

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 29 JULY 1869

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hampton. He was afraid the letter he had written on that occasion had been lost, or it would have been included in the correspondence which was in the hands of honorable members. He referred to it to show that it had some effect with the Government. The town of Rockhampton was a place in which the orphan children had been entirely dependent upon private charity, and he had pointed out that being in the centre of a large number of gold fields, where the men employed in mining were liable to accidents, and were continually moving from one place to another, it was a place which was peculiarly liable to the support of orphans. There were also statistics to show that there were already such a large number of orphans in Rockhampton that an establishment of this kind was in great requisition. He would not enter into all the reasons he had given to the Government, but would read the answer he had received to his first letter. That letter was written on the 15th April, and the answer from the Colonial Secretary, which was on the 28th, was as follows :—

“ Following up my letter of the 7th instant, I now desire to inform you, that, yesterday, I pressed upon the notice of my colleagues the desirability of establishing an orphanage at Rockhampton; and, I may state, that when the facts are fairly before us, the Government will be in a position to give your application their most favorable consideration.

“ It is true that you have placed before me a return showing the number of orphans, on the 19th instant, in the Benevolent Asylum, at Rockhampton, numbering, in all, fifty-six; this is, of itself, conclusive evidence that a necessity exists for an orphanage at Rockhampton, both on the grounds of humanity and economy.

“ The information which I ask you to supply can be very easily ascertained. The names of the ladies and gentlemen now acting as the committee of the Benevolent Society, at Rockhampton; how and by whom appointed; the source from which the funds of the Benevolent Society are supplied, and the mode in which the accounts are audited.

“ You are well aware that two orphanages exist in Brisbane—Protestant and Catholic. This is not considered desirable, and will not be repeated in any other part of the colony. It would, therefore, be desirable that the Government should be furnished with the names of those ladies and gentlemen, resident in Rockhampton, who would, irrespective of creed, kindly consent to act as members of committee in connection with such an institution.

“ You will thus understand that the Government are in earnest in this matter. They are willing to place a sum on the Supplementary Estimates agreeably with your suggestion; but they naturally desire to know how, and by whom, such an establishment is to be conducted.”

He thought he need hardly remark that after such a letter as that, he had fancied he had only to supply the required information, and that the whole matter would be arranged. He did not think any gentleman, or any member of the House, would consider that

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 29 July, 1869.

Orphanage at Rockhampton.

ORPHANAGE AT ROCKHAMPTON.

Mr. ARCHER moved pursuant to notice—

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 1869, the sum of £1,600, for the purpose of establishing an Orphanage at Rockhampton.

The honorable member stated that some months ago he had addressed the Colonial Secretary officially on this subject, and had called his attention to the fact that under present circumstances it was absolutely necessary, not only in order to meet local requirements, but for the benefit of the country, to establish an orphanage at Rock-

he had been over sanguine, after the decided terms of that letter; the letter, in fact, on the face of it, showed that the honorable member had brought the matter before his colleagues, and that the request had been to a certain extent assented to. He thought he should be able to prove that he had satisfied the Colonial Secretary upon every question which he had put to him. In the first place, of course, he had written to Rockhampton to obtain the necessary replies to these questions; and while on that point, he would read an extract from a letter from the lady president of the benevolent institution at Rockhampton, which would show that the Colonial Secretary had fallen into a mistake with regard to some expression in his first letter—

“The Colonial Secretary seems to be laboring under a mistake, in supposing that we have an orphanage in Rockhampton. There is none, but we have to hire rooms in different parts of the town for the use of the children.”

He merely read that in order to correct an error in the Colonial Secretary's letter, in which the honorable gentleman stated that these orphan children were in the Benevolent Asylum at Rockhampton. That was not the case; there were a number of places where orphans were kept at the expense of the people of the town, and under the supervision of persons hired for that purpose—much, in fact, in the same way as that miserable system adopted in England, of letting out children to any one who would take care of them. Well, in answer to the questions put by the Colonial Secretary, he had forwarded two annual reports of the benevolent society in Rockhampton, and he had written to him, on the 10th June, to the following effect:—

“I have now the honor of laying before you the information asked for in your letter of the 28th April, regarding the names of those acting on the committee of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, Rockhampton, by whom such committee was appointed, the source from which the funds of the society are supplied, and the mode in which the accounts are audited.

“The enclosed printed report for the years 1867 and 1868 will furnish an answer to the questions regarding the members of the committee, from whence the funds are supplied, and the manner in which the accounts are audited. The society was first originated at a public meeting of the inhabitants, since when it has fallen to the lot of some ten or twelve ladies, assisted by the ministers of all denominations, to carry out its objects. There has not, as far as I can hear, been any interruption to the harmony with which all the ministers have worked together. The auditors are elected at the yearly general meeting. I should wish to draw your attention to the fact, that for the two years the society has been established, the private subscriptions have amounted to the sum of £419 17s. 5d., which has been supplemented by £331 from the pauper fund. This, added to the very large private subscriptions for the Hospital, which, even under the depression of last year, amounted to £486, is a proof that the

inhabitants of Rockhampton have not come to ask the assistance of the Government for objects for which they are themselves unwilling to contribute. I have, since I last addressed you on this subject, been in frequent communication regarding it with those in Rockhampton whose opinions I consider of most value. It appears from their report that the river bank is the least healthy part of the town, more particularly for children, and they strongly advise that it ought not to be chosen as a site for the Orphanage. The Government have yet a large quantity of land on Athelstone Range, which is by far the fittest position for such a building, and, if they would consent to grant a site there, the following is the estimate I have received as the necessary outlay. The estimate is framed on the understanding that the building should be only part of a plan of a larger building, so that when any further additions were rendered necessary, they could be carried out on the original plan, and not as incongruous additions.

“Part of building for present use	... £800
“Furniture, bedding, &c.	... 300
“For support of orphans	... 500

“I feel sure that the yearly grant of £500 would be sufficient for some years to come, and, although the sum I ask for is large (£1,600), it must be remembered that the outlay for buildings, furniture, &c., would not occur again for many years. I hope you will agree with me in thinking that the plan herein proposed is a better one than spending money on a building unsuited for the purpose.

“I shall be prepared, when called upon, to place a plan of the building before the Government, for their approval, and indicate the site most suitable for its erection. I hope that this will receive a favorable consideration from yourself and colleagues.

“I have, &c.,

“A. ARCHER.

“The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.”

The printed reports were enclosed. One of these reports was printed in the published correspondence on the table of the House—the other was not included, because he presumed the Colonial Secretary considered that one report would afford all the information required. The fullest details were given, the manner in which the accounts were audited, and all particulars. The funds were the result of private subscriptions, supplemented by a smaller sum which the trustees of the hospital, seeing the requirements of the town and the absolute necessity of supporting the fund, had handed over to the ladies connected with the institution as the proper persons to entrust it to. He wished to state that the inhabitants of Rockhampton had subscribed £420 during the first two years of its establishment, and that sum had been supplemented by £331 from the pauper fund. Now, he thought, he had there answered very fully all the questions put by the Colonial Secretary, and the honorable member then stated to him that he was glad to see there was such an extremely good working committee in Rockhampton. He thought the facts were sufficient to bear out that opinion. The number of orphans supported by the ladies

