300 a year; but the Legislative Council there does not represent the people in any way, as it is a nominated House. That Council, truly, is selected by the Government from time to time; and so far it may be, as the Premier has suggested, that the Government select from amongst the labouring classes in some cases, as in the instance he mentioned in regard to New Zealand. But after all, a nominated House is not the representative House of the people, and therefore has no claim for payment. In New Zealand the same principle holds: the Legislative Assembly is paid £240 a year, but the Legislative Council was in the first instance nominated for life, and is now nominated for a term of seven years. Men who go to the nominated House have no election expenses: they are there at the will of the Ministry of the day, and that House is simply filled with persons chosen at the will of the various Ministries that may be ruling the country as time goes on. In Queensland we have the same thing: £300 a year for members of the Legislative Assembly, and the Council nominated for life. In Victoria, as hon. members know, the proposal was to pay both Houses; but during two or three sessions the Legislative Council resisted the passing of the Bill for payment of members, and resisted it effectively, until when the feeling amongst electors in the country became strongly manifested, the members of the Upper House then passed a Bill providing payment for members of the Legislative Assembly, and rejected payment for the Council. I want to call attention to the fact that the Legislative Council of Victoria is exclusively a property House.

**THE PREMIER** : The same qualification as ours, exactly.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** : The right hon. gentleman is not quite correct.



**THE PREMIER:** The qualification for electors of that House is the same as here.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** When payment of members was passed in Victoria, the qualification of electors for the Upper House was a £25 franchise, and now it is £10. But there is this tremendous difference, that when a man is elected to the Legislative Council there he must be a large property owner, to the extent of £10,000. It is no use to say he has £10,000 in goods, or has so many head of cattle: he must have £10,000 in freehold property, or he cannot have the necessary qualification. The selection, so far from being popular, although on a £10 franchise, is a selection absolutely of propertied men; for if a man has £10,000 worth of real property and he sells it for £2,000 and shows the receipt, he is disqualified by ceasing to be possessed of freehold property amounting in value to £10,000. It would be grossly inconsistent to give to a House elected on such a basis as that, payment of members; and the members of that House saw the inconsistency, and rejected payment for their House when it was proposed to them.

**THE PREMIER:** It is a very small qualification: property to the value of £50 a year, I think.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The qualification must be £10,000 worth of freehold property, over and above all encumbrances.

**MR. MONGER:** And the man places his own value on it.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** In South Australia both Houses are uniform in payment; and if the Premier desires to follow precedent, the first time we meet with payment of members on anything like an equal elective basis, we find both Houses are paid the same amount. The Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly in South Australia receive £200 a year for their members. Almost any man can be elected to the Legislative Assembly there, as almost any man can be elected to this House; and the fight in South Australia at present is as to extension of the franchise even to lodgers, which carries the suffrage as far as it is in Great Britain. In Tasmania both Houses are elected, and the honorarium is uniform there. The question of interest to

me is: will the sum proposed to be paid here carry out the principle which underlies payment of members? It is not a question of wages, as I have said: it is not a question as to whether the member is to be paid for so much work done; but the question is whether the door of the Legislature shall be opened for every man to enter this House, if the electors so desire. I say the amount of £200 a year is not sufficient. The amount paid in Victoria was £300 a year in the first instance, and when troublous times came and it was necessary to retrench the salaries of civil servants, the honorarium paid to members was reduced to £240 a year. When times got better, they brought back the amount to £300 a year. In regard to the mass of the people for whom we desire to open the door, the mass of our workers, the miners, mining being essentially the main industry in this colony, the £200 a year proposed in this Bill will practically close the door of this House. £240 might bring it within the range of the greater portion of the miners, and I therefore am sorry indeed to find that the amount proposed in this Bill is only £200 a year. I think that £20 a month is practically the wages which a large number of intelligent miners are earning, and in the case of many men whom it may be desirable to bring into this House, the door is closed to them at £200 a year.

**MR. HARPER:** They have to work for it, though.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** But this is not a question of work. I resent the idea that the money is to be paid for work done, because no sum paid in any Parliament covers the value of the work done. The principle that underlies payment of members, which is universally supported, throws the door open to every man and woman in the community, and it says to them, "Payment of members opens the door to every man who has ability to come into this House and represent his fellows." My desire is that the door shall not be closed against any man of ability whom his fellows desire to send here as a representative. Payment of members is a democratic idea, and it is not a question of remuneration; for if it were so, you would have to remunerate members according to their position, and professional men elected to this House would require to be remunerated according to

the sacrifice they made in giving their time here instead of devoting it to their profession. The idea is that we should open the door, so that every man who has a right to vote may have a right to sit here if the people of the colony desire him to do so. The Premier brings in a Bill which proposes to pay members of another place; and on what ground I would ask is it suggested that that House should receive only half the amount which is to be paid to members in this House? Is it that members of that House do not do so much work? I resent the idea of the money being paid for work done. Is it because that is a property House? Then if you are going to be consistent, you must pay it nothing at all, if it is to be a House representing property; and if it is intended to limit to a certain extent the choice to a £10 franchise, then there is an argument for refusing to pay that House at all. But behind that argument, or in opposition to the argument which I present, this legislation can only pass if we have both Houses in harmony with the general mind of the people. In order to get that I want the doors of both Houses opened so that any person who wishes to represent the people, or whom the people wish to represent them, should be able to enter, and that poverty should not close the door to them. It seems to me if the Government are in earnest with this Bill, if they desire to pass it, the best course to pursue will be for them to withdraw the Bill and bring in a measure that will not raise friction in another place.

**THE PREMIER:** What do we know about friction?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The Council can strike out the £100 and make both payments uniform.

**THE PREMIER:** You can do that now.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The evil which I complain of in regard to another place will be accentuated in this; the amount is valueless for that for which payment is given. If you make the amount such that the mass of the people from whom the selection is to be made—

**THE PREMIER:** At the Cape, members only get £100.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Perhaps the mass of the people there cannot earn more than £100 a year.

**MR. MOORHEAD:** What is the necessity for a second Chamber if you make it democratic?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** That is dealing with another question. The argument cannot be resisted. All I say is that in Tasmania the principle of payment of members does not exist for the purpose for which it was intended, for the principle is that a member should be paid sufficient to come into the House, and £100 to reimburse a member for expenses does not enable a person to come into the House. It may assist a man; it may go towards paying his expenses, or may pay his expenses to come into the House, but a sacrifice would have to be made by the man. If we are to do what the Commonwealth Bill, for instance, provides, an absolutely democratic Constitution, surely the greater includes the lesser, and we shall never be able to go back upon the Commonwealth Constitution in Australia again.

**MR. MORAN:** That does not follow in every other federation in the world.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** In the Commonwealth the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives are both to be paid a sum which is considered adequate to open the doors of both these Houses to anyone in the community.

**THE PREMIER:** Members have to go away from their home into a distant country.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** That is why the amount is made £400 a year. The idea is that a man from the most distant part of Australia shall be able to give up his work and his time at the people's request, and that he shall have such a sum to reimburse him as will enable him to go to the Commonwealth Parliament: that is why £400 a year is provided. If it were not so there would be no argument. We know that £400 a year would not remunerate Sir John Forrest to leave his home and go to Melbourne as a representative of this colony; £400 would not remunerate Sir Samuel Griffith, if he can be induced to enter the Commonwealth Parliament. I want to impress the point that is at present in my mind, and I want to impress not only why I believe in the principle, but why I am in favour of payment. I am not in favour of payment, that we should put so much into our pockets; I am in favour of payment

because it is the corollary to the principle of universal suffrage. It can only be the corollary to universal suffrage if we make the payment such that every member in the community can come into Parliament. I take the miner because he is the greatest representative of labour in this country, and £200 a year would not enable him to come into Parliament. The door is closed to him by the small amount. What the Government ought to do in this case is to withdraw the Bill, and bring in a measure providing for £240 a year for members of both Houses—£20 a month. That will open the door, and that is the true principle on which payment of members should be given, that every man in the community can become a representative of his fellows if he desires, and if they desire him; but £100 a year is absolutely worse than nothing—it does not open the door.

