

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 1 JUNE 1869

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 1 June, 1869.

Cotton Bonus.

COTTON BONUS.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved—

1. That it is expedient to extend the period fixed by Parliament as that at which premiums upon the export of cotton shall cease and determine.

2. That, at the expiration of the year 1869, a further premium of land orders to the value of £2 10s. shall be granted for every bale of good cleaned cotton, weighing three hundred pounds, the growth and produce of Queensland, which may be exported to Great Britain during the year 1870, and to the value of £1 5s. during the year 1871.

3. That the Legislative Council be invited, by message, to concur in the foregoing resolutions.

He said that, in moving those resolutions, he believed it was not necessary for him to enter into the abstract question, as to granting bonuses, as the principle was established by Parliament in 1860. In that year a clause was inserted in the Land Bill that was brought

before the House, giving a land order to the value of £10 for every bale of Sea-land cotton, and a land order to the value of £5 for every bale of inferior cotton exported from Queensland during the three following years. That fact clearly showed that Parliament fully recognised the necessity of establishing new industries in the colony. At that time considerable attention was attached to the subject of cotton cultivation, and a great quantity of land was taken up and planted with cotton. During the first three years, however, there was but a small quantity grown; and in 1863, the year before the Act granting the bonus, expired, resolutions were passed by both Houses of Parliament continuing it. Those resolutions continued the bonus till 1865, at the rate of £10 per bale, for all descriptions of cotton until the end of 1865, and till the end of the present year, at the rate of £5 per bale. This bonus would be paid upon all cotton exported during the present year; but at the end of this year the bonus would altogether cease, unless the Parliament further renewed it. Now, it appeared to the Government that it would be exceedingly unadvisable to stop the bonus suddenly, as to do so might have the effect of disorganising what might now be considered as one of the settled industries of the colony. His opinion was, that cotton cultivation might now be considered as a settled industry, whether the bonus was continued or not; but if the bonus was suddenly stopped, he thought it would be half-a-dozen years before the cultivation of cotton reached its present stage. Now, he would not advocate the continuance of the bonus, if he did not think that, at the end of two years, cotton-growing would have reached such an extent that it would be self-sustaining, and that bonuses would no longer be required. If the House would permit him, he would enter into a few statistics, for the purpose of showing honorable members the rate of advancement that had taken place in the matter of cotton cultivation. As he had said, it was in 1860 that the Act granting a bonus on every bale of cotton exported was passed; but, in 1861, only one bale was exported. In 1862, there were 48 bales exported, and 105 bales in 1863. In 1864, there were 129 bales; in 1865, there were 496 bales; in 1866, there were 656 bales; and 1,376 bales in 1867. It could be seen by those figures that the quantity had rapidly increased every year, up to 1867. During those seven years, the experience that had been acquired, as to the most suitable soil and the best mode of cultivation, induced a larger number of agriculturists to enter upon cotton-growing; and the result was that, in 1868, there were 6,032 bales exported, being an increase over the previous year of no less than 4,655 bales. The area of land under cotton last year was 8,149 acres, and this year there was 11,184 acres; but, owing to the unfavorableness of the season, it was not expected that the yield

per acre would be so large as it was last year. During the first five months of 1868 there were 1,031 bales exported; and during the corresponding period this year the quantity exported was 1,211 bales—being an increase of 180 bales over the first five months of last year. The bonus, as honorable members were aware, was £5 per bale of 300 pounds weight;—that was at the rate of four-pence a pound. Though the cotton-growers were in good spirits, and most of them were pretty sure they would be able to grow cotton profitably, a great proportion of those at present engaged in this industry, had only started lately, and, consequently, had not derived much benefit from the bonus; and, it was supposed, that to drop the amount all at once, from £5 to nothing, would very seriously interrupt the progress of cotton cultivation. The beneficial operation of the bonus was clearly shewn by the fact, that while in 1867 there were 1,300 bales exported, there were 6,032 bales exported in 1868—or five times as much as during the previous year. That circumstance, also, showed that three-fourths of those engaged in the cultivation of cotton had not derived the benefit of the bonus for more than one year; and as it required two or three years to become thoroughly acquainted with the proper mode of cultivating cotton, those who had just entered upon this industry had yet a very great deal to learn. Now, he thought that the graduated scale he had proposed for the reduction of the bonus was a very reasonable one indeed; and ought to be accepted by the House, as well as by every one concerned in the cultivation of cotton. Although he had no doubt the scheme would be attacked from both sides of the House—on the one hand it would be contended that the industry ought to maintain itself; and, on the other, it would probably be contended that the fall from £5 to £2 10s. was too great a reduction all at once—and, he must confess, that it was his own opinion that it was too great a fall—but still, he thought, that, under all the circumstances the proposal should be accepted as a reasonable one. He had shewn that, last year, the quantity of cotton grown was nearly five times as much as it was in 1867, and during the next two or three years they might expect that there would be a steady and greater increase. But, last year, the quantity exported was, in round numbers, 6000 bales, and taking the price at £12 per bale, or half what it was six years ago, when cotton cultivation was commenced here, the export amounted to the value of £72,000;—so that, from the article of cotton alone, that amount was added to the receipts of the colony during 1868; and it had also to be borne in mind that the whole of that amount was spent in the colony. He thought he would not be far off the truth if he were to say that, including the children in the families of cotton-growers, every bale of cotton sup-

ported one person;—in other words, the six thousand bales supported six thousand of the population. Now, if the same ratio of increase in production were continued for a short time, honorable members would see that cotton-growing would become a most important interest, and provide employment to a great number of people. The cultivation of cotton possessed, to his mind, one great advantage, and that was that a large proportion of those engaged in this pursuit were living on their own property, and not so much dependent on the receipt of wages; and that, he believed, was the best kind of population they could have. To show the beneficial effects of encouraging the growth of this product, he would briefly refer to the slow progress, at first, of the growth of cotton in the Southern States of America. In the first three periods of six years—that was, from 1748 to 1754; and, again, to 1770—only a few bags of cotton were exported annually. In 1770, there were only ten bags exported; but, from 1784, cotton began to appear as an article of regular export from the Southern States. In the last-mentioned year, only eight bags were exported; and in 1792, eight years afterwards, only three hundred and fifty bales were exported. For nine years cotton-growing in America struggled on, before it made the progress it had done in this colony in three years. In 1792, as he had stated, the quantity of cotton exported from the United States was three hundred and fifty bales; but next year, in 1793, the quantity exported was twelve hundred and twenty; and in 1794, there were four thousand bales;—so that from 1784 to 1794, being a period of ten years, cotton-growing in America had struggled on before it reached the stage it had reached, in this colony, last year. That was, it took ten years for America to reach the same position, from a like position, as this colony had reached in five years. In 1797, the export from America reached 9,471 bales; in 1798, to 23,400 bales; in 1799, to 24,000 bales; and in 1800, to 44,475 bales. Now, here they had got over the difficulties that always attended any new industry at the outset; and had reached that position which justified them in believing that, in a few years, cotton-growing would not any longer require to be fostered. At present, however, most of the main points in connection with cotton cultivation the growers of cotton were still in ignorance about, and one of those was, as to whether they should prune the plants or not every year. However, he had no doubt that the experience the growers would gain in the next half-dozen years would enable them to export several thousands of bales in one year. Perhaps it might be advantageous that he should take that opportunity of saying a word to cotton-growers; and it was, that they must not rest satisfied with producing what might be called cotton, but that they must direct their energies to the pro-

duction of a superior article. He believed that the effect of the climate of this colony on cotton was such as to render it from a fourth to a third more valuable than the cotton exported from New Orleans; and, as a proof of that, he might mention the fact that last year's crop was realising in the Liverpool market higher prices than the New Orleans cotton. He believed that if the farmers put forth their energies to produce cotton of a superior quality they would, with the advantages of the soil and climate, succeed in producing an article that would realise from two-pence halfpenny to three-pence per pound more, in the Liverpool market, than the New Orleans cotton. They ought, of course, to be careful in the selection of the seed they used, and they would require to give close attention to other important details; and if they did so they would be able to add greatly to the value of their cotton. He was sure those engaged in the growth of cotton would take those remarks in good part; and he might say that he was the more emboldened to make them, because of what had come under his notice in respect of the article of wool. He had noticed that the wool grown upon some stations did not average more than £10 per bale in the English market, while the wool grown upon other stations, owing to the care and attention that had been bestowed on it, was of such a superior quality as to realise £35 per bale. Such a difference in price ought to be taken, by both wool and cotton-growers, as a proof of the advantages arising from the production of articles of the best quality.

Mr. WALSH said he had never regarded this question of cotton bonuses otherwise than as a tax upon those of the community who were not cotton-growers; and with all deference to the honorable gentleman who introduced the resolutions—and introduced them by an argument which he must say was a very lame one indeed,—this was not so much a bonus to cotton-growers, as it was a bait for the support of certain honorable members who represented cotton-growing districts. He could easily understand that there were certain honorable members who would feel it to be their bounden duty, on behalf of their constituents, to support the resolutions; but how any other honorable member, who was not so circumstanced, could vote for them, he could not understand. But he could tell the House that he did not intend to vote for them, although his constituents expected that he should. So far from voting for those resolutions, he would rather cut off his right hand than vote for them. The proposition, reduced to its merits, came to this—that they should tax 97,000 persons for the benefit of 3000. A lamer argument than that put forward by the honorable the Treasurer, in support of the motion, he never heard advanced in support of any motion whatever. Indeed, he experienced a difficulty in apprehending what

was the reason upon which the honorable gentleman's argument was based. The argument seemed to rest on a number of disjointed bases. One consisted of contrasting the rapid progress of cotton-growing in this colony, under the bonus system, with the slow progress of cotton-growing about a century ago in America, without a bonus. Then the honorable gentleman told the House that all those cotton-growers were living in comfortable circumstances, and most of them on farms of their own. The other points put forward by the honorable gentleman were equally futile. If cotton-growing had become the staple product, he might say the wealth, of the Southern States of North America, without any bonus, why was it considered necessary to resort to a bonus for the cultivation of cotton here, in a colony possessing a climate that had such an effect upon cotton as to make the article grown in this colony worth about three-pence per pound more than New Orleans cotton—according to the honorable gentleman's own statement. Then, again, if the cotton-growers were living in comfortable circumstances, and most of them upon farms of their own, why was it considered necessary upon that ground to give them a bonus? He had never heard such arguments put forward. Every stage of the honorable gentleman's argument seemed to him to carry its own refutation along with it. Now he must repeat that he would not be a party to taxing 97,000 people for the benefit of 3000. The honorable the Treasurer said there was one person supported by every bale of cotton that was produced. Well, granting that that was the case, the same might be said with respect to every bale of wool that was produced, or every cask of tallow. Now, he would grant that what the honorable member said with respect to the number of persons engaged in connection with cotton-growing was correct; but was that any reason why 97,000 people should be taxed for the special benefit of 3000. He must protest against such a thing. No one more than he could desire to see a large cotton-growing population settled throughout the colony; but he could not consent to the taxation of the rest of the community for their special support. The honorable gentleman said that he asked for the bonus to be renewed, because a great proportion of the cotton-growers in the colony had been engaged in that pursuit for only one year. Now, proceeding upon that basis, the reason for the renewal of the bonus would never cease to exist, for there would always be some one going into the cultivation of cotton for the first time, every year. That argument, if it held good in 1869, would hold equally good in 1879, and again in 1899. In contrasting the progress of cotton cultivation in America with its progress in this colony, the honorable gentleman ought to have remembered that it was owing as much to the American war, as to the bonus, that cotton-grow-

