and they had tacked to it a very large extent of country for purposes of representation in the Assembly. There were other very extensive districts that would only have one member, and he thought Perth and Fremantle ought to congratulate themselves upon getting no less than six members between them.

THE HON. SIR J. G. LEE STEERE could not help expressing his astonishment that the hon. member for Perth should have the audacity to propose to abolish the Nelson district, an important country constituency, for the sake of giving the Canning and Wanneroo a member of their own. He did not think the hon. member could have the slightest idea of the Nelson district—an important farming district—when he proposed that it should give way to Wanneroo and the Canning, where there were only some 30 electors, or so. It was ridiculous. He had been wondering why the hon. member should have picked upon the Nelson district of all the districts in this schedule for the purpose of striking it out; certainly there were many others which he should imagine were less entitled to a member of its own than the district of Nelson. He did not think the hon. member could be serious. He was sure the hon. member would get no support in that House to his proposition.

The motion to report progress was agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past eleven o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 26th March, 1889.

Petition (No. 1) from Mrs. Tracey, of Guildford, complaining of grievous injustice in being dispossessed of her landed property—Correspondence between the Government and owners of s.s. *Australind*, as to steamer not calling at Wyndham—Constitution Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

PETITION FROM MRS. TRACEY, OF GUILDFORD.

MR. RASON presented a petition from Mrs. Eliza Tracey, of Guildford, complaining of grievous injustice in being dispossessed of her landed property, and praying for some redress. The petition, he said, was signed by 41 residents of the Swan district, in support of the petitioner's cause.

The petition was handed in.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) said the signatures were not on the same sheet of paper as the body of the petition. The whole document ought to be in one continuous roll.

THE SPEAKER said he had pointed out a similar irregularity in a petition presented during the last session of Council. Members presenting a petition should see that it is in proper form.

The documents were then handed up to His Honor.

THE SPEAKER: I see there are two petitions here, one from Eliza Tracey, and signed by her, which seems in order; and a second petition, with several signatures attached, addressed to the hon. member, Mr. Rason, which, of course, is highly irregular. All petitions intended for consideration by this House should be addressed to the Legislative Council, and not to individual members. Eliza Tracey's petition appears to be perfectly in order, and that is the only one which it is competent for this House to receive.

Petition received and read.

MR. RASON moved that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the allegations contained in the petition, with power to call for persons and papers. He did not propose at this stage to com-

ment upon the petition, but it would be seen that it contained some very serious charges. Whether those charges were true or not—and it was generally believed in the district where the petitioner resided that there was some truth in them—he thought they ought to be investigated; and a select committee would probably be the most competent body for that purpose.

MR. A. FORREST seconded the motion.

MR. PARKER said, before the House agreed to the motion, it would be well to see whether the prayer of the petition was such that it could possibly be carried out. The petition concluded as follows: "Your petitioner has now placed before "Your Honorable House the simple facts, "which might be added to, but she trusts "that sufficient has been shown to justify "not only her appeal, but to ask that "Your Honorable House will be pleased "to address His Excellency the Governor "either to appoint a Commission to "inquire into the truth of the statements "which are now made, or that a short "Act may be passed remitting the illegal "fine passed on her by Mr. George "Walpole Leake, and revesting the "land in your petitioner." With regard to the latter part of the prayer, it was evident that the Legislature could not pass such an Act. He, himself, knew something about the circumstances connected with the sale of this property; and, if it was sold (as it was indeed sold) by the Sheriff, it was owing to Mrs. Tracey having vested it in Mr. Horgan, in order, he believed, to defraud her own creditors. When the sale by the Sheriff took place, at the instance of the person she had named, the Sheriff had the writ in his possession to obtain payment of the costs out of which she had kept that person. Mr. Horgan sent a letter to the Sheriff, and informed him that the purchasers must be made aware that Mrs. Tracey had no interest in the land, and that it was wholly and solely his. This letter was read out in Mrs. Tracey's presence at the sale, and she made no protest whatever; and it was in consequence of that fact that the persons present did not know whether it was Mr. Horgan's land, or whether there would not be a law-suit before they could get a title to the land after purchasing it. If Mrs. Tracey had protested against Mr. Horgan's right to the land, he believed it would have fetched something about its true value. It was only owing to her being a party to the fraud that the land was sold at such a small price. He might point out that this matter had been before the Supreme Court and fully inquired into, even so late ago as at the last Full Court. In the first instance, the Chief Justice had made an order to set aside the judgment and execution under which the land was sold. Then it came before the Full Court, on appeal, and the Court set aside the Chief Justice's order, and found it had no power to set aside the judgment and execution. The petitioner had thus had the benefit of the opinion of two Judges upon her case; and he would ask whether it would be well for that House to go into an inquiry which could not possibly have any practical result. This land had not only been sold to Stanbury, but had since been parcelled out in small blocks and sold again. He (Mr. Parker) was at the Sheriff's sale, and he thought that, regard being had to all the circumstances, Stanbury gave a fair value for Mrs. Tracey's right in the land. Mrs. Tracey now asked that they should appoint a select committee to inquire into the truth of her statements. The only object of such an inquiry would be to see whether she had any legal foundation for any remedy. The Supreme Court had done that already; and had decided that she had, by her own default, lost her only legal remedy. He trusted the hon. member who presented the petition would understand that he had no objection to a committee being appointed, but it appeared to him that so far as this petition was concerned, they ought to see whether any practical result could be arrived at by appointing such a committee. He should not oppose the resolution; he simply mentioned this, in order that the House might determine whether it was advisable to appoint a select committee, or not.

MR. MORRISON said he knew that a good deal in the petition was perfectly correct, as regarded the land having become Mrs. Tracey's and her having lost it; but he really could not see what the House could do in the matter. Mrs. Tracey was one of those peculiar sort of

ladies who took advice from everyone, and followed none. With regard to the land having been conveyed by her to Mr. Horgan, to enable him to pay the costs in the case of Leake *v.* Horgan, he had been told by Mrs. Tracey that she handed it over to Mr. Horgan to qualify him for a seat in Council. There was no doubt that she had been—he did not know whether he ought to say robbed out of the land; but she had been done out of it. He rather agreed with the hon. member for the Vasse in thinking it was difficult to see what could be done in the circumstances. With reference to what the petitioner said about the "man of the baser sort," it was well known at Guildford that she had evicted this man, and turned his things out into the street, and she was justly punished for it. But he thought there could be no doubt that the land was taken out of her hands improperly, and that she did not get a fair value for it.