**THE PREMIER:** It costs a good deal of money. We are not made of money in this country.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** If we are to follow principles, we should not regard the amount of expense. The country pays the money, not the Government; the people pay, and the people demand payment of members. If they demand it they are quite willing to pay the amount.

**THE PREMIER:** We have not asked them yet.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** What will the cost amount to? It will amount to one halfpenny per week per head of the population of the colony, to give £240 a year to the members of both Houses; or 2s. 2d. a year—that is what it will cost.

**MR. MORAN:** That is what federation costs, Mr. Matheson says.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** If the people desire that the doors of both Houses of Parliament shall be opened—

**THE PREMIER:** Children cannot pay 2s. 2d., you know.

**MR. JAMES:** Lots of them can, on fireworks.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** A good many children pay more than that into Charles's sweeps. The cost to the community will be 2s. 2d. per head or a halfpenny a week for the whole of the people; but whatever the cost may be, the people have the right to do as they please with their own, and the voice of the people has been heard in connection with the

Federation Bill. On every platform whenever the question of payment of members was mentioned, it was cheered from one end of the country to the other; therefore we have reason to believe that the principle of payment is approved of by the people of the country. If it had not been for the referendum and the declaration which has been given in all parts of the country, I should have stood firm for the question being referred to the people at the next general election; but when the voice of the people has been taken, when the people have voted £400 a year knowing it involves payment out of their own pockets, if the people of the country desire to open the doors of both Houses to anyone whom they desire to send, and declare emphatically that poverty shall not exclude a man from the halls of Legislature, then the payment should be adequate, and £200 a year for the members of one House is not sufficient, although perhaps if £200 a year had been proposed for the members of both Houses I should not have objected. If it is proposed to close the door of another place by offering £100 a year, we are taking a step that should not be taken.

**THE PREMIER:** You are anticipating all these things.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** I say the principle for which we have contended in this colony is violated by this Bill, because the Bill does not represent the principle of payment of members: it represents an honorarium which means that there is no wider selection for the Legislative Council than there was before. There is a wider selection perhaps for the Legislative Assembly, but I say even that door is not opened sufficiently wide. The amount is not as much as a good miner can earn, and you cannot expect a man to give up his employment for less money.

**THE PREMIER:** It is £50 a month for four months.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Every hon. member knows that a member of Parliament works all the year if he attends to his duties faithfully. I do not know what other members do, but I have more work to do during the recess than I have to do when the House is sitting, and every hon. member knows that is so. If you call a man out of a mine to be a repre-

sentative of the people, you cannot send him here for four months of the year and send him back to his work for the other eight months. As a principle it will not work, and it overthrows the very principle for which we are contending in payment of members. I understand that there has been a compromise, that the Government have a majority and are going to carry the Bill. This only means that the great question of payment of members has still to be fought and settled. This Bill will not settle the question: it will have to be fought out on the hustings next year. I say there are only two logical positions: either look at the Legislative Council as a property House, with a limited representation, therefore it should not be paid at all; or pay the two Houses the same sum of money. Open the door that every man in the community can enter if the people so desire. I am very much disappointed in the Bill. It seems to me it only goes a certain distance, but the Government have got a majority, and they can carry it. I do not think it wise for us to pass a Bill which by its very nature will bring irritation to another place. I do not look with any degree of complacency on the idea that the Upper House has the power of making suggestions. Every occasion on which that power is used, I say, is to further strengthen the principle; therefore I am not at all in favour of sending a Bill to the Council with the full consciousness that it will come back. Is that legislation?

**THE PREMIER:** How do you know that? Have you talked to members or what?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Is that legislation with a degree of judgment and intelligence which the country expects from this House? Practically what the Premier says is this: "Here is our Bill: if you do not like it, alter it." That is the substance of the Premier's remarks to-night. He is going to send a Bill to the Legislative Council; he does not know what the members of the Council want; they may want £500 a year.

**MR. MORAN:** Give them a chance of valuing themselves.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** It is not a question of value. Members there have fought as well as those elsewhere for the

true principle of payment of members, and it is not a question of value, but the principle involved. We are a House supposed to control the finances of the country, and is it not in accordance with proper, straightforward, honest dealing for us to send a Bill with the full consciousness that the Bill must be altered to suit another place. We should not tell the Legislative Council, as the Premier has done: "If you do alter it we will accept the alteration." That is the position the Premier has taken up to-night. He is sending a money Bill to the Legislative Council, and he has said to that body: "Here is the Bill: I do not know if you like it or not; if you alter it we will accept the alteration." We are to accept dictation from another place in regard to a money Bill. What is the sense of taking such a course as that? Here is an intelligent House, controlling the finances of the colony; and if we are prepared to pay, why not pay straight out and be done with it? If we are not prepared to pay, strike out the £100 a year. If we understand the Council is the property House, the power is open to the people who elect the representatives to enter that House: that is the logical conclusion. I am disappointed with the Bill, and I urge upon the Government to withdraw the measure, and at least bring in a Bill that shall give equal payment to both Houses, and, if possible, that the payment shall be adequate—at least £20 a month. For the reasons I have given, I hope the Government will see their way clear to take the course I suggest.

**MR. KINGSMILL (Pillarra):** I must say the views of the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) occasioned a good deal of surprise to me. I am very glad this is not a party question. The Premier treated the subject with all the delicacy which the subject demands: I think his was an essentially reasonable speech. As far as I am concerned, I think the main object that the House requires has been attained, at this stage at all events. The object is to get the back of the question broken, to get the principle on the statute book of Western Australia; and for my part I say that if the payment proposed was only £50 a year, it would be well for the House to accept the Bill, always with the chance of

amending it later on. I take it, as one who has always been in favour of the principle of payment of members, that it is the duty of the House to accept the Bill. I may say I regret the Government have thought fit to make some difference in the payment to the members of the two branches of the Legislature. For my part I think the Legislative Council should not be paid at all, or should receive as much as we are to receive; but the Premier, although the member for Central Murchison blamed him for doing so, said that any alteration which might be suggested by the Legislative Council would meet with the consideration it deserves. In acting in this way the Premier was reasonable. After all, this is the first attempt at legislation on the subject, and I take it, although the Premier did not say so, this is merely a tentative measure more than anything else. The Bill will be sent to the Upper House with the object, as one member suggested, and perhaps he was right in some degree, of getting members of that House to put a value upon themselves. As far as I am concerned I intend to support the Bill, and I congratulate the Premier on the speech with which he moved the second reading of the measure.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): The logic of the member for Central Murchison was scarcely sound. I think the burden of his remarks was to the effect that we should open the door of both Houses to every man in the community. He thinks, good easy man, the way to do that is to give members of both Houses £200 or £240 a year. I suggest to the hon. member that that is a very infinitesimal part of the broadening principle. The question of opening the door of both Houses to all the community is entirely one of franchise, to begin with.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Franchise, *plus* payment of members.