ing had extended so rapidly in this colony. The bonus, by which it was really fostered, was the high price obtained for cotton in the English market, in consequence of the ports of the Southern States being blockaded. The honorable gentlemen also argued that this industry should be bolstered up, because there were from 6000 to 7000 persons engaged in it. Now, in gold digging, there were about 10,000 persons engaged, and what was the law as regarded them. Instead of receiving a bonus on their industry, which was of a more critical nature than cotton-growing, they were subjected to an export duty on the article they produced. To the 7000 persons engaged in one pursuit they gave a bonus; and on the 10,000, engaged in another pursuit, they placed a special tax. Now, he objected to bonuses altogether. He objected to the principle of them, because it led up a class of the population to trust, not to their own industry and the increase of the soil, but to what they could get from Government—on political grounds. Responsible Government seemed to be degenerating in this colony into a question of bonuses. It might be in the shape of a Pastoral Relief Bill, or an extraordinary Land Bill, or an Immigration Bill; or, as in the instance before the House, a land-order bonus; but, more or less, it was political bait, and that seemed to be the position upon which the existence of responsible Government rested in this colony. The honorable gentleman also told the House that those who grew cotton were very comfortable. Well, if that was the case, where was the need of giving them a bonus? If they were badly off he could understand giving them a bonus; but he could not understand giving them a bonus because they were well off. Why give them a bonus, more than the successful squatters? The honorable the Minister for Lands, the other day, expressed himself in very indignant terms because of the comfortable circumstances in which some squatters maintained themselves now-a-days, in having carriages and town-houses, and so forth. Now, that being the case, how could the honorable gentleman, the Minister for Lands, support a proposition for giving a bonus to those who were already in a comfortable position, and well off, having farms of their own? Why not give to the honorable member for Dalby, or the honorable member for the Mitchell, a wool bonus? It would be as reasonable, and as justifiable, as to give those cotton-growers a bonus because they were people enjoying a large amount of comfort. But who were those people? They were those who had cost the country a large amount to bring them here, and who, in addition to that, had received land orders, by means of which they had taken up the land upon which they were now located. Now, having given them passages to the colony, and land to sit down on, the country was called upon to subsidise them in their industry. He was not now using his own arguments,

but those of the honorable the Premier, and of the honorable the Minister for Lands. It appeared to him quite monstrous that those honorable gentlemen should advocate exactly the opposite measures now to those they formerly advocated. What did the honorable the Premier say in 1864 on this very question? He said—

“The principle enunciated by the honorable member for Eastern Downs, Mr. McLean, was a correct one. He (Mr. Lilley) considered that an attempt was being made to nurse up an enterprise which had been found to fail. The only result, in his opinion, of the encouragement, as it was called, which had been given to the culture of cotton, had been to place a quantity of land in the hands of schemers, who would not otherwise have been in a position to obtain it.”

Now, he was sure that if the honorable the Premier were sitting on the opposition side of the House at the present time, he would oppose this motion, if brought forward by another Ministry, as strongly as he opposed cotton bonuses in 1864; and besides saying that the land was in the hands of schemers, he would say that the cotton bonuses also were in the hands of schemers. Well, in 1865, the honorable gentleman again opposed the granting of bonuses. He found, at page 526 of “Hansard,” that, in a House of twenty-seven, he was one of eighteen who voted against a motion for extending the duration of the cotton bonus to the end of the year 1867. Now, what did the honorable member say on the subject in 1867? He said—

“I was also opposed to cotton bonuses; and in fact, when I listened to the speech of the honorable member for Rockhampton, it seemed to me like an old echo.”

The honorable the Minister for Lands invariably voted against cotton bonuses, and the honorable the Minister for Works also voted against them. That honorable gentleman, as he found by the third volume of “Hansard,” said, in reference to this subject—

“That as far as his experience went, the seasons were always unpropitious.”

Now, what would the people say when they found those gentlemen who had always opposed this aid being given to cotton-growers, bringing forward this motion, and, in doing so, command the votes of six or eight honorable members who were bound to advocate such a measure. He would himself vote against the motion; and, he thought, the wisest thing the House could do would be to throw it out, in order that immigrants arriving in the colony might not be deluded into entering upon cotton-growing under the belief that the bonus would be continued from time to time.

Mr. ARCHER said that at the outset of the few remarks he felt called upon to make with reference to the motion before the House, he would frankly acknowledge, that if two years ago he had been called on to vote on this question he would have voted against it;

but, as a man grew older he might possibly gather wisdom. Now, his opinion was, that, before the House came to any decision on the motion, it would be a pity if those gentlemen who represented the districts that would be benefited by the bonus, did not get up and state what were their reasons for asking for its continuance; because, though it was a Government motion, and had been brought forward by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, they all knew that that honorable gentleman could not be perfectly acquainted with the working of the bonus system, or the effect of its continuance, or the benefits that would arise from its continuance; and he was anxious to be informed on those and some other points. On one matter he did not require to be informed, and that was as to the advantage Queensland would derive from the establishment of an agricultural interest. A great deal had been said as to the squatters being opposed to the establishment of agricultural pursuits in the colony. Now, that opinion must have arisen from some misunderstanding, or from some strong expression used in the heat of debate. But, he might inform the House that he had been engaged in agricultural pursuits as largely, perhaps, as any honorable member in the House. He had been engaged in the cultivation of sugar and coffee, and that on a large scale; and he knew, therefore, as much, practically, about the cultivation of those articles as any man in Queensland. He did not know much, practically, about the cultivation of cotton, though he had seen that industry also carried on; but he had been engaged in the growing of sugar, coffee, and tobacco—largely in coffee—and he, therefore, could testify to agriculture being better for a country than squatting. Agriculture encouraged the settlement of a large population, and led people to live near to each other. There was not the slightest doubt that the resolutions before the House, if they proved anything at all, proved that cotton-growing had not been a success in Queensland. He was not going to push that argument further than was fair; but, in asking for a continuation of these bonuses, after they had been granted for eight years, he thought those honorable members who were interested in the question should get up and show that cotton-growing could be carried on profitably; and that the withdrawal of this encouragement would prevent the establishment of that industry in such a way that cotton would become an article of export upon a large scale. Until he had heard some statement to that effect he should hesitate to vote for the extension of the bonus. A good deal had been said about class legislation; but he would ask whether any class legislation had ever been attempted of such a direct character as this? It was really a case in which a portion of the capital of the country was appropriated distinctly for the benefit of a class. He did not

say this in opposition to the extension; but he wished to know whether cotton planters, with the assistance of this bonus, were likely to become well-to-do, and employers of labor, and whether their progress would be checked by its withdrawal. For, he was ready to admit, that the decline or progress of any interest of this sort would affect the whole community. The establishment of a new export must, of course, be an advantage to the colony; and he should, therefore, like to hear the opinions of those gentlemen who were interested in the pursuit. No industry of this nature would ever be profitable to those engaged in it unless it could command a market in England; and, therefore, if it were likely to be established, it would be the duty of this House to assist in producing that result. He, also, wished to hear from honorable members who represented these cotton districts whether, if this extension were granted, they would come down to the House at the end of the period mentioned by the Colonial Secretary, and ask for a further bonus, or whether they were prepared to state that this was a final appeal to the House for the thorough and permanent establishment of cotton-growing in the colony. If not, if they intended to come down year after year and ask for an extension of this bonus he should be compelled to vote against the resolutions, because it would then be clear that the cultivation of cotton could not be carried on without fictitious aid. If, on the other hand, it could be shown that, in consequence of the seasons, or other causes which had operated hitherto, it had become necessary to ask for this assistance, then he thought very few honorable members would refuse to grant it, especially as the concessions were made in land; although he believed that, as the land orders were transferable, and could be used for the purchase of country and suburban land, they were nearly as good as money. He thought the honorable member for Maryborough had been very hard upon the Ministry for supporting now what they had opposed on a former occasion. It was perfectly fair for the honorable member to use that argument, for no one liked to be twitted with changing his opinions; but, as the honorable member was himself in the same boat with the Government, he did not pay much attention to it. People changed their opinions upon many subjects as they grew older and became more experienced. He should not make up his mind to vote for or against the resolutions until he had heard what effect an extension of the cotton bonus was likely to have.

Mr. FORBES said he could not agree with those honorable members opposite to him, who had spoken against the extension of this bonus. He might commence by stating that he had the great political economists of the day on his side. John Stuart Mill advocated encouragement to new industries, and that argument had been urged at the time the

Sugar Distillation Bill was under discussion, for the differential duty in favor of that article of export was quite as much encouragement as the cotton bonus was to cotton. The speech of the honorable member for Maryborough, on that occasion, would be found to embrace opinions widely different from those he had just given utterance to; and he recollected that he as well as other honorable members, who were entirely opposed to that measure, so materially changed their opinions before the debate was over, that the resolution was agreed to without even a division. He would state in reply to what was stated by the honorable member for Rockhampton, that the cotton bonus was never really made use of in this colony until the year 1866. It must be known to all honorable members that the population of the colony was so demoralized up to that time—every man, woman, and child in it living upon the public money—that agriculture was almost unknown. It was only the necessities of the times, which drove people to seek their living by the production of cotton. Before that year they had found that they had no market for the ordinary crops of maize, potatoes, and vegetables, and with the assistance of the bonus they commenced gradually to grow cotton. Independent of the cotton exported, he maintained that the promotion of this industry had done more towards the settlement of the colony, than all the land laws put together. It had settled a large population on the land, not a shifting population, as on the gold fields, here to-day and gone to-morrow, but a class of industrious farmers, who cultivated their own land and would leave it their children after them. Those were the people who ought to be assisted in this way, and he hoped the time would come when other industries would require similar assistance, and the colony would feel the want of some sort of protection measure in order to establish manufacturing industries in it. Honorable members might differ from him in reference to the protective policy which he thus shadowed forth, but he believed it would do more good to the colony than any land or immigration Bill. His constituents he knew would say so—they would object to remain always hewers of wood and drawers of water, producers of the raw material only—instead of becoming manufacturers and exporters, and vieing with America and other great countries. He had been told that in Victoria during the late crisis, the depression was felt less than in any other colony, because there was so many industries to employ the population. The honorable member for Rockhampton wished to know, if this would be the last appeal of the kind? He repeated that, virtually, this encouragement had only been in force for two years, and in that two years it had worked wonders, and had been the means of settling an industrious and self-reliant population on the land. He believed there was nothing that would tend to make

the people more self-reliant, than an accumulation of the knowledge necessary to the furtherance of this object. He believed the greater portion of the cotton-growers were still ignorant of the proper mode of cultivation, and that without some further information on the subject, many of them would probably leave it in disgust, after another season like the last. He had been informed by several persons interested in that pursuit, that, owing to circumstances over which they had no control, the last season had been ruinous to them, while again others had obtained a fair crop; and he thought therefore that until the cultivation of cotton was better understood, it would be unwise to withdraw the protection afforded by the cotton bonus. It would be found that in other countries similar difficulties had been met. Take, for example, the American colonies at the time of their independence. In the year 1793, in consequence of a resolution passed in Congress in 1791, the quantity of cotton exported was so small that the Government of the United States did not think it worth their while to enter it on their list of exports at that time. But he found that from 1793 to 1794, there was great attention paid to the cultivation of this article, which showed that the Americans had learned a lesson of self-reliance from the hardships, trials, and sufferings they endured, and that they took that honest and straightforward course which had made them one of the greatest nations in the world. The cotton exported in 1793 was 1,200 bales; but in 1794, it amounted to 4000 bales, which showed that about that time it became an article of exportation. It was to the credit of this colony that a similar rapid stride had lately been made in the same direction; and it was to the credit of a paternal Government that the cotton bonus was offered as an encouragement to the growers. He believed a bonus of this sort would redound to the credit of any country, because it would be the means of doing a great deal of good at a very trifling expense. It did more to settle a population on the lands than the land laws had previously done; for they had led to extravagant speculation, and the lands had been so locked up that it was impossible to make agriculture a success. But that was now altered, and the land was being cultivated and settled upon by an industrious and permanent population. These were the very men to make the colony of Queensland. When the public works were stopped in this colony, and in Brisbane there was a starving population depending upon charity, it was found that in the cotton districts every man was employed. The cultivation of cotton had preserved numbers of persons from distress, and prevented them from seeking Government aid. He believed, if the bonus were suddenly removed or cut down, the effect would be baneful to the colony. But he thought it might be reduced more gradually than was proposed