connected with the Benevolent Society did not appear in the printed correspondence, but that given to the Colonial Secretary was fifty-six, and he had ascertained that twenty of these orphans, in the Brisbane institution, were from the North, and some of them came from Rockhampton. He contended that it was a great hardship that people who were willing to support their children, and who wished to continue to know them, and to care for them, should be prevented by the enormous distances which separated them. However, it was less important to show that, than the fact that there were already a number of orphans supported by private charity in Rockhampton, and that there was no accommodation provided for them, and not a single penny granted by the Government in furtherance of that object; they were maintained and looked after, as was stated, by the lady president, at different houses in the town. He did not think that was a fair position in which the ladies, who interested themselves in the care of these children, or the people of Rockhampton, should be placed, and he felt perfectly sure that the House, by its vote, would decide that the establishment of an orphanage was necessary. The annual reports handed in to the Colonial Secretary, showed him that the gentlemen who assisted those ladies on the committee, were the principal residents in the town; persons who had always been entrusted with carrying out the principal works in the place. The lady president of the society, Mrs. Hunter, was the wife of the Mayor; another lady was Mrs. Palmer, the wife of one of the principal merchants in the place. He would not mention any other names, and would only state, from his personal knowledge, that they were the very persons who should be selected for such a purpose. The reports he had handed in, also showed that large private subscriptions had been raised for this purpose; that the funds had been properly administered, and the accounts properly audited. He had, therefore, answered all the questions put by the Colonial Secretary previous to the promise made by that honorable gentleman to put a sum on the Supplementary Estimates. He had, also, answered another question, as to whether it would be better to establish another orphanage, or to support a united institution of that character. He had shown that ministers of all religious denominations had been on the committee—and there were no more efficient members on that committee than the Rev. Mr. Savage, independent minister, and the Rev. Mr. Morlay, Catholic minister—and when gentlemen thus representing different denominations worked cordially together, it was a good sign that the work was well carried out. He did not wish to tire the House by going into further details. He could, of course, enter largely into the argument as to whether an orphanage should be established only in one part of the colony. He thought it

was absurd to suppose that children could easily be sent to Brisbane from distant parts of the colony. If the metropolis had been centrally situated it might have been less difficult; but as that was not the case, it was a little too much to expect that orphans from outside districts could easily be forwarded to Brisbane to be taken care of; and if they were left without proper care they would probably entail, at some future day, a far greater expense upon the country. It was only the other day he had been looking over the Rockhampton papers, and had seen a frightful case which came before the police court, where a man who had unfortunately lost his wife, was obliged to send his children to a woman, who received 8s. a week, but who so ill-treated and abused the children that she was fined £10 for the offence. Such were the extremities to which widowers were driven where there was no place to which they could send their children for care and instruction; and if honorable members would look at the *Argus* of the 12th instant, or the *Bulletin* of the 13th, they would see the particulars of a case of such brutality that he would not shock the House by reading it. The parents or friends of the children would sooner pay a high price and have their children near them than they would send them down to Brisbane; and if the people were willing to tax themselves in this way, he thought they had a right to come down to this House and ask for some support. He did not think the sum he asked for was a very large one. It would be seen that for the orphanage in Brisbane £4,000 had been put down, and the expense had sometimes been over £5,000. He only asked £1,600, £800 being required for providing a building, and £300 for furniture and bedding; and the whole sum he asked annually for a town second only to Brisbane in importance—a town for which no other charity was provided by the House—was £500. He did not think he was making an extravagant request, considering there were fifty or sixty children which would have to be accommodated at once—children who were already on the books of the society, besides those which would be so almost immediately. There could be no doubt that the children would be much better trained and taken care of in a proper institution; and, considering the liberality which the Legislature displayed yearly towards the orphans in Brisbane, he could not think they would allow such a state of things to continue at Rockhampton. He was quite aware that the Colonial Treasurer, in his financial statement the other day, had called upon honorable members to discourage all attempts to obtain luxuries; but he would ask, was it a luxury to remove from streets the wretched boys who were found there, and place them in an institution where they would be cared for, and taught the three cardinal virtues—honesty, sobriety, and industry,—and saved, in all probability, from

the gaol? And as for the girls, he thought the House would deny that it was a luxury to place them in an institution where their welfare would be cared for by ladies who would consider it their duty to make them respectable members of society, which, otherwise, they would have little opportunity of becoming. He was satisfied the House would not call these luxuries, but look upon them as economical necessities, and decide that the establishment of an institution at Rockhampton, for the reception of these unfortunate children, was indispensable. If the House should decide otherwise, he should be forced to the conclusion that they were determined not to help those who had shown—as the inhabitants of Rockhampton had shown—that they could help themselves.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, before he commenced his observations on the subject-matter before the House, he would state, that the suppression of one of the pamphlets to which the honorable member had referred, arose because the two documents, one of which appeared in the printed correspondence in the hands of honorable members, were almost exactly similar in their import; and as one was a report from the year 1867, and the other for 1868, he had selected the latter in order to place the latest information before the House. He felt sure the honorable member would not for a moment think he had withheld the paper with any intention of weakening his position. With regard to the munificent charities mentioned by the honorable member, which he might say were officially known to him, he could not help taking the opportunity of paying a compliment to those ladies and gentlemen who so ably and effectually administered those charities in Rockhampton. That part of his observations was very easily got over; but he now came to a slight difficulty. The honorable member had very properly, and very candidly, explained the circumstances of his case. He had read the correspondence which had taken place between him (the Colonial Secretary) on the part of the Government, and himself, and he had also referred to the conversation which had taken place at the Colonial Secretary's office on the subject, and he (the Colonial Secretary) did not hesitate to say that he believed every word which the honorable member had said with regard to that conversation, was strictly correct. The letter written by him (the Colonial Secretary) on the 28th April, had been read *in extenso*; it was written on the day after he had brought the matter under the notice of the Cabinet, and here he regretted to state that those papers, and his memorandum on the subject, had been lost. Every search had been made for them, but without effect. He was exceedingly sorry, because on one of those would be found a minute, in exact accordance with the letter which he had written the day after to the honorable member for Rockhampton, explaining to him, as the honorable member

very correctly observed, that the Government would be willing to place a certain sum on the Supplementary Estimates; the exact sum was not stated, but he would come to that presently. There was no doubt that a considerable amount of encouragement had been held out to the honorable member for Rockhampton, to continue in his intention to bring forward this resolution; and no doubt there was a promise, to a certain extent, made to him on the production of certain information, to place a sum on the Estimates in connection with an orphanage at Rockhampton. But when the Government received the honorable member's letter, of the 10th June, he must confess they were rather astonished at the large sum he asked for—£1,600. Honorable members would observe there was a considerable difference in the dates, the 28th April and the 10th June. During that interval his honorable friend, the Colonial Treasurer, was performing the very proper duty of setting his house in order, and looking into the state of the finances; and, before the 10th June, he had been obliged to come to the conclusion that this colony was not in a position to undertake any public works, or erect any public buildings not absolutely and immediately necessary, and that information be placed before his colleagues, and upon that information they were prepared to act, and to take their stand. It was perfectly impossible for a Government, owing the large sum of four millions sterling, with a population of only 70,000 persons, to rush further into debt. No sensible man would do so in his private business, and the Government would not be satisfied in increasing the debt of the colony under such circumstances. Now, he thought there was very little doubt that his letter of the 28th April had the effect of raising certain hopes in the mind of the honorable member for Rockhampton, and speaking more as a member of the House than a member of the Government, he should be glad, if it were possible, to meet the views of that honorable member's constituents on the subject. But he would ask the honorable member who wanted £800 for a building, whether there were not a large number of unoccupied buildings in Rockhampton, one of which could be had at a moderate rental, for this purpose. He had been told, on good authority, that there were. Then, again, there was another slight difficulty which suggested itself to the Government—who was to have the control of this orphanage? Was it to be, in any way, under the control of the Government, like the orphanage in Brisbane? The honorable member must be aware that the Diamantina and St. Vincent orphanages were under Government control, and the Immigration Agent was nominally responsible for them, although he was fortunately assisted by a committee, including a number of ladies. Now, he found that, of the orphans in these institutions—of the 190 in the Diamantina, and the 110 in the St.