MR. MORAN: I repeat, purely one of franchise. It may take £200 a year to make a poor man walk into it, but it is open to him all the same. If he wants a walkingstick to the value of £200 to be able to pass through, that is not the fault of the door: it is the fault of the man's leg or his purse. But the question of equalising these two Houses on a democratic basis is one of franchise.

Says the member for Central Murchison, "Everybody who is entitled to a vote is entitled to be elected." I go further, and the constitution of the Commonwealth goes a little further: I say everyone of a certain age and intelligence should be allowed to be elected, whether he can elect or not. The hon. member only goes so far as to say that he who possesses the franchise should also have the privilege of being nominated.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And I hold that every man should possess the franchise.

MR. MORAN: You omitted to state that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: One cannot state everything in one speech.

MR. MORAN: Now we have arrived at the hon. member's true position. He would have two Houses of Parliament in Western Australia elected on identical franchises; but where would that land us?

MR. JAMES: In the same position as the Commonwealth.

MR. MORAN: Certainly not. The hon. member does not know the Commonwealth Act. I deny that it is the same.

MR. JAMES: Your denial does not alter the fact.

MR. MORAN: But I will prove it. In the Commonwealth, the Upper House is elected by the whole of the people of each State, excepting Queensland, which of course is out of the argument. For Senatorial elections, Queensland is divided into three electorates. The so-called Upper House of the Commonwealth is elected by the whole of the people. Now I deny that to be true of the Lower House.

MR. JAMES: No one said it was.

MR. MORAN: Then what does the hon. member mean by "franchise"?

MR. JAMES: What do I mean by "cat"?

MR. MORAN: I can tell you what I mean by "puppy."

MR. JAMES: I was not asking that question.

MR. MORAN: I say the Commonwealth Upper Chamber is elected by the whole of the people, but in the House of Representatives we have the borough representative coming in, and the electorates are not equal; therefore in the Lower House one man's voice may be equal to that of ten men in the Upper House.

MR. JAMES: It is the same franchise.

MR. MORAN: The franchise should carry the same value and the same power.

MR. JAMES: You said it was not the same franchise.

MR. MORAN: I repeat it is not the same. Now what is the position of the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth)? He wishes to have the two Houses in Western Australia elected on identical franchises.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: But not by the same electorates.

MR. MORAN: Well, what does the hon. member mean? I am only striving to arrive at the truth. His speech is clouded with all sorts of suppositions. First, he said he did not mean an elector should be the only person qualified to stand for Parliament; and then he said everyone should be an elector.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I was speaking to an intelligent audience.

MR. MORAN: I am certain that is a compliment. The hon. member now says he would have the electorates different for the two Houses. Does he mean he would have an Upper House elected by the whole of the colony voting as one democratic electorate, or what does he mean? The hon. member means, if anything, that the time has arrived in Western Australia for the abolition of the Upper House.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I am against that now.

MR. MORAN: It is just as well to know that. He would have exactly the same franchise for the two Houses. Then the Upper House would be a replica of the Lower; and, to be logical, I admit he is correct—he wishes to put both Houses on the same basis. In other words, instead of having 54 Lower House members he would have 100, because the Upper House men would become Lower House members also; and he would pay each member £240 a year. In that view, probably I should be inclined to support him; and to give the Upper House an opportunity of suggesting to us that they shall be paid this amount, we should give them the chance of sending the Bill back with a suggestion—which, if they feel inclined, I hope they will do—of increasing their pay to the same amount as ours. Then we can say to them—I hope they

will see the position—"Now, in order to open your doors, you have received the same remuneration as we have; therefore give the same franchise as we give." They are not a representative House in the sense that we are. They could not be a property House, if they were. If they demand full payment the same as we are to receive, on democratic grounds, the position is clear. We shall say next session: "Very well; we will alter the Constitution, so that the franchise shall be exactly the same for both Houses." When that comes about, I am certain the people of the colony will say, "What is the good of having two Houses elected on exactly similar franchises? What is the use of two if we can have one House with 50 or 60 members?" In my opinion, that number is sufficient for Western Australia under federation. This is the position the hon. member is aiming at; and if that be so, I do not mind supporting him. But to say he does not believe in abolishing or altering the Upper House in any way brings me into a dilemma as to what the hon. member means at all. I am at a loss to understand him. He wants to pay Legislative Councillors £240 a year to open their door; but he said not a word about the franchise, which is the real way to the open door. If the door were opened by the franchise, it would mean putting democrats in the House; though some of the members are fairly democratic just now, in my opinion. However, logically considered, it looks as if those who said we should not pay the Upper House members are correct. Still, the Lower House consider that to give the Legislative Council an opportunity of expressing their opinions on this matter, the remuneration should be fixed at £100 instead of £200, so that hon. members in another place may have an opportunity of saying, if they will: "We recognise that we are a property House; we are supposed to be men of some means, and £100 a year is neither here nor there to us; we will send back the Bill to the Assembly with the £100 provision struck out, and we will make £240 the honorarium for each member of the Lower House." If they say, "We want to be on the same basis as you," then the position reveals itself: they wish to be democratic—to open the door to everybody. Then we have the best right to say, "Very well;

extend your franchise;" and the battle will then commence, just as it did in the other colonies. But there does not seem to be the slightest logic in talking about opening the door in paying members of the other House while the franchise remains so different. I trust the Upper House will not be so spiteful or revengeful as to throw the Bill out without reasons, because they do not get their £200. They recently passed a resolution affirming the principle of payment of members, and they cannot consistently deal harshly with this Bill. If they do, they are stultifying themselves by going back upon their resolution of this year. I suppose there will be in the Upper House a division; some discussion will take place, and the Bill will come back with a suggestion that members of the Council should receive £200 a year, or will go through that House unaltered, or those hon. members will say they do not want any pay, and will strike out the provision for £100 per annum. But I do not anticipate any trouble. I do not care much how it goes. If the Bill come back with the suggestion for £200 a year, it means, undoubtedly, the commencement of the abolition of the Upper House.

MR. JAMES (East Perth): I shall support this Bill, and have always been in favour of payment of members. I hardly think it necessary to discuss this question at length, for questions of detail were thoroughly threshed out by the convincing and logical speech of the last speaker. My opinion is that the franchise has nothing whatever to do with the question of payment of members. In Australia, one finds nominated Upper Houses paid, and elected Upper Houses paid. Some of the nominated Houses have no franchise at all; and all the Lower Houses are, of course, elected by the people. There has been exactly the same experience in America and elsewhere regarding the Senate and the House of Representatives.

MR. MORAN: Is the American Senate nominated?

MR. JAMES: I say there are, in some instances, different franchises for the two Houses, such as we have in South Australia, where there is an elected Upper House paid, while in New Zealand there is a nominated Upper House paid. If we

go outside Australia we shall find the same, that systems which the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) called inconsistent, have prevailed. In other words, wherever we find this principle of payment of members applying, we do not find the question of franchise enters into it at all. Nor can it come in. We have Houses of Parliament here, and we desire, by the introduction of payment of members, to open the door of this House so as to enable more candidates to stand for election. We are not dealing with the right to vote; that is dealt with in the electoral laws, which say nothing about payment of members. That being so, I think we should either have excluded the Upper House or should have paid them at exactly the same rate as the Lower. If they want £200 a year, I think they have a right to get it. I do not think we have a right to claim more for our services than they, although it is notorious that the demands on members of the Lower House are far greater.

MR. MONGER: What about the honourable title?