by the resolutions before the House—say, for instance, £3 per bale the first year, £2 the second year, and £1 the third year; and he intended to move an amendment, in committee, to that effect. He looked upon this bonus as an encouragement to which no free trader could take objection. It was not protection, in its true sense, but rather the liberal encouragement of an important interest. He appealed to the mercantile men, who must support it because it was necessary to their own interests; he appealed to the mechanic and the laborer, because it would find them employment; and to the general colonist, because it would in every way add to his prosperity, and promote the general interests of the colony. It was upon these grounds that, he maintained, the resolutions should be supported. The honorable member for Maryborough had alluded to this bonus as being offered as a concession to one section of the House; but he thought there was not a member in the House who had more fully concurred in the principle it embraced than that honorable member. He was glad to hear that many of the honorable member's constituents differed with him upon this point; he believed they were right in doing so, because they knew that it would be unwise to check an industry which would be of benefit to the whole colony. He did not wonder at their disagreeing with the honorable member on this subject; and he thought there could be no stronger proof adduced in support of this principle than that the bulk of that honorable member's constituents were in favor of it. Then the honorable member said that an interest which had been fostered for nine years, and was not able to stand alone, must be regarded as a failure. He did not agree with that argument of the honorable member, for he had shown that, up to the year 1866, the people of the colony lived upon the public expenditure, and had no interest in developing the resources and capabilities of the land. The honorable member also asked why the whole colony should be taxed in order to benefit some three thousand persons; but, if those three thousand persons benefited the whole colony, surely that argument was illogical. Then he talked about impoverishing the colony; but how could the establishment of an article of export impoverish the colony? In settling a fixed population on the land, it benefited the whole community. He must remind honorable members that they had nothing else to look forward to but the cultivation of wool, and the country was languishing for want of new industries. Then the honorable member compared the gold-digging population with the cotton and sugar growers—persons of a totally different class, who had no feeling at all in common with them—men who come to the colony merely to dig up gold, and did nothing to benefit the country unless it was in paying for police protection for life and property, and were

ready to leave the colony when any other attraction offered. The honorable member for Maryborough asked who these cotton-growers were who would be benefited by this bonus? They were colonists of Queensland, men whose interests were identical with those of the colony. There was no comparison to be drawn between them and the diggers, who left their families, came here only for a short time, and took all their gold out of the country. With regard to the remark of the Premier about the land bonus having got into the hands of schemers, he had no doubt that was the case, to a great extent, up to the year 1866, because there was a great deal of speculation in land, and there was really no agricultural population in Queensland at all up to that time. He could recollect the scheming and struggling for corner allotments, and therefore he believed the honorable member was quite right in that remark. He thought he had succeeded in showing the benefits which would accrue from the establishment of an agricultural interest in this colony, and the settlement of a fixed population on the land, which was being brought about by the encouragement afforded by the cotton bonus; and he believed that the honorable member for Maryborough, from the way he had argued, really entertained a conviction of the importance of encouraging this industry, and would support the resolutions before the House. He looked upon them as a step in the right direction; and believing, as he did, this would be the last time that any similar resolutions would be brought forward, he hoped the House would assent to them.

Mr. THORN said he thought the honorable member for Rockhampton might have found answers to his questions in the speech of the honorable Colonial Treasurer. For his part, if he thought the cultivation of cotton would not prove a success in this colony, he should not support the resolutions before the House; but he felt convinced that, before many years were over, there would be vessels taking away such large quantities of cotton that, in conjunction with other industries, such as sugar-growing, and the distillation of rum, it would materially advance the prosperity of the colony. It was because he believed that cotton-growing only required a little further encouragement, to establish it permanently, that he supported the resolutions. He should be glad to see cotton cultivated, not only in his own district, but in many other parts of the colony which were equally adapted to its growth. He had seen some cotton grown at Chinchilla, on the Darling Downs, not far from the station of the honorable member for Maranoa, which brought three shillings and two-pence per pound in the English market. That was four years ago, while the cotton grown in his district only fetched, at that time, one shilling and six-pence per pound. Then again, the cotton grown at Maryborough fetched two shillings and six-pence that year;

and he was really surprised that the honorable member for Maranoa and the honorable member for Maryborough should be the only two members who opposed the cotton bonus. The districts of Ipswich and East and West Moreton were not, therefore, the only districts in the colony suitable for cotton-growing. There were also Gladstone, Port Curtis, Bowen, and other places equally adapted to its cultivation. He did not, however, go quite as far as the Colonial Treasurer, for he thought the sudden jump from four-pence to two-pence would deter many persons engaged in this industry, and prevent other persons from embarking in it; and he should have been far more pleased if the reduction had been more gradual—say from three-pence to two-pence, and then down to one penny. He did not think this year's crop would prove quite as good as the last, but he found that in almost every instance the number of acres under crop was greater. The honorable member for Maryborough had asked who were the persons who would benefit by this bonus, but he thought the honorable member for West Moreton had fully answered that question when he said they were the settlers; and it was not fair to compare them with a class of men who came here to dig gold, and rushed away as soon as they got their pile, without doing any good to the colony. He believed it would not be long before as much cotton was exported from Queensland as from the Southern States of America. To compare one interest with another—was not the sugar interest equally protected? There was a duty upon refined sugar which amounted to something like £5 or £6 to the acre, besides which, there was the distillation of rum from molasses. He thought it was quite right to protect these industries until a sufficient quantity of the article was raised in the colony to make them articles of export. With regard to the cultivation of cotton, for the first five years, growers did not know what kind of cotton to grow, and were not as successful as they had been lately. It was only last year that cotton-growing was commenced in earnest. When people found out that the lavish expenditure upon public works had ceased, they began to settle on the land; and he believed if they had done so two years before, there would have been no necessity to come down to the House to ask for an extension of the bonus. But as that was not the case, they asked to have this protection continued for a short time longer, in order that this branch of agriculture might be placed on a permanent footing. He did not see why the House should not at once go into committee upon these resolutions, and he should be glad to support any amendment which made the reduction more gradual.

Mr. THOMPSON said he was one of those men who had lost a great deal of money by cotton-growing;—not that he believed it was not an industry which would not ultimately

pay, but he knew nothing about it at starting. They had formed a company in Ipswich, called the Ipswich Cotton Company, when the £10 per bale was offered as a bonus; but that company would not have been started if it had not been for the confluent circumstances of the American war and the bonus offered in this colony. That was the first step of any consequence which was made, in this part of the colony, to grow cotton for exportation. Now, the first difficulty they had to contend with was that the seed was nothing but rubbish. It was presented to them by Sir George Bowen, who got it from Manchester, and it was totally unsuitable;—it was neither Sea-island, Egyptian, or New Orleans, but a mixture of different sorts, and of a very inferior character. That was the first difficulty, and the next was that they knew nothing about the cultivation of cotton. For instance, in a field of twenty acres, they had ten men hoeing, when a horse-scurf and two men would have been quite sufficient. Then they found that agriculture could not be conducted with profit by a company. The old adage, that “a man must either hold or drive if he wants to thrive by the plough,” was applicable in their case. His experience, therefore, was that cotton-growing was not profitable at starting, though he believed it would ultimately pay if properly carried out. Cotton-growing would have to contend with the same difficulties here as they had in America—with the bollworm, the caterpillar, and other pests. Then, again, there was a difficulty which was difficult to guard against;—the rainy season sometimes came on during picking time, and some varieties of cotton were so injured by the wet that the pods dwindled away to nothing. Again, experiments had been made whether pruning was beneficial or not, and whether short or long pruning paid the best; in fact, they had been doing little else but making experiments for the last nine years. They had been gradually learning the mode of cultivation, and, had it not been for the encouragement offered by the bonus, they would never have arrived at their present position, which was that of exporters of cotton. They were now, year by year, introducing capital into the colony by this export, which was expended in the purchase of those articles which could not be produced here. Cotton-growing had thus become a benefit to the whole country in the same way as wool or any other export. He held in his hand a memorandum which could give a very fair idea of the cotton crop of last year, which was a very good average year. This year, he was sorry to say, it was a partial failure, in consequence of the bollworm, the caterpillar, and the rain, which seemed to rot the immature pods, and made them disappear with marvellous rapidity. His figures showed the returns from cotton grown on twenty-five acres. A yield of twenty-two bales had been sold in England

for £314 4s. 9d. That was the total quantity produced; but there had also been grown sufficient corn to feed all the stock on the place, besides hay and vegetables, which must be taken into consideration. The expenses which had been incurred were, for shipping, £59 9s. 10d.; paid for picking, £46; for ginning, £23; and for bales, £6. That gave a total cost of £134 9s. 10d. Besides that the grower had to pay for turning up the ground, the rent of land, &c., and also wages for nine months in the year, say £60, and, of course, worked himself, so that the labor of two men was calculated, with horses, and the necessary implements, and a profit was shewn upon one year's transactions, of £179 4s. 9d., the material employed being the ordinary implements used on a farm, such as plough, harrow, scufflers, &c. No bullocks were used, as it was found that horses did equally well. That, he thought, was a fair idea of what cotton cultivation would do in an average year. But that was only an average; some men were lucky to get a three-quarter bale per acre, while others only got a half bale, and some still less. These persons were generally poor, and could not afford the expense of experiments or the loss of a year, and that was the reason why the bonus should be continued. Now, he had been rather in a difficulty as to his vote upon this question, because he was totally opposed to protection properly so called, and it had been pointed out to him that, in giving this bonus, they would be upholding a very dangerous principle. But it appeared to him that this was not a question of protection at all. By this encouragement to cotton-growers they did not place themselves in the position of preventing the world from competing with them, but they facilitated an experiment in reference to an important interest, by allowing it to be conducted upon an economical principle. The principle which John Stuart Mill advocated was, that new industries should be encouraged; and he gave as a reason that the advantage of one nation over others in its peculiar industries was not so much in its superiority in producing those industries, as because they had been earlier in the market; and he therefore argued that any encouragement was allowable which gave a country an opportunity of starting fair. It appeared to him, that whether right or wrong, this bonus having once been given, should not be taken away too suddenly. He was a gardener as well as a farmer, and he had always found that it was useless to shelter a plant unless that shelter were continued until the plant reached its full strength and vigor—that having once used artificial means to foster its growth, it was necessary to protect it until it was able to stand all the necessities of its situation. He thought a great deal of misapprehension existed in reference to the benefit that this encouragement would afford to certain classes only; but he thought it had been pretty well shown that it would benefit

