state, however, that the Government were not wedded to any particular age, and if the feeling of the House was in favour of substituting 18 years for 21, the Government would have no objections to making the change. (Hear, hear). As regarded the quantity, they proposed to fill the blank with 100 acres. He came now to the fourth resolution. Under the United States homestead law, a settler, on proof of continuous residence for five years, got his patent. The Government proposed to fill the blank in this resolution also with five years. But it went further. In the United States, where the land was chiefly prairie, and ready for cultivation, there was no necessity for any condition as to clearing. In our country it was different, as the land was covered with timber, and he proposed to provide that, before the patent issued, it should be necessary that fifteen acres should be cleared. It was proposed also that it should be necessary that a certain quantity—not less than two acres—should be cleared annually. The house would be of the ordinary dimensions, 18 by 24 feet. The fifth resolution contained the homestead provision, which was proposed in order to give greater encouragement to parties to take the free grants. The blank would be filled with "twenty" years; this was the period they had in view when the resolutions were drafted, but the Premier thought it best to leave a blank and fill it up afterwards; it was also proposed to modify the latter clause of the resolution, so that the locatee should not have power to alienate, mortgage or pledge the land until five years after the granting of the patent. One honourable member, who professed to be a supporter of the Government, had candidly expressed his opinion that this measure was an abortion.

Sir HENRY SMITH—I understand, Mr. Speaker, it is a Parliamentary rule—[to Mr. Richards, who still continued standing, "Sit down, Sir."]—I understand it is a Parliamentary rule that a member is not to allude to a previous debate. If the hon. gentleman wanted to have a tilt at me, he should have spoken when that debate was in progress.

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS—(after consulting with the Premier)—said he had not the Parliamentary experience of the gallant knight, but he was told he was perfectly in order, as he had not named the member to whom he referred. An hon. gentleman had pronounced this measure to be an abortion. He would not cavil at the language in which that idea was expressed—it might comport with the taste of the hon. gentleman who used it. But he was not prepared to admit that the idea conveyed by the expression was correct. For this measure in point of fact went further than the United States law, which only exempted the land from execution or liability for debt, until the patent was issued. This resolution went further and protected it for twenty years. There were many opinions entertained about a Homestead Law, and he believed very few people in this country understood what was meant by it. At the two elections he had gone through the thing was not once mentioned. He admitted, however, that in several constituencies the matter was brought prominently forward. He did not say what the Government might do with it hereafter; but at present they were dealing merely with free grants, to which they proposed to give a homestead exemption for 20 years. At the end of that period these lands might be worth, as was the case now in the older townships, $80 an acre, and it would clearly be wrong to continue exemption longer for a property worth $8,000.

Mr. TETT—Will the twenty years count from the date of the location, or of the patent?

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS—From the date of the location.

The Speaker, at six o'clock, left the chair till half-past seven.

After recess,

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS continued his remarks. With reference to the 6th resolution, he said the object of the Government in these resolutions was to consider the agricultural interest. They proposed, therefore, that the free grants should be confined to those lands which were adapted for agricultural purposes. The timber and minerals of the country, they considered, should be reserved to furnish revenue. The free grants hitherto had only been on the colonization roads, which went through districts, a large proportion of which was unsuited for agricultural purposes. The result was that, when the valuable timber had been stripped off the lots, they were abandoned. This policy was unjust to the settler, to the lumberer, and to the public, and it had not yielded to the public any benefit corresponding to the large amount of $550,000 which had been expended on the colonization roads. In the Muskoka territory and near Georgian