MR. JAMES: The title "honourable" is enjoyed in countries where members of the Upper House are paid. That is a matter of somewhat petty detail. Therefore it would have been better if we had either left out all reference to payment of the Upper House, or put those hon. members on exactly the same footing as ourselves. The only objection I have to the Bill is that some provision ought to be made in favour of members who reside outside the metropolitan area, or who represent constituencies outside that area. There are members who travel great distances, and who are put to far greater inconveniences than those who live in Perth and represent the metropolis.

MR. MORAN: That has been tried in the other colonies, and has failed.

MR. JAMES: That is no reason why we should not try it here. I think the principle has failed where it had been introduced, because those receiving the smaller amounts thought, perhaps, they were entitled to receive more. If a member reside in a metropolitan area and represent a metropolitan constituency, he is entitled to the same pay as the man who either resides outside the Metropolis or represents a constituency outside the metropolis. If a member reside in Perth

or Fremantle and represent a constituency outside, he is put to a far larger expense than one representing a metropolitan constituency. His election expenses are greater.

MR. MORAN: Cut them down by law.

MR. JAMES: The election expenses are far greater in a distant, wide and scattered constituency, than they would be in the metropolis.

MR. HIGHAM: It does not follow.

MR. JAMES: If a member represent an outside constituency, he is supposed, especially if paid, as he will be, to go there once a year, travel over the area, and address his constituents time after time. I know members who live in Perth now and represent country constituencies, who have constant demands made upon them, far greater than those experienced by members representing metropolitan electorates. And a very strong case can be made out for giving country members more than those whose duties as members of Parliament are less onerous. But I do object—and I propose in Committee to test the point—to this Bill being made to apply to this present House. [MR. MONGER: Hear, hear.] We were not elected with provision made for payment of members. So far as we know, we should have been opposed at the last general election if payment of members had been the law. We came here believing that during the course of this Parliament payment of members would be an accomplished fact. I do not think we have a right to accept payment under those conditions. I think the Bill should come into force at the beginning of the next Parliament. Then those who desire to stand for election will know that if elected they will receive this payment, and that will give to the electors an area of choice which they will not have if this Bill come into operation now. No one can say that we were elected under conditions that will apply when this Bill comes into force. And unless we were so elected, I do not think we have any moral right to accept payment. With that exception, although I should have liked to see the Bill altered in the way indicated by putting the Upper House in the same position as ourselves, or by altogether excepting them, I shall support the Bill, and shall endeavour, in Committee, to have the

application to the present Parliament omitted.

MR. GREGORY (North Coolgardie): It is not often one hears such arguments as we have heard to-night, and I do not think I have heard for a long time so much "playing to the gallery." This question has been before us for the last three years, and we had to fight very hard to get even the affirmation of the principle. Numerous arguments were brought up against us then, and I think the matter was fairly well threshed out in several sessions; and I think, if we had acted properly in the first session, according to the desire of the majority in the House, we should have immediately passed a Bill providing for the payment of members from that session onward. That is the action we should have taken at the time; that was the action taken in all the other colonies; that was the procedure in Victoria, when they provided for payment of members; and had we taken that action then, we should have been receiving an honorarium during the last two and a half years we have been in this House. And I hope no effort will be made now, knowing the feeling of the House, and knowing how we obtained a majority—I hope nothing will be done now which may result in having this Bill thrown out. As the hon. member for Pilbarra (Mr. Kingsmill) says, the Bill is the thin end of the wedge. I would not be content with £200 a year; I do not think the amount sufficient; but we are content to begin with that, and then in the next Parliament we may possibly try to have the amount increased. When once we get the Bill on the statute book, it will be easy to amend it. The difficulty is to get it there. I hope we shall let this Bill go through. I was pleased to hear the way the Premier spoke about it, when he said that if the other House desired anything different, they could easily make a suggestion. I blame members of this and the other House if there be any objection to the Bill, because it has been known to hon. members for the last week what the amount of payment was to be. That has been public property, and, I think, well known to every member; and some representations have been made to the Government asking them to alter the amount. During debates in this House



I was the only member who mentioned a stated sum. No other member mentioned what he thought would be a fair salary, at least I did not hear him; and I think it is scarcely fair for us to blame the Government when no representations were made to the Government as to what the amount should be. I hope the Bill will be allowed to go through Committee without amendment. I hope we shall do our best next session to make the payment sufficient to enable a person always to live independently and to maintain an independent position while he is a member of this House.

MR. MONGER (York): I am indeed glad the Premier, in introducing this Bill, said there was no party question attached to it; because, otherwise, it would have been my misfortune, for the first occasion under the present Government, to vote against him. With all due respect to the gentleman who had drafted and submitted this Bill for the consideration of hon. members, I think if we were to pass it in its present form, we should be casting a slur, not only on the present Legislative Assembly, but on the people who do us the honour of appointing us their representatives. I congratulate the member for East Perth (Mr. James) on the stand he has taken in regard to the retrospective clause. It is not often that I attempt to deal with constitutional law, and I am not going to attempt to deal with it now; but it does seem to me absolutely unconstitutional for a body of men to vote themselves any sum of money for services rendered. I am absolutely against Clause 2. I think it will be a reflection on the Parliament of 1900 if we carry such a Bill as is now submitted to us by the Government. I listened to the learned arguments that emanated from the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Illingworth), and I cannot congratulate the Opposition on those learned arguments which emanated from the brain of their leader. The way in which the leader of the Opposition dealt with this question was to refer to the word "honorarium," then to the word "constitutional," and such like words: he did this repeatedly, but he did not give us one solid reason why we should support this Bill. He said that a Bill should be produced giving to members in another place the same honorarium as is

proposed to be paid to members of this Chamber, and he suggested an increase of £40 in addition to the £200 proposed in the Bill. I may mention that it was only a few days ago I heard from a member in another place that the reason why that House threw out a Bill which involved an expenditure of only £1,400 per annum was that they thought it would save money to the country. Well, if the gentlemen who occupy seats in another place consider that such a big expenditure as £1,400 is detrimental to the best interests of Western Australia, I can only say—and I would like this to go back to the hon. member who made the remark I am quoting—that when this question comes on for consideration in the Upper House, that hon. member and others who supported him on a certain occasion will say, "We, the members of the Legislative Council, do not require any remuneration for the services we render to the State." Personally, I do not think their services are worth much. Referring again to Clause 2 of the Bill, I would like to ask the Premier whether, supposing this Bill becomes law—and I am glad to see one hon. member in his seat this evening, so that I may have an opportunity of replying to certain remarks he made—if this clause be passed for payment of members during the present session, whether every hon. member is privileged to attach the initials "M.L.A." to his name, and whether in particular the member for Albany (Mr. J. F. T. Hassell) who is now in his place, and the member for Plantagenet (Mr. A. Y. Hassell) who is not in his place, will consider themselves entitled to be paid for the services they have rendered during the present session of Parliament—whether they will claim payment for the noble and able services they have not given in this House? I ask the member for Albany, who is in his place, to get up and reply to the suggestion I have made, and say whether he, in his affluent circumstances, would take payment from this Government for services absolutely unrendered. One of those hon. members has been away for some time through stress of business, perhaps shearing or something else, which precluded him from being here to allow us the benefit of the able opinions which he no doubt forms on most of the important questions

that come before us; and I ask the member for Albany, and would ask his brother also if he were now present, to say calmly and collectively whether the services they have rendered to the State entitle them to any remuneration during the present session. If we pass this Bill in its present form, we shall be handing down to the people of this country one of the most iniquitous Bills ever passed by this Legislature. I do hope that when the question comes even to the second reading, the member for Albany and those other members who have expressed themselves so frequently on this question during the present session, will show their absolute sincerity by voting on the same side as I shall vote.