MR. RASON said he trusted that hon. members, in dealing with this matter, would not forget that they were dealing with an ignorant and ill-informed woman. There was no doubt she had done wrong—indeed she admitted it—but, because she had herself done wrong it did not follow that she should be quietly told to sit down under the wrongs inflicted upon her by others. Possibly, the committee would not be able to do her much immediate good; but, if the result of the inquiry did nothing more than to expose the conduct of the solicitor whom she employed, and who recently held a seat in that House, it would have a result that might be of some benefit to the whole colony.

MR. VENN said that, after what had fallen from the hon. member for the Vasse, he thought it was very doubtful that any practical good would result from the appointment of a select committee to look into the matter.

MR. SHOLL said it appeared to him this was in reality a matter for the Supreme Court. If Mrs. Tracey's object was only to expose a solicitor, would not her proper course be to refer the matter to the Supreme Court, rather than to the Legislative Council?

MR. RANDELL said that it was not very often that he wished he was a lawyer, but he did wish he was one on this occasion. He believed that, if he were one, he should be inclined to take this case up, and sift it to the bottom. Certain facts had been exposed here which were not disputed, and he felt the greatest indignation when he thought over some of the things which had been stated in the petition, notwithstanding that the petitioner might be an ignorant and ill-tempered woman. If any good could result from this inquiry he thought it ought to be held, and, if necessary, he should be prepared to give his services as one of the committee. He felt the deepest sympathy with the woman, whatever she might be. The revelations made in her petition, even if they had only a substratum of truth in them, were enough to stir up the indignation of any honorable-minded man. She was debarred by poverty and other reasons from going into Court and getting that justice which she sought through her petition; and it appeared to him that the only remedy was either a Commission appointed by the Governor, or a select committee of that House, to inquire into the matter.

MR. LOTON said that happening, as he did, to know something about the circumstances of the case, he should say that if there was one dishonest person connected with it, there were two, and Mrs. Tracey was one of them. He was not prepared to say whether she knew it at the time, but she stated in her petition that a certain libel case was brought against her solicitor, Mr. Horgan, for which he was cast in heavy costs, and that she offered this land to him in order that he might raise a mortgage upon it to enable him to pay those costs. He believed the petition stated that Mr. Horgan demurred to that, but suggested a transfer instead of a mortgage. In any case, he appeared to have got hold of her property for the time being. The hon. member for the Vasse had referred to a case which was brought against a man who was the tenant of the property for which Mrs. Tracey was, at that time, receiving the rent; and Mr. Horgan was then acting as her solicitor, and also the tenant's solicitor. The case went against the tenant—although the same solicitor had advised him to pay her the rent, and even threatened him. The dupe of this precious solicitor and of Mrs. Tracey was cast in the loss of about £200. There was no secret about the matter; he, him-

self, had found the tenant, a decent respectable man, the money to pay the amount with. At the time the conveyance took place, he tried his utmost to see whether Mrs. Tracey had not something at her back out of which this unfortunate individual could be recouped; but the property had been conveyed to her solicitor. [Mr. BURT: "Honest John."] Yes, "Honest John." As far as he had been able to find out, it was no use to take any legal proceedings whatever; the parties had kept within the law, and there was no getting at them. He said to one of the two solicitors he consulted about the matter —that solicitor was now sitting in the House,—that if there was any means of getting at the bottom of the case, and fixing the penalty upon the right person, he would willingly pay £500 out of his own pocket to have it done. Whether the select committee could do any good in the matter was another thing; but no doubt there had been a great deal of roguery connected with it.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL thought the information which the House had received from the hon. members, Mr. Parker and Mr. Loton, showed the necessity for a select committee being appointed. He would remind hon. members that the House was constitutionally the guardian of the rights of the public, and was in duty bound to inquire into any petition properly presented to it, especially having reference to the administration of justice. Even if Mrs. Tracey's allegations were untrue, the House must remember that grave imputations had been cast upon certain persons, the Police Magistrate among them — imputations which would go forth to the colony; and it seemed to him that it would only be fair that the House should deal with this petition. The hon. member for the Vasse was quite correct in saying the House could not carry out the precise prayer of the petition, but they might see whether something could be done to give the petitioner some remedy. He thought they were bound to deal with it in some form or other, and he did not know how they were to deal with it except by a select committee.

The motion was agreed to.

MR. RASON moved that the select committee consist of Mr. Burt, Mr. Randell, Mr. Harper, Mr. Morrison, and the mover.

Upon the suggestion of MR. PARKER the name of the Attorney General was, by leave, added to the committee, and the motion was agreed to.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE OWNERS OF THE S.S. *AUSTRALIND*.

MR. GRANT moved for a copy of the correspondence that had passed between the Government and the owners of the s.s. *Australind*, in reference to an alteration of the terms of the existing contract, under which that steamer called at Wyndham.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said the correspondence asked for would be laid on the table.

CONSTITUTION BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this bill.

Clause 37.—Electoral districts—(adjourned debate):

MR. SCOTT said he had already expressed his intention of moving—in order to make room for a separate member for the Canning and Wanneroo districts, instead of those districts being thrown in with Perth—that the Nelson district should be merged in some other Southern district. He, therefore, now moved that "Nelson" be struck out, and "Perth Suburban" inserted in lieu thereof.

MR. SHENTON could hardly think the hon. member for Perth was in earnest. Anybody who had gone carefully into the electoral sub-divisions of the colony, as prepared in this bill, must acknowledge that Perth and Fremantle had received every attention, and an ample share of representation, returning as they would no less than one-fifth of the whole number of members in the new Parliament. There were other considerations besides population to be taken into account in the matter; were it otherwise, the result would be that the country districts would be completely swamped and have no representation, or voice, in the Government of the colony at all. He must oppose the amendment, considering as he did that Perth was amply provided for under the proposed distribution of representation.

MR. VENN said he also must strongly oppose the amendment, which coolly proposed to wipe out a very extensive district, that of Nelson. [Mr. SCOTT: How many electors?] A very considerable number of electors—certainly more than at Wanneroo, or the Canning. Nelson was one of those portions of the Southern districts which had every claim to be represented in the Legislature as a separate district; and he hoped the committee would not listen to the amendment.