Vincent—there were only twenty from the North, including Rockhampton. That being the case, it certainly bore out the assertion of the honorable member, that there were a large number of children farmed out in the town of Rockhampton, and, no doubt, the honorable member had given correct information upon that point. He asked the honorable member to consider whether, if the Government were prepared to meet him half way, and place the sum of £800, instead of £1,600, on the Supplementary Estimates, he would be content. He thought the proposition would be received with more favor by the House, if the figures were reduced to that sum. He would put it in this way—£300 would be required for rent and furniture, and £500 would remain for the support of fifty orphans, at 6d. a head. The orphans in Brisbane cost 9d. a head, and, if the ladies and gentlemen in Rockhampton would supplement that sixpence with another threepence, the £500 would be sufficient; and, as he had already stated, one of the unoccupied buildings in Rockhampton could be devoted to the purpose. In making this suggestion, he was speaking for himself, and not for the Government, and he would not in any way withdraw from the spirit of the letter he had written after the Cabinet meeting, but would support the honorable member heartily and cordially, because he believed his proposition ought to be entertained by the House to a certain extent. He quite agreed with the honorable member, that these unfortunate children should be located where their parents had lived, and where their friends or relatives would be able to visit them, which they could not do if the children were sent down to Brisbane. Then, again, there was the cost of sending them down from Rockhampton, and, as they grew up, the Government would probably have to pay their passages back again. The honorable member had estimated the population of Rockhampton at 7,000 persons, and the town was in the centre of a large district, and surrounded by a number of gold fields, and was without any public institution in the district to which these children could possibly be sent. He thought the greatest possible credit was due to those ladies and gentlemen who took such care in Rockhampton; and he was very glad indeed to observe, in the reports which the honorable member referred to, one of which appeared in the printed correspondence, that this charitable work had been carried out entirely irrespective of creed, and that the representatives of different denominations worked cordially together. He would, in conclusion, recommend the honorable member to accept his suggestion to reduce the amount he asked for, in which case he should heartily support him.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said he was anxious to say a few words on the motion before the House, the more so as it had been introduced by the honorable member for Rockhampton, who took every possible opportunity of obtaining as much

as he could—for good purposes undoubtedly—for his own town, and throwing what he must look upon as uncalled for reflections upon the members for Brisbane, especially that they desired to deprive Rockhampton, and the North generally, of a fair share of the public funds. He protested, on behalf of his constituents, against such insinuations. He did not believe such a feeling of jealousy existed at all; on the contrary, he was convinced there was in this part of the colony an anxious desire to give the North all that was due to her. In this particular instance, he was inclined to concur thoroughly in the opinion expressed by the honorable Colonial Secretary, that the proposition made by the honorable member ought to be met at least half-way by the House. He had, himself, been connected with one of these orphan asylums, and he could speak to the great benefit which they were to the colony. There were, in this establishment in Brisbane, a great number of children from different parts of the colony, and it was very desirable that they should be kept in or near the places where their relatives or friends resided. In the Brisbane orphanage, there were many children whose friends or parents lived in or near Brisbane; some of them had one parent living in the neighborhood and some both parents, for they were not all orphans. If the other children had parents or friends living at Rockhampton or elsewhere, then he said, in the name of humanity let them be left in the vicinity of their friends. It was not the first time he had had an opportunity of protesting against the practice which had crept into these asylums, of receiving children who were not orphans. If there were to be orphan asylums, let only orphans, who were properly children of the state, and depended upon the State for support, be admitted. If they were to be institutions for the support of destitute children, let them be called so. One of the finest institutions in the colonies was one in New South Wales, of that description, and he saw no reason why a similar establishment should not be commenced here; but he believed it was a mistake to allow children to be admitted into an orphan asylum, who had fathers and mothers living—persons, who, in very many cases, were perfectly able to support their children. He thought the honorable member had asked for too large a sum of money. He must remember that the support given to the orphan asylum, in Brisbane—he spoke more especially of the St. Vincent—had only been one shilling a day, per head, from their commencement; and, he believed the Government had lately re-considered the question, and reduced that sum, because they found that the committee who managed those establishments were able, besides supporting the children, to construct a large building out of the funds they received. That was, he thought, very creditable to them, because one shilling a day was not much. However, it had been reduced to

ninepence a day; and, he believed, if the honorable member for Rockhampton simply applied to the Government for that sum, with the understanding that the ladies and gentlemen would supervise the expenditure and management, the House might be willing—and he, for one, should be very happy—to support him.

Mr. BELL said he was sure that every honorable member who had listened to the appeal of the honorable member for Rockhampton, must have been satisfied, not only that he took a warm interest in the question he advocated, but that his sympathies extended to every institution of a charitable nature, and to all necessary requirements in the colony. But, when he recollected the ruthless way in which that honorable member had dealt with a case of great necessity, which he (Mr. Bell) had brought before the House not long ago—a case which happened to refer to the requirements of persons residing in the southern portion of the colony—he was unable to arrive at the conclusion that the honorable member's sympathies were so widely extended as his speech of that evening would lead the House to believe. It was not long since he (Mr. Bell) had made an appeal to the House—a pathetic appeal, as he had thought at the time, which the House could not possibly refuse—on behalf of persons who were suffering under dire necessity for want of a much smaller sum than the honorable member for Rockhampton now asked for; and that honorable member was one of the strongest opponents of the motion. That appeal was for a water-supply to the people of Dalby; and he contended the cases were very analagous, for they were both cases of necessity. He had pointed out the great losses which were occurring, and the stoppage of traffic which was taking place; he had appealed to the feelings of honorable members—and as he had stated, the honorable member for Rockhampton had been his strongest opponent. He did not exactly understand the position which the honorable Colonial Secretary had taken with regard to this question, because, if the honorable member wished to acquiesce in the motion to the extent of one-half the sum asked for, his course should have been to have voted for the principle of the motion at once, and reduced the sum in committee. He was not disposed to follow the example of that honorable gentleman: he thought the principle of the motion should be decided by the votes of honorable members. For his part, he should vote against it; not that he thought the honorable member for Rockhampton had not fairly made out his case; but because of the number of other instances of a similar character which would be brought forward. The House had, but the night before, listened to statistics quoted by the Government in reference to the finances of the colony, and he thought he was right in stating, that the honorable member himself

had expressed his determination to uphold the Government by supporting the appeal made by the Colonial Treasurer, not to increase the Supplementary Estimates. The Treasurer, he believed, had stated that the surplus which he had shown in his budget could not be carried out unless honorable members refrained from attempting to increase the expenditure. For more than one reason, he could not support the motion of the honorable member for Rockhampton. He might have supported it; but he had not received the sympathy of that honorable member on the occasion to which he had referred. The honorable member was evidently, in the position of a man who found that his sins came heavily upon him, and now sinned in the same way as when he voted against his (Mr. Bell's) motion.

Mr. WALSH said that it was his intention to support the motion, as he felt that he was bound to vote for every penny which could be voted for the North; and as he was quite sure that if he got every penny asked for, from the members of that House, the North would only get one-hundredth part of what it was entitled to. He must confess that the *tu quoque* argument of the honorable member for the Northern Downs was strictly applicable in the present instance; and he was only sorry that his feelings for the North would not allow him to go with that honorable member, because, if there had ever been a case of injustice, it was the manner in which that honorable member had been treated when he showed to the House how the vote for a water supply to Dalby was needed. If his sense of justice would only allow him to do so, he certainly would vote against the motion of the honorable member for Rockhampton, now. There was no doubt the honorable member had made a very good effort to succor the unfortunate children in that portion of the colony; but he thought that they were carrying that feeling too far, as it was not a question whether those children should be relieved, but whether there should not be a certain amount of money spent in that neighborhood. It was possible to carry the laudable feeling exhibited by the people of Rockhampton too far, and thus cause considerable harm; as it was not only a question of relieving the friendless children, but was likely to destroy, as in the case of public schools, the feelings which should exist and be maintained between parents and children. He was not quite sure that they were not taking from parents the manifest duty cast upon them, when they legislated for them in that respect, and allowed them to cast upon the State those duties which belonged rightly to them; and also, that in being too liberal with their schools, that they were not running into great danger. He knew of children in the orphan schools, whose parents were in existence, and in good circumstances, and who were thus taught to forget the