all classes. It benefited the shipper nearly as much as the grower and the ginner, the merchant as well as the laborer, and even the women and children—in fact, it was a benefit to every member of the community, as every accession of wealth to the colony must be. Last year, something between £75,000 and £79,000 of capital was introduced into the colony by this industry. As to the remark of the honorable member for Maryborough, that this bonus was offered in order to secure the votes of certain honorable members, of course, every public man had to put up with charges of that sort, but he paid very little attention to it; that was only one of the stock arguments which politicians made use of. He could only say that the Government would get nothing out of him on that account, nor did he think honorable members were guided by any such considerations. The honorable member also contended that the Government were asking support for an interest which confessedly did not pay. Now, he had explained that it did not, perhaps, pay at the start, but that it was likely to become the most profitable of any article of agriculture except perhaps sugar—and far more so than maize, potatoes, and hay, which had hitherto been almost the only crops raised in the colony. The effect of extending this bonus would be to keep people on the land, and give them industrious and domestic habits. The great vice in the population of these colonies hitherto had been that youths, when they reached a certain age, took to the bush, and in very many instances became bad members of society; but under this system of agriculture, they would have employment found for them at home, and would not be under the necessity of getting hold of a stockwhip, and jumping on to a horse, and getting a living as they could. Then, a comparison had been drawn between the 7000 persons who were benefited by the cotton bonus, and the 10,000 diggers who had not this encouragement. But there was no analogy in these cases. The gold digger took all his money out of the colony, while the wealth of the cotton-grower came back in the shape of necessary commodities from other countries. His experience, too, was that the majority of cotton-growers were men who used to pick up a living about the towns, who were thrown out of employment on the cessation of public works, and in this way found a livelihood without becoming a burden to the community; and not men specially introduced under any immigration system, to cultivate this article; and that was an argument in favor of encouraging its production. It appeared to him that if this industry were not to be protected, they ought to do away with the Botanical Gardens, the Acclimatisation Park, and other institutions which received similar aid; but if it was to be the policy of the Legislature to encourage new industries, it was a safe and economical policy to protect

an interest which was certain to be profitable in a very short time. He denied, *in toto*, that this would be class legislation, or that it had anything to do with a class. Any man could become a cotton-grower; and it was rather a remarkable thing that in the districts in this colony which were most adapted to its growth, and where the best descriptions could be grown, no cotton was cultivated at all. In East and West Moreton, they could only grow New Orleans, and perhaps ultimately a variety of green seed cotton, while in the North, Sea-island cotton could be cultivated with entire success. The fact was, agriculturists resembled a flock of sheep; where a few went, the rest followed; and the cotton interest had been started he might say by the Ipswich Cotton Company, and by the valuable assistance afforded by one or two gentlemen, a Mr. Panton and the honorable member for Northern Downs, to whom the country was greatly indebted. It only required some effort of a similar kind to be made in the North, and the same results would follow. He, as he had already stated, was a cotton-grower, and the question might be raised whether he should be entitled to vote on this question, as it been on a similar occasion in the case of Dr. Challinor, who had been asked, "whether he had a direct personal interest in the question." He should be glad to have the Speaker's ruling on this point. Objections of this kind had been made in the House of Commons; honorable members would find a case to the point in "May," page 354, where on the question of a Bill relating to railways, the vote of an honorable member was objected to, because he was the proprietor of certain railway shares, but the objection was overruled. He wished, therefore, to know whether he was qualified to vote? He should very possibly venture into cotton again. This year he expected a total loss, but he did not wish to be precluded on that ground, from voting on the question. He was going to say, that at the exhibition in Sydney, the other day, several new products were shewn, which he thought it was of great importance to give attention to. There was, for instance, banana fibre, which he was informed could be sold at £45 per ton, and China grass, which grew so well in this colony, and sold in a state fit for weaving, at £200 per ton. The stalk of the banana, after the fruit had been taken away, was usually thrown away or given to pigs or cattle, and if a valuable article of export could be made from it, he certainly thought it should be encouraged. With regard to the establishment of manufactures in this colony, he should also be disposed to encourage them; but he thought they should take care not to degenerate into a protective policy, though manufactures might be encouraged in such a way as suggested by the honorable member for Toowoomba, though perhaps not to the same extent; but so that while it had not the appearance of protection, there

might be money granted for purposes of experiment.

Mr. LAMB said he did not rise to oppose the object sought to be gained by the resolutions before the House, but to oppose the mode in which it was brought before the House. He contended that the proper mode would be in the shape of a Bill; as it was perfectly illegal to ask the representative of the Sovereign to carry the resolutions into effect, and thus to commit what he supposed he could designate an unconstitutional act. He conceived it to be the duty of any honorable member to point it out to the House, when he saw them falling into an error. It might be held that the previous Government granted the cotton bonus under a similar state of things to the present; but he contended that they did not do so. The resolutions under which they gave the bonus were perfectly legal: they were passed in accordance with the fourth clause of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1860, the same Act which gave the bonus. Under the twenty-first clause of that Act, the bonus was granted, and, it was extended by resolutions passed in virtue of the fourth clause, which he would read—

“It shall be lawful for the Governor with the advice aforesaid to grant or otherwise dispose of for such public purposes as are specified in clause sixteen of the Unoccupied Crown Lands Act of 1860 or for such other purposes as may from time to time be previously sanctioned by the Legislature any waste lands of the Crown in the said colony.”

But that Act had been repealed, and no such power was now given to the Legislature as had been exercised under that clause, therefore, the object of the present resolutions must be attained by a Bill. However, the honorable and learned gentleman at the head of the Government, might have advised his colleagues to the contrary. He (Mr. Lamb) merely pointed out what in his opinion was wrong, but he was bound to bow to the opinion of the law officers of the Crown. He had studied the matter; and he had heard even legal gentlemen state that the first resolutions were illegal; but they had evidently overlooked that clause of the Act which he had read. The House had no right to ask the Council to concur in anything they supposed to be wrong. So far as extending relief to the cotton-growers was concerned, he certainly agreed with the principle of the resolutions. There was precedent for it in Australia: the wool-growers were encouraged in New South Wales to an extent far beyond the encouragement given in this colony to the cotton-growers. The Government would pay away about £60,000 or £70,000 worth of land for the encouragement of an important industry, which was nothing compared to what had been done for the wool-growing industry. Previous to 1831, any person arriving in Sydney with £500, received a grant of 1,200 acres of land, and was allowed

the services of twenty convicts to assist him in working that land. For the encouragement of wool-growing and agriculture, 3,800,000 acres of land had been granted; so that the House were not initiating anything new in principle. If the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, who spoke in reference to bringing in a Bill for encouraging new industries, would introduce such a measure, he (Mr. Lamb) would certainly give him his support; because he conceived that, in the infancy of a colony, every encouragement should be given to new pursuits. The greatest writers on political economy—he thought it was mentioned by McCulloch and others—took that view, that a system of protection could be adopted for the encouragement of new industries in a young country. Therefore, the House could not go wrong in following those great thinkers on the subject. However, he had drawn the attention of the Government to the facts of the case, and he was satisfied in his own mind that he was right.

Mr. S. HODGSON considered the question before the House was of very great importance to the future welfare of this colony, and it deserved most special attention. At the present time, when the House were legislating for immigration, and many were puzzling their heads to know what was to be done with the immigrants when they came, all thinking men must see that if the Parliament intended to attract population to these shores, there must be proper provision to settle the immigrants on the land—if they were to be of actual benefit to the colony. To settle the people on the lands, it must be shewn that the colony could grow some article that would command a large foreign market. The present question, he thought, most deeply affected the men of property—the men who had a stake in the country; for the public debt of the colony could not be borne much longer by the present population. He (Mr. Hodgson) did not think the present position of the colony a bright one: a cloud hung over wool, and the increased production for exportation must be very slow; and, as the squatters were now reducing the number of hands on their runs, the means of employing additional population would be so much less than heretofore; and the House must look for some outlet for the surplus population. Taxation would become heavier on the population that remained, unless some speedy means could be devised of lessening that burden. The gold fields were not to be depended on;—a digging population was here, to-day, and away to-morrow. Manufactures were only a blank, and there would be none in the colony until men with spare capital—a sort of commercial philanthropists—came here and settled. Some articles, such as potatoes and maize, were produced readily enough, but there was really no market for them. If it could be proved that this colony could yield those productions for which heretofore it was

indebted to the temporary bonus, the door was opened to relief from all its difficulties. Dr. Babec, a native of the Southern States of America, writing on the cotton question, said, alluding to Australia—"Nature intended this portion of the world as a cotton field of most gigantic dimensions." Now he (Mr. Hodgson) wished to know—as Queensland's climate was equal in salubrity to any in the world, and her soil such as would grow an equal crop of cotton to that of any other portion of the world—what was to prevent this colony from competing with other countries in producing cotton? Queensland was on an equal footing with America, now that slavery was abolished; freight from America to England was the same as from Queensland; and the great length of the coast line of this colony might be put against the rivers of America. He might mention that in America it was calculated that, with white labor, cotton could be grown two hundred miles from the coast. It took forty-two years to make the same progress in the cultivation of cotton in America as Queensland had made in five years. Only eighty years since the export of cotton from America was the same as it was now from Queensland. The honorable the Treasurer had read to the House the exports of cotton from Queensland during the last five or six years. The results thus shewn had, he (Mr. Hodgson) considered, been mainly due to the energy and stubbornness of a few men in the neighborhood of Ipswich and Maryborough. Honorable members must remember that a high price for cotton was ruling during part of the time, owing to the American war; and that there was also the £10 bonus granted by the House. Still, the cultivation of cotton did not succeed at first. That was mainly owing to the difficulty of getting practical farmers to direct their labor and their little capital to an experiment that might result in their ruin. It was only within the last two years that the practical farmer had taken the thing in hand; and every year he was finding out something that he did not know before. Those were some of his reasons for strongly advocating the continuation of the bonus on a reduced scale for some time longer. Honorable members must remember that the colony was now heavily taxed—more so than any other cotton-producing country in the world—being at the rate of seven guineas per head of the population. That taxation must be reduced to an equality with the taxation of other cotton-growing countries, before Queensland could come into fair competition with them. The district which he had the honor to represent had made the most wonderful progress during the last two years; and he failed to see the reason why other districts had not made the same progress. The soil and climate of the Downs were fully equal to those of West Moreton. It was not always the best soil that produced the best cotton; for, this year, in West Moreton, he understood

the best cotton was from a medium soil. The honorable member for Maranoa might feel some comfort in knowing that the cotton-plant would grow within twenty miles of his head station, Dulacca, where he (Mr. Hodgson) had seen some small but splendid samples of it. He might now state the average crops of cotton in the most favored portions of the globe. In America, 250lbs. of the best cotton per acre was produced; in Egypt, 250lbs. of clean cotton to the acre; in India, 105lbs. of clean cotton to the acre; in West Moreton, 250lbs. Last year, in West Moreton, it ran up to 350lbs.; on many plantations, as high as 450lbs.; and on some as high as 550lbs. The progress in that district had been more rapid than in any of the Southern States of America. Before the war, he might mention, the increase of cotton was in the same ratio as the increase of slaves—one bale for every slave in the state. The population of the cotton-growing states of America, in 1860, was about 13,000,000, and the cotton produced was 5,131,000 bales. The cotton states were fifteen in number, and he would give the produce in comparison with the population—

Tennessee,	1 bale to every 5 of the population.
Florida	1 " " 2½ "
South Caro-	
lina	1 " " 2 1·5 "
Georgia	1 " " 1½ "
Texas	1 " " 1¼ "
Arkansas	1 " " 1 18·100 "
Louisiana	1 " " 1 88·100 "
Alabama	1 " " 1 90·100 "
Mississippi,	the largest producing state of the
Union,	1 bale to every 1·67 100 of the population.