MR. A. FORREST said he should have been prepared to support the amendment to strike out "Nelson" if the object had been to provide a separate member for Northampton and the surrounding country. Northampton was a very important mineral district, and well deserved a member of its own. The Southern districts would have several additional members under Responsible Government, and they might well spare one from Nelson for Northampton.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said as he had taken some interest in arranging these electoral divisions he should like to say a few words with reference to this proposition of the hon. member for Perth. As the Perth electorate was originally arranged by him (the Commissioner of Crown Lands) or by the Government, they proposed that one out of the three members which it was intended to give the metropolitan district should represent the suburban or country portion of the district, as distinct from the town itself. But this arrangement had since been disturbed by the select committee; and, if the country portions of the electorate were not adequately represented under the new arrangement of boundaries, the hon. member himself, and some others, were to blame. The select committee, on the recommendation of the hon. member for Perth and the hon. member for Toodyay, divided the Perth electorate into three divisions, making the central part into one division, and including Wanneroo in another part, and the Canning in the third, thus mixing up the country and the town; whereas the Government had intended to keep them separate. With regard to Northampton, the Victoria district now returned two members, one for Geraldton and one for the Greenough; under Responsible Government there would be four electorates—Irwin, Greenough, Geraldton, and Murchison, each returning a member of its own. There were increases also farther North; so that it could not be said that the interests of the Northern portions of the colony had been neglected. As to abolishing Nelson, he thought they had no right to do so. Nelson was already an important agricultural district, and gave every promise of still greater importance in the future. There was a rising township at Bridgetown; and great things were expected from the tin mines which had been discovered in that neighborhood.

MR. GRANT was surprised at the hon. member for Perth proposing to increase the representation of Perth, which he considered was already provided with more than its fair share of members. He was quite in accord with the hon. member for Kimberley in thinking that Northampton ought to have a member of its own; it was a very rising place; and looking at its importance in comparison with Wanneroo or the Canning, or even the Nelson district, it certainly ought to have a member. The true test of representation ought to be—not population but the producing value of a district, the amount it contributed, or was capable of producing, to the export trade of the colony; and looked at in that light, he thought the Northern part of the colony had some reason to complain at the amount of representation it was proposed to give it, as compared with the South. While on this subject, he should also like to point out that not a single Northern member had been placed on this select committee that arranged these electoral divisions; they were all Southern members, and he thought it showed a very selfish spirit. He could not help regarding it as some slight to the North. It was all very well to say that the House would have a chance of altering the recommendations of the select committee; but they knew very well that these select committees generally managed to carry their point, and he looked upon it as very unfair indeed towards the North that not one Northern member should have been appointed on this select committee. It showed a very selfish spirit in that House. The committee originally proposed by

the Government included two Northern members (Mr. Burt and Mr. A. Forrest); but, when the House balloted for the members to sit on the committee, these names were omitted, and the North had not one single voice on the committee. He thought that was very hard indeed.

MR. SHOLL could not support the amendment. He thought Perth and the country around it would be very well represented by three members. It was one more member than at present; and Wanneroo and the Canning would get their share of this additional representation. He did think with the hon. member for Geraldton that the Southern portions of the colony had a greater share of representation than the Northern portions, taking everything into consideration. There were only four members south of Fremantle at present; but it was proposed to increase that number to eight. He thought we might fairly spare one of these for Northampton. No doubt, in course of time, the Southern portions of the colony would support a large population; but it was not so yet. It would be time enough to increase the representation when that time arrived.

MR. KEANE was afraid that in this matter of increasing the representation of Perth, he and his hon. colleague had another "forlorn hope." When the members for Perth or Fremantle attempted to get anything for either of those two towns, it had become quite the fashion for the country members to sit upon them; and, as these country members had a majority in the House, it was not much use for his hon. friend and himself to try and get anything for Perth. Joking apart, he must candidly and honestly admit that, in his own opinion, both Perth and Fremantle ought to be well satisfied with the provision that had been made for them. He thought, when they took into consideration the claims of every part of the colony, Perth and Fremantle had no cause for complaint when they got one-fifth of the whole number of members for whom seats were to be provided in the new Parliament. Although he should have liked to have followed his hon. colleague in this amendment, still, when he came to look at the matter fairly, he really did not think that the central towns had any cause for dissatisfaction; and, under the circumstances, he trusted his hon. friend would withdraw his proposition.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

MR. DE HAMEL moved that the name of Plantagenet be substituted for "Kojonup." He did not propose to alter the electorate in any way, but it seemed to him that as Plantagenet had been the parliamentary name of the district for the past half a century it would be a pity to abolish it. He would give Albany, as a borough, one member; and divide the country votes between Kojonup and Williams, retaining for the former the old name of Plantagenet.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) pointed out that it would be competent for the hon. member to move in that direction when the schedule came under discussion. He said that to change the name of Kojonup to Plantagenet would be to make a new departure, as the latter name belonged to the country nearer Albany.

MR. RICHARDSON was inclined to think they might find it advisable to adopt some such suggestion as that made by the hon. member for Plantagenet when they came to the schedule.

MR. A. FORREST was opposed to the alteration of the name. These districts had been known by their present names ever since the foundation of the colony.

MR. MARMION thought that if any alteration were to be made, it would be better to leave Kojonup as it was and revert to the old name applied to Albany.

MR. DE HAMEL said his idea was simply to retain the name of Albany for the town.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES said he might be pardoned for reminding the committee that as a matter of fact Kojonup had always been included in the Plantagenet electoral district.

The amendment, on being put, was negatived; and the clause agreed to.

Clause 38.—Electoral laws:

MR. SCOTT asked whether the Government proposed to do anything with reference to altering the law so as to make it illegal for candidates to make a personal canvass, after the day of nomination?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) said the question of in-

troducing an Electoral Bill was under the consideration of the Government, but, so far as canvassing was concerned, he did not think it was the intention of the Government to take any steps in the direction indicated. It seemed to him to be taking too refined an idea altogether of the position of a parliamentary election. There were plenty of traps already in the way of an unsuspecting candidate, without introducing fresh ones. Personal canvassing had been a practice at elections ever since elections had been the mode of selecting representatives; and he thought it was a perfectly harmless way of showing your respect for those whose votes you were dependent upon for your return; and he was afraid it was the only way of securing many people's votes.

MR. RANDELL thought a good deal might be said on either side as to personal canvassing by candidates. He did not understand that it was proposed that canvassing at elections should be prohibited, except on the day of the election, or a few days before. He thought that would be a boon to the candidate himself. On the other hand, it might be said that if a candidate did not himself canvass—in the early part of the proceedings at any rate—and so endeavor to woo the support of the electors, he would simply throw the work of canvassing into the hands of hired agents, some of whom were unscrupulous men, who simply made a living out of it, and who would canvass for anybody who paid them for it regardless of the character of the candidate. He thought it would be a good thing if the services of men like these could be dispensed with, rather than that additional encouragement should be given to them by prohibiting candidates themselves from canvassing the electors at all. He did not know that there was anything dishonorable in a candidate asking an elector for his vote; on the contrary, he thought it was a very proper course to pursue, and, from his own personal experience in Perth, it was a course that a candidate was bound to pursue if he wished to secure his election. Besides, it brought him into personal contact with those whom he sought to represent; and many electors would fancy that a candidate did not care for their votes if he did not personally ask them for it. He remembered being told by a lady on one occasion that as he had not taken the trouble of asking her for her vote, she had given it to another candidate.

