

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER 1867

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 5 December, 1867.

The New Parliament Houses.—Gold Escort for Gympie Diggings.—The Main Street of Roma.—Brisbane Servants' Home.—Provisional Certificates of Registration Bill.

THE NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSES.

MR. GROOM asked the Minister at the head of the Public Works Department:—

1. Whether any tender has been accepted for the completion of a part of the new Parliamentary Buildings?

2. If so, what is the amount of the contract, and the name of the contractor?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY answered:—

1. Yes.

2. £17,500. The building to be completed according to original specification, except colonnade

in front. Refreshment rooms of two stories high, of wood, connected with main building by staircase twenty feet long, on brick arches, included. Contractor, Mr. John Petrie, To be completed in twelve months. Chambers for the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council to be, if possible, ready for next session.

Though out of the ordinary course, in answering a question, he wished to add that he had taken considerable trouble over that matter, and he had found it would be the most expensive to only partially complete the buildings; it would be best and cheapest to have them finished according to the original specification, even in the face of the fact that one tender would be carried out for only £7,000. But, in the latter case, there would not be a particle of plaster on the walls, and the staircase would be temporary, and many of the fittings already prepared would be, comparatively speaking, thrown away. A temporary refreshment room would cost £1,200 or 1,500; and all the stone in the front of the buildings would have to be cleared away, and all the workshops removed, and stabling for honorable members would be required; so that, after all, the cost would run up to about £11,000, and, by-and-bye, the work of completion would have to be carried out at a greater cost than ever. The Government had found, after calculation, that it would be most economical and best in every way to complete the Parliament Houses according to the original intention. The Houses would be fit for the reception of the Parliament, and a workman would not be wanted for years, except, perhaps, to repair broken glass. The refreshment room would be a very substantial building with a galvanised iron roof, and the kitchen underneath with a stone floor. The stone now lying about would be used for the floor; and there would scarcely be the slightest danger from fire. The Government found that, with the cash in hand, and the ground they could sell, they would have more than enough to finish the works. In consultation with his honorable colleagues, and with the honorable the President of the Council, and some other members of both Houses, the conclusions he had stated had been arrived at. Although the contract was not completed, it was in course of completion.

MR. GROOM, in explanation, said it was not for any disparagement to Mr. Petrie that he had put the questions, but simply that other parties might not feel themselves aggrieved.

GOLD ESCORT FOR GYMPIE DIGGINGS.

MR. PRITCHARD moved—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to consider of an address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for 1868 the sum of £1,500, for the services of a gold escort, between Brisbane and Maryborough, *via* Gympie Creek.

He said he thought it was known, and would be admitted, that the diggings at Gympie Creek were established, and that there was a permanent and payable gold field. It was the duty of the Government to do all they could to foster it and keep the gold in the colony, instead of letting it all go to Sydney. By the returns of the export duty paid through the Customs at Maryborough and Brisbane, more than 4,000 ounces of gold had already been brought from that gold field—a very good criterion of its profitability and permanency. A great number of the diggers, there, were Brisbane men, and they very naturally wished to have their gold sent to Brisbane instead of to Maryborough. The banks, too, had established branches at the diggings for the purpose of purchasing gold, and it was their desire to have Brisbane as the head-quarters of their gold receipts. On the other hand, those men who belonged to Maryborough and the north, could send their gold to Maryborough under escort. He believed £1,500 was actually more than would be required for the service; because the fees of transport would equal the outlay very soon. There might be some objection to the road from the diggings to Brisbane, but according to a report from parties competent to give an opinion on the subject, a road had been discovered which was not only practicable, but it was one in which there was little danger of bushrangers or highway robbers attempting any interference with the escort. The Government were not liable for loss in that way, so long as they took due precautions; but in that, as in all other respects, the new route possessed advantages over the existing road. He thought the House should give the matter their serious consideration. It had been proved that gold digging was a most important interest, and one which had been the making of some of the southern colonies—Victoria, especially—and he did not see why the Queensland Government should not endeavor to encourage it as much as possible, and if properly assisted by Parliament, there was no reason why this colony should not, through its gold mining interest, occupy as important a position as Victoria.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Government would be very glad, if they could meet the honorable member on this motion; but they certainly did not, at present, feel in a position to do so. In the first place, it was not at all clear that Gympie Creek was either a permanent or a payable gold field. He had three or four correspondents, there, who kept him informed of what was going on, and their opinion was that it would be nothing of the kind. Until it was proved that the diggings were payable, and likely to be permanent, it was impossible that the Government could take any steps towards carrying out the motion, and expending £1,500 out of the revenue; more especially as Maryborough was within 45