Now, as to what West Moreton had done.—He found, by the last census, that the population of that district, including Ipswich, was 12,700, and that 4,229 bales of cotton had passed the Ipswich custom house: a proportion of one bale for every three of the population. The value of that cotton was £70,000, including the bonus. All that money had been spent in the town and district this year. But the whole colony reaped benefit from it. The honorable member for Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, mentioned, a few evenings ago, the large amount of money spent in Brisbane on the wool that passed through for shipment. Cotton would do the same for the city that wool now did. If the same progress, as marked the past, in West Moreton, continued for two years more, that district might be unable to produce more cotton, after that time, without an increase of population. Up to the present time, no attention whatever had been paid to the quality of the seed, while great study was given to it in America; and there were many things not found out yet which it was desirable to know, and which would lead to further progress when fully understood. Among the number, he might mention pruning; and

that as, he thought, high lands suited the cotton-plant better than the low lands. It had, also, been found this year, that a less quantity of seed cotton was required to make a bale of clean cotton than ever previously,—owing, he presumed, to the seed becoming acclimatised. If honorable members would only afford the time to visit the district of West Moreton during the picking season, they would feel satisfied that the money already spent in bonuses was well spent. Instead of hearing growling about the colony, such as they heard from time to time, they would mark the signs of advancement and prosperity, in the blooming fields : veritable homesteads, with groups of women and children, with nice bags slung across their shoulders picking the cotton. Some £44,000 had been paid away in bonuses, just about a quarter of the value of a good Darling Downs station. He found, too, that the farmers were daily releasing their deeds from the hands of the storekeepers, which had been in pledge for years ; many were writing home for their relatives to come out, to do as well as themselves. This latter fact would do more to draw attention in England, to the colony of Queensland, than anything else ; and if attention were once drawn to the fact that such an article as cotton could be produced remuneratively, population would come, and capital, too, be at call. Emigration from Ireland to America received a great fillip from that cause—immigrants, when settled, writing home for their friends and relatives, giving a good account of the land ; and it would effect more for Queensland than sending home any six emigration agents. No crop so affected the welfare of England as the cotton crop ; and, as he said before, this colony had only to show that it could be raised here, to get population enough to grow it. England was even now suffering from the cotton famine ; and it was only for Queensland to promote the cultivation of cotton, to do good to itself, and our fellow-countrymen at home. He was only sorry that a more gradual reduction of the bonus was not proposed by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer.

Mr. FRANCIS said he had no objection whatever to the resolutions—he fully approved of them ; and he was exceedingly pleased at the way in which they were received by the House. It had been satisfactorily shown that by the encouragement given to cotton-growing, the colony had succeeded in establishing more or less successfully an important agricultural interest. He thought it would be desirable to extend the assistance before that interest could be thoroughly established ; but he wanted to see several other agricultural products brought before the attention of the House, and made successful by similar means. He wanted to say one word in favor of what was stated by the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson. The House must not suppose that this colony could pro-

duce only cotton. Before it produced cotton it was thought that it could produce only wool. There were several other products for which it was adapted. He (Mr. Francis) would like to see the Government go further in the matter of setting on foot or giving a start to new industries—always agricultural. He would instance tobacco. He should like to see a bonus given for manufactured tobacco. There were several fibres—China grass, hemp, and silk—the production of which could be wisely encouraged as cotton had been. He thought that, with a little assistance from the Government, in the way of turning people's attention to them, it was practicable to establish those things as well as cotton. He should like to see something more especially suited to the more northern districts of the colony encouraged. There was an agriculture fit for the Downs, and for East and West Moreton, and for northern Queensland. The North could grow spices, cocoa nuts, and other things equally suitable to its climate. He only wished the House would study a little more the map of Queensland with that view ; and then that valuable territory would not long remain as it was now, almost useless. That the bonus on cotton must, ultimately, cease, was quite clear to his mind. He would go as far as the honorable member for Rockhampton in saying that the House ought to be extremely cautious before establishing a principle that was bad : and, he said, it was a bad principle to protect a production to enable an industry to be carried on—it was a bad principle to protect it to enable him to carry on farming. But, to give a start, to give temporary support, to an industry, that without assistance would not exist, was quite another principle altogether, and was one for which he would vote—to let the cotton-growers down easily, rather than they should drop at once from five pounds to nothing. He hoped the Government would adhere, however, to their own resolutions. He thought the House was indebted to the honorable member for Mitchell for calling attention to the manner in which the subject of the resolutions was brought before the House. He was not surprised that the Government overlooked the matter. That extraordinary Land Act of 1868 seemed to him (Mr. Francis) to be designed to sweep away the power of the House to deal with the lands. He should like to see the resolutions withdrawn, if it were necessary that a Bill must be introduced ; and he should like to see the Government prepared to extend encouragement to tobacco-growers, sugar-growers, and oil-growers—for vegetable oils, there was room for a large production in this colony—in the same way that encouragement was given to cotton-growers. He was well persuaded that there were within reach the materials of unbounded wealth.

Mr. DE SATGE : He had been very much struck with the manner in which the honorable the Colonial Treasurer introduced the

cotton-bonus resolutions to the notice of the House. After giving statistics of the cotton crop, the history of cotton cultivation, and all necessary facts—which the Minister for Lands never thought proper to give about the squatters of the North, when moving the second reading of the Pastoral Leases Bill,—the honorable gentleman asked the concurrence of the House in his proposition. A little measure like the one under consideration had been found worthy of so much attention for one Minister, while a great measure, affecting the welfare of at least three-fourths of the colony, was treated in a very small way indeed, by another Minister. He (Mr. De Satge) was afraid that the difference he pointed out only showed the strong southern tendency of the honorable the Secretary for Public Lands. Referring to the question, he considered that the logic of the Colonial Treasurer was faulty; for that honorable gentleman stated, that from the results achieved, he regarded cotton cultivation as a settled industry. If that were so, cotton cultivation required no further stimulus from the country in the shape of a bonus. He should like to know where the £24,000 was to come from, that was to be paid to the cotton-growers. He should like to know why the sugar-growers should refrain from asking the House for a bonus on their industry :

“ Oh! what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive.”

The bonus was introduced nine years ago; but, it seemed the House did not know when to stop! It was a really strange industry that required pushing on for that time. He was surprised to hear the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Thompson, say, that he wished the reduction of the bonus had been more gradual; and, honorable members on the ministerial side of the House said that honorable members on the opposition side, who were not interested in cotton-growing, did not know that the bonus was to stop. He was very much afraid that before two years were over the House would again see the cotton-growers applying for a continuation of the bonus. He was willing to support the resolutions as an ultimatum. It was very hard to know when the bonus was to stop; he was afraid the House had no assurance of it; and he could not help remarking, that while the representatives of West Moreton were beginning to puzzle their heads to know what to do with immigrants when they came to the colony, the honorable member, Mr. S. Hodgson, who admitted that, was one of the majority of twenty-two who voted for the Immigration Bill. They were beginning to puzzle themselves to know what to do with the immigrants: the subject was not at all foreign to the question before the House. He had made several inquiries with regard to cotton-growing and sugar-growing, and, as a squatter, he would say that the cultivation of land, to succeed, depended, everywhere in the colony, upon the description of labor that

would be introduced; and that was the matter to be decided,—whether English adults or Coolie laborers were to be introduced in the agricultural interest. He should vote for the resolutions,—for the sliding scale, and the two years to finish off the bonus. He hoped the House had heard the last of the bonus; for in voting for the resolutions, he did not pledge himself to support any industry that might arise.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the honorable member for Mitchell had again raised a question which had very often been mooted before, as to the legality of the cotton regulations. As to the legality of the resolutions before the House, no question could arise. It was perfectly competent for the House to decide that it was expedient to give a bonus. As to the way that was to be done, it might be left to the Ministry afterwards to determine—either by introducing a Bill to give effect to the resolution of the House, or otherwise. That was a question for the consideration of the Cabinet; but it was perfectly competent for the House to pass resolutions which merely affirmed—

“ (1.) That it is expedient to extend the period fixed by Parliament as that at which premiums upon the export of cotton shall cease and determine.

“ (2.) That, at the expiration of the year 1869, a further premium of land orders to the value of £2 10s. shall be granted for every bale of good cleaned cotton, weighing three hundred pounds, the growth and produce of Queensland, which may be exported to Great Britain during the year 1870, and to the value of £1 5s. during the year 1871.”

In what way practical effect was to be given to them was, as he said before, for the Cabinet to consider. He was inclined to think, notwithstanding the views of the honorable member for Mitchell, and those who agreed with him, that the existing cotton regulations were of doubtful legality; and perhaps it would not be a waste of time if he drew the attention of the House to the state of the law on the subject. He might state, however, that Government hitherto had acted upon resolutions, and not the Act of Parliament. He did not blame any one of them, because he believed he was himself one of the members who supported the existing resolutions, at the time they were introduced by Mr. Herbert, and because the Government had perfect indemnity in the resolutions of the House; and he should have no hesitation in advising grants to issue under their authority, for he was sure the House would not think of impeaching a member for giving effect to their wishes. Perhaps it would be better, to give effect to the resolutions, if the House should see fit to adopt them, that a short Bill should be brought in for that purpose. With regard to the law, he was always glad to aid the House on such a matter; but he must be understood to have the right to decline to do so, if he thought fit, because

matters sometimes arose suddenly, which required more consideration than could be given to them when suddenly raised by some acute member, and which, perhaps, was then brought before him for the first time. But he had no hesitation in going, at once, into the present question. The Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1860, in the fourth section, which the honorable member for Mitchell read, enacted that—

“It shall be lawful for the Governor with the advice aforesaid to grant or otherwise dispose of for such public purposes as are specified in clause sixteen of the Unoccupied Crown Lands Act of 1860—

he might state that cotton was not included in that—

“or for such other purposes as may from time to time be previously sanctioned by the Legislature any waste lands of the Crown in the said colony.”

There was a power to the Governor to grant land for the purposes “previously sanctioned by the Legislature.” In August, 1860, while the Alienation of Lands Act was still in force, the House, by resolutions, sanctioned the granting of bonuses, in the shape of land orders, for the growth of cotton. What rendered the resolutions of doubtful legality was this—that the Legislature could hardly have contemplated to grant a cotton bonus by clause four, because, in the same Act, express provision was made for that subject; for, by a well-known legal rule, where one thing was expressed, the thing unexpressed was excluded. In the twenty-first section, it was enacted that—

“In order to encourage the growth of cotton within the said colony it shall be lawful for the Governor with the advice aforesaid to issue land orders during the next three years to the extent of ten pounds and during the next two years to the extent of five pounds for every bale of good cleaned Sea-island cotton without any admixture of damaged or discolored and weighing three hundred pounds the growth and produce of the colony which may be exported to Great Britain and during the said periods one-half of the above premiums shall be given for the common descriptions of cotton.”

There it was expressed. The legality of the resolutions was still more doubtful, more uncertain, when he looked at the dates. The Act which he cited was passed in September, 1860, and it specially set out, that—

“In order to encourage the growth of cotton within the said colony it shall be lawful for the Governor with the advice aforesaid to issue land orders during the next three years.”

In August, 1863, the House passed resolutions extending that period for five years. They had no power to pass those resolutions. If the argument was correct, the power to encourage the growth of cotton by bonus of ten pounds was limited by the original Act to three years, and to five years altogether, including the lower bonus. But the resolutions extended the bonus again

for five years. On the 7th August, 1863, in the Legislative Assembly—

“The chairman reported that the committee had come to certain resolutions, which were then read, at length, by the clerk, and are as follows:—

“(1.) That it is expedient that the larger premiums on the export of cotton, authorised by the Act 24 Vic., No. 15, be granted by the Government until the end of the year 1865, and the lesser premium, until the end of 1869; and that the same premium be given for good cleaned Upland cotton as is now given for Sea-island cotton.”