MR. RICHARDSON said that the mere fact of allowing a candidate to canvass personally would not do away with the evil referred to by the hon. member, Mr. Randell, that of canvassing by paid agents. He thought it was very derogatory to a man's sense of self-respect that he should be compelled to go about a district touting for votes; yet every candidate had to do it now, simply because the other side did it; whereas, if it were made illegal, there would be an end to it. Although there might be nothing actually dishonorable about it, yet he could see a great deal about it that tended to lower a man's self-respect. He did not believe anyone could go through an election contest now, under this system of personal solicitation, and think as much of himself afterwards as he did before. He did not see anything wrong in a man's committee canvassing for him, and doing their best for him; but when a candidate himself descended to personal touting for votes it must diminish his sense of self-respect, and it often had the effect of making people promise their votes, possibly against their own convictions, when they would not think of doing so otherwise. It destroyed the value of the ballot.

MR. MARMION said one would imagine there was something dishonorable in a candidate seeking to obtain a seat in that House asking an elector for his vote. He did not think so at all. He did not think there was anything more dishonorable in the candidate himself asking a man for his vote than in a paid agent or a committee-man doing so on his behalf. He had borne the brunt of many elections in his day, and he had never thought he had lost any of his self-respect by asking an elector for his support. If the elector thought he deserved it, why should he not promise it? He saw nothing degrading about it—either to the candidate or to the elector. It was not considered so in any other country that he knew of; and he did not see why we should be so very superfine as all that.

Clause put and passed.

Qualification of electors.

Clause 39.—"Every man shall be en-

"titled to be registered as a voter, and "when registered to vote for a member "to serve in the Legislative Assembly for "an electoral district, who is qualified as "follows (that is to say) :—

"(1.) Is of full age and not subject "to any legal incapacity; "and

"(2.) Is a natural-born or natural- "ised subject of Her Ma- "jesty or a denizen of West- "ern Australia: and

"(3.) Possesses within the electoral "district for which he is "registered either a free- "hold estate in possession "at law or in equity of the "clear value of One hun- "dred pounds sterling "above all charges or in- "cumbrances affecting the "same; or

"A leasehold estate in pos- "session of the clear value "of Ten pounds sterling "*per annum*; or

"A lease or license from the "Crown empowering him, "subject to the payment of "at least Ten pounds ster- "ling *per annum*, to de- "pasture, occupy, cultivate, "or mine upon Crown "lands; or

"Occupies as householder a "dwelling-house within "such district of the clear "value of Ten pounds ster- "ling *per annum*; and

"(4.) Has possessed such es- "tate, lease, or license, or "occupied such dwelling- "house for at least one "year before being regis- "tered.

"No man shall be entitled to vote at "any election for the Legislative Assembly, "or for the Legislative Council, when con- "stituted under Part III. of this Act, "who has been attainted or convicted of "treason, felony, or any infamous offence "in any part of Her Majesty's dominions "unless he shall have served his sentence "for the same, or have received a free "pardon for such offence, or a pardon "conditional on his not leaving the "colony;

"Nor shall any man be entitled so to "vote unless at the time of the election he "shall have paid all rates and taxes in "respect of the qualifying estate, lease, "license, or dwelling house, except such as "shall have become payable during three "months next before such election:"

MR. PARKER moved that the words "one hundred" in sub-section 3 be struck out, and "fifty" inserted in lieu thereof; so that the possession of a £50 freehold would entitle a man to be registered as a voter, instead of £100. He thought £50 was quite high enough. It would be seen from the Notice Paper that he had another amendment lower down, to reduce the value of a lease or license from the Crown, and also the householder franchise from £10 to £5. In other words, he proposed to reduce the franchise one-half from what it was in this clause. Of course, if the committee should be of opinion that it would not be desirable to reduce the freehold qualification from £100 to £50, he should not deem it advisable to introduce his other amendments, for he looked upon them all as following upon the same line. If they insisted upon a £100 freehold it would only be fair and logical that they should insist upon a £10 leasehold or household franchise. He moved this amendment with the view of gradually introducing into this colony a more liberal franchise, rather than they should jump at one step from the present somewhat conservative franchise to one of manhood suffrage. He thought there could be no doubt that in the course of a very few years, we should find ourselves compelled to come to that, following in the wake of the sister colonies; but he thought the descent should be a gradual one. He was not prepared to say that even at present, with a judicious system of registration, similar to that in force in Victoria, and with the members of the Upper House elected by persons possessing a comparatively high property qualification —he was not prepared to say that even at present, with those safeguards, there would be any great danger in our adopting manhood suffrage. But he did not propose at the present time to go to that extent. It might be said that the adoption of this amendment would not lead to any large increase in the number of those who would be admitted into the

franchise. He did not know that it would to any large extent; still, he believed, there were many people in the colony who possessed freehold properties that were worth £50 without incumbrance, that did not possess freehold worth £100; and these men might not be householders nor *bonâ fide* lodgers, nor entitled to a vote in any other way. He could not but think that a man who had invested £50 in freehold property had just as much right, as a colonist and as a man, to exercise the franchise as he who had invested £100. The same argument applied to the other amendments, and he mentioned this now as he did not propose to follow on with the others if this fell through. There were plenty of leaseholders, for instance, paying £5 a year who were as much entitled and as well qualified to exercise the franchise as those who were paying £10.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): They are probably householders as well, and would be able to vote as householders.

