

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**TUESDAY, 6 JULY 1875**

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THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

DURING THE

SECOND SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF THE COLONY  
OF QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA,

APPOINTED TO MEET

AT BRISBANE, ON THE TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY OF APRIL, IN THE THIRTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF THE REIGN  
OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1875.

[VOLUME 2 OF 1875.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Tuesday, 6 July, 1875.*

Address to the Queen.—The Volunteer Force.—Brisbane  
Drainage Bill.

ADDRESS TO THE QUEEN.

The PRESIDENT announced that he had duly forwarded by letter to the Governor the Address to the Queen agreed to by the Council on the 17th instant, in reference to the cession of Fiji and British claims on New Guinea, to which His Excellency made the following answer:—

“Government House,  
“Brisbane, 5th July, 1875.

“SIR,—I have received with your letter of to-day's date, the Address to Her Majesty, agreed to by the Honorable the Members of the Legislative Council on the 17th June last.

“It will be my care to have it forwarded, in due course, for presentation to the Queen.

“I have the honor to be,

“Sir,

“Your most obedient Servant,

“W. W. CAIRNS.

“To The Honorable

“The President of the Legislative Council.”

THE VOLUNTEER FORCE.

The PRESIDENT said, as he understood that the honorable gentleman representing the Government would offer no opposition to the

production of the returns which were asked for in the notice of motion standing in his name on the paper for the day, he should withdraw the first portion of the notice in order to bring it forward at a future opportunity, when the reports asked for were on the table of the House, and now merely move formally—

That Copies of all Reports addressed to the Government by Officers Commanding Volunteers in this colony, since the year 1869, be laid on the Table.

Question put and passed.

BRISBANE DRAINAGE BILL.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the House resolved into Committee of the Whole for the consideration of this Bill.

Plans showing the land referred to in the schedule, were laid on the table.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving the first clause, stated that opinions differed as to the amount likely to be realised from the sale of the land. Some persons thought that the proceeds would be £26,000 or £27,000. For himself, as far as he could judge of the value of city property, and he thought he should be found to be pretty near the mark, he calculated that about £16,000 would be realised. The works proposed to be made under the provisions of the Bill were very necessary for the public welfare; to prevent the destruction of property by the recurrence of floods and to preserve

the health of the citizens. Much of the sickness and mortality prevailing was due to the defective earth-closet system and to the use of impure milk that was sold in the city.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON said that as he had suggested the postponement of the Bill so that the Central Board of Health should have an opportunity of offering an opinion upon it, he had now to say that the Board were quite satisfied that nothing they could recommend in connection with it would be of any use, the measure being simply one to take land out of the hands of the Corporation and put it into the hands of the Government. The Board would, however, place a set of resolutions before His Excellency the Governor, recommending certain action which they considered desirable. So far as the Bill went, the object aimed at could be gained very easily by selling the land in allotments as they might be required, taking advantage of the market. But for a general system of drainage for Brisbane, a much more elaborate arrangement would have to be made, inasmuch as much of the land was swampy and below the high-water level of the river. For instance, the swamp near the Cemeteries was slightly above low water-mark but below high-water mark. To drain that properly it would be necessary to erect flood-gates at the mouth of the creek, where the first bridge was, on the Milton road, near Mr. Bennett's house. It was not, however, intended by the Bill to provide for carrying off more than the flood-water in the localities which had been already spoken of in the House by the Postmaster-General.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in explaining the objects of the Bill for the benefit of the Honorable Mr. Taylor, who was not in the House at the second reading, urged that from the proceeds of land taken from the Brisbane Corporation the Parliament House had been built, which was a place for the benefit of every part of the colony.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR asked, if the proceeds of the land should not be sufficient for the works proposed, would the Government come down on the general revenue?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: No. The sewer from Makerston street to the river, for which he understood all the plans were prepared, would cost something like £4,000; so that there would be no difficulty in making that sewer. Then there was the completion of the sewer behind Queen street.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON said he did not think any one would object, if even a few pounds were taken from the general revenue to do the work proposed. The public buildings of Brisbane had been erected mostly at the expense of Brisbane itself; and he defied any honorable member to show any town in the colony, or any capital in the colonies, in which the same thing had been done. Brisbane had been exceptionally and badly treated, without doubt, in its lands

being taken from the Corporation and the proceeds spent in public buildings.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: If the honorable and gallant gentleman was not a member of the Council, he should have thought his last speech was meant for the electors of the city. He should be glad to give all the land required in Toowoomba, if the same buildings were put up there. Brisbane benefited by the buildings, and no other place did. Honorable members were dragged down to the city, when there was a much finer climate on the Downs.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN objected to the statements made about any hardship having been put upon Brisbane. In all the towns of the colony certain portions of land were put aside for public buildings.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON said the ground on which the Parliament House stood was not all that was taken from the Corporation, but other land was taken and sold, and the proceeds, amounting to £20,000, were contributed to the building. In other towns the cost of the public buildings was contributed from the general revenue of the colony. The proceeds of the lands sold in the city, for the erection of the public buildings, should have been divided between the Corporation and the Government, and not all taken by the Government. The cost of the public buildings in Brisbane had been one-half defrayed out of moneys belonging to the city; and those buildings were for the benefit of the whole colony. The Municipality of Rockhampton, he heard, never wanted money. Well, the whole of the river frontage was reserved to that Municipality, which thus got a large revenue from wharfage. In Brisbane, with the exception of two little spots reserved by the Crown, the whole river frontage had been sold to private individuals, and that source of revenue was lost to the city. Therefore, he said, that Brisbane had been unfairly treated.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY observed that a large portion of the land would be required at no distant date for an extension of the railway in the city. There was nothing in the Bill to compel the Government to sell the land; it enabled them to sell it. Though the recent Wharfage Commission did not suggest such an extension from the present terminus for passenger traffic, but only an extension to connect the railway with the wharves and warehouses on the river, yet the House should approach with caution the question of the alienation of lands that might be hereafter required. He asked the Postmaster-General if the Government had under consideration in any way the subject of further requirements; or, had they any report on the subject from a competent officer?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It was not likely that the Government would sell any land that there was the slightest probability of their requiring for a railway. At the present time the extension of the railway was

under the consideration of the Government. He believed some survey had been made. It was not, however, settled how the line was to be extended eventually. Formerly, he said in the House that the railway would never be a commercial success until it was connected with the wharves of the port. But, the terminal station could not, he thought, be brought further into the city than its present situation. It was as near the centre of the city as possible, though perhaps not as near the warehouses as it might be. Until the railway could deliver at and take from the warehouses goods and produce, the river would carry the bulk of the traffic, at any rate, as far as Ipswich was concerned.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON: Surely the Government would take more care of the land for the benefit of the railway than the Corporation! He wished honorable members to bear in mind that he did not defend the administration of the Brisbane Corporation.

The Bill was passed through committee and reported to the House without amendment; and the report was adopted.