MR. MITCHELL (Murchison): As the mover of the amendment to the motion of the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory), and from which amendment the present Bill eventuated, I have a right to say a word or two on this question. I can assure hon. members that when I moved that amendment I had not the slightest idea that the sensibilities of hon. members would be so affected that they would have a delicacy about accepting the amount of payment provided in the Bill. They have no need to strain their modesty by accepting the money which the Bill proposes to be paid to members for the present session, because the payment is not compulsory, but purely optional; and if we pass the Bill and take the money, though I may say I was not red-hot in favour of payment of members, yet having been here for one week short of six months during the last session and for several months in this session, I say it is only right that hon. members who come here and leave their business, should expect to be recouped for money out of pocket. I would not like to offer an opinion as to the different amount which should be paid to members of another place as compared with members of this House; but I do say this in defence of the right hon. gentleman in what he stated to-night, that if the members of another place have any opinion on the subject, and will send a Message back to this House, we can consider whether we can accede to their requirement or not. Rather than jeopardise the passing of this Bill, I shall vote for it as it stands.

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL (Albany): I was the member who seconded the amendment which has been referred to, and I beg to assure the House that payment of members in not a personal thing I have gone in for. When before my constituents for election, it was one of the main planks in my platform; and those electors who were present at the election meeting said to me, "We put you in to vote for payment of members." I have also a letter from the Municipal Council of Albany, to the same effect. I like to be honest, and will tell the House what they said to me. They said: "We have been deprived of a member we formerly had for this portion of the colony, and since then we have had no proper representation in Parliament; therefore we think that until some form of remuneration is given to members who represent outside districts, we shall not be properly represented." I disagreed with that; but at the same time that was their feeling. As my friend the member for York (Mr. Monger) has referred to myself in connection with this Bill, I will inform the House that I am not coming back here, and therefore I have no reason for voting payment to myself. As far as I am concerned, if I had not been elected under those terms, I should have liked this matter to go to the people at the next election; but, under the circumstances, I must perform the promise I made to the electors. There are other members who have been absent from the sittings of this House as well as myself during this session, and I am positive that members here and the people generally have no objection, when a member has been ill or has had urgent business elsewhere, that he should have a certain amount of leave; therefore I think it is a bad principle for the hon. member to "slate" a member who has not really been guilty of what he is accused of. In regard to payment of members for the Upper House, and speaking as an old resident of the colony, I think it is a bad principle for members of that House to demand any payment for themselves. I agree with the Premier that the Upper House being altogether different from this House in regard to the franchise under which the members are elected, those representatives who go into the Upper House should do so on a thoroughly

independent principle. We may dwindle into the same thing, in a few years; but I say the Upper House should have retained some dignity in this matter, for some time longer. In looking through the debates of previous years in this House, I find my brother said he would never be a party to vote for payment of members, either for the Lower House or the Upper House; so hon. members will see that the older persons in the colony who sat in Parliament in previous years gave their time and ability without payment. Still, I think now the colony is willing and able to pay representatives who come from outside districts, so that members who have not the means of coming here and paying their expenses will have some allowance to help them in meeting expenses while attending to their duties in Parliament; because we know that if we do not get men who reside in those districts, and who know practically what is going on in them, the people of the country far away from the metropolis will not be properly represented, and it will be to the detriment of this colony to prevent that class of men from coming into this House. I consider members of this House should be paid for their time and trouble, and I shall vote for the Bill as it stands, for I regard it as a good and fair Bill. I shall not object to the proposed payment of the Upper House; and if there is any objection to the Bill, let it go to a vote.

MR. MONGER: But you won't take anything yourself for your services?

MR. J. F. T. HASSELL: That is my business.

MR. WILSON (Canning): I am sorry to hear the remarks which have been directed against the member for Albany (Mr. Hassell). I think those remarks were out of taste, and do no credit to the member who made them. I do not think the value of the services of the member for Albany has anything to do with the important principle we are discussing to-night, and therefore we should leave personal matters out of the debate. I have always supported the principle of payment of members. On the hustings four years ago I advocated payment of members, and I think my constituents clearly understood I should support that principle in this House whenever brought forward, and I have always done so. I do agree with

the member for East Perth (Mr. James), that it is somewhat out of place for us to be voting payment for ourselves.

MR. GREGORY: What about members of the Upper House voting payment for themselves?

MR. WILSON: I agree that we ought not to make this Bill retrospective in regard to payment. We were returned to an unpaid House, and therefore I say I have no right to vote myself payment. What I would like to have seen carried out would be that the Bill should come into operation on the first day of the new Parliament; and that would give an opportunity for the electors in the country to state whether they were in favour of the Bill or not. Thus electors who are opposed to payment of members could pledge their candidates to vote for the repeal of the Bill, and other electors who are in favour of payment could pledge their candidates to retain the Bill, and the matter would in that way be settled.

THE PREMIER: Let them vote on their own Bill, afterwards.

MR. WILSON: No; I think it is our duty to pass this Bill for the new Parliament, and in that way we shall put the Bill before the people at the elections.

THE PREMIER: The other way is more reasonable.

MR. A. FORREST: Throw the Bill out altogether.

MR. WILSON: The hon. member is not in favour of throwing it out altogether: he is in favour of payment of members in this House and in this session; and why should he be in favour of throwing out the Bill? It has been stated by some members that a distinction should be made between different electorates; that those members who represent far-distant electorates should be paid differently from those who represent electorates in the metropolitan district.

THE PREMIER: That is the same plan as in Cape Colony.

MR. WILSON: It is said a difference should be made between those who reside in or near the capital, and those who reside outside; but, if you are going into that and other distinctions, I think you will not arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. There will be some anomalies in all positions, and I maintain that those

who represent electors nearer to the capital very often are put to greater expense than those who represent constituencies in the far North. The expenses of elections alone are higher in the metropolis. The member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) sits in his office in Perth and is returned without a penny of expense, and there are others who are returned in the same way.

MR. A. FORREST: The proper way, too.

MR. WILSON: There were something like 18 members returned without opposition for far distant parts of the country at the last election. You cannot distinguish in this way; you must take the principle as it is. Are members to be paid? If you say "yes," then they should all be paid alike. So long as we have got two Houses elected by the voice of the people, I contend that the members of both Houses should be paid alike. If we had a nominated House, or a House under an absolutely different qualification, then you might have different scales of payment, but the two Houses being elected by the voice of the people they should be paid alike. They are the people's representatives, and the people want to return any representatives they wish to either House.

MR. MORAN: They are representatives of property purely, in the other House.

MR. WILSON: They are the people's representatives; therefore they should be paid, as we are to be paid in this House, if we are to be paid at all.

THE PREMIER: There are lots of precedents against that argument.

MR. WILSON: Very likely. No doubt there could be arguments advanced against my opinion, but it is for the majority to decide, both in this House and in another place, when the matter comes before them, how members shall be paid. I agree that plenty of candidates could be found if there was no payment at all; that goes without saying, and doubtless learned men, too; but it is not always the learned men who make the best representatives. We want to pass a Bill so that the people may have representatives from their own rank if they like; so that the workers can elect workers to represent them if they so desire. The question of education does not altogether come into the matter. I think we are justified in passing the Bill,

which has been introduced into the House, but I would like the Premier to adopt the suggestion that I have thrown out, and which the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James), has spoken about, to make the Bill come into force on the first day of the next Parliament.

MR. MORAN: You are usurping their functions, then.