MR. PARKER: Some of them are not. But, as I said, my principal object in introducing the amendment is not that I think it would admit any large number of additional voters, but that I think it is a concession we ought to make to the agitation that is going on in favor of a more liberal franchise. As I have said, I am not prepared at present to pledge myself to manhood suffrage—and I do not know that I ever should. Looking at the way it is safeguarded and hedged round in Victoria by the system of registration they have there, perhaps there may be no great objection to it; at the same time I think we would do wisely in coming to it gradually, and I look upon this concession as a step towards it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) thought the half-hearted way in which the hon. member had brought forward his proposals must have satisfied the committee that the hon. member hardly expected they would be accepted. This question was fully discussed at the second reading of the bill, and there seemed to be a consensus of opinion that the man who ought to have a vote was the man who had made for himself some decent position in the colony, whether he was a working man or belonged to any other class. He should like to know how many decent working men, even of the poorest laboring classes, there were in this colony who did not pay 4s. a week for their houses. What class were they likely to admit into the franchise if they reduced the qualification to 2s. a week? It was really not worth arguing about. Why should hon. members run after mere phantoms? It was said there were some people here who wanted to lower the franchise even below what was now proposed. But who were they? Mere vagrants, or wanderers on the face of the earth, who had never secured a home or a house for themselves, and who led a precarious sort of existence from place to place. Was it right that men of this class, who were here to-day and gone to-morrow, should exercise the same influence upon the politics of the country as the decent, steady householder, who had made the colony his home? If perforce in the future, when the population of the colony had largely increased, members might be tempted to listen to the demands of these agitators, as they had had to do in the other colonies, let it be so, but at present why should we build up our Constitution on such an unsatisfactory foundation? He thought it would be a mistake, and that all right-minded persons would regard it as such, if they were to lower the franchise at present below the low standard proposed in this bill. He could not help thinking that the hon. member himself, who had put forward these proposals in such a half-hearted way, must be of the same opinion.

MR. BURT said he was not with the Colonial Secretary at any rate. He should go with the hon. member for Sussex. Although it was a good thing of course to have the qualification as high as possible to prevent what the Colonial Secretary designated as vagrants and wanderers, who had no real interest in the colony, from exercising the same influence and the same power in politics as the honest steady-going householder,—although it was all very well to aim at all this, they knew in their hearts that the whole thing was humbug from beginning to end whatever qualification they put down here. They all knew it would have to come off again. Even with the Colonial Secretary himself, if he were to seek election to-morrow, probably the very

first thing he would find himself compelled to promise would be to cut away this qualification, and go in for manhood suffrage, pure and simple. The hon. gentleman would not hesitate to give in. [The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Never.] That had been the teaching of experience. They knew that. And to attempt to set up any bulwarks or safeguards was all rubbish. They would all have to come down. For his own part, he would not have any qualification of any description whatever. It was simply a question of one statesman or party outbidding another for the popular vote. They knew it was so in England, where the rival parties were outbidding each other for the sake of popularity. They were coming to women's vote now. They were not satisfied with admitting all sorts and conditions of men to the franchise, they must get the women in too; and one party would just as soon do it as the other, if there was anything to be gained by it. It was all nonsense to talk about putting up any barriers. They must all come down sooner or later. The sooner the better, he thought. His view was to begin at the very bottom; we should then start with a Constitution such as was never seen before. He believed it would do away with all party strife. It would cut away all ground for agitation. All those gentlemen who lived on politics and hoped to get fat on it, would not have a solitary plank left to stand upon. He would have no qualification for members, and he would have no qualification for electors. We should then live in peace. If the hon. member for Perth pressed all his amendments, he should go with him.

MR. RICHARDSON said that if the opposition that had been shown the other evening to a property qualification for members had succeeded, he really believed he should have felt bound in all consistency to have supported the doing away of this qualification for voters too, for, it appeared to him, if they did away with the one they ought to do away with the other, if they wanted to be logically consistent. He had endeavored to point this out the other evening when the question of the qualification of members was under discussion; and it was unnecessary to repeat the argument. He thought they should guard against making this Constitution Bill of too radical a character to start with. No doubt the time would come—it had been the experience of other countries—when outside pressure would compel politicians here to trim their sails to catch the popular breeze; but he did not think it would be wise for us to come down "flop," at one shot, to manhood suffrage. It would be wiser to make the descent by degrees, easily and quietly. The people themselves would be better informed and have a better notion of political life by-and-bye, and, as they became more politically enlightened, they would be better fitted to be trusted with political power, and better qualified to exercise the franchise.

MR. SCOTT said he had always been inclined to go absolutely against manhood suffrage; and even at the very last election he opposed the idea, but he must confess that he had since become half convinced by the arguments he had heard that it would add a great deal to the stability of this bill, and make very little difference in point of time, if we adopted it now, rather than have to adopt it—as we certainly should—a few years hence. We were bound to come to it; and, if we accepted it now, it would have one good effect—it would put an end to any further agitation in that direction. With regard to the present amendment, he thought if £500 was considered a sufficient qualification for a member, £50 ought to be sufficient qualification for an elector.

MR. DE HAMEL said he agreed with the remarks that fell from the hon. member for Sussex, that unless they met the people in this manner, half-way, the agitation in favor of manhood suffrage would increase, and the very first pledge that would be exacted from members at the next election would be in support of manhood suffrage, pure and simple; whereas, if this compromise were now agreed to, and this concession made to the popular cry, he believed that manhood suffrage would be staved off for some considerable time. So far as he was individually concerned, and looking at the results in the other colonies, he should be in favor of the immediate adoption of manhood suffrage, and so cut away all grounds for further political agitation in that direction. At any

rate, he was certain that by granting this concession to the popular demand they would do a good deal to render this bill acceptable to the people.

MR. MARMION said one heard a great deal from some hon. members about the introduction of manhood suffrage,—why did they not have the courage of their convictions, and propose manhood suffrage at once? If they were so imbued with the belief that it would be a good thing, why did they not have the moral courage to move its adoption, instead of playing with it? He hardly thought they could be in earnest. So far as the proposed reduction was concerned, he might say that, personally, he had been returned on the franchise as provided in this bill, and he intended to stand by it. He did not see much advantage to the country, or any probability that it would increase the number of electors much, by lowering the franchise as now proposed, because there were very few householders in this colony who paid less than £10 a year. As to reducing the value of freehold estates from £100 to £50, he did not think there was much objection to that, though, for his own part, he thought they might well adhere to the bill as it stood. As a general rule the freeholder was a non-resident in the district in which he voted in respect of his freehold; he generally exercised his right to vote as a householder in the district where he resided. After all a £100 freehold was not a large estate to ask a man to hold in order to give him a right to vote, independent of his qualification as a householder—to give him a plurality of votes, for that was what it meant. As to reducing the value of leasehold qualification from £10 to £5, he saw no necessity for it at all. A £10 rental representing 10,000 acres of land in this part of the colony, or 20,000 in the Northern portions of the colony, was not too high a franchise at all. He should certainly prefer, himself, rather than play with the thing—for he considered it was nothing more or less—to vote for manhood suffrage pure and simple, with the restrictions placed upon it as they had in Victoria.

