

1907-8, the cane was of much better quality, and the quantity required to produce a ton of sugar was only 8.84 tons, the sugar content representing in this case somewhat more than $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the weight of cane crushed. In 1908-9, owing in large measure to the effect of frosts, the quantity of cane required to produce one ton of sugar was increased to 9.49 tons, the sugar thus representing only about $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the weight of cane crushed, while in 1909-10 only 8.65 tons of cane were required to each ton of sugar, the sugar representing about $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the weight of cane crushed. The especially favourable weather existing throughout 1910 resulted in a very high average quantity of cane per acre being obtained, while the moisture which caused this led to a slight diminution in the saccharine density as compared with the previous year. In 1910-11 the quantity of cane required to produce one ton of sugar was 8.73 tons, the sugar produced representing about $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the weight of cane crushed; in 1911-12 the ratio of sugar to cane crushed was virtually the same, being $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. It should be noted also that in 1901-2 no less than 9.76 tons of cane were needed to produce a ton of sugar. It may be remarked in this connection that the systematic study of the beet in Germany shewed that by suitable culture its sugar content might be greatly increased, and this is by no means impossible in the case of sugar-cane.

6. Sugar Bounties.—The provision of bounties or similar aids to the sugar-growers of the Commonwealth early occupied the attention of the Commonwealth Parliament, the object in view being that of assisting the industry, whilst at the same time diminishing the employment of coloured labour in connection therewith. The earliest legislative provision made with this object in view was that contained in the Excise Tariff 1902, under which an excise duty of three shillings per cwt. of manufactured sugar was charged, and a rebate of four shillings per ton allowed on all sugar-cane delivered for manufacture, in the production of which white labour only had been employed after 28th February, 1902. This rebate was calculated on the basis of cane giving 10 per cent. of sugar, and was increased or reduced proportionately according to any variation from this standard, that is to say, the rebate amounted to two shillings per cwt. of the sugar content of the cane-treated. In actual practice it was found that this system of rebates was producing effects that had not been anticipated at the time the legislation was passed, and that the greater part of the cost of substituting white for coloured labour in the sugar-growing industry was thereby being imposed upon the States engaged in the industry, viz., Queensland and New South Wales, instead of being a charge upon the whole Commonwealth. To remedy this state of affairs, the Sugar Rebate Abolition Act of 1903 was passed on 30th July, 1903, and the Sugar Bounty Act 1903 received assent on the same day. The rate of bounty provided by this latter Act was, as in the case of the rebate mentioned above, four shillings per ton of cane grown by white labour giving 10 per cent. of sugar, the bounty to be increased or reduced proportionately according to any variation from this standard. This Act remained in force until 31st December, 1906, when it was superseded by the provisions of the Sugar Bounty Act 1905, which extended the principle of bounties to the end of the year 1912, but stipulated that during the years 1911 and 1912 the rates payable on cane delivered should be respectively two-thirds and one-third of the rates prevailing during the earlier years of the period. During the 1910 Session of the Commonwealth Parliament an Amending Act (the Sugar Bounty Act 1910) was passed repealing the provision for successive decrements in the amount of bounty payable, and thus leaving the bounty at full rate applicable for an indefinite time. The rate of bonus allowed under this Act was six shillings per ton of cane of 10 per cent. quality grown by white labour, provided that the rates of wages and conditions of employment of such labour were fair and reasonable, in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Under the Sugar Bounty Abolition Act 1912, assented to on 24th December, 1912, the various provisions for sugar bounties were repealed, the Act to come into operation by proclamation. At the date of writing (21st January, 1913) no such proclamation had been made. Under the Excise Tariff 1905, assented to on 21st December, 1905, the excise duty on sugar was, from 1st January, 1907, increased to four shillings per cwt. of manufactured sugar in place of three shillings formerly imposed. This rate

of duty was, under the original Act, to continue in force until 31st December, 1910, reducing to 2s. 8d. per cwt. for 1911, 1s. 4d. per cwt. for 1912, and being abolished after 31st December, 1912. The Excise (Sugar) Act 1910, however, repealed these provisions for reduction and abolition, leaving the duty in force at the full rate for an indefinite time. This Act was in turn repealed by the Sugar Excise Repeal Act 1912, assented to on the 24th December, 1912, under which all provisions for collection of sugar excise duties were abolished, the Act to come into operation by proclamation. At the date of writing (21st January, 1913) no such proclamation had been made.

7. **Beet Sugar.**—During the past few years an effort has been made to revive the sugar-beet industry in Victoria. During 1910-11 £554 was paid as bounty on 1,847 tons of beet, and £2,244 on 7,481 tons during 1911-12. It is anticipated that the latter quantity will be increased by at least 75 per cent. during the ensuing season.

8. **Cost of Bounties.**—The amounts paid by the Commonwealth Government in sugar bounties and the expenses in connection therewith during the period 1907-8 to 1911-12 are shewn in the following table :—

SUGAR BOUNTIES AND EXPENSES, 1907-8 to 1911-12.

| Particulars. | 1907-8. | 1908-9. | 1909-10. | 1910-11 | 1911-12. |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Bounties ... | £ 577,148 | £ 477,090 | £ 402,132 | £ 630,762 | £ 543,503 |
| Expenses ... | 7,474 | 6,616 | 5,645 | 6,862 | * |
| | 584,622 | 483,706 | 407,777 | 637,624 | * |

* Not available.

9. **Collection of Sugar Excise.**—The table hereunder contains particulars concerning the net amount of excise duty on sugar collected in respect of the several States for the years 1901-2 and 1907-8 to 1911-12. In this table refunds and drawbacks have been deducted and the requisite adjustment has been made between the States :—

SUGAR EXCISE, 1901-2 and 1907-8 to 1911-12.

| Year. | N.S.W. | Victoria. | Q'land. | S. Aust. | W. Aust. | Tas. | C'wealth. |
|-------------|---------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|--------|-----------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 1901-2 ... | 119,577 | 40,189 | 10,658 | 781 | 8,184 | 10,156 | 189,545 |
| 1907-8 ... | 266,876 | 226,638 | 103,272 | 63,788 | 46,238 | 35,116 | 741,928 |
| 1908-9 ... | 250,329 | 229,409 | 116,215 | 69,267 | 49,434 | 36,122 | 750,776 |
| 1909-10 ... | 137,672 | 229,981 | 126,626 | 9,373 | 32,526 | 12,538 | 548,716 |
| 1910-11 ... | * | * | * | * | * | * | 794,645 |
| 1911-12 ... | * | * | * | * | * | * | 748,670 |

* Amounts not allocated to separate States.

10. **Production by White and Coloured Labour.**—The following table contains particulars furnished by the Commonwealth Treasury concerning the production of sugar in New South Wales and Queensland during the past ten seasons, and furnishes an indication of the decline in the employment of coloured labour in the sugar industry during that period :—