Now the resolutions not only increased the premium for a certain number of years, but extended the period of its application. It was only upon the relief from responsibility given by the resolutions, that the Government, from time to time, acted. He (the Attorney-General) did not blame the Government, because, as he said at the outset, he should have no hesitation in acting upon it, if the two Houses of Parliament, by resolution, directed him that he should make grants of land; but he would advise the House not to proceed in such an irregular way, and that it would be better to put their resolutions in the form of an Act of Parliament. But that did not affect the question of resolutions on the present occasion; because they could be passed, if the House should think it advisable to extend the bonus. He would tell the honorable member for Maryborough that he was going to vote for the resolutions, and that he would do so in good faith, and in perfect consistency with his previous conduct. He was not less opposed on principle to the granting of bonuses than formerly—he believed they were radically wrong in principle. But, he was not prepared to say that there were not circumstances under which a country might resolve to depart from that principle, as a matter of expediency. As a matter of abstract reasoning, cotton bonuses, or bonuses of any kind, were false in principle; they were so, in the first place, because they created an unnatural direction of capital. Men were led to withdraw from what afforded them reasonable prospects of success, from enterprises in which they were legitimately engaged, by the bonus. And men would grow cotton for a number of years, or do anything else, while there was a bonus to give them a profit, although they might be convinced, from a variety of reasons, that otherwise it would not pay, and that after the bonus was at an end, they would withdraw from the enterprise. It might at best be regarded as a temporary, and, to some extent, a doubtful enterprise. But a country might resolve that, as in the present case—though against his conviction, and against what his vote would be if the House were entering upon the matter for the first time—in entering upon an experiment, in which the Government and the people were jointly interested, encouragement and aid should be given. That was not broadly stated by the

honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, but he had gone nearly to it. The bonus might be justified in such exceptional circumstances. It could only be justified in an enterprise for cotton or sugar-growing, or something that was likely to become of great national importance. The House could not so encourage a man in growing arrow-root; in such a case, it would be false policy to give Government aid, because it would be an unnatural stimulus. He (the Attorney-General) hoped nobody would be induced to vote for the resolutions, as if they were any form of protection. He would not vote for them, if he thought they gave any encouragement to the heresy of protection. Protection for industry was a permanent principle—

Mr. LAMB: No, no.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Protection must endure permanently, or until the interest protected was beyond competition. Now, protection, here, would be placing Queensland cotton-growers beyond the competition of some persons who were sending cotton into the colony. But Queensland did not import cotton; she hoped to export it. Therefore, the House had no means of protecting the industry of cotton cultivation. The argument came back, again, to what the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, said—Cotton cultivation was an experiment; further, he (the Attorney-General) said it was a joint experiment between the Government and the people. He could not at all agree with the honorable member for Maryborough, when he said that by the cotton bonus, ninety-seven of the population were taxed for the purpose of supporting the industry of three. There was no taxation in the matter;—it was a grant, a gift, of land. There was no burden or taxation at all: it was an experiment, and it was made for the benefit of the whole community. If successful, it would be of almost incalculable benefit to the community. Already, there were signs of warning;—if the fall in the wool market were permanent, it was a matter of very serious consequence to this colony, generally. Queensland must have another staple, and that should be cotton. If the depression in the staple product of the colony continued, Queensland would not be so prosperous or successful as she had been. The squatter, the townsman, or whoever he might be, was interested in seeing that the production of cotton was increased. If it was right in 1863, when the cotton interest was likely to decline, to continue the bonus—if the industry had since been unnaturally fostered by the bonus—on principle, to save the cotton-growers from ruin, he would vote for its continuance, to let them gradually withdraw from their enterprise. On that ground he would support the continuance of the cotton bonus for two years. Whether it was quite desirable to pass an Act, for that short period, was to be con-

sidered. The continuance of the bonus was granted in a rough way before, and not strictly in the way it ought to have been done. As he had shewn, the Parliament gave express sanction to the bonus, in an Act, but the resolutions extended it. He did not think it was necessary that he should enter in any elaborate statement about bonuses. He knew that there was a tendency slightly reactionary to protection, at home; it might be that the movement would be back again from the out-and-out principles of free trade to the principle of protection again. For himself, he thought a moderate amount of assistance might be given for an experiment in an enterprise which it was desired to establish. The word protection might be used, if a moderate amount of taxation were assumed for that object; but that was exceptional taxation, and a grant of land or money was far better as an encouragement to industry than putting a tax on the people. He denied that he went in for protection in supporting the resolutions; but he did for the encouragement of industry by the gifts of money or land, which was not so broad a departure from the principles of free trade. There was one subject referred to by the honorable member for Ipswich—whose speech was a good one, and suggestive in many things—and it was a subject that was engaging the minds of many members of the community—namely, what was to be done with the lads that were growing up? There were few things for them to engage in. The professions were limited; and as to trades and crafts, and mechanical pursuits, the opportunities for learning them might be said to be none whatever. It therefore became a matter of serious consideration as to what direction they should point the education of the youth of the colony. He might mention that, some days ago, he suggested to his honorable friend the Colonial Secretary that it would be expedient to start, in an humble way, something like a branch of technical education. At all events, he thought they might begin with agriculture. It would be a small beginning in that way, but in its results it might be very important hereafter. If a number of small farmers' sons could be got in at small expense to the Government, to receive technical instruction at the Botanic Gardens, it might be of the greatest importance to them in after life. With regard to the culture of cotton he thought that, if at the end of eleven years, growers had not obtained sufficient experience in the various modes of culture, the best kinds of seed, and the soils best adapted for cotton, it might reasonably be supposed that they never would. Now, he thought it would be well that it should be distinctly understood throughout the colony that the bonus would not be extended beyond the period mentioned in the resolutions, and that at the end of two years hence, cotton-growers would have to depend solely upon

the value of the product. He must say that he had a great abhorrence of the system of bonuses in any shape. Any industry fostered in that way was much in the position of a plant grown up under unusual protection. As soon as the protection was taken away, the plant failed, or perhaps died altogether; but, at any rate, it would never be so hardy or vigorous as the plant that had grown up without any protection. There was no doubt there would be a time of depression after the discontinuance of the bonus; but he was afraid that at the end of two years it would be difficult to make out a good case for the continuance of the bonus; and if any attempt were made to extend its duration, it might be said of any Government making such attempt, and that with more force of truth than against the present Government, on account of this motion, that it was done for the purpose of catching votes. Now he begged to deny, most fully and entirely, that the Government in bringing forward the present motion, were actuated by any such motive. It could not be conceived that the late Government, that remarkably pure Government, could be guilty of anything of the kind, and yet it was their intention to have brought forward resolutions somewhat similar to those now under consideration; and why might it not also be allowed that the present Government had brought forward these resolutions for some other purpose than that of catching votes. What would be the worth of catching the votes of honorable members, whose constituents were interested in the cultivation of cotton, for the purpose of carrying those resolutions? Immediately the resolutions were passed, those members, their own purpose having been served, would turn round against the Government, if their support so far had been purchased, and the Government would only have succeeded in increasing the number of their enemies. Everything was said to be fair in love and war, and perhaps it might be allowed that in politics everything was fair in order to gain a point; and no doubt the honorable member for Maryborough, in charging the Government with desiring, by these resolutions, to catch the votes of a few members, thought it a good way of having a hit at the Ministry. But the same thing might be said of all Bills. The honorable member, he believed, did say so with regard to the Pastoral Leases Bill; and he felt sure he would do so in respect to the Gold Fields Bill, and also the Additional Members Bill. Now, the position of the Ministry with respect to the motion before the House was this, holding as he did that bonuses were inexpedient, it was his duty in the past to vote against them; but when, by the House having gone on a wrong track, a large number of people had been encouraged to invest their capital in the cultivation of cotton, the question as to what might be the effect of suddenly stopping those bonuses

was forced upon him, as it would be at the present time upon any one occupying the same position; and he felt it his duty to take such action as would prevent this enterprise being affected in a way that would bring utter ruin upon a large number of the community.

Mr. HALY said that when he voted for the Immigration Bill, he did so for the purpose of having people brought out to the colony and placed upon the lands to engage in cotton-growing and other agricultural pursuits; and honorable members would consequently see that, as a matter of course, he would vote in support of the resolutions now before the House. There was a certain amount of debt on the colony, and the taxation necessary to meet the interest of it was a very great drawback to every man in business in the colony. Now, he wanted to lighten the burden on his shoulders as much as possible, and, therefore, he wished to see as many people as possible come and settle upon the colony. He believed that he only once voted against the cotton bonus, but that was when he believed that cotton-growing in this colony was a failure, and that it was intended to tax the wool-growers in order to support the cotton-growers,—but then there were only a few bales compared with what there were now. The honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, said that in 1867, there were 1,300 bales exported, and, in 1868, there were 6000 bales exported. Now, that being the case, there could be no doubt whatever that cotton-growing had become one of the permanent interests of the colony. Of that they might be sure, when they found it developing itself so extensively in so short a time. Now, for the sake of two years more, it would be a great pity to act, in respect to this matter, in a way that would, undoubtedly, result in their losing all that they had already paid. As the honorable the Premier had mentioned, it was clear that the article of wool was being interfered with in the English market by the produce of other countries; and it therefore became necessary that they should endeavour to add another to the staple products of the colony. Well, then, if they got a large number of immigrants to come here, of the right sort, and got them to settle on the land, not only would the burden of taxation be diminished, but the wealth of the colony would be increased by the greater production of articles of export that would take place. They all knew that the squatters on the Darling Downs were carrying out a selfish policy in going into fencing; and if that policy should be much extended, they would soon be relieved of a great deal of the labor power of the colony; and then how would it be possible for them to get their sheep shorn. They might have then to pay very high for shearers, and the Darling Downs squatters might find that by their fencing-in their runs, they had only succeeded in saving so much during a certain

period of the year," and having to spend when the shearing season came on, a great deal more than they had saved. He had seen quite enough that day to convince him that the first payable gold field might deprive them of all the labor available for the shearing of sheep; and to convince him that they should do something to induce those men to remain at some settled employment, and under such circumstances that they would not be ready to rush off to the Gulf of Carpentaria, or to Africa, as soon as they heard of a new gold field being discovered. He could go on in this way at any length, but he had no desire to occupy the time of the House, by making a long speech, like some honorable members. He had said in as few words as possible all he had to say, and he would now conclude by repeating that he would support the resolutions, because he believed the continuation of the bonus would be beneficial to every interest in the colony.

Mr. MILES said he hoped the mind of the honorable member for the Mitchell would now be at rest, after the speech of the honorable the Premier, with respect to the legality of the resolutions. The honorable member at the head of the Government knew very well when he introduced the resolutions, that the course he proposed was illegal, and he had now admitted that it was so, and consented to bring in a Bill to deal with the question. But, no doubt, the honorable gentleman would hold the Bill over to the last, that he might be able to secure the votes of certain members, till the end of the session. Now, it showed a most deplorable state of things for the colony when it was found necessary by the Government to hold out a bait, first to one side of the House, and then a bait to the other. The honorable the Premier knew he could not hold a seat in the House for twenty-four hours, unless he gave the honorable members for West Moreton a pledge to bring in a motion for the continuance of the cotton bonus. The honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. S. Hodgson, had charged him with stating at some former period, that cotton would not grow in the colony. Now, he must really inform the honorable member and the House that he had no recollection of ever having said anything of the kind. The honorable member also took the opportunity of informing him (Mr. Miles) that cotton was growing in the Leichhardt district. Well, he could assure the honorable member that he really did not require to be informed of that, because he had cotton growing in his own garden. It grew like a weed, and that was why he maintained that its cultivation did not require to be fostered. Cotton would grow almost wherever it was planted, and throughout this colony it was only necessary to put the seed into the ground. Now, he hoped that after such an assurance as that, the honorable member for Ipswich would not again accuse