MR. RASON said members knew that at the last general election this question of a reduction of the franchise was one of the burning questions of the day. Every member seeking election had to give his views upon that point; and he thought the House would be with him when he said that the vast majority of the country appeared to be decidedly opposed to manhood suffrage. He represented a country constituency himself, and he knew that when he was placing his views before the electors, and stated that he was prepared to oppose manhood suffrage, his statement was received with the greatest favor; and any statement which he made on that occasion he looked upon as a pledge which he had given his constituents; and he had come there prepared to carry out his pledges to the letter. He was distinctly opposed to any reduction of the franchise; but he thought an extension of it in the direction of lodgers and miners was desirable. That also was a pledge which he gave to his constituents, but he thought the majority of members were distinctly pledged to oppose any lowering of the franchise.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

MR. PARKER said he did not propose to proceed with the other amendments standing in his name.

MR. DE HAMEL moved that sub-section 4 be struck out. This sub-section, it would be seen, required that an elector shall have been possessed of his qualification for at least one year before being registered. The other day he moved a similar amendment with reference to the qualification of members; and in that case the House decided against him. But that was a very different case to this. This sub-section required a man to possess this qualification twelve months before he even could be registered, and, if the committee would look at the practical effect of that, he thought they would go with him in striking out this provision. Take it, for example, that the 30th June was fixed for the registration of voters; now, supposing a man obtained his qualification on the 2nd July, he would have to hold it for twelve months before he could be registered, so that he would have to wait for the 30th June in the year following before he became qualified to have his name put on the register. Supposing a general election took place on the 15th June following, that man although he had really held

his qualification for one year and eleven months would not be entitled to vote. He would get his name on the register, that was all. There might be no other election for four years; so that we should have a man possessed of the necessary qualification for six years (all but a fortnight) before he could exercise his privilege as an elector. He thought members would agree with him—particularly in view of the high value placed upon the voter's qualification—that this would be a great hardship, and, in his opinion, an altogether unnecessary hardship.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) said that to his mind this was the most important of all the conditions with regard to electoral qualifications. For his own part he would rather see what was called manhood suffrage with a long residence than a high property qualification with short residence. Nothing would be easier to stuff the electoral roll with the names of persons who ought not to be there, if people who had only been in the colony a week, or a day, or an hour were allowed to be placed on the roll. If they wanted to keep West Australia for West Australians, and not have the constituencies invaded by a rabble coming, no one knew whence, who arrived here just in time, perhaps, to take part in an election and who, next day, might be out of the colony, they ought to insist upon at least a year's residence. He believed that in one of the other colonies they required a three years' residence. He felt very strongly on this point. The strongest efforts of the ultra-Radicals in England, led by a keen and unerring instinct of democracy, were directed against this residence clause more than against any other part of the qualification question. A very few votes sometimes would turn an election; there might be a hundred sturdy, honest, honorable voters on one side, and an equal number on the other, and the scale might be turned by some thirty or forty worthless vagrants who had no interest in the country and no business to be on the roll. His advice, as an old politician, was to leave this provision in the bill above all others, dealing with the qualification of voters.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

MR. MARMION moved that the following sub-section be added:—

"(5.) Has occupied, for a period "of at least twelve (12) months prior "to registration, a room or rooms, as "a *bonâ fide* lodger, without board, "at a weekly rental of not less than "four shillings per week (4s.); or,

"Has occupied, for at least twelve "(12) months prior to registration, "a room or rooms, as a *bonâ fide* "lodger, with board, and has paid "for such board and lodging not "less than fifteen (15) shillings per "week."

The hon. member said he did not lay claim to have worded this new subsection exactly in the manner in which it ought to be done, but he thought at any rate it was intelligible, and he believed it was in accord with the views of the majority of the committee. There had been a strong expression of opinion—more especially in the centres of population—that it was desirable to widen the franchise in this direction, so as to bring in the *bonâ fide* lodger; and he thought that when they provided for at least a twelve months' occupation of a lodging they provided all the safeguards that were necessary. With regard to the weekly rental of 4s. he had been guided in fixing it at that by the value fixed on the householder's suffrage, namely, £10 a year, which was equivalent to about 4s. a week. Then as regards lodgers, with board, he thought 15s. a week was a fair rate; it was about the average charge for decent respectable board and lodging in Perth and Fremantle, and he did not think they ought to go any lower. This would include all respectable mechanics and working men, and almost every person he thought who had any right to be included in the franchise. Some members might think 15s. too high, and others consider it too low; but he thought it might be accepted as a fair average rate, regard being had to the other classes of qualification. So much had been said, inside and outside, as to the desirability of adopting a lodger franchise that it was unnecessary for him to detain the committee in dilating upon the subject. He would, therefore, leave it to the good sense of the committee. He thought it would be regarded as a liberal

concession outside, and to a very great extent do away with further agitation in the direction of liberalising or widening the franchise, for some time to come. Without it, he believed we should not be long before the cry for manhood suffrage would receive a very considerable accession of strength, and he thought they were all agreed that a judicious extension of the franchise in the direction here indicated would put an end to all present agitation. That was the opinion he had formed from a considerable acquaintance with the state of public feeling on the subject, especially in the town of Fremantle.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said, if he understood the hon. member, he made this appeal on behalf of the towns; it could not affect country constituencies. He thought, himself, that the representation of the towns and centres of population was already fully provided for, and it was open to discussion whether the town residents should really receive any further concessions. In a colony like this, a non-manufacturing country, the prosperity of the town was inseparably wrapped up with the prosperity of the country. If the country prospered, the town progressed; if the country languished, the towns would starve. There was nothing in our towns within themselves capable of supporting a population, and the inhabitants of our towns, therefore, were entirely at the mercy of the country. It was only within the last year or two that Perth and Fremantle had become (so to speak) over-populated — happily many of the surplus population got away, otherwise the result would have been disastrous; and he did not think the House need trouble itself about granting any further concessions to the residents of our towns, in the shape of the franchise. The country was the bone and sinew of the colony; it was upon the country that the centres of population here must depend; and, in his opinion, the town ought to be subservient to the country, rather than the country subservient to the town.

MR. MARMION: What has that to do with this question?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said they were dealing with this question of the franchise in its applicability to the whole colony; but this appeal of the hon. member for Fremantle was avowedly made on behalf of the two principal towns, where a good deal of agitation had been going on of late. They had heard a great deal about not being logical and about not being consistent, in the course of this discussion. Possibly, from a logical point of view, if they gave the franchise to the man who had a wife and family and lived in a house for which he paid £10 a year, they ought also to give it to the man who had no wife and family, but who paid £10 a year as a lodger. A single man, it might be said, had as much right to a vote as a lodger as a man with a family had to a vote as a householder. No doubt that was logically correct. But the difficulty was to distinguish between the *bonâ fide* lodger who really had some claim upon them, and the wandering worthless fellow who to-night lodged in one place, and next week lodged elsewhere, and who had no fixed place of abode. He was glad to find that the hon. member proposed to insist upon a twelve months' residence; but, even then, he thought the concession was one that would only benefit the residents of towns, whereas their aim should be to consolidate the country vote as much as possible. He hoped the committee would adhere to the clause as it stood.

