

STRATHALBYN TOWN HALL

UNANIMOUS VOTE TO TAKE OVER INSTITUTE PROPERTY

FOLLOWING on the business in connexion with the Electric Lighting Scheme at the ratepayers' meeting on Thursday night of last week, the business relative to the offer of the Institute Committee to the Corporation to take over the whole of the Institute property was discussed, and in opening up the subject the Mayor referred to a resolution passed at a meeting of subscribers to the Institute a little while back.

Mr. Richardson pointed out that hall required certain alterations which the committee was not prepared to undertake, and a suggestion had been made to the effect that the property be handed over to the Corporation as a Town Hall. The Corporation was willing to take the property over if the ratepayers were agreeable, and he could see no reason why such a step should not be taken. They had no town hall at present, and that was a slur on a town of the size and importance of Strathalbyn. The only cost of the change was the payment of the bank overdraft (a matter of about £69) and the cost of the transfer. It really amounted to a gift of about £6,000.

Mr. K. Harris (president of the Institute) explained the committee's reasons for the offer. The hall was not large enough for present-day requirements, and the committee was faced with the problem of borrowing a large sum to modernise it or else let it go. He thought Strathalbyn should have its town hall, and the committee was making the people an excellent offer. The hall was built 60 years ago, whereas the Corporation was only five years old and it was built by the pioneers who realised that the Corporation was not then in a position to build a hall. Since then the Institute had been run by different committees or communal purposes. The

committees or communal purposes. The time had now arrived when the committee thought the property should be handed over to the people. It had more than paid its way, and would continue to do so. The library would also be handed over at the same time, and would, if accepted, be carried on by the Corporation on the same lines as at present.

The Mayor thought the suggestion was an excellent one. Recently a number of tourists had been visiting Strathalbyn, and all had expressed surprise at there being no town hall here. The Institute was in a good position, and had an assured income in addition to the Government subsidy which would continue. The hall needed extending and modernising, for at many of the dances held recently the place had been packed. He hoped the ratepayers would accept the gift.

A number of questions were asked and answered, and Mr. Thomas stated that although the committee had effected improvements from time to time to the value of £2,000, there was at present only an overdraft of £69. He could not see how the people could hesitate in accepting such a gift.

Mr. Harris moved that the offer of the Institute Committee be accepted in accordance with the conditions specified, and on being seconded by Mr. Fisher, the motion was carried unanimously.