him of having said that cotton would not grow in this colony. It had been said that the growers of cotton were comfortable, and happy and prosperous. Well, if that was the case, why come and ask a bonus for them? If those who commenced growing cotton upon leased lands were now in a position to be able to take up the deeds, he did not see what necessity there was to grant them a bonus; and therefore he maintained it was time the bonus should cease. If cotton-growing had not been a success after encouragement by a bonus for nine years, nothing else would make it a success. As to the experience required for cotton cultivation, it appeared to him from what he had seen of the plantations on the Peak Mountain in the neighborhood of Ipswich, that no experience whatever was required. It appeared that the honorable the Treasurer calculated upon receiving £35,000 from the sale of land, exclusive of land orders. Now, he did not see how the honorable member was to come to that conclusion. If the Immigration Bill should be passed, there would have to be land orders issued; and if a measure on the subject before the House should be passed, there would also be cotton bonus land orders. Now, how in the face of all that, the honorable the Treasurer could expect to raise a revenue from the sale of land, to the amount of £35,000, was really more than he could for the life of him, understand. The honorable the Minister for Lands was strongly opposed to the immigration land orders, and therefore he must be equally opposed to cotton bonus land orders. The honorable member said, with respect to the sale of certain lands, that no land orders would be taken. Now, it was all very well for the honorable member to talk that way; but there was an extensive sale of land on the Downs that day, and he had no hesitation whatever in saying that most of the land sold would be paid for in land orders. The honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, had said that cotton-picking was an excellent occupation for young people. Well, it might have a tendency to keep them from engaging in cattle-stealing; but the effect, he thought, would be very injurious in another way. He had seen some of those unfortunate children who, from the circumstances of their parents, were required to go and pick cotton. There they were in the cotton-field, from six years of age down to little creatures that were hardly able to walk. They earned a little money, and that was inducement enough for the parents to send them to work. But that would be continued from season to season, and the children would be kept from school, and they would grow up in a state of utter ignorance; and, in the end, it might be found that the cure, as against a roughing life, was as bad as the disease. He believed there were only one or two honorable members opposed to the motion,

and therefore he would not take up the time of the House by saying any more on the subject, and would content himself with recording his vote against it. He did not agree with those honorable members who were of opinion that the time had come when they could determine that the bonus should cease in two years hence. Now, how could they come to any determination as to what might be done or what might not be done in two years hence. His opinion was, as he had already said, that the time had now come when the bonus should cease and determine. He did not expect he would be supported in the course he proposed to adopt. No doubt, those who were interested in schedule B would support the Government on the present occasion. The honorable member for the Leichhardt, Mr. Sandeman, he noticed, was always away on occasions such as the present. Sometime ago there was a knotty point about £1000 a-year for another minister, and the honorable member did not appear in the House then; but when the Pastoral Leases Bill came before the House, the honorable member was found in his place. The honorable member seemed desirous of keeping out of the way on such occasions. He was absent now when this cotton bonus question was before the House; but he believed in his own mind that the honorable member's reason was, that he was afraid he might jeopardise schedule B. Now he (Mr. Miles) was himself interested in schedule B, but that would not influence him in the way he would vote on the present occasion. If he could not come to that House and speak and vote without fear or favor he would be ashamed of himself. The honorable member for the Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, also absented himself when the question about £1000, for another minister's salary, was under discussion. As he understood, that honorable member was also interested in schedule B, and so it did not suit him to be in the House on the present occasion. A state of things that brought about the like of that must be very injurious to the country. Now, he would warn the honorable member at the head of the Government not to be in a hurry to bring in his Bill on this subject. He could keep it back, and by securing, to about the end of the session, the support of those honorable members who had an interest in the matter, he could sit very comfortably where he was. He had got both parties in a nice fix; but he nevertheless had a great responsibility on his shoulders. The honorable member had no right to sacrifice the country for his own political purposes; and he knew perfectly well when the resolutions were introduced that the course proposed was illegal—better than the honorable member for the Mitchell knew it—but it would not have suited his purpose to have brought in a Bill on the subject. That would have wiped the thing off too quickly, and honorable members, their object being served, might have kicked

up too soon; and therefore the question was first brought before the House for ventilation by resolution; and now, having obtained the sense of the House on the subject, the resolutions could be withdrawn as being illegal, and a Bill could be brought in on the subject towards the end of the session, when the honorable member had secured his own purposes with the support that such a measure being in contemplation would obtain for him.

Mr. PALMER said he thought he should hardly have risen to address the House that evening, but for the speech that had been made by the honorable member for Maranoa. He could not permit absent friends to be unfairly attacked, without defending them. Now, he must say that he never heard more uncalled-for observations than some of those that had been addressed to the House by the honorable the member for the Maranoa. He referred, in particular, to the remarks respecting the honorable member for the Leichhardt, Mr. Sandeman. Now, it was quite true that that gentleman was absent, but not from any desire to be absent when the cotton bonus question came before the House. In fact, the honorable member had no expectation that the question would be before the House to-night; and, in proof of that, he might inform the House that he had a note before him, from Mr. Sandeman, stating that he thought the House would, to-night, be in committee on the Pastoral Leases Bill, and asking that he (Mr. Palmer) would try and get the order for going into committee postponed for a day or two. The honorable member for Maranoa, on a previous occasion, made an attack on the honorable member for the Western Downs, and he had attacked that honorable member again to-day, imputing motives to him also for being absent. Now, he must say that he hoped that sort of attack would be discontinued for the future; because such attacks were not at all creditable to those making them. The honorable member for the Western Downs would be in his place in a day or two, and would then, no doubt, fully and completely clear himself of the charges that had been made against him. As to the question before the House, he must say that he had as great a horror of bonuses as the honorable the Premier, or any other honorable member could have, of them. He altogether disliked them on principle, and, since the motions before the House had appeared on the business paper, it had been a matter of serious consideration with him to decide as to how he should vote upon them. He had as great a horror of bonuses as he could have of a protective duty—though the two were very different in their nature, and were directed to different purposes. The one was for the purpose of promoting the growth of an article, or the development of an industry in the colony; and the purpose of the other was to keep out of the colony whatever could be produced in it. Now, in respect to the motion before the

House, honorable members, as he took it, were called upon to look to the interest of a large class that had grown up under the fostering care of cotton bonuses; and the question, therefore, was whether, if they were to stop the bonus at once, they would not do a serious injury, not to the cotton-growers only, but to the colony; while, on the other hand, by gradually reducing it from £10 to £5 for next year, and from £5 to £2 10s. the following year, and then to become extinct, they would not be sustaining the industry so far as it had grown, but also preserving cotton-growers from something like absolute ruin, and maintaining the prosperity of cotton cultivation in the colony. It was only with the hope of such beneficial effects that he would vote for the resolutions. He could assure the House that nothing but a sense of duty, and fear of injuring a large producing class, which he was anxious to see flourishing in the colony, whether as growers of sugar or of cotton, would induce him to vote for the resolutions. The honorable the Premier had stated that the principal of taxation was not involved in this system of bonuses. Now, if taxation was involved in it, he must say that he did not know what taxation was. According to the estimate of the honorable the Treasurer, the amount that would have to be paid out of the revenue for bonuses next year would amount to £25,000. Now, as that would be so much out of the revenue it must be made up by taxation; and if they gave the bonuses in the shape of land orders it would make no difference in that respect. The land orders would occasion a reduction of the land revenue to the extent to which they were used, and that amount would have to be provided for from some other source. He was astonished to hear the honorable the Premier make the statement he had referred to; and the only conclusion he could come to was that the honorable member must have made it without thinking what he was saying, for it was quite ridiculous to say that land orders, whether on account of payment of passage to the colony, or on account of the cultivation of so much cotton, did not lessen the revenue that would be derived from the land, and, consequently, increase the necessity for raising an equal amount by taxation—for it should be remembered that no matter what might be the value of those land orders in the market, they were received in the purchase of land for their full value. He did not think the honorable the Premier went far enough when replying to the charge that these resolutions had been brought forward as a bait to catch the votes of a certain number of honorable members. He could not give the Government credit for being so foolish as to do any such thing, for they knew, as every man who had had any experience in the world knew, that the man who had been bought took the first opportunity of selling the man who had bought him. But the honorable

gentleman should have gone a little farther and have informed the House that he could not buy the honorable members who had been referred to; and he might have taken the opportunity so excellently afforded to him of explaining all the circumstances connected with his formation of the present Ministry, and how they had secured the support of the honorable members for West Moreton and Ipswich.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He would make it now, and briefly, by assuring the House that the honorable members for West Moreton and Ipswich were beyond suspicion.

Mr. PALMER: Well, he thought they were to have had a fuller explanation than that. A full ministerial explanation was promised long ago, and they had not got it yet. If the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government were a little more loquacious than he had been of late, honorable members might, by this time, have heard all they could wish to know. The honorable member for Western Downs, Mr. Taylor, being in the Ministry, quite astonished him. He was sure that nothing but a burning desire to be a Minister could have induced that gentleman to accept office in a Ministry, a part of whose policy was the continuance of cotton bonuses, which the honorable the Minister for Lands had formerly opposed so bitterly. He did not think that a gentleman of his sternness and consistency, and desire for retrenchment, would have consented to join a Ministry of this sort unless upon some grounds that had not yet been explained. It had been stated that the late Ministry intended to bring forward a series of resolutions similar to those now before the House. Well, that might have been the case. All he could say was that he was not personally aware of it. He could only say that the late Premier, Sir Robert Mackenzie, had conversed with him about the advisableness of doing away with the cotton bonuses on a sliding-scale system; but he might now inform the House that he differed with the honorable gentleman on that subject. However, he must say that, looking at the present circumstances of the colony, and taking into consideration the gigantic strides the cotton industry had made within the last two years, he thought it would not be injurious to the colony, while it might be advantageous to continue the cotton bonus for two years longer. He hoped, however, that it would be impressed upon the cotton-growers that this was a final measure on the subject. The great majority of cotton-growers were working men, and if it were impressed upon their minds that, at the end of two years from this date, the bonus would cease, they would, in the meantime, be preparing to do without it, and would see the necessity of putting forth their energies to raise a superior article, that they might compete advantageously in the English market with the American cultivators.

Mr. THORN said he desired to take that opportunity of assuring the House that, so

far as he was concerned, he entered into no compact whatever respecting the continuance of the cotton bonus, or any other matter whatever, on the formation of the present Ministry.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said he had but a very few remarks to make in connection with the vote he intended to give upon the motion before the House; and, at the outset, he desired to say that he fully concurred in the observations made by the honorable member for Port Curtis, that means should be taken to impress strongly upon the minds of the cotton-growers, that this was a final measure on the subject. There was no doubt that, at present, a large number of the cotton-growers and small farmers in the West Moreton District were relying upon this cotton bonus altogether for success. It was only the other day that one of them, who had about the largest crops last year, explained to him that it would be utterly impossible to farm and grow cotton without the aid of the cotton bonus; and he said that it would not pay him to employ the requisite labor for the purpose. When he asked for an explanation, the person he now referred to, informed him that if he had a large capital to enable him to bear the losses he would have to suffer some years, from drought and other causes, he might carry on; but not only was he a man of small capital, and unable to meet those adverses, but he began with a small capital, and had to undergo considerable hardships, and incur large expenses at the commencement, and it was then the cotton bonus came to his aid. In a year or two he expected to have his land cleared and fenced, and under the cultivation of the plough; and he expected, by the aid of the cotton bonus for that period, he would be able afterwards to carry on. He believed it was a fact that the small farmers were relying on the cotton bonus, and were enlarging their farms as much as possible every year, and, for that purpose, taking advantage of the cotton bonus as long as it lasted. The principal reason he saw for extending the bonus at the present time was, that those who had prepared a large quantity of ground for cotton might not, in the event of a bad season, be hopelessly ruined. Now it ought to be impressed upon the small farmers that, in order to protect themselves against such a probability, they ought to cultivate a variety of crops, so that they might not be wholly dependent upon any one product; and that they must grow something else than cotton if they desired to be successful farmers. It was of great importance they should be impressed with that fact, but he was afraid that so long as there were any hopes of bonuses being continued, they would not attend to it. He thought they ought not all at once to stop the bonus. The vast strides that cotton cultivation had made during the last two years afforded in itself the greatest proof that could be

adduced of the benefit of encouraging a young industry. The mode in which the cotton bonus was granted was, he thought, the great fault of the system; and arguments had been advanced to show that those bonuses had the effect of increasing the general taxation of the colony. The House had been told that those cotton bonus land orders were given in payment of purchases at land sales to a very considerable extent, thus diminishing the revenue derivable from the sale of land. Now, it would have been preferable, that instead of giving orders that could be dealt with in that way, a system of bonus had been devised by which land grants would be given to cotton-growers; and he believed it was the original intention that these bonuses should be applied by the cotton-growers to extend the field of his operations—and for no other purpose. He thought the great fault of the system was, that the benefits were not strictly confined to the producer. Whether the quantity of land was two or twelve acres, it should be given to the producer, and to nobody else; and he hoped that if it should be necessary for the honorable the Premier to bring in a Bill for the purpose of giving legality to those resolutions, it might be found possible to alter the system, so as to prevent trafficking in the orders.