miles of the diggings, and Brisbane was at the least 120 miles. It might be that a great many persons who first went to the diggings were Brisbane men, but the honorable member must recollect that one-half or them were already returned, or on the way back. He (the Colonial Treasurer) could assure the honorable member that, as soon as the Government felt themselves justified in taking steps to provide an escort, they would do so. His own belief was, that if the gold field increased, it would come very near to Brisbane, because the same slopes of the range where the gold was found tended in this direction some sixty or sixty-five miles. He was not one of those who thought it made much difference whether the gold was sent to Maryborough and shipped thence to Sydney, or whether it was sent from Brisbane to Sydney. No doubt, if the diggings did turn out to be permanent they would do good to the trade of Maryborough, but the Brisbane people ought not to be jealous of that prosperity. He saw nothing to prevent the merchants of Brisbane getting their gold down by way of Maryborough.

Mr. PUGH said he should like to ask the honorable member at the head of the Government what he considered a payable gold field; and, whether he was likely to arrive at a decision on the matter from the number of people on the diggings, or the amount of gold sent down?

The SPEAKER: The honorable member for North Brisbane knew it was irregular to ask a question in the way he had done.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in explanation, said that as far as his experience of Queensland gold fields went, they were a very great expense to the Government, without any commensurate advantage: large outlay was incurred sending up detachments of police to new gold fields, as they were discovered, and, after a short time, the diggings failed. People were unsettled and scattered about—servants were taken away from their employment—and the ordinary channels of industry were disturbed. What he called a payable gold field was one that, without rivalling those of Victoria, would be permanent and profitable, increase the consumption of dutiable goods, and prove of general benefit to the colony—which none of the Queensland gold fields had yet done.

Mr. PRITCHARD, in reply, stated that the export duty was charged at Maryborough, so that if the gold were shipped to Brisbane, and thence to Sydney, double duty had to be paid; whereas, if it were conveyed overland, by escort, the export duty would have to be paid only once.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Duty could not be charged at Maryborough on gold for Brisbane, but only on that for Sydney.

Mr. PRITCHARD: Well, if honorable members tried it on, they would find, to their sorrow, that he was correct in his statement. Gold could not be shipped at any port of the

colony without the export duty on it being paid. Referring to the advantages that accrued from gold fields, he maintained that the Customs revenue of Rockhampton had quadrupled from the consumption of imports on the gold fields; and Maryborough, also, could shew an improvement in the revenue since the opening of the Gympie Creek Diggings. The expense of maintaining police on new gold fields might be large, but the increased revenue more than covered it. The population and yield of the new diggings named in the motion warranted the expenditure for which he asked.

The question was put and negatived.

THE MAIN STREET OF ROMA.

Mr. MILES moved—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to consider of an address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for the year 1868 the sum of £1,000, for the forming and draining of the main street within the Municipality of Roma.