proper connection which should exist between them and their children. He would warn honorable members to consider whether they were not, in their laudable efforts to assist those children, in reality producing a greater evil than they supposed, and one that would not be compensated by the amount of good which on the other hand would be effected. Undoubtedly, the state was bound to step in, in many instances; and there was a law in existence which enabled every police magistrate to do so; but they were not bound to deal with children whose parents were not criminals, but only with those of criminals, which they could send to an asylum, in order to prevent them from commencing their criminal career. He should be sorry that the former class should suffer if they were really not in a criminal condition. He would warn the House, even as regarded the Brisbane institution, that it required some watching. He believed that that was well managed; but there might be a feeling on the part of those connected with it, that they were doing good by swelling or increasing the number of children entrusted to their charge, in order to show the good effect of such institutions, or to gratify themselves; and, as he had been informed, even to go so far as to tout for children, so that they might impress on the public the great good they were doing. He thought that, granting one shilling a head would not have a good effect, but that the House should grant a lump sum, and compel the managers of the institutions, whatever they were, to maintain them on those terms. He thought the Government were only bound to pay such sums as would prevent what he had referred to, from occurring. He thought that, unless the inhabitants of a district were taxed to a certain extent, they would fail to take that interest in an institution, without which it could not be well managed. The honorable member for Rockhampton had not furnished the House with such figures as would lead honorable members to imagine that there were a large number of destitute children in that district; but he ought to have done so, in order to show what would be the requirements of it. The correspondence quoted by the honorable member, had referred to the orphans now in the Benevolent Asylum, and did not contain the figures which should have been provided. He found, on referring to the last census, that there were only four hundred children in Rockhampton more than there were in Maryborough. The total number under ten years of age, in the town and police district of Rockhampton—which was very large and scattered—was 2,322; and of those, the proportion which were interested in the erection of an orphanage would be very small. That district would include all the children likely to be rescued by such an institution. The comparison between the two districts led him to say, that if an orphanage was required at Rockhampton, it was equally

so at Maryborough, although it was a larger district; and he trusted that, if the honorable member carried his point, he would vote for a similar amount for Maryborough. All honorable members were interested in the matter, and he trusted that they would not leave it to him to defend the North always, but would assist him as a representative of the whole colony. He would put it to the honorable the Treasurer, why he should not ask them to assist him in some comprehensive scheme. When the honorable member for the Northern Downs asked for a water supply for Dalby, he was told that it was intended to bring in a comprehensive measure; and, on the same grounds, he asked that the Government should bring in one general scheme for the orphan schools. He was opposed to matters like the present being introduced, and treated in a party spirit, and hoped it would not be shown outside that they were always fighting for one place or for another. The honorable the Colonial Secretary, as a correspondent, appeared to him to be the most curious one he had ever met. Why did he want to know the class of ladies, or the social standing of those who acted as a committee at Rockhampton? Who was to inquire into the character of those ladies, wives of persons residing at Rockhampton? Did the honorable gentleman wish to become a Fouché?—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the paragraph in the correspondence alluded to, was entirely owing to a remark made by the honorable member for Rockhampton, who, he had no doubt, could give a most excellent character to the ladies there.

Mr. WALSH said he considered it was his duty to object to the honorable member inquiring the names of the ladies of Rockhampton, and their fitness to be members of a committee; and he would object also to the honorable member characterising the ladies as being a "rattling good committee." He was astonished that such a correspondence had been published, and had appeared on the records of that House. He could refer to more than one reason for objecting to contribute to any society, if the names of the committee were to be submitted to the Colonial Secretary, and then become a record of Parliament. He had no fear of the motion not being carried, and would give it his support. He certainly must protest against the remark that the Government could not afford a sum of £1,600 for such a work, as if the money were once given, it could be afforded much better than if it was for a railway; especially when they were told that they would want nearly half-a-million of money for that railway.

Mr. MILES said, that as he had not brought forward a motion for a supply of water to any place, he could approach the present question without any imputation of a personal feeling being thrown upon him. He

had began to think that the honorable members for Rockhampton and the Kennedy, from their general complaint of want of money for the North, were as badly dealt with as they tried to convince the House they were; but, on looking at the Auditor-General's return, he found that, last year, Rockhampton got a sum of £4,600, towards an hospital. That was not a bad sum, and yet, night after night, they were constantly hearing from those honorable members, of the neglect of the North. He saw, on looking further, that they had a larger sum put down for them than any other place, in proportion to the population. The honorable member for Rockhampton said he put down the population of that district at one-third of that of Brisbane; and yet, whilst a further sum of £1,000 was put down for the hospital there, only £2,000 was put down for the Brisbane institution. He was positive that if any honorable member took the trouble to examine the figures, he would find that the North was better off than the South. There was something rather strange in the correspondence, and indeed he would not have spoken on the subject had it not been for the production of that correspondence. The honorable member at the head of the Government, who had the reputation of keeping his honorable colleagues in order, should have some check over their correspondence; and there was no doubt that if he had seen the correspondence now on the table, or the honorable the Treasurer had seen it, it would have been stopped. He really could not see how the honorable the Colonial Secretary could vote against the motion after the letters which had passed. There was one letter which required explanation—

"You will thus understand that the Government are in earnest in this matter. They are willing to place a sum on the Supplementary Estimates agreeably with your suggestion; but they naturally desire to know how, and by whom, such an establishment is to be conducted."

The honorable member then promised £1,600 —

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, if the honorable member would look at the date of his letter, and at that of the honorable member for Rockhampton, he would see that there was a lapse between them of two months.

Mr. MILES knew that much, that if he asked any member of the Government for money for his district he would have to tell them what he wanted it for, and if he did not cut down the amount, in the first place, they would cut it off altogether. He would repeat that by the correspondence the Government were bound to give the £1,600; at any rate, if he were a member of the Government, he should consider himself so pledged. So far as the asylum was concerned he was most anxious that it should be established, but he believed that it would be too expensive to the colony to establish a similar institution all over it; and it would not be so expensive if all the

orphans were brought to Brisbane, as there were steamers constantly running between it and the northern ports. It had been said that the parents would not like to be separated from their children, but he considered that they should have to bear with that separation. The honorable member for Maryborough had spoken very truly when he said that if the amount in question was voted for Rockhampton, he had an equal claim on the part of the district he represented, and he (Mr. Miles) would then have to apply for one in another place, and so on throughout the colony. He should vote against the motion, as he considered that the orphanages in existence were quite sufficient to meet all present requirements; and if children were forwarded to Brisbane, they would be as well maintained and as much cared for as if they were near their friends, and, at the same time, without any loss to the country. He did not suppose that the honorable member for Rockhampton wanted the money in order that it might be spent in his district, but that so long as the children were taken care of, it was all he desired. The country was already involved in a heavy debt, and he was determined to check any expenditure, when by so doing he would not be injuring the colony. On that ground he should oppose the motion.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the honorable member who had just sat down had overlooked the dates of the correspondence when he thought that the Government were pledged to pay the £1,600 for the erection of an orphanage, at Rockhampton. The letter he referred to, was dated in April, when it was promised that every consideration would be given to the matter on further information being supplied. So that the letter written in April could not be considered as replying to one written in June, two months afterwards. The Government had a right, therefore, to treat the question on its merits only. He thought the honorable member for Rockhampton had not succeeded in making out his case, and had failed to establish any claim on the Government. He certainly said a great deal about not allowing young helpless children to wander about the streets, with which he (the Colonial Treasurer) quite sympathised; but not one thing was said about the application in the present case. Every argument of the honorable member had a general application; and he would ask honorable members whether they were prepared to dot the country over with orphan schools. He had not heard one argument used which did not go in that direction; and he quite agreed with the remark of the honorable member for Maryborough, that they had not been furnished with sufficient figures to prove the great necessity for the orphanage.