MR. PARKER did not think that the amendment of the hon. member for Fremantle, as at present worded, would be workable. It did not state where this room for which the lodger was paying 4s. a week was to be—whether in the electoral district where he claimed to vote, or whether it need be in the colony at all. There was considerable difficulty in dealing with this lodger franchise in a practical way. The hon. member said this amendment was to apply to *bonâ fide* lodgers only. But what was the meaning of a *bonâ fide* lodger? A lodger was a lodger, and you could not make anything else out of him. It was a very difficult point to deal with. In England, having passed a bill a few years ago dealing with the lodger franchise, they found it necessary to amend it very shortly afterwards, and define the meaning of "lodger." Then, again, this amendment made no provision requiring

the lodger to give proof of his having paid his rent; though the next sub-section provided that the boarder shall have paid his 15s. a week for his board. He thought it would be unwise to go into these details as to how much a week a man paid for his board, and if the hon. member would accept the following suggestion it might do away with much of the difficulty that stood in the way of giving practical effect to his intentions in this matter. He would suggest that the amendment should read thus: that the franchise should be extended to any person who as a lodger had occupied within the electoral district for which he was registered, for at least one year before being registered, a room, or rooms, or lodgings, of the clear annual value of £10 sterling. There was no occasion to go into the question of board at all. Board followed as a matter of course.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): Would you not say room or rooms of the clear annual value of £10, unfurnished? That is the condition imposed in England, the room is to be of so much value, unfurnished.

MR. PARKER said there could be no objection to that.

MR. MARMION said he was willing to accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Sussex; and, with leave, he would withdraw his original amendment.

Leave given, and amendment withdrawn.

MR. MARMION then moved, in lieu thereof, that the following sub-section be added: "As a lodger has occupied within the electoral district for which he is registered, for at least one year before being registered, a room, or rooms, or lodgings, of the clear annual value, unfurnished, of £10 sterling."

MR. RICHARDSON said it seemed to him that this amendment had a somewhat revolutionary tendency. It virtually amounted to manhood suffrage, or next door to it; and he thought they might as well go in for manhood suffrage, pure and simple, as this. There was hardly a man, in Perth or Fremantle at any rate, who did not pay for his board somewhere, and there might be a dozen of these lodgers occupying one common room. The amendment as it now stood was less objectionable than it was at first; but he thought it was a very difficult matter to deal with, in a colony like this.

MR. KEANE thought they should make the clause apply to the circumstances of country districts as well as the towns. He thought there were many young men in the country, living with their parents, who were quite as much entitled to vote as those who were living in lodgings in town. A man who paid for his board with his services ought to have the same privilege as the man who paid for it in cash.

MR. GRANT thought he should be wanting in his duty if he did not rise to oppose this amendment. To his mind they were simply attempting to do what was impracticable. It would lead to roll-stuffing and all sorts of evils. It appeared to him that the towns were the only places which this amendment would benefit in any way. If they wanted to extend the franchise in this direction let them do so as to apply to laboring men on farms, in the country, who, though not lodgers in the sense intended in this amendment, were quite as much entitled to a vote as most of the worthless fellows who would be entitled to it in the towns under this clause. A large influx of people into our towns would enable these 4s. a week lodgers to swamp the *bonâ fide* householder voters. He saw no actual necessity for liberalising the franchise in this direction.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) urged upon the committee the desirability of adhering as near as possible to the bill before the committee. Why should they take this opportunity of revolutionising the electoral system of the colony. The present system had been in operation for many years, and he was not aware that it had worked any great hardship. Why should they seek to upset it now, simply to meet the wishes of those who represented the towns of Perth and Fremantle? He would ask whether it would not be better at this stage—if they were really in earnest in their desire for Responsible Government—to pass this bill as it stood, and as it had been approved by Her Majesty's Government, and (for that reason) as it would be supported by Her Majesty's Government in the House of Commons. If they altered it in any material particular, they must run the

risk of having it sent back again. He took it that one of the first measures of the Government here under the new order of things would be a new Electoral Act, defining clearly not only the franchise but also the laws relating to elections. Would it not be better for us to leave this question of liberalising the franchise until then? Would it not be better to have the whole question dealt with in a comprehensive measure, rather than attempt to tinker with it in this way, simply as a temporary expedient. He thought the best thing they could do, in the interests of the colony, was to pass this bill as soon as possible, and in a shape that would make it acceptable not only to the Government here, but also to the Government at Home, and the British Parliament. They must not forget that this bill would have to pass through the ordeal of the Imperial Parliament before it would be allowed to become law.

MR. SHENTON said if any practical amendment could be framed that would include young men who resided under their fathers' roof in the country, working on their fathers' farms, as well as town lodgers under certain conditions, it would have his support. But, the more he thought of it, the more difficult it appeared to him to deal with this question in this bill. He was inclined to agree with the Commissioner of Crown Lands that the proper time to deal with this question of the franchise and the electoral system generally would be when the new Constitution had come into operation, when we might be able to pass a comprehensive measure that would probably meet all the circumstances of the case. He certainly did not think the present proposal would meet the requirements of country places, so as to extend the franchise to farmers' sons and farmers' servants, residing under their parents' or their masters' roof.

MR. BURT said, although he was very much inclined to go with the hon. member for Fremantle and try to frame some clause dealing with this question, he had come to the conclusion that it would be almost impossible to deal with the subject in this bill. The wording of this amendment would certainly not answer for a moment. It said a lodger who had occupied "a room,"—what was a room? What provision was there for defining or ascertaining what a room was? Would it be left to the revising justices or to their clerk to decide what a room was under this subsection? It must be remembered that the legislation on this lodger franchise question in England had been brought about by the decisions of the Courts as to the proper definition of a lodger. People might occupy a room in a stable, or in a barn,—were they to be entitled to a vote? What sort of occupation had you to prove? Once a week, or mere possession of the key, or what? Or was it to be continuous occupation for a whole year before being registered? Supposing a man occupied two rooms, one in one place and the other in another, would he be entitled to a vote for each? All these questions had been the subject of litigation at Home, and there were decisions upon them, clearly explaining what the law was. But here we had nothing to guide us; and innumerable questions would arise. These lodgers could not be registered under our present electoral law; there was machinery for it. He thought they might leave this question to be dealt with in an Electoral Bill, which might be passed at the next session of Council —for it was evident there would have to be another session of the present Council —and let it come into operation with the Constitution Bill, rather than encumber this bill with all these provisions as to the enlargement of the franchise and the electoral roll.