He said, if he were to judge from the feeling of the House exhibited at the time he gave notice of this motion, he was afraid that there was not much chance of its being carried; for the House were evidently now of the same opinion as then. But he advised honorable members not to come to a conclusion until they were acquainted with the merits of the case. If the Government had acted justly to the municipality of Roma, he should not have had to table such a motion at all. When the inhabitants petitioned to be incorporated, no counter-petition was presented to the Government within the three months prescribed by law; but the petition for incorporation got stowed away on a shelf in the Colonial Secretary's Office, and no notice had been taken of it until nine or twelve months after its presentation, and after he had gone to inquire the cause of the delay in proclaiming the municipality. The only excuse the Government had for the delay, was, that the petition had been mislaid and overlooked. Meantime, however, a large quantity of Crown land in Roma was sold, and the whole proceeds went into the pockets of the Government. Had the municipality been proclaimed in due course, as it ought to have been, Roma would have been entitled to one-third of the amount realised by the sale of such land. That portion had been applied for on behalf of the municipality, but the honorable member at the head of the Government refused it. That was the principal reason of the motion being brought forward. He thought he should be able to shew that on many occasions the House had granted large sums of money to corporations. Amongst them, Ipswich had received a good sum; Toowoomba, also, had had about £2,000, for forming and draining the main street; Dalby had had a small sum to put its principal street, which was also

a main road, in repair. He (Mr. Miles) found, also, that Rockhampton had had £5,000 for drainage purposes. Therefore, Roma was fairly entitled to the £1,000 he asked for. Over and above all that he before urged, the town was badly situated, although the site had been chosen by a Government surveyor; for it was nothing but a perfect swamp and a bog-hole—in wet weather it was impossible to cross the street except on horseback. He had experienced the difficulty himself. Traffic could not be carried on through the town unless a good sum of money was spent on the main street. The Government were responsible for the faults of their officers, and therefore they ought to contribute towards making the main street passable, since they had fixed the township in such a place, and had received a considerable return for land sold in the town. He trusted that the Government would do justice to the town by agreeing to the motion.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the argument used by the honorable member as to the site of Roma being improperly in a swamp, and that, therefore, the Government of the day should spend money to redeem it, was a very improper one: it might be used for a portion of Brisbane known as "Frog's Hollow," just as well as for Roma. People had bought land there with their eyes open, and they could hardly, with justice, expect the Government to drain and improve it. The honorable member had hardly stated his case fairly, in so far as regarded the action of the Government. He (the Colonial Treasurer) did not affirm an opinion on the case of Roma until he had referred it to the Attorney-General, who had given him his opinion on the legal bearing of it. After the petition for incorporation had been sent down from Roma, the municipality was not proclaimed until a period of the year which left it out of the power of the Government to grant the proportion of money that was asked for. The Attorney-General had given his opinion that the calculation of the proportion of proceeds of Crown land sales for the endowment of a municipality could only be made from the date of the proclamation of the municipality. The grants in aid to municipalities had been a mistake; they had led corporations into extravagance, and expense, and debt, that they could not get out of. If the finances of the country would admit of it, he (the Colonial Treasurer) should be glad to do what he could to meet the honorable member's wishes; but, now, he must do what he had had to do for his own district. He was not long in office when he got an application from Gayndah for a sum of money for the forming and draining of the main street, and he refused to entertain it. He must consistently refuse all such applications.

Mr. PRITCHARD held that the statement of the Colonial Treasurer was unfounded, that the endowments to municipalities were too

large, if the honorable gentleman took into consideration the privileges that municipalities were entitled to before the Act brought in by Mr. Herbert was passed, which took away from them the proportion of land which had before been granted to them. The endowment at present enjoyed was not much compared to the revenue raised. Municipalities were more economical than the Government. It was the fault of the Government that Roma was in a swamp; they had sent an incompetent officer to select the site for the town, and they were responsible for his act. It was the duty of the Government to place towns in naturally advantageous positions.

Mr. FITZGERALD maintained that the endowment to municipalities was not too great. What was it? A third of the proceeds of the land sold within the boundary of a municipality. Where did it come from? From the pockets of the people themselves, who gave enormous prices for small bits of land in particular localities, on the coast or inland, in order to form settlements. Was it to be maintained that the Government were to take the whole of this money, and do nothing whatever for the people. How were the other two-thirds absorbed? He did not know how; it was very unsatisfactory. If the municipalities required improvements, they were obliged to tax themselves. He was sorry that the state of the public finances did not allow him to support the motion.