Mr. ARCHER: We have lots.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: As they were last before him, it would be seen that out of the fifty-six children on the list of the

Benevolent Asylum, five only were orphans, the remainder being the children of destitute persons; also, that in some cases, both parents were living, and in others, only one parent. They were supported by the Ladies' Benevolent Society, at Rockhampton; and it was thought it would be more convenient to bring them altogether, instead of having them distributed through the district. The letter he had last received, proved that it was not for orphans that the money was asked, but for fourteen or fifteen hundred people who were provided for by the police magistrates, out of Government funds. It was said, that because £400 was taken out of the funds of the Benevolent Society, it would be better that the Government should build a hospital for that class; and it had been attempted, by the honorable member, to make out that the money was not all taken out of the Government fund. He was quite willing to believe that the people of Rockhampton were most sincere in their wish to succor the unfortunate children who were destitute; but he could not see how it was to be done in the way they proposed. In the letter of 10th June, it appeared—

"I should wish to draw your attention to the fact, that for the two years the society has been established, the private subscriptions have amounted to the sum of £419 17s. 5d., which has been supplemented by £331 from the pauper fund. This, added to the very large private subscriptions for the Hospital, which, even under the depression of last year, amounted to £486, is a proof that the inhabitants of Rockhampton have not come to ask the assistance of the Government for objects for which they are themselves unwilling to contribute. I have, since I last addressed you on this subject, been in frequent communication regarding it with those in Rockhampton whose opinion I consider of most value. It appears from their report that the river bank is the least healthy part of the town, more particularly for children, and they strongly advise that it ought not to be chosen as a site for the orphanage. The Government have yet a large quantity of land on Athelstone Range, which is by far the fittest position for such a building; and, if they would consent to grant a site there, the following is the estimate I have received as the necessary outlay. The estimate is framed on the understanding that the building should be only part of a plan of a larger building, so that when any further additions were rendered necessary, they could be carried out on the original plan, and not as incongruous additions."

He could not find out all the figures, but when the honorable member said they had subscribed £350 he thought there must be a discrepancy, as the receipts showed only £329. It would be seen that two-thirds of the amount expended was from the Government subsidy; and as the honorable member had not explained those things, he trusted that he would not be thought depreciating the people of Rockhampton when he referred to them, as it was quite clear that they were not keeping the paupers in question without

Government aid. In the application for an orphanage, not a word was said about subscriptions, and there was a proposition in the letter of June for expenditure for a building. He would warn the committee against that, as it would be the first orphan school for which money had been granted out of Brisbane, and that if the money was voted they could not refuse to establish similar schools or institutions elsewhere, and the Government would have to come down to that House every year for a large sum of money to provide for them. He held the opinion that, before any money was voted, the whole question should be discussed fairly and generally. There was a Bill already in existence in regard to orphans which had not been put in force, which would give the Government power to exercise proper authority over those children, and which would put a stop to the evils which existed in the present system of orphanages, which were made use of by parents who did not deny that they were able to provide for their children, but that it was "very awkward for them to do so." He should vote against the motion.

Mr. JORDAN (who was very indistinctly heard) said that, considering that Rockhampton was next in importance to Brisbane, he had, at first, felt inclined to support the motion, but after having listened to the arguments which had been used, he had determined not to do so. He thought, after the remarks of the honorable member for Maryborough, that if an orphanage was given to Rockhampton, one should be given to his district, would be admitting the principle that orphanages should be established throughout the country, and that would not be for the general interest, as it appeared that the institutions in question were not for orphans alone but for destitute children. That the majority were not orphans appeared from the statement of the honorable the Treasurer, and whilst giving the people of Rockhampton every credit for what they had done, it appeared to him that many of the children had parents who were able to support them. He had always been of opinion that it did not matter how many children a person had in Queensland, as they were not a burden to them, and that the working classes in Australia were better off than their employers and more independent, as their children could give them so much assistance. He did not think there was any excuse for parents sending their children to a public institution, except in very rare cases indeed; and he was very much afraid that if they voted that £1,600, they would be admitting a principle which would work very disadvantageously to the colony. From the "Statistical Register 1868," it would be seen that the children under ten years of age, at Rockhampton, numbered five hundred. Now, it had been admitted that evening, by the honorable member for Maryborough, that

so soon as the motion was carried he would put in a claim for his district—his example would no doubt be followed by the honorable member for Toowoomba; by the honorable member, Mr. Thorn, for Ipswich; and by others; and so they would have to establish a large number of institutions for the children of idle persons, where they would be supported at the public cost. That would be most dangerous to the colony, and even presuming that they admitted the principle that the people would not be demoralised by such a system, the question would arise, was the colony in a position to go to such a great expense? They had just heard the honorable the Treasurer's financial statement, and he thought honorable members were bound to assist him and his colleagues in carrying out economy; as with a debt of four millions hanging over the colony, which was equivalent to £40 per head for every man, woman, and child in it, it was only by the strictest economy that the country could ever recover its lost position of having exceeded the revenue four years ago by a sum of £70,000. He did not really think they could afford to give £1,600 for the support of children whose parents, it was well known, could support them if they chose so to do. He believed in the voluntary principle in connection with charities, and that it would be much better as regarded the orphanages. He believed that the ladies of Rockhampton were greatly to be commended, and that honorable members would not be doing wrong, whilst commending their efforts, to refuse the vote, as they would thus show that they thought those ladies were equal to the task. For the reasons he had mentioned, he should not support the motion.

Mr. FRANCIS said he could not support the motion, as it would be the initiation of a new principle if the House agreed to pay money for such institutions as the one referred to in it. He believed that when the Estimates were before the Committee of Supply the votes for the orphanages would have to be cut down considerably; and he also believed that if inquiries were made, the revelations referred to by the honorable the Colonial Secretary would be found to be true. Notwithstanding that such was the case, he thought there was some claim established by the honorable member for Rockhampton, and when the vote for the orphan asylums came before the committee, he should be prepared to support a vote for that place, at the same time fully carrying out the principle that those who were doing a good work should not be interfered with, and that the ladies of Rockhampton would have no reason to be thankful if they got the money. He saw no reason for assisting in passing eleemosynary grants of money, nor could he understand why the sum of £2,700 should be placed on the Estimates for the support of paupers, a lock hospital, orphanages, and other places. He did not think such grants were necessary,

and he was opposed to them, not in the interests of economy alone, but from higher motives, inasmuch as they did not, in his opinion, tend to elevate the moral condition of the people.

Mr. PALMER said he thought honorable members would not be very much surprised at hearing that he intended to support the motion, and, in doing so, to criticise the speeches which had been made by honorable members who had preceded him. That made by the honorable member for Rockhampton hardly needed comment, as he had proved the absolute want of an orphanage at Rockhampton. The speech made by the honorable the Colonial Secretary was not exactly in reply; for however much credit it gave him as a man, as a Minister it was another question, and the same could not be said of him. He (Mr. Palmer) could not see, in the face of the correspondence which had been read, and which was written by him, that either the honorable gentleman or his colleagues could withhold their support to the motion. He knew that, if any colleague of his had acted in the same way, and a letter was written stating that the Government had favorably entertained the application—that was stated most positively—and that it was the intention of the Government to establish an orphanage at Rockhampton, if not to the extent of £1,600, yet still to establish it, he should consider the Cabinet was bound by it, and that they could not get out of it simply because no specific amount was mentioned. They must otherwise repudiate the letter, and deny the right of the Colonial Secretary to write it. At any rate, he could claim the vote of that honorable member. He thought, if honorable members would look over the mutilated correspondence allowed to them—which they could not obtain until it had been moved for by him—if they looked at it, they would see most plainly that the Colonial Secretary had pledged his Ministry to give the orphanage—unless, indeed, it was said by them that no letter should be written but at the dictation of the Premier. It must be done by the happy “band of brothers.” The action of the Colonial Secretary, in sending a departmental letter, bound the Government, and they could not escape. He thought the speech of the Colonial Secretary, that evening, when he said he would personally support the vote, was most creditable to him. But he was rather astonished at the remarks of the honorable member afterwards, when he drew a distinction between the northern and southern orphans. He said he would allow sixpence a head for the North, and ninepence for the South. Now, surely, if ninepence was only sufficient for the South, the orphans in the North would be starved upon sixpence. The orphanages in Brisbane were supported entirely by the Government, and there were no private subscriptions, and if anything like general government was to be carried out, the same sum would be neces-