MR. WILSON: As to the amount, I shall not cavil at the £200 or the £240, whichever is thought to be the reasonable sum. I do not think it should be intended that the amount be given as recompense for the time spent by members in the discharge of their duties. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that we cannot reimburse members for the time they give, and money they are out of pocket; therefore I look at it from the point of view that this sum of money is to enable men who cannot afford otherwise to give their time, to come here to represent their constituents. That is the Premier's object, therefore we should pass the Bill. If the workers, who are dependent on a weekly wage, elect one of their own class to represent them in the Parliament of Western Australia, then that man would be enabled to sit in Parliament.

MR. MOORHEAD: That being so, ought we who can afford to attend without payment take the honorarium?

MR. WILSON: Let the hon. member answer his own question. I take it that the amount as far as the £200 is concerned will not be disputed. If members think that the amount ought to be £240, I do not think any exception will be taken to that.

THE PREMIER: We cannot increase the amount.

MR. WILSON: Then leave it as it is. I do not think it matters whether it is £150 or £200.

MR. A. FORREST: You can reduce the amount.

MR. WILSON: As far as I am concerned the amount can be reduced to £50, and when the next Parliament is elected the members can say whether they are satisfied with the amount or not. We are going to put a law on the statute book which can be amended when the new Parliament meets, if it is so desired. But the amount mentioned in the Bill is a reasonable one, and should be sufficient

to enable the workers' representatives to enter this Chamber, if they so desire, and if it is the wish of the people that they should.

MR. A. FORREST: Twelve pounds a week while they are sitting: that should be sufficient.

MR. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I have consistently, since I have been in the House, voted against payment of members. Some other hon. members have also done so, and I have not seen any reason to change my mind. If my vote would be the means of throwing the Bill out altogether, I should certainly give my vote in that direction. A good deal of discussion has arisen as to the cost of elections, and as to whether or not members representing far-away districts should not receive more remuneration than members representing the metropolitan constituencies. When this question was discussed in the first place in this House, I pointed out that it would be impossible, even with the amount suggested for payment, for a working man to represent a far-away district of the colony, and I think the same thing applies now. It would be impossible for any working man, on the amount suggested in the Bill, to contest an election in the far North of the country; to pay his passage up and down, twice a year, if he had to live in the electorate, to attend to his parliamentary duties, and bear the expenses while down here. I think there is a good deal of cheap claptrap in the arguments on this matter. It is not the great democratic principle that some members are talking about, that is contended for here: it is the question of payment of members of the House. The question as to payment of members of the Upper House ought to be a very simple one. Will any hon. member say, or any member of the Upper House say, that the duties that are performed by members of the Upper House are as great as the duties that are carried out by most of the members of this House, particularly, may I say, those members who sit on the front Opposition benches? I say the duties are not the same at all; therefore it cannot be considered reasonable for members of the Legislative Council to receive the same sum of money for their services.

MR. WILSON: We cannot grade them.

MR. CONNOR: What have the members of the other House to do? They have to check the work which is done by this House. They do not initiate much legislation. During this session there has been a change there: probably it is not a change for the better, because the usual procedure in Parliament is that the principal part of legislation shall be initiated in the Lower House and sent to be checked by the Upper House. Take England, for example: the Upper House there is in existence simply for the purpose of being a check on the legislation carried on in the House of Commons. The same thing applies in all countries, and it is the understanding, I believe, that the Upper House is elected for that purpose alone. We have the fact that the members of the Upper House do not sit as often as the Lower House; they do not do as much work, and they are elected for six years. We are told they also get a title. The fact of some of those gentlemen having to carry a title is perhaps the only reason why they should be paid at all. I think with the hon. members who have spoken, that if payment of members is to be passed in this House, nobody will sit in the House next session who will deserve to be paid more than the hon. members who are sitting on the front Opposition benches to-day, if we consider the work they have done up to the present time. If a vote is taken I shall vote against the Bill, and if a division is taken as to altering the clause in reference to retrospective legislation, I shall not vote against that clause.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley): I may say at once that I intend to support the Bill, although for the last ten years I have always voted against such a proposal; but I go on the principle that the country requires the measure, and we are here to carry out the mandates of the people. I see no reasons myself why the members of the present Parliament should not be paid as well as the members of the next Parliament. Several hon. members have gone on the high moral ground, or there has been a trend in that direction; but I believe in their hearts these members will be more pleased, although perhaps they will vote in the minority, if the Bill is carried in its present shape. It is very

nice for anyone in the House to say—I could say it myself—that we ought not to vote money for ourselves; we should vote money only for the next Parliament; we should do nothing to pay ourselves. No doubt if we said that, we should get a good deal of kudos from the Press of the country, and from people outside the House. I have listened to the speech of the leader of the Opposition with great interest. He was in earnest when he said that he hoped the Bill would not be made retrospective.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I did not say that.

MR. A. FORREST: I beg the hon. member's pardon; it was the member for East Perth (Mr. James). The hon. member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) said he hoped the Bill would not come into force until the 1st of January next.

MR. WILSON: I did not say that.

MR. A. FORREST: I do not believe there is one member on the other side or on this side of the House who does not want the Bill to come into force from the time this Parliament met. If members want it otherwise, I am sure there are some members on the Government side who are quite prepared to throw the Bill out altogether. I am prepared to allow the Bill to stand over until the next Parliament. I say there are many members who have served in this House for from 15 years to one year, and these members deserve well of this country. It has been a pretty expensive luxury for many men in this House to fight elections and so forth, and the cost to a member, even to live as a member of Parliament, is very great. I see no reason why the country should not pay for the services of members of Parliament during this session. If the country were against the proposal, that would be a good reason for not passing the Bill until next Parliament. We know that £200 a year is not a large amount; it will not pay the "tip" bill of some hon. members. I am sure those who are opposed to this Bill are quaking in their shoes, thinking that the measure may not be passed. They recognise the fact that this Bill is being brought in by the Government under great pressure. The Government do not want the Bill themselves, but it has been brought forward on the representations of members on

both sides of the House, and a compromise has been arrived at by the members sitting on the Government side of the House, and that compromise is contained in this Bill. If the other House think they have a grievance in not being paid the same amount as members in this House, they have a proper course to take. They can send a Message down here asking the House to increase the amount. If the members of the Upper House are so thin-skinned that they are afraid to do that, and I presume some of them are, they have the option of throwing the measure out altogether.

MR. MORAN: They have not that option now, since they have passed the resolution.

MR. A. FORREST: I do not think any member of the House will feel very much aggrieved if the Bill is thrown out by another place. As far as I am concerned, I shall not feel aggrieved. I can live very well without the payment, although I think it fair that members of the House should be paid. I would not feel very much hurt if the measure were defeated. In the first place the Upper House would send down a suggestion, and this House would consider the matter fairly: if it was thought necessary, the same amount would be given to members of the other House as is proposed to be given to members of this House. I shall support the Bill.

MR. WALLACE (Yalgoo): I agree with what the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) has said. There is a beastly modesty existing in this House on the part of some hon. members. Those members who are opposing the Bill are doing so from mock-modesty, knowing full well that the measure will be carried. These members will get some kudos by its being said that they opposed payment of members. Some reference has been made by the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) and the member for East Perth (Mr. James) to payment of members from distant parts. I understand that there would be some difficulty in arranging that, inasmuch as when the Premier was introducing the Bill he referred to the payment as an honorarium. Accepting it as an honorarium, I do not see that there is any necessity to discuss the question of paying country members a larger sum than city members.

MR. GREGORY: Country members never asked for a larger sum: it was only a suggestion by a town member.