Mr. GROOM said he was surprised to hear the honorable member at the head of the Government say that municipalities were too largely endowed, when the honorable gentleman had been a member of a Government that enforced the formation of municipalities. He remembered, when application was made for £200 for Drayton, Mr. Herbert urged that that town was large enough to be a municipality; the advice of the Minister was taken, and the vote refused. Drayton became a municipality before long. The honorable member for Maranoa had fallen into a mistake in stating that £2,000 had been granted to the municipality of Toowoomba for the main road; only £1,000 was granted. But, then, it must be remembered that nearly all the land within the municipality had been sold, and that, therefore, it had a claim on the Government. He should be very glad to support the motion, if the public funds would allow it; but he could not forget that the municipality of Roma was a very extensive one, and that a large quantity of Crown land was included within its boundaries, to half the proceeds of which land, when sold, it would be entitled.

Mr. G. THORN opposed the motion. The House had, at last, arrived at a true sense of its duty. The honorable member had already been successful with his motions for grants of money for the benefit of Roma, and now he wished to procure another. With reference to the honorable member's argument that the

municipality of Roma was entitled to a large proportion of the money accruing from land sales in that municipality before its proclamation, he (Mr. Thorn) contended that it would be just as reasonable to suppose that all the towns in the colony could demand a portion of the receipts from the sale of lands ever since they existed. In cases of extreme necessity, where money was really required, the honorable member opposed motions for money grants, and he, Mr. Miles, ought to be the last to bring forward such a motion as the present, especially as the municipality of Roma was flush of funds. He (Mr. Thorn) was quite sure, if gold diggings were within 120 miles of Roma, the inhabitants would raise all the money required for an escort. He believed that the honorable member would, on reflection, withdraw his motion; Roma was not in the same state of chronic insolvency as other municipalities—Brisbane and Rockhampton, for instance.

Mr. ARCHER wished to correct an error into which the honorable member for Maranoa had fallen. The honorable member had stated that the municipality of Rockhampton had £5,000 or £6,000 from the Government for the purposes of drainage. That money was granted to Rockhampton as a loan; and £3,400 of it was already repaid. All the Government had done was to guarantee the loan, by which it was got at a lower interest than would otherwise have been the case.

Mr. MILES replied, deprecating the cuckoo cry of "no money," raised by the Government. He did not come down to the House to beg, but to ask that the municipality of Roma should receive as a right what it was justly entitled to. In reference to a statement of the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. G. Thorn, he said that he had been successful in a former motion for £300—a paltry sum—for the benefit of Roma; but it was only because that town was entitled to it, and had made out a good case. He would press the present motion to a division, if he had to stand alone; and he would not cringe to any honorable member for support, or join in "log-rolling" for a vote.

The question was put, and the House divided—ayes, 3; noes, 16.

BRISBANE SERVANTS' HOME.

Dr. O'DOHERTY moved—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to consider of an address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon the Supplementary Estimates for 1868 the sum of one hundred pounds, as a grant in aid of the Servants' Home, Brisbane.

He said he hoped that he should be more fortunate than his predecessor in obtaining the favorable consideration of the House for his motion; because, apart from the strong claims the institution had to the attention of honorable members, on the score of utility,

its benevolent tendencies, through the ladies of Brisbane, under whose control it was, were acknowledged and appreciated by the community, and should be recognised by the House. The institution was managed in an economical manner that was in a high degree creditable, and that finance ministers might take an example from. Every one who employed servants was interested in the welfare of the Servants' Home. It had often been said that at the Antipodes everything was reversed. The saying was most true in regard to the positions of masters and servants; for here, instead of the servants being dependent on the masters, the masters were dependent on the servants. The objects with which the institution was organised were, to train young women to be good domestic servants, and to make them useful members of society; and, to protect them when out of place, by affording them a home where they would not be subjected to temptation to misconduct. Every one knew that the class in this colony, and in the other colonies, from which female servants were supplied, was, as a rule, one composed of families whose members were scattered over the country, and of young females who had come out from the mother country without their natural protectors; and, when out of place, they required a refuge, where they would be free from exposure to the numberless temptations that beset persons in such a position. Unless an institution of the kind referred to in the motion were maintained, many young women would go astray, and, instead of becoming a benefit to their employers, and doing good for themselves, they would be an absolute curse to the community. Therefore, it was of the utmost importance that such an institution should flourish. The claims of the Servants' Home would appear strong when he gave the particulars of the remarkable economy exhibited in its management, and of its being almost self-supporting. The money asked for was to assist in paying the debt that had been incurred in organising the institution. But, he could not do better than read from the report which had been drawn up by direction of the committee:—