sary for the North as for the South. The correspondence proved that so far as the people of Rockhampton were concerned, they were quite willing to support the unfortunate orphans; but that was no reason why they should be forced into it by legislative enactment. There was, no doubt, a great deal of truth in what had been said—that the children were not all orphans—and perhaps it would be better to call them destitute; but if they were destitute, they had, he contended, a claim on the Government. He would go further, and say that, so far from looking upon orphan schools as a tax upon the revenue, he considered them a saving to the colony, as, by the admission of children, their protection, and their proper education, a great deal of future crime was prevented. There was no doubt that there were a great many children admitted into the orphanages of Brisbane whose parents were living; but it had to be proved to the satisfaction of the Colonial Secretary, who gave the right of admission, that either the father had deserted them, or could not be found, or was unable to support them. In other cases they were admitted where the mother had died, and the father agreed to pay a certain amount towards their support—although that was seldom done, and was “honored more in the breach than in the observance.” If it was found that the man had the means of payment, it was within the power of the Immigration Agent, who had charge of the institution, to make him pay, and even arrears. As to sending the children from the North to Brisbane, it was carrying out the old idea of centralization—of spending all the money in Brisbane, and bringing everything into it. Honorable members must bear in mind, that by such a system they not only saddled the State with the children, but they also separated the children from their parents. That must have a bad effect in many ways; as, if brought to Brisbane from the North, children would be really orphans; they would not be so well cared for as they would be where it was known that their parents could see that they were treated properly. He was sorry to hear the argument of the honorable member for the Northern Downs applauded by the honorable the Premier. The argument was, certainly, a good one, that, because “You vote against a water supply for Dalby, I shall oppose an orphanage for Rockhampton.” He (Mr. Palmer) was astonished at such an attempt to try another system of log-rolling, like the Warwick Railway. The honorable member did not care, apparently, whether the orphans starved or not, so long as the honorable member for Rockhampton would not support him in his water supply. What analogy there could be between the two cases? The Colonial Secretary then found another excuse, namely—that he could not agree to the full sum (£1,600), as there was no money. Had, he would ask, the honorable

the Treasurer cut down his estimates so carefully that there was no money? The honorable member was told that he must be satisfied with a small sum, build a small place, and go on quietly. But, on turning over the Estimates, he (Mr. Palmer) noticed various sums of money for buildings, and repairs of buildings, and he did not think, in the face of those items, it was too much for the honorable member for Rockhampton to ask for £1,600. The argument of the honorable the Treasurer, to the effect that, the House putting themselves in *loco parentis* to the orphans, should make them careful, was pretty well proved, as at present there were only 365 children, and he did not think that they need be very careful in leading the parents to suppose that the State was desirous of taking the children out of their hands. But if it was proved that the children were being brought up to crime, he maintained that it was the duty of the State to take those children out of the way; and, as he had remarked before, it would be much cheaper in the end. The honorable member for Maryborough had concluded his speech by an attack upon the Colonial Secretary, for asking for the names of the ladies forming the committee of the society; but, if he intended to give the money, it was his duty to ascertain the names, inasmuch as he had the appointment of the committee. They had been told, in the course of the debate, that Rockhampton got a great deal more last year than Brisbane—namely, £4,600 for a hospital. Now, what had Brisbane received?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Nothing.

Mr. PALMER: Five times as much. And what had Ipswich, which backed up Brisbane?—what Toowoomba? Looking at the northern districts after them, it was a mere farce to say that the North had a fair share of expenditure, and that was the very reason why they could not get a statement of accounts. On the same principle, they had been told by the Treasurer, that night, that he had lost some figures, and yet he was arguing upon them.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Assume them to be true.

Mr. PALMER: Why not produce them? He could not assume them to be true. The honorable the Colonial Treasurer said that only five out of fifty-six children in the Benevolent Asylum, at Rockhampton, were orphans; but he had nothing to prove it, and, therefore, it was an unfair argument. They ought to have had the whole of the correspondence. Where was the first letter, if the Treasurer recollected the contents of it so well. The honorable member might lose a million, or debentures by the score, if he could lose an important letter from the North so easily. The honorable gentleman had also tried to frighten the House against voting for the motion, because it would establish a principle, and that, if Rockhampton had an orphanage, Ipswich and Toowoomba would

each want one. But he said—introduce them at once, if required. They were not to be frightened by such a threat, as they must have orphan schools as the colony went on increasing, and the Government would have to succumb to such a necessity. There was no analogy between the relief administered by the board appointed by Government, in Brisbane, and the relief administered by the ladies' committee at Rockhampton, such as was drawn by the Colonial Treasurer. There was little or no analogy between the two. The relief in Brisbane was entirely from Government money, and it was administered by a board, the members of which were appointed by the Government, and administered the relief in a very bad way. He had drawn attention during the passage of the last Estimates, to the necessity of some check upon that board. In Rockhampton, the ladies make themselves personally acquainted with the wants of the persons they relieve; but the relief in Brisbane depended upon the reports of the inspector. It was not possible that one man, however anxious to do his duty, could be acquainted with the private circumstances of those relieved. The consequence was, that many in Brisbane received relief who had not the slightest necessity for it. That was a notorious fact. There was a great deal of money going out from that board. Although he was quite aware that there was also a great deal of want and misery in Brisbane, yet he did think that the operations of this board required closely checking. If a committee such as that in Rockhampton could be formed to work and see to the persons relieved, it would be much better. At least one-half of the relief given by the committee at Rockhampton was contributed privately, and that was another difference. The honorable member for Rockhampton was accused by the Colonial Treasurer of ignoring the fact that the Rockhampton committee had any amount of money from the Government. The honorable member for Rockhampton had not, and could not, have done anything of the sort, as the correspondence itself clearly showed—

"I should wish to draw your attention to the fact, that for the two years the society has been established, the private subscriptions have amounted to the sum of £419 17s. 5d., which has been supplemented by £331 from the pauper fund."

The honorable member never said that the relief fund was supported entirely by private funds, and no doubt his figures were accurate at the time the letter was written. There was no doubt a good deal of money had been paid for the committee and benevolent asylum. They were warned again by the Colonial Treasurer, that if they were to countenance this motion, they would be introducing the first orphan school, for the building of which money had been granted by the House. Granting this still it would have been much better if the

amount for building had always been voted by the House, and it had never been put into the power of any committee, however well conducted, to build as they pleased, as well as the sum necessary for the support of the children and their education. This would have been far better than allowing a lot of cottages to be huddled together without plan or principle, such as had been put together. What was the result, as far as the Diamantina and St. Vincent Orphan Schools were concerned. The former school was on ground to which they had no title, and for which it was not likely they would ever get a title, and the Government might order them off any day; and, at the same time, the buildings were all of wood, and susceptible to fire. It was equally bad with the other—the Roman Catholic School. It was built out of the way, at Nudgee, where it ought never to have been placed at all. He maintained that such institutions should be as close to the committee as possible, and under the surveillance of the public. That was another reason that a vote should be had for these buildings, and a site vested in trustees for the building. The money spent at Nudgee, he looked upon as money absolutely thrown away. He could not say that the speech of the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Jordan, had astonished him very much. Any amount of sympathy came from the honorable member, but the moment any money was asked for, the sympathy all evaporated, and excuses were given at once. At any rate, several members had regretted to him exceedingly, outside the House, that they could not vote for this sum. He was very glad to see the honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, who would support him, was present to-night.

Mr. WALSH called attention to the state of the House, when a quorum was formed.

Mr. PALMER: They got sympathy, but little else, in the wants of the North, from the southern members. He was astonished that the late Agent-General for Immigration, the honorable member for East Moreton, should refuse to support this resolution. That honorable member was morally responsible for the number of orphans in the colony. If so many prolific individuals, invalids, and consumptive patients, had not been sent out to the colony, he did not think there would have been any necessity to ask for this comparatively large amount of money for the orphans. He did not mean to say that the honorable member was altogether responsible for the number of this class at Rockhampton; but the immigrants had been very well weeded at Brisbane, and the best men kept there, while the refuse was sent on, without a penny left, to the northern ports—these were a mere lot of paupers, with scarcely a rag to their backs. Such were the persons shipped off, time after time, to the northern ports—he had seen it himself,—and there they were landed in a state of absolute destitution. The result was pauperism and the calls upon