MR. LOTON merely wished to say that he was strongly in favor—in spite of all he had heard to the contrary—of an extension of the franchise to lodgers, with clearly defined conditions as to residence and other conditions, that would make it applicable to country districts as well as towns; but he had come to the conclusion, before even the hon. and learned member for the North got up, that it would be almost impracticable to introduce all these provisions into this bill. At the same time he thought there ought to be some expression of opinion on the part of the House as to whether members were in favor of an extension of the franchise in this direction or not.

MR. BURT: That could be made by motion.

THE HON. SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said that there was one point that should not be lost sight of: if, by means of an Electoral Bill, it should be decided to extend the franchise in a direction not provided for in the Constitution Bill, the question might arise whether that would not be regarded as such an alteration of the Constitution Act as was contemplated in the 73rd Clause, which provided that no change should be made unless agreed upon by an absolute majority of the two Houses.

MR. BURT believed there was a case on that very point, where it was held by the Court that an alteration of the franchise was not an alteration of the Constitution.

MR. PARKER thought there were many difficulties surrounding this question of a lodger franchise. The suggestion he had made to the hon. member for Fremantle in the amendment now before the committee was simply made in order to elicit an expression of opinion; he did not regard it at all as perfect, though, perhaps, it might serve to carry out their views on the subject.

MR. MARMION said if the House agreed to the principle of the amendment, the necessary machinery for carrying it out might be provided hereafter. It appeared to him that it would apply to the country as well as to the towns, so long as a man occupied a room.

The committee divided upon the amendment, when the numbers were—

Ayes	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	10
Majority for		...	4

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Burt	Mr. De Hamel
Mr. Congdon	Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest	Mr. Grant
Mr. Harper	Mr. Randell
Mr. Keane	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Loton	Mr. Shenton
Mr. Morrison	Mr. Sholl
Mr. Parker	Hon. C. N. Warton
Mr. Paterson	Hon. J. A. Wright
Mr. Pearse	Hon. Sir M. Fraser, K.C.M.G. (*Teller.*)
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Scott	
Mr. Venn	
Mr. Marmion (*Teller.*)	

MR. MARMION moved that the following subsection be added:—

"(6.) Is the holder of a Miner's Right under the Goldfields Act of 1886, and has held such Miner's Right and has resided within a declared Goldfield for at least twelve (12) months prior to registration.

"Provided that no person shall be entitled to vote at any Election by virtue of holding a Miner's Right unless he shall be resident at time of such Election upon a declared Goldfield, nor unless he shall have resided upon the said Goldfield for at least twelve (12) months prior to date of such Election."

The hon. member said it would be unnecessary for him to dwell upon this question of a miner's franchise; every member had made up his mind upon it. He had surrounded it with various safeguards, and he thought the committee might accept it as, at any rate, the basis of an arrangement for giving miners a vote. There seemed to be a general desire that miners should be admitted into the franchise, in view of the development of our goldfields; and he could see no objection to it, provided the necessary safeguards were provided, in the shape of residence and other restrictions.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he should like to point out what would be the effect of this subsection, so that members might clearly understand what they were asked to agree to. The proposal was to give every holder of a miner's right under certain conditions a vote for the district in which he resided; and what would be the probable result? Take, for instance, the Yilgarn and other goldfields included in the electoral district of Toodyay. He believed there were at present about 300 electors in that district, and, if this subsection became law, there would be about 200 additional voters added to the roll at one stroke, and, if the number of people on the goldfields increased, as they expected, this number might be doubled or trebled before the next electoral roll was made up. The result would be that we should have hundreds of miners, who had simply paid £1 for their miner's right, exercising the same privilege as the £10 householders, and, possibly, swamping the voice of the country electors. It might be the same again with Pilbarra; the whole of the present De Grey constituency might be swamped by the holders of miner's rights, with the

result that all other interests would be unrepresented. He did not know whether members would consider that a desirable thing. He did not object at all to the *bonâ fide* miner having a vote, so long as it was limited to the goldfield on which he resided, and did not interfere with the householder vote, in the way he had indicated. But the question was—how were we going to provide the necessary machinery? He did not see how it could be done unless they gave the goldfields a separate member, and let the miner's vote be given for his own representative. He did not think it would be at all a desirable thing to throw all these miners' votes into the balance with the householder votes, in the same district. But that would be the effect of this amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that everyone who knew anything about goldfields must know that when miners were admitted into the franchise, it was in order that they might be able to return their own member for their own goldfields; and he did not think anyone would venture to say that our goldfields had yet attained that importance that they ought to have the right of returning their own member. He could not imagine that anyone would agree to allow the holders of miners' rights, obtainable at any time for £1, to completely swamp the genuine £10 household electors of the district, which, as his hon. friend had pointed out, might be the case if this amendment became law.

MR. RICHARDSON said he did like to hear things called by their proper names—a spade a spade, and not an agricultural implement. If members wanted manhood suffrage why not go in for it, and call it by its proper name, instead of seeking to introduce it by these side winds. It appeared to him that this would be simply manhood suffrage under another name, and manhood suffrage in a very objectionable and one-sided form,—manhood suffrage extended to those districts only in which there happened to be a goldfield. It appeared to him it was all humbug talking about the hardship of miners not having a vote, in the present stage of the development of our goldfields. It was no more hardship for the man who worked with his pick and shovel down a mine than the man who worked with his pick and shovel down a well. One had no more right to a vote simply because he called himself a miner, than the other had; unless he also had the necessary qualification as a householder.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

Clause 40:

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Clause 41.—Electoral lists:

THE HON. SIR J. G. LEE STEERE pointed out that these lists, according to the clause, were to be made out according to the Electoral Acts now in force. He thought it would be as well if the Attorney General were to consider how far this provision would affect the making up of the lists in the event of a new Electoral Act being introduced.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): There may be something in that.

MR. SHENTON moved that progress be reported.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at a quarter to five o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 27th March, 1889.

Geraldton Jetty Extension: How vote of £2,000 expended—Recognition of past services of John and Henry Chipper, mail drivers—Bonus for establishment of Roller Flour Mill—Message (No. 6): Replying to Address re Schedule D (Pensions) of the Constitution Bill—Roads Act, 1888, Amendment Bill: first reading—Constitution Bill: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.