MR. WALLACE: The Premier, in moving the second reading, pointed out that he did not see that the same honorarium should be paid to both Houses. I appreciate the endeavour of the hon. member to avoid creating any friction; but I cannot applaud the expressions of the leader of the Opposition, which will tend greatly to arouse feeling in the Upper House.

MR. MORAN: He wants to throw out the Bill.

MR. WALLACE: I believe if there be anything in this debate which will endanger the passing of the Bill in the Upper House, it is the speeches from those on this (Opposition) side, and especially from the three members on the front Opposition bench; but at the same time they have spoken as they have, feeling sure that the Bill will be carried in spite of their opposition. I have not heard any of those hon. members say he will give his £200 a year to the hospital or other charity; and I reckon that when pay-day comes, they will be found amongst the members receiving their cheques.

MR. MORAN: They will be waiting on the door-mat.

MR. WALLACE: I thank the Premier for introducing this Bill, and I am prepared to vote for the measure as it stands. I promised my electors some four years ago that I would support payment of members; I am quite satisfied with the liberality of the Premier in granting this House £200; and I can only regret that he did not see his way to grant the other House a similar amount, inasmuch as he has mentioned the remuneration as being a honorarium, and not a salary. If it came to a question of salary or payment for services rendered, the discussion would be prolonged. I hope the Bill will pass this House to-night, will go through the Upper House in quick time, and be speedily placed on the statute book of the colony.

MR. MOORHEAD (North Murchison): I am very sorry to find myself amongst those members who have earned the opprobrium of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest). I cannot see any reason why this House should

have taken upon itself to insert in this Bill a clause of such a retrospective character as has been inserted here, or, if so, why we have stopped short at this session. I cannot see any reason why we should limit this particular clause to the commencement of the present year. If the principle be to pay members for their services rendered during this session, then why not pay members for their services to the country since the commencement or the opening of Parliament? [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] If we can go back to the opening of the present session, I see nothing unconstitutional or illegal in our going back to the opening of this Parliament. With the general principle of this Bill I need hardly say I am thoroughly in accord. I think, of hon. members present, I was the first who in this colony advocated payment of members. It is now some nine years since I advocated the principle on a platform in the constituency of the member for Geraldton (Mr. Hutchinson). It was then laughed at by some members of Parliament at present in this House; but I now have the pleasure of seeing the Bill introduced by the Premier. With regard to the principle underlying it, I am in accord with the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth). The whole principle underlying payment of members is, not to provide an adequate remuneration for services rendered, but really to open the doors of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly to the more direct representation of the people. Those of us who have had experience of constituencies in this colony, and who have travelled around, must have seen that in many outlying places are men of intelligence, men who would represent more accurately the feelings of the working classes than perhaps we ourselves can do; men who are brought into closer contact with their requirements, and who, from their education, would very adequately represent their views. The only drawback, in fact, the only barrier to such representation, has always been want of funds. Men of the class of miners, artisans, or mechanics cannot leave their work to come down to spend, as that hon. member pointed out, perhaps five or six months here in Perth, and probably to lose the chance of reemployment on their return,

without some recompense on the part of the country. I therefore say that of the two principles which have been advanced as arguments in support of this Bill, I think the broader principle is the one which ought to influence us, namely the throwing open of the doors to the better representation of the people. But I also view with approval the observations of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest). I think we cannot go altogether on that ground, because our doing so would land us in very extraordinary difficulties; for if these labour constituencies, instead of returning members of their own order, returned some of the gentlemen at present sitting here, and who have been here during the last four or five years without any remuneration, thereby announcing the fact that they are in a position to uphold their status as members without appealing to the country for financial assistance, what becomes of the remuneration? I asked that question of the member for East Perth (Mr. James), and he referred it back to me. Well, if we are going solely on the principle that payment of members is to open the door so to enable the people to return members drawn from their own ranks, then if the members are not drawn from the workers, but from other orders, I say the *raison d'être* of the remuneration is gone altogether; therefore, to be logical, we must have a judicious blending of both principles. We must have first, no doubt, the ordinary principle that we are enabling the people to return those who will represent them better than they are represented at present; also that there should be some remuneration for services rendered.

MR. D. FORREST (Ashburton): I must say I am strongly in favour of this Bill, because, after my little travels through the country, my short experience in this House, and my long experience outside, I am ready to understand that the majority on this (Government) and I think on the other (Opposition) side of the House are in favour of the Bill. I take it most hon. members will agree that it is not a great luxury to be a member of Parliament. Our hands are continually in our pockets: we are expected to do a great deal more than if we were outsiders. I can speak for myself, and I trust for

some others too: we are expected to give largely to charities, and I reckon the £200 a year will just about recoup a great many members for the cost of refreshments in the Assembly and for money they have to give away outside. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill as it stands.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Members to be paid:

MR. WILSON: Was it intended that members of the Legislative Council, as well as of the Assembly, should be paid from the beginning of the financial year, even though elected only recently?

THE PREMIER: The clause applied to both Houses.

MR. JAMES: With a view of making the Bill take effect as from the first session of the next Parliament, he moved to strike out the word "present" in line 1, and to insert "next" in lieu. Members had no right to pay themselves. In 1897 he took exactly the same position, that it would be indecent to pass legislation to pay ourselves; that hon. members were not elected for that purpose; that they were sent here, not that they might gain by making this principle law, but that the country might gain. Payment of members for the present session would not serve the real purpose intended. The object of such legislation was to widen the choice of the electors; therefore it would not only be against the principle of the Bill to make it apply to the present Parliament, but it would put hon. members in a false position. Having been here for several years without payment, hon. members could well wait a few months longer.

MR. A. FORREST: The House divided on this question a few days ago. Why waste time?

MR. JAMES: After the recent resolution, the Government were justified in bringing down the Bill, but the resolution was wrong.

MR. GREGORY asked the last speaker whether, if his amendment were thrown out and the clause carried, he would accept the payment which would accrue during this year.



MR. JAMES: The question was irrelevant. If the amendment were lost, he was prepared to pay over every penny of his remuneration to a charity, if the hon. member (Mr. Gregory) would do the same.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 3 and 4—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

PERTH ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS LIGHTING AND POWER BILL (PRIVATE).

SECOND READING (MOVED).

MR. MOORHEAD (North Murchison): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I may point out that although the Bill contains some 41 clauses, very few clauses contain matter of a contentious character, most of the clauses being practically a repetition of provisions in the Electric Lighting Act of 1892. The object of this Bill is to enable the Perth Electric Tramways Limited to construct works in the municipality of Perth for the supply of electric light and power. Clause 5 is practically a repetition of a similar provision in the general statute known as the Electric Lighting Act of 1892, and deals with the breaking up of streets, the erection of poles, and so on. The clauses following are again a repetition of provisions in the Act I have mentioned; and practically nothing of importance occurs until we come to the provision dealing with the maximum charge which the promoters or undertakers are entitled to claim for the supply to consumers. The Bill does not aim at giving a monopoly, nor does it aim at compelling the Municipal Council of Perth to take electric light from this company for lighting the public streets. The object of the Bill is to enable the company to supply private consumers with electric light and power. In other words, the Bill gives to the company a right to erect its poles in streets and to carry its cables over roads in the city of Perth. A good deal of opposition has been shown to the measure, and some 35 witnesses have been examined before the Select Committee, whose report is now before the House. The