the charity of the Rockhampton people to support these paupers and their offspring. He had been surprised, therefore, that the honorable member for East Moreton, with his extensive sympathy, and with the moral responsibility upon him for this pauperism, should have told them that he was going to oppose this vote. He supposed his southern sympathies were too strong for it altogether. Alluding to the difference between the expenditure in the North and South, he had been met by the remark that a great deal of the money was gained from the revenue raised there, thus some £90,000 was obtained from the railway. Before revenue was counted, the interest on the cost ought to be counted. Looking at the interest to be paid upon the debt for railways in the southern districts of the colony, it was preposterous for them to say anything of revenue from the railway. The receipts derived from the line did not pay the debts and the interest. They should pay debts and interest first, and then count your revenue. There was a greater necessity for an orphanage at Rockhampton than at Brisbane, owing to the shifting character of the population, and the destitute people who had been sent there. These men had not been able to do much since coming to the colony. Again, the population being migratory, left their wives and families in Rockhampton, many of them when up in the bush can get no work, and sometimes get ill; and, besides, there was a large digging population in the district of Rockhampton. The result was, a larger number of destitute people in Rockhampton than in Brisbane. He considered that the honorable member for Rockhampton was perfectly entitled in justice to have this resolution carried; and how the Government, after the letter of the Colonial Secretary, could oppose it, he could not for one moment conceive.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that they had again and again made the same statement of figures to show the unjust treatment of the North, figures which were exploded years ago, and which were fallacious, and altogether inaccurate. The honorable member for Port Curtis said that there was no revenue unless there were a surplus. Could anything be more absurd? Why, this question of northern grievances was leading honorable members to the most absurd conclusions the mind of man could conceive. But it was all futile, and beating about the bush. He was very much struck with the admirable remarks of the honorable member for Maryborough adduced that day; but he had no doubt that the arguments last made use of were arguments to encourage idleness and the abandonment of children by their parents. He was very much afraid that there was another huge system of pauperism growing up about them which would require the utmost vigilance to prevent its overshadowing the institutions of the colony. It did appear that the Government had been extending aid

to this ladies' committee in Rockhampton; and not one of the honorable members who had yet spoken had attempted to show that that aid was inadequate to the present purpose. It was perfectly clear that the argument that the best system was not adopted, applied equally to the Brisbane Orphan School. In Dalby, in Roma, in Maryborough, in Warwick, in all the towns of the colony in the middle and western districts, there was no institution so well supported as this committee in Rockhampton, so that the same arguments would apply there. If the honorable member for Rockhampton would satisfy the Government that the sums raised were not equal to the efforts to provide for these children, something more should be done. He thought that the Brisbane institutions ought to depend largely upon private charity. He thought the Government aid should foster private sympathies, and bring out the genuine aid of the public towards these charities. He had heard of a very gross instance of abuse practised upon these charities. An honorable member of the Council had in his service a cook, at £80 a year, and that man had two children in the orphan asylum at Brisbane. That was monstrous; and if he knew of that one case, he might infer that there were many others, very similar in their character, in the land. He should have to vote against the motion. At the same time, he must say that they ought to see that the efforts of this committee at Rockhampton were fairly aided, and that the children were not left to perish, or suffer in any way. But there must be a vigilant supervision and examination of these charities, in the interest of those who had to bear the burden of them, and who were working honestly, to see that they were not plundered by these mendicants. He could not regard the letter of the Colonial Secretary as pledging them to this vote. He must oppose it, in the interest of economy. Many of these small sums made up a heavy sum. If the honorable member for Rockhampton pulled at the revenue for £1,600, and succeeded, they would have all the members pulling away for a like sum; and they would speedily add £60,000 to the Estimates, for these charities. They must look at the question in that light. He very strongly objected to the system which led members to say to each other, "If you don't help me for this, why should I help you for that?" That was the out-door relief known as "log-rolling," and described by the honorable member for North Brisbane as "co-operation." He was aware that the letter of the Colonial Secretary showed that he was in favor of the motion, and he knew that, in the warmth of his heart, his honorable colleague would give anything he was asked for. But the Colonial Treasurer must resist these additions to the estimates, if he was to verify his predictions of a surplus. Still the letter did not pledge the Government to vote the £1,600. This money

was asked for only part of a plan. They all knew what these buildings on part of a plan, meant. It was only get the Government to begin and they must finish.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER : Railways.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL : Exactly. They had been led on to them gradually, and were subject to the delusion at the outset that they were to have a cheap railway, but their eyes were afterwards opened. The Colonial Secretary, in his letter to the honorable member for Rockhampton, at the outset, said, "I may state that when the facts are fairly before us, the Government will be in a position to give your application their most favorable consideration." That was on the part of the Government. It was no pledge. There was then the sentence at the end of the letter: "You will understand that the Government are in earnest in this matter." So they were; and if any case could be made out, no doubt the House would be inclined to go with the honorable member for Rockhampton. But the House could not venture upon this expenditure, especially as it had not been shown that the present means were inadequate, and a better mode could be devised for the management of the children.

Mr. FRASER said he could not but regret that distinctions between North and South were continually drawn in these questions—which should be determined upon their own merits, whether affecting North or South. He was disposed to support the honorable member for Rockhampton, owing to information he had received from other sources than those before the House, that these children were destitute, and dependent upon public charity. When he reflected that Brisbane had an institution entirely supported by Government, he could not vote against the motion of the honorable member for Rockhampton. He was opposed to a system which would create dependency, and was attached to the voluntary principle in every respect. But there were limits in these matters; and in a young colony like this, it was not to be expected that the community should at once be equal to the demands of a purely voluntary system. He was surprised at the arguments made use of by the honorable member for Northern Downs, this co-operation or log-rolling would not determine the question upon its real merits. He admitted that the system might be evil, but situated as they were, they were bound to submit to a number of necessary evils. The question was, whether it would be better to give support to meet these necessities to a limited extent, in the present, or to suffer these children to grow up in ignorance and vice, and so become at a future day a heavier burden upon the taxation of the community. The system of paying so much per head, although reduced to nine-pence, was a wrong principle entirely, and the institution could be conducted upon much sounder

principles. Those buildings in Brisbane were erected from a surplus out of this amount per child, and they were not put up in the most economical manner. If the honorable member for Rockhampton would accept a modification of his resolution, he would support him most readily. He could suggest something like £600. He had no doubt that the character of the population led largely to the number of destitute children in the orphanage. It was no argument to say that one place should be dealt unjustly with because another would require justice if it were otherwise. If destitution, pauperism, and ruffianism, existed in the colony, protection against these evils was necessary in the interests of the State. He had no doubt that items might be knocked off the Estimates—even though the finances were not in a flourishing condition—sufficient to meet this want. He saw that all the commissioners for lands, with the exception of the commissioner for Darling Downs, had been knocked off the Estimates. He could not see upon what grounds the commissioner for East and West Moreton, who had done his work so well, should be cashiered, while the commissioner for Darling Downs was retained. He should be prepared to knock him off too. All these institutions were liable to abuse, and too strict a vigilance could not be exercised over them; but they should be conducted under voluntary superintendence by those who took a lively interest in them. They would thus be conducted more economically than in any other circumstances. He was not supporting this resolution because it was a northern question, and he desired northern help. Nor was he about to enter into the question of North and South, as it was still undetermined where the North began or the South ended. The less they said about that, for the present, the better. They should get on with the work of the country at large. He begged to move—

That the question be amended by the omission of the figures "£1,600," with a view to the insertion, in their place, of the figures "£600."

Mr. ARCHER said the Colonial Treasurer made a harsh use of his memory in quoting figures from the missing letter. But the honorable gentleman was utterly wrong in the figures he had used. The last paper stated that the greater number of children had no father, or were as much orphans as if both parents had been dead. There was one thing in the speech of the honorable member for the Northern Downs which he wished to answer. The reason why he had voted against the water supply for Dalby was because the Government had promised to introduce a scheme for the whole country. That promise was given on the debate upon the honorable member's motion. It was stated that every place in the colony would be asking for a similar sum if this were granted. If it could be shown, by some active steps taken, that

any place was in a similar position to demand it, then the House should entertain their demands. The Rockhampton people had come forward in a way in which those of other towns had not; therefore he had a claim upon the House which no other town could put forward. He knew nothing of the Colonial Treasurer's figures, but he had the audited accounts of the society, which showed £400 receipts from private subscriptions. It spoke much for the necessity of this institution that the people were ready to tax themselves for its support. When a sum was put down with equal claims, for Dalby or Roma, he should be willing to vote for it. The simple reason why he had been asked to bring this motion before the House was, that the people in Rockhampton were unable to cope with the destitution of the place. He would not have brought the motion before the House at all, unless it had been shown that the private charity of the place was not competent to grapple with the necessity. The strong point in favor of it was that they had tried to help themselves, and had failed. If the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Jordan, really held the opinions he stated, he ought to have urged before that the orphanages at Brisbane should be supported by voluntary help from the purses of the people. That honorable member certainly placed the ladies of Rockhampton high as compared with the Brisbane ladies. But he would not detain the House with any further remarks. He would be glad to accept the amendment proposed. Although the children would have to be scattered about, instead of being under one management, it would be better to have this than otherwise. It would be found that as soon as the children were brought together, the streets would be cleared. He was surprised that the House had not conceded the full amount, but he would accept the amendment of the honorable member for North Brisbane.