"The great aim of the committee has been to render the institution, as far as possible, self-supporting; and this object will be fully gained as soon as the debt contracted in building has been liquidated.

"The subjoined statement will shew the extent of the operations of the Home, and the benefit it has conferred upon that portion of the community it is intended to serve:—

Total number of single girls received since the opening of the institution	...	1,752	
Total payments by such girls	...	£1,042	4 4
Total of debts contracted by inmates, at time of leaving, through inability to pay	...	304	9 0
Total of debts paid subsequently	...	163	9 3
Total of debts considered bad	...	£140	19 9

Those payments were merely made an obligation on the girls when they left the Home; and it was very encouraging, that out of £304 9s. of debt incurred for their maintenance, the girls had repaid £163 9s. 3d. That shewed the benefits of the institution were appreciated in a remarkable degree by those for whom the institution was established.

"Total of debts considered bad, £140 19s. 9d.

"1. From the foregoing figures, it will appear that no less than 1,750 single girls have already received benefit and protection from the institution.

"2. That the inmates themselves have paid £1,042 4s. 4d.—an amount sufficient to cover the cost of house-keeping, and this our committee look upon as an evidence of the esteem in which the Home is held by them.

"3. That the Home has afforded board and lodging to inmates in distress through want of employ, to the extent of £304 9s. Of this sum, £163 9s. 3d. has been honorably repaid out of subsequent earnings, whilst the balance, £140 19s. 9d., may be looked upon as a direct charitable donation to girls altogether destitute of the means of support, thus preventing the necessity of their applying to that committee which is charged with the administration of the grant voted by Parliament for the relief of paupers."

He asked honorable members to pay attention to the latter portion of the ladies' statement; for it was more strongly recommendatory to the granting of the small sum asked for than anything he could say. The ladies had been enabled to provide the comforts of a home to those who needed it; and many of the inmates, but for such an institution, would have been compelled, at least, to seek aid out of the grant for the support of destitute persons.

"In addition to the daily care of carrying on the institution, the committee have the following pecuniary obligations devolving on them during the year:—

Matron's salary	...	£40	0	0
Maintenance	...	20	0	0
Renewal of furniture, bedding, cooking utensils, and sundries	...	30	0	0
Interest on borrowed money	...	72	0	0
Instalment of borrowed money to be repaid	...	100	0	0
		£262	0	0

"To meet these liabilities, the committee will have to use every effort to collect the money. In consideration, therefore, of the benefit the institution has conferred upon the community in providing a home and protection for single girls, who, for the most part, have neither friends nor parents in the colony, and considering the large amount of money which, by careful management, they have been enabled to spend in the relief of positive destitution,"—

the ladies who controlled the Servants' Home had every reason for applying for aid to the Parliament. He hoped the House would accede to the motion.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he supposed he must not give a silent vote on the

present occasion, as the motion before the House was one relating to a grant of money. He was not disposed to place this request in the same category as other charitable requests that had been made. The Servants' Home, he believed, was a very good institution in its way, but still it was not without some objections. The Government had granted a very valuable piece of land to the institution as a site for a building. A building had been erected on that site, and a very ugly building it was. Now, he considered that when the Government gave a grant of valuable land in a town as a site for a building, they had a right to expect that an edifice having some architectural pretensions should be erected upon it. But such had not been done in the case of the Servants' Home. This was an institution which he thought ought to be self-supporting. At the present time it was not so much required as it was two years ago. Indeed, considering the present state of the labor market, both for males and females, he did not think that a Servants' Home was at all required. One of the consequences of the institution was, that girls, finding they had such a resource, could go there and make such terms as they chose for future employment. He did not believe that the vote was absolutely necessary for the institution, and therefore he would oppose it. The application was made to him in the first instance, personally, and he refused it; but suggested that some of the city members should be requested to bring a motion on the subject before the House.

