

jected if a smaller amount, say \$2,000 had been voted to members of parliament, still I believe the amount at which the sessional allowance has been fixed is not too great.

If a gentleman is sent to parliament who is not worth \$2,500 a year, it is the fault of the constituency and not of the amount of his allowance and if a gentleman is called to be a member of this honourable House who is not worth \$2,500 a year to the country, the fault lies in the advice given to His Excellency in making the selection and not in the amount of the allowance. I believe that the people of the country, when the matter is fairly, clearly and fully laid before them, will regard it as very small politics to attempt to raise a cry on this subject. It is, in my opinion, unworthy of the press of Canada, when some of the most influential newspapers apply the word grab to the members of parliament because they voted a reasonable amount for their own remuneration. Why should it be so regarded? What other authority could vote an increase of pay to the members but themselves? Is there any other power under our constitution by which the services of members of parliament can be rated except by a vote of their own? I had my attention called, when looking up some other information, to a speech made by Sir Wm. Meredith in the Ontario legislature on this very question, in which he denounced in the strongest terms the application of offensive and opprobrious expressions to members of parliament because they voted to increase their own salaries. In England the principle has recently been adopted by the imperial parliament. The amount parliament has named is a small one, but it is the introduction of the principle and no doubt later on it will be carried further. In the United States, for many years, they have paid five thousand dollars to Congressmen in addition to which there has been a sum of from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars a year provided for clerical assistance, and now I see it is proposed to raise the salary to seven thousand five hundred dollars, leaving the clerical assistance to remain as before. In the Australian commonwealth the amount paid to members is four hundred pounds or two thousand dollars, and Australia is not to be compared with Canada either in wealth or in

the importance of the legislation with which it has to deal. In some of the provinces of Australia,—New South Wales and Victoria—they pay £300 as sessional indemnity. There has been a great deal made of this question in the country, but when the electors come to discuss it fairly, calmly and reasonably, there will not be very serious fault found with it.

I had intended at some point in this discussion to interject a few observations with regard to matters in the speech, and I presume as I am now on the floor of the House, and have disposed of the subject which was more particularly in my mind when I arose, I may as well make the few other observations which I intended to address to the House at a later stage. The hon. gentleman who moved the address made a very admirable speech, to which I had the pleasure of listening very attentively, as well as to that of my hon. friend who seconded it who, I know, always speaks judiciously. But the hon. gentleman who moved the address started by throwing into the arena as a subject for discussion the Autonomy Bill and the fight of last session on that measure. Of course, he did not do it aggressively, but he brought the subject up. For my own part I think, that, important as that discussion was and great as were the principles involved, and however unpleasant the result has been in a constitutional sense to many of the people of the Northwest and how much the co-religionists of the minority in the other provinces of Canada feel that they have not obtained what they were promised or what Sir Wilfrid Laurier proposed to give them, or pretends even yet that he did give them,—I feel that this question might well have been allowed to pass from public discussion for the present.

Some hon. GENTLEMEN—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—We have so many questions of great importance pressing themselves upon us that we cannot afford to be going back over the work of a previous session and bringing it into the next. We must deal with the issues that are coming before us each session as we meet them. My hon. friend did not, however, in his observations refer to one point that I think is of great importance in connection