Mr. THORN said he intended to oppose this motion, and if it were assented to, he should give notice for a similar amount to be granted for the district which he represented. The population of that district was double the population of Rockhampton, and the destitution in it was much greater. Now he could tell the honorable member for Rockhampton that since he had had a seat in the House, the eleemosynary aid extended to Rockhampton was greater than had been extended to any other place in the colony. For instance, the Rockhampton hospital received last year £400 more than the Ipswich hospital, although there were not so many patients in it as there were in the Ipswich hospital. Now, as such was the case, and as there was such a large amount on the Estimates for his district, he thought the honorable member should, in view of the financial position of the colony, rest satisfied for a time. The honorable member was one of those who was always for economy when

the proposed expenditure was for any other part of the country but the district which he himself represented. The people of Rockhampton had not come out nearly so liberally with respect to charitable institutions there as the people in other districts had done. The honorable member now asked for aid to establish an orphanage at Rockhampton. Well, if he should be successful, other honorable members would ask for a similar benefit for orphan children in their districts, so that it might happen in that way that they would have a number of orphanages scattered over the whole colony. Now, it was in his opinion far better that there should be one good and well conducted orphanage in Brisbane than a number of poor and miserably conducted establishments in different parts of the colony.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said he should support the motion, because he thought a very good case had been made out by the honorable member for Rockhampton why the orphan children in that part of the colony should be provided for where they might have some friends or relations, instead of being brought to Brisbane. He thought besides it would be more economical to provide for the children there, than to bring them such a distance from the place where it might be that one or other of their parents were residing. He did not approve of the Government supporting such institutions wholly, and he hoped that in future the principle of granting aid in proportion to the amount raised by local subscription would be adopted.

Mr. WALSH said he thought that some explanation was required from the Government, because of the way they had dealt with this question. He understood from the Colonial Secretary that the Government were to support the vote.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He stated that he would support it, but he did not say the Government would support it.

Mr. WALSH: That was a most extraordinary statement for the honorable gentleman to make after he had written a letter, dated the 28th of April last, stating that the Government were in earnest in this matter, and that they would support a vote for the purpose. In his letter to the honorable member for Rockhampton, the honorable gentleman said—

"You are well aware that two orphanages exist in Brisbane—Protestant and Catholic. This is not considered desirable, and will not be repeated in any other part of this colony. It would, therefore, be desirable that the Government should be furnished with the names of those ladies and gentlemen, resident in Rockhampton, who would, irrespective of creed, kindly consent to act as members of committee in connection with such an institution.

"You will thus understand that the Government are in earnest in this matter. They are willing to place a sum on the Supplementary Estimates agreeably with your suggestion; but they naturally desire to know, how and by whom, such an establishment is to be conducted."

That was the statement made by the honorable the Colonial Secretary on the 28th of April; and he thought he was now entitled to ask if the honorable gentleman wrote what was true or false on that occasion? Nothing that he could see had occurred since to lead the honorable gentleman to say that the Government would not support the vote. Now, taking the statement in the letter, and the opposition of the Government to the vote, the only conclusion that could be come to was, that the honorable member for Rockhampton was being made a fool of when communicating with the Colonial Secretary on the subject; and that the Colonial Secretary, on the 28th of April, wrote to the honorable member for Rockhampton either what was true, or what was an absolute falsehood.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY rose to order; and moved that the words be taken down, namely, that he wrote to the honorable member for Rockhampton what was an absolute falsehood.

The motion was put and carried, and the words were accordingly taken down by the Clerk.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY then said he wished to ask the ruling of the Speaker, as to whether those were words that could be used by one honorable member to another. He asked for the ruling of the Speaker, more particularly after what he had stated to the honorable member for Rockhampton, for he did not much care for what was said by the honorable member for Maryborough; and he did not suppose that any honorable member would much care for what fell from that honorable member's lips. Still, there was a certain amount of decorum that must be maintained between one honorable member and another; and, if they dispensed with it, that chamber would cease to possess the character belonging to a legislative body, and obtain that of a bear garden.

Mr. PALMER said that he thought when the words were ordered to be taken down, all the words should be taken down, and not a few of them only, because it was possible to torture the meaning of a few words into anything at all. Now he must say that he did not hear the honorable member for Maryborough impute falsehood to the Colonial Secretary. The honorable member was speaking in the way of argument, and he said that the Colonial Secretary had written that which was true or an absolute falsehood. No doubt that was very strong language, but it did not charge the Colonial Secretary with writing a falsehood.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL rose to order. It appeared to him that the course to be pursued in a matter of this kind was clearly laid down in standing orders eighty-nine to ninety-two. There it was required that the words having been taken down, the member using the objectionable words should be called upon to explain or withdraw them. It was

not competent for any honorable member to comment upon them.

Mr. PALMER said it appeared to him that there was no intention on the part of the honorable member for Maryborough to impute falsehood to the Colonial Secretary, for he spoke in an alternative form, saying he either did one thing or he did another.

The SPEAKER said the words were highly objectionable, and were such as ought not to be used by one honorable member towards another, but being expressed in the alternative, they were in some degree qualified. The honorable member, however, had a perfect right to explain.

Mr. WALSH said he did not use the words from any desire to offend the Colonial Secretary, or to impute falsehood to him; and he attributed the objectionable words entirely to the interruptions of the honorable the Premier. He was, at the time, asking if the Colonial Secretary expressed the views of the Government in his letter, as he seemed to do, and the honorable the Premier called out "No, no."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The honorable member took more liberty in interpreting the observations of other honorable members than any other honorable member did. Now, he wished to inform the honorable member, that he did not deny that the Colonial Secretary expressed the views of the Government.

Mr. WALSH said that, after the letter that was written by the Colonial Secretary, pledging his colleagues to support the vote, and asking the honorable member for Rockhampton to inform the ladies who were moving in the matter that they would have such support, it was a most unworthy thing for the other members of the Government to place their colleague in such an ignominious position as they had placed him in, with respect to this matter, for the sake of saving the small amount that was asked for; or, indeed, for the sake of saving any amount. He considered it was a duty the honorable the Colonial Secretary owed to himself, to demand from the Government an explanation of the way in which they had treated him in the matter,—by instructing him to write the letter of the 28th April, and now opposing the vote to which that letter referred, and which pledged the Government to support it.

The question was put—"That the figures proposed to be omitted stand part of the question," and the House divided:—

Ayes, 7.	Noes, 13.
Mr. Walsh	Mr. Lilley
" Royds	" Miles
" Archer	" Stephens
" Hodgson	" Francis
" Palmer	" Edmondstone
Dr. O'Doherty	" Jordan
Mr. Fraser.	" Thompson
	" Taylor
	" Forbes
	" Bell
	" Macalister
	" Murphy
	" Thorn.

Whereupon question put,— "That the

figures proposed to be inserted in place of the figures omitted, be so inserted."

The SPEAKER said, that in consequence of the opponents of the motion voting differently from what they evidently intended to do in the first instance, there was still a blank to be filled up, which placed them in a difficulty, but the blank might be filled up by any amendment.

After some conversational discussion upon the point,

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, that in order to put matters right; he would move that the House do now proceed to the next motion on the paper.

The motion was agreed to, and the House then adjourned.