Mr. PUGH said he would support the motion, as he believed the Servants' Home was an institution that was more deserving of support than some institutions for which similar sums had been voted—the Lady Bowen Hospital, for instance, the proper name of which was the Lying-in Hospital. It might be that the building which had been erected was an ugly one, but the sum now asked for was not on account of the building or the building fund, but for the maintenance of the institution. It should also be remembered, that some time ago the Government was very glad to avail themselves of the accommodation of the building, when a large number of female immigrants were arriving in the colony, and the Immigration Depot was overcrowded. The Servants' Home was more of the nature of a charitable institution than some other institutions; for though in some cases the girls who went there were able to support themselves, at times a great many who availed themselves of the Home were really in indigent circumstances. When objections were made by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer to the motion before the House, he would like to hear from that honorable gentleman how it came to pass that a vote for the Ladies' Society of Brisbane appeared on the Estimates without the House being consulted in the matter in the first

instance. On a former occasion a vote in aid of this institution was granted. Last year it was refused on account of the financial circumstances of the colony at the time; but it was understood, when the amount was first granted, that the vote would be an annual one.

Mr. BELL said he quite agreed with the view taken by the honorable member at the head of the Government; and would, therefore, vote against the motion. He thought the vote was not really required for the institution, and that the present circumstances of the colony did not warrant the House in passing votes that were not absolutely necessary. When this institution was initiated, it was at a time when a great many females were arriving in the colony, and for whom some such institution was necessary; but the circumstances of the colony had altogether changed since then. There was not now the same influx of immigrants, and, consequently, not the same competition for employment; and wages were sufficiently high to enable those who, from being temporarily out of employment, resorted to the Home, to bear expenses. He thought the working of the institution should not be continued at present, though the institution itself should be retained, in order that it might be available when occasion required, for the class of inmates by whom it was formerly occupied. He entirely disagreed with the opinion of the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. PUGH, that this was an institution more deserving of support than the Lady Bowen Hospital, which was a most necessary and humane institution, and one that he should be sorry to see denied the support it had hitherto received from the Legislature.

Mr. MILES also opposed the motion. He considered the Servants' Home was a most useless institution, except for the encouragement of laziness. That the Legislature should be asked to vote money to assist in keeping those girls lying up in the Servants' Home in idleness, was really more than he could understand.

Mr. G. THORN opposed the motion, for reasons similar to those advanced by the honorable member for the Maranoa; and further, as he believed, such an institution as the Servants' Home encouraged improvident habits.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he thought the Servants' Home could not be strictly characterised as a charitable institution; and practically it had been a very useful institution. Since it was opened, some 1,752 girls had passed through the Home as inmates, and they had contributed towards the support of the institution £1,042. The original intention was, no doubt, that the Home should be entirely self-supporting, but a want of funds had arisen through some of the inmates of the Home not being able to pay the fees during the whole time they remained in it, and it was to make up for the deficiency so