main objections to the Bill were urged by an opposition company, the Perth Gas Company; and its opposition was based on the fact that the receipts of the Gas Company, which also supplies electric light, would be diminished by reason of the opposition or the competition of the Electric Tramways Company in supplying electric light and power within the city. The committee, after taking evidence, saw no valid reason for supporting the objections which have been urged in favour of the contentions put forth by the Perth Gas Company; especially when the committee found that the amount of capital which the Perth Gas Company has called up is about £50,000, that it has paid out of profits £31,000 in addition to its plant; that the company has paid altogether something like £46,000 out of profits, and has its plant intact. That was the extraordinary position of the Perth Gas Company in opposing the powers sought to be obtained by another company under this Bill; and still more extraordinary is the action of the Perth Gas Company in opposing the granting of those powers to the other company, when the committee find that the Perth Gas Company, while admitting that its price for supplying electric light is high and its profits have been large, yet would give to the Select Committee no information as to the price which the company would charge for electric light in the future. That was extraordinary; and more extraordinary still are certain statements in a printed document which has been sent, I understand, to members of this House, setting forth further objections to this Bill. I may tell the House that the Perth Gas Company was not the only body which came forward to object to the Bill; for the Perth City Council objected to it, on the ground that as the Municipal Council must use electric light for lighting the public streets, it was therefore desirable the supplying of electric light in Perth should be in the hands of the municipal body. That is a proposition which many members of this House would probably agree to, had we sufficient evidence before us that the municipal body really intended to carry into execution that idea; but apart from the anxiety of the City Council to get the lighting of Perth streets into its own hands, we had no objection from any other

body except the Perth Gas Company Limited. The objections of that company have been subsequently crystallised in the petition which has been presented to this House, and have been reiterated in the printed document sent to each member of the House. I say advisedly that in putting forth these further objections the Perth Gas Company has taken an extraordinary and impertinent course; for the company actually states in the printed document that the Standing Orders of this House have not been complied with in regard to this Bill; although the question of the Standing Orders had been specially reported on by the Select Committee which inquired into the Bill. The printed document says:

The Standing Orders were not complied with (*see* Gas Company's letter of the 18th October).

This means that the Gas Company asks this House to say that the Select Committee was wrong in arriving at a decision to the effect that the Standing Orders had been complied with. Further, and a more gross misrepresentation still, paragraph 8 in the printed document says:

No company can promote a Bill in Parliament unless expressly authorised by its memorandum of association (*see* Palmer's Company Law, p. 44). Neither the memorandum or articles were produced.

Again, paragraph 9 says:

The desire of the promoters to acquire the rights and powers asked for was not proved. No proper evidence of such desire was given (*see* paragraph 3 of Gas Company's letter).

Well, members present have had more experience than I have in legislative matters, but whether their experience has been gathered in Western Australia or gathered elsewhere, I think they have never yet had presented to them, as members of the Legislature, such a document as that which directly questions the decision of a committee of this House on its own Standing Orders, and questions its findings on facts. The document says: "The desire of the promoters to acquire the rights and powers asked for was not proved." Now that depends altogether on the evidence produced; and the Select Committee has decided, upon that evidence, that there was sufficient to warrant the committee in reporting that it was satisfied the Stand-

ing Orders were complied with. I allude to these matters and deal with these details, as showing the conduct of the company which is opposing this Bill. I do so especially in my anxiety to point out that the only objection of the Perth Gas Company, when boiled down, was: "Our profits will be diminished by the invasion of our rights." I say, of course, we can understand that position; for if any of us were carrying on business as bakers or merchants, or in any other commercial pursuit, we should naturally object to another man coming in to undersell us. The promoters of the Bill now before the House restrict themselves in regard to the price to be charged for supplying electric light, by providing in the Bill that the maximum charge to the consumer shall be 7d. per unit. The maximum price charged at the present by the Perth Gas Company for supplying electric light is 1s. per unit; that is, the company is entitled to charge this amount, and does charge it, but the company allows a reduction of 2d. per unit. The company has certain arrangements in practice for allowing a reduction; but under its Act of Parliament the company is entitled to charge 1s. per unit, and the committee saw from the contract notes that the company had charged 1s. per unit, and allowed a discount of 2d. The Perth Gas Company now comes forward and says it is agreeable to accept the recommendation of the select committee, that the maximum charge should be 7d. per unit for supplying electric light in Perth. The "further objections" set forth in this extraordinary document of the Perth Gas Company—extraordinary in face of the declaration by the manager that the Gas Company was unable to give any information as to what price it would charge in the future, or how far the company was prepared to reduce its admittedly high price—contains the following extraordinary statement:

The maximum price mentioned in the Bill is 7d. per unit. The promoters and the Gas Company may combine and make this the minimum.

The promoters and the Gas Company! These people who are opposing the Bill hold out the idea that the two companies may combine to-morrow or the next day to make the maximum the minimum! Surely we are not fighting shadows: we

are dealing with facts. At the present time the consumers are being charged an exorbitant rate and are getting a bad quality of light. They go on to say:

The Council of Kalgoorlie produces electricity at less than 4d. per unit. The Perth City Council could probably produce at less cost.

Is that statement correct on the part of the Perth Gas Company? How is it that a company which has been in existence for so long a time, deriving such huge profits from the people, is not able to similarly reduce its price per unit to 4d., while here is the Kalgoorlie Council, with the price of fuel at the rate we know it must be owing to the carriage and the scarcity of water, able to produce the light at 4d. per unit? Here is the Perth Gas Company with its works in our centre, with all the difference between the carriage and the difference in the price of water—why cannot the company say, "Although we have been charging the consumer this pretty high price in the past, we can come down now and supply consumers at the same price as Perth City Council will be able to do?" The Perth City Council has to pay £200,000 for the plant of the Perth Gas Company: the evidence discloses that was the price the Gas Company was asking from the Perth City Council. I put these points before the House in urging this measure. An objection has been taken, what I call a lawyer's objection, which does not emanate from the gentleman who signs the document at the bottom, Mr. Blackney, the secretary of the Perth Gas Company. The Bill practically overrides the powers conferred on municipalities under the Electric Tramways Act. I should point out, although this is a matter which may be threshed out in Committee, that another of the suggestions of the Select Committee is, the Electric Lighting Act of 1892 might be incorporated with this measure. This clause has been added to the Bill:

This Act and the Electric Lighting Act of 1892 shall be read together and form one Act; and the undertakers under the Act shall, where not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, have imposed upon them the same duties and obligations and be liable to the same restrictions and penalties as if they were supplying electricity under a license from or contract with the Council under the provisions of the Electric Lighting Act of 1892.

The meaning of that is that under the Electric Lighting Act of 1892, the Perth City Council may enter into a contract with a person to supply light; they may light the streets and contract with persons, or they may grant licenses for 21 years to contractors to undertake not only to light the streets but to lay cables wherever they like. Such a license as that would have another provision under the Electric Lighting Act, imposing such restrictions as the Council may see fit. This Bill, the second reading of which I am moving, would not contain such a provision, and for this reason: we are obtaining the sanction of Parliament. The promoters applied to the City Council for such a license contemplated by the Act of 1892, and the Council took no notice of their application. For that reason the promoters ask for statutory authority to erect their own poles to carry these cables, and to supply to the citizens of Perth a long-felt want. The provisions, I have already stated, in the measure in no way conflict with the provisions of similar enactments. It would have made the Bill much shorter by embodying, as the committee suggest, the Act of 1892, and with these provisions the Bill could have been reduced to practically ten clauses. Another important provision in the measure is that the committee also suggest that the period for the completion of the work be reduced from two and a-half years to eighteen months. I understand the promoters fully acquiesce in that, and I have every confidence in recommending the Bill to the House. I formally move the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by Mr. QUINLAN, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:30 o'clock until the next day.