Mr. JORDAN said he could not agree at all with the view put forth by the honorable member for the city, Dr. O'Doherty, that it would be impossible for the growers of cotton to carry on that industry profitably if the bonuses were discontinued. If he thought so, he would at once vote against the motion. Now, it was because, after nine years' experience, he was satisfied cotton-growing would be successful, that he intended to vote for the resolutions before the House.

Dr. O'DOHERTY desired to correct the honorable member. He did not say that cotton-growing would not be successful without the cotton bonus. What he said was, that at present the small farmers grew cotton alone, depending upon the bonus, so that if the season was adverse, they would, without the bonus, be wholly ruined; and he further said, he thought it would, in consequence, be of the greatest importance to give the small farmers clearly to understand that they would not receive the bonus for more than two years longer, so that they might be prepared to enter upon the cultivation of some other product besides cotton.

Mr. JORDAN concurred entirely with the honorable member in saying that it was desirable those who grew cotton should not rely entirely upon it, but should enter upon the cultivation of some other product. The man who grew cotton and general agricultural products could not help making a livelihood. He thought honorable members must have felt very much interested in the speech of the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, as to cotton-growers, or rather, perhaps

he should say, the small farmers. The honorable member showed how twenty-five acres had produced twenty-two bales of cotton, the other produce raised paid for the labor, and the profit was £179. Now the cotton-growers were not men of large capital. The honorable member said "They were mostly all poor men;" and it was his own opinion that, in a new country, farming by small capitalists would be more profitable than farming by large capitalists. That was why he had always been in favor of small farming in this colony. The question for the House now to consider was—Whether cotton-growing in Queensland had hitherto been so successful as to make it worth the consideration of the House that something should be done for the encouragement of cotton-growers as a class; or had they been so successful as not to require any aid at all? Well, they had had nine years' experience of cotton-growing in this colony, and now they found that 7000 persons were engaged in that industry, and during the same period the progress of production seemed to correspond remarkably with the progress of cotton-growing in America after cotton became a recognised article of export from that country. In the course of nine years, cotton produce had risen in this colony from one bale to 6000 bales, and taking it that it was mostly small farmers who were engaged in the industry, cotton-growing, he thought, must be pronounced a success. The sales in Great Britain showed that the 6000 bales had realised £75,000. That was the amount which had been added by this one industry to the wealth of the colony during the past year. Supposing this to go on for a couple of years, the 6000 bales would be increased to 12,000 bales; and supposing it were possible to increase at the same ratio for ten years—which, of course, would be impossible, as they could not get the population—they would be exporting thirteen millions of bales of cotton annually. But there was this fact before the House—that 225,000 persons left England every year, chiefly for the United States, taking with them their energy, their industrious habits, and millions of capital. Now, if a proportion of those emigrants from the old country, say 10,000, came out to this colony, and that each member of a family produced a bale of cotton, the wealth of the colony would increase to such an extent that, in a very few years, it would become the richest dependency of the British crown. He did not concur in the remarks of the honorable member for Port Curtis and the honorable member for Maryborough—that, by giving an extension of this bonus, they would be taxing the whole community to support a certain class. He maintained that it was no taxation at all. It would, probably, entail an expense this year of £25,000, but what would be the revenue derived from customs duties, secured by the introduction of the population it would bring into the colony? He had, lately,

quoted a return from the Collector of Customs, which showed that every man, woman, and child, in the colony, was now contributing at the rate of £3 6s. 8d. per head in customs duties alone. Now, if six thousand persons only contributed to the revenue at this rate, there would be a sum of £20,000 every year; to say nothing of the advantage of having the value of those persons' labor. He did not intend to go fully into this question, as it had been already so well ventilated, but he had one or two remarks which he wished to add. One honorable member had stated that he had made careful inquiries with a view to ascertain the description of labor which was likely to be successful in the cultivation of sugar and cotton, and said he "Had found that Coolie labor alone would answer;" from this he (Mr. Jordan) entirely dissented. He had been glad to hear the honorable member for Burnett say that he had voted for the Immigration Bill because he wished to see a British population engaged in the cultivation of cotton, as was the case in the neighborhood of Ipswich. He thought they were all indebted to the gentlemen in Ipswich for the encouragement they had given to this industry. He believed that some 7,800 acres were employed in the cultivation of this crop in West Moreton. He should be glad to see that area greatly increased, and he was confident that, if they passed a thoroughly good Immigration Bill, intending it to be successful, and not mutilating it in committee, and sent home a good agent to work it, and to send out a large number of persons of the right class, bringing with them their energy, industry, and capital; that what had been done in Ipswich and West Moreton, might be repeated around all the centres of population in the colony, and they would soon be exporting, as they did in America, in 1800, seventeen millions of pounds of cotton, and eventually some hundreds of millions. This colony embraced an immense extent of country, and even supposing that only one-tenth of it was adapted to the cultivation of cotton and sugar, there would still be forty millions of acres. They could get from 20,000 to 30,000 persons out from Great Britain every year, and with the capabilities of this colony for the growth of cotton, not only in Ipswich and around Brisbane, but in Gladstone, Maryborough, and other parts of Queensland, why should they not prevent those 20,000 or 30,000 persons from going to America and to other countries? And he could promise the House this, that, although he would not go home again himself upon any terms, if they sent a right man home under the Immigration Bill, they might have a very large population in this colony in ten years hence, and this industry conducted on a very extensive scale. When he lectured in London, Mr. Bazley, the member for Manchester, stated one or two facts in connection with Queensland cotton. He said he had

received, for several years past, small parcels of cotton from Queensland, one or two bales at a time, and it was so exceedingly fine that they could not get it spun in any Manchester loom. He sent it to France, where they could not spin it, and at last they sent it to India, where they did spin it, and manufactured a very fine texture—a piece of muslin, which was so exceedingly fine that it was afterwards exhibited in Victoria alongside of a very large nugget of gold. Mr. Bazley stated that our cotton was very valuable, and that whilst American cotton was selling at six-pence and six-pence halfpenny per pound, the Queensland cotton would fetch two shillings. Some time afterwards, in conversation with Mr. Cheetham the vice-president of the Cotton Supply Association in Manchester, he put this question—the quantity of the finer kinds of cotton imported to Great Britain being then eighteen millions of pounds—“Supposing we could grow it on a large scale in Queensland, would there be a sufficient demand for it?”—and he said, “Yes, if you can supply it at eighteen-pence per pound, the consumption would be greatly increased.” There was no limit to the market for cotton;—there was scarcely any limit to the land they had to give away;—and, instead of being injurious to any other interest—if, as the honorable member for Ipswich had shewn, it was the means of fixing a settled population on the land and bringing capital into the country—it would benefit every other interest in the colony. He had been called an enthusiast on the subject of agriculture, but, unlike some other persons who held the same opinions, he said what he thought. There were some persons in the colony who, having once affirmed that a cabbage could not be grown in the colony, considered themselves bound to adhere to that assertion. But those fallacies had been exploded long ago. It had been proved that cabbages as well as other products could be grown in Queensland, and it was absurd to suppose that any agricultural pursuits in this colony could only be made to pay by the employment of Coolies or Chinamen. He maintained that whatever they could do, he could do;—whatever Coolies or Chinamen could do, Irishmen or Englishmen could do. He contended that if the immigration scheme of 1860 had been faithfully carried out, there would have been, at the present time, twenty times the cotton grown in this colony. One honorable member had stated that it was not the immigrants who came out under that scheme who were the growers of cotton, but mechanics and others who were thrown out of employment by the cessation of public works in 1866; but he should like to know where they came from, except from the old country, under that immigration scheme? Another honorable member had drawn a miserable picture of the poor children gathering cotton. Why, riding through

the bush for eighteen miles, as he had done that day, with the beautiful Australian sky overhead, and the sun pouring a flood of light over the landscape, he could see no reason for commiserating those children in their own fathers' fields, picking cotton for two or three hours a day, for three months in the year; he could but compare them with those unfortunate children—those millions of children—belonging to the poorer classes in the old country, who got neither education nor sufficient food—who were literally starving in the garrets and cellars of the towns. When he considered there were always a million of paupers in Great Britain, and that she had such splendid colonies where there was room for everyone, containing great resources; and, as had been proved during the last nine years, the capability of growing cotton with profit to themselves and the mother-country, he could only feel astonished that such arguments could be used. He could only come to the conclusion that those who had held one opinion for so many years, would continue to hold it all their lives.

Mr. FRASER said he should vote for these resolutions, simply on the ground that to discontinue the bonus upon cotton all at once, would place those who were engaged in it at a great disadvantage. It must be borne in mind, that although this bonus had been granted for a considerable time, great difficulties had been in the way of the early settlers, who were all strangers to the mode of cultivating this article. It was entirely a new branch of industry, and they made, as was very natural, a good many mistakes during the first few years. The continuation of this bonus would give them an opportunity of placing it on a firm and satisfactory basis. There was one subject which had been hinted at, on which he would like to offer a remark. In Great Britain it had been found necessary to pay a good deal of attention to education for agriculture, and colleges had been established from which much good had resulted. If that were the case in the old country, how much more necessary was it in a new country, where most of those engaged in this pursuit were entire strangers to the mode of cultivation. The seasons and the climate were quite new to them, as well as the peculiar mode of treating the plants. For instance, with regard to cotton and sugar, very few persons knew anything at all about them until they were actually engaged in producing them; so that although the bonus had been given for nine years, and it might appear to be time to discontinue it, practically that was very far from being the case. He found that, in 1867, the number of acres under cotton crops was four times as much as in 1866, which clearly proved that, although the bonus had been held out as an inducement for a number of years, it was not until the last three years that the cultivation of cotton had been entered upon with any energy, and consequently the benefi

arising from the bonus had not been realised to such an extent as might have been supposed. Again, with regard to the objection which had been urged as to the way in which the bonus was given, he did not think much could be said in its favor. The original intention in granting the bonus was to allow the cotton-grower to extend his operations; and it must be borne in mind that in many cases this was impossible, as the land was taken up all round him and he had no opportunity of doing so, and what would have been the advantage if he did? The bonus was given to help these persons out of their difficulties, and to enable those who had little or no capital to enter upon the cultivation of cotton. He was quite satisfied with what he had heard—and he had been more or less mixed up with the question of cotton-growing for a number of years—that were they to stop the granting of this bonus to-morrow, it would not ruin this industry, although it might give it a shock and retard its progress. What was wanted to establish it permanently was population of the right kind. He had been rather amused to hear the honorable member for Ipswich ask what we were to do with our surplus population. That appeared to him a singular question, considering that the colony embraced an area of 758,000 square miles, which was occupied by 100,000 individuals, and that it was capable of producing every variety of product from the temperate to the torrid zone. There was room for all the population they could possibly bring into it.

Mr. S. HODGSON: The honorable member had misunderstood him. He said that honorable members were puzzling their heads as to what to do with the immigrants when they got them; and he went on to say that unless they were settled on the lands they would be of no real benefit to the colony.

Mr. FRASER: He should not trespass any further on the time of the House. Although he was opposed to protection he agreed in the distinction which had been drawn between the encouragement offered by the cotton bonus and a protective policy, and he should content himself with what he had said, and support the resolutions before the House.

The question was put, and a division having been called for, it was found that there was only one teller for the "Noes" (Mr. Miles), whereupon the Speaker declared the question to be resolved in the affirmative.