occasioned that the motion before the House was brought forward. It had been asked—why should they maintain an institution that encouraged improvident habits? The same question might be put with respect to some of their most charitable institutions; and with respect to others that received support from the Legislature the question might be asked—Why support institutions that tended to the encouragement of vice? Many of the girls who availed themselves, temporarily, of the accommodation afforded by the Home, were really in indigent circumstances, and if, on account of their being unable to pay for the accommodation they received, they should be refused admission, they would be compelled to go to the Hospital for relief. Now, he was sure, no honorable member would wish to place a girl in the degrading position of having to apply to the Hospital for relief, when such an institution as the Servants' Home was open to her, through the agency of which she could obtain employment. If such an institution did not exist, many girls when out of employment would have to go to public-houses, where they might form associations that would sooner or later eventuate in their utter ruin. This institution had been, as far as any public institution could be, a home to many females when out of employment, and had been to them also a place of shelter from the vicious associations they might otherwise have been compelled to form; and those females had felt deeply thankful that the country provided such an institution for them to resort to in their time of need. The expenditure which this vote was asked for to cover was not an expenditure that had arisen strictly in connection with the express purposes of the institution, but an expenditure that was occasioned by affording accommodation to a large number of female immigrants, some time ago, when the immigration depôt was overcrowded. From that circumstance, and as a great many were not able to pay for the cost of their residence there, the institution fell into debt to the amount of £300. Of that amount the institution had been reimbursed to the extent of £160, so that there still remained a debt of £140, and it was towards meeting that liability the honorable member for North Brisbane now asked the House to authorise the grant of the small sum of £100. There was no great principle involved in the motion, and if the sum asked for were granted, it would be productive of a very great amount of good; and he therefore hoped the House, though this might be an interference with the strict economy they desired to observe, would stretch a point in this instance and agree to the motion.

Mr. ARCHER said that although, as had been stated, 1,700 persons had availed themselves of the accommodation offered by the Home, he believed it would be found that in a great many cases the same girls had presented themselves over and

over again for relief. The names of girls who preferred to live in the institution instead of doing faithful service out of it, would, he thought, be found to occur in the books of the institution over and over again. It was now a degradation for any girl in good health to receive help from the Hospital, when female servants were so highly in demand; but, if she were in ill-health, the Hospital would be the best place for her to go to. He could not agree with the honorable member for Eastern Downs, that a girl would be degraded in applying for such assistance, when she required it, if the necessity did not arise from her own conduct. Until he heard a better case made out than had yet been presented on behalf of the Servants' Home, he should oppose the motion.

Mr. RAMSAY said he had tried to advocate economy, ever since he came into the House, as much as any other honorable member had done, and he had been refused votes which he thought were absolutely necessary, and which he would have liked to see passed. In this case, he did not see there would be any saving effected by rejecting the present motion; for he held the opinion, however reluctantly, that if the girls were not supported in the way now proposed, it would be necessary to support them in some other way. He thought there was no class of girls who more required that the House should throw its protection over them than the class for whom the Servants' Home was established. Those girls had been induced to leave their homes, and they had arrived in the colony without friends and without parental care, in a great many cases; and, without such an institution as the Servants' Home, they would literally, when out of a situation, be cast upon the world. He, therefore, thought that the House ought to do something towards affording them protection, and for that reason he would support the motion.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said he hoped the remarks that had been made by the honorable member for the Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, would have more weight with the House than the remarks that had been made in opposition to the motion. The honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Bell, had said that the Servants' Home was not so necessary now as it was some time ago, when there was a large influx of immigrants into the colony. He admitted that such an argument possessed great weight, but it was to be hoped that things were not to remain always as they were now. For his own part, he hoped soon to see a large stream of immigrants again coming into the colony, and then the institution would be as much required as it was before. After the very excellent remarks that had been made by the honorable member for the Western Downs, he thought it would be better to allow the motion to go to a vote without his saying anything further in its support.

The motion was then agreed to.

PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATES OF REGISTRATION BILL.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that a Bill to amend the law relating to letters of registration for inventions and improvements in the arts or manufactures by granting provisional certificates of registration for a limited period, be read a second time. This Bill, he said, originated in the Legislative Council, and he had taken charge of it in the Assembly. There was nothing particular in the Bill calling for special comment; and all that he felt it was necessary for him to do was to inform the House of the nature of the measure. There was at present an Act of Parliament in existence with reference to the issue of letters patent, whereby persons depositing plans and specifications, and paying a fee of £20, could get protection for a certain period. The object of the present Bill was to afford greater facilities to inventors, by lessening the fees and giving an inventor a temporary protection for a short time, which could be extended on application, as specified in the Act.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read a second time.