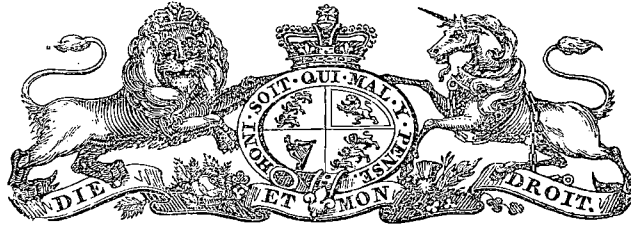


(No. 14.)



1901.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

BUSH FIRE RELIEF FUND:

REPORT AND BALANCE SHEETS, 1899-1900.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.

Cost of printing—£5 17s. 6d.



BUSH FIRE RELIEF FUND.

Hobart, 1st May, 1901.

SIR,

WE have the honour herewith to forward Statements of Receipts and Expenditure in connection with the relief given to the sufferers by bush fires which broke out during the summer of 1899-1900. The statements include the receipts and expenditure for the following funds, namely:—Dromedary, Glenora, New Norfolk, Hamilton, Bagdad, and General Fire Relief Funds, all of which are closed, with the exception of the General Fund. On this account we had, on the 1st March, 1901, a credit balance at the Commercial Bank of £110 1s. 8d., and this sum, less some small outstanding indebtedness, not exceeding £5, we are intending to place at fixed deposit with the Commercial Bank, in order that it can be available for the assistance of any fund that may be raised for bush fire relief in the future.

The Government assistance was promised to Local Committees upon the £ for £ principle, equal to the amount raised by contributions in aid of the sufferers, and this promise was accompanied by the stipulation that all claims for relief recommended by Local Committees should be submitted to and approved by us, as the Government representatives on the Committees. This stipulation was carried into effect, and, we are pleased to be able to say, worked admirably. We had but little friction with Local Committees, and the relief was given as nearly as possible in accordance with their recommendations. The members of the Local Committees, and especially the Chairmen and Honorary Secretaries; at considerable inconvenience to themselves, made every inquiry into each claim for assistance, and supplied us with all necessary information, in order that we might be able to judge as to the need for relief and the amount that could be made available from the funds at our disposal. The sufferers are deeply indebted to the Local Committees for the thorough manner in which they investigated all claims for relief, and for the trouble they took in representing fully to the Government representatives the manner in which such relief should be given.

Relief was given in material for buildings; in wire for fencing; in furniture, clothing, and in food. Cash was only given in cases where Local Committees certified that the money would be honestly expended in replacing the damage done by the fires.

We endeavoured to make it clear to the several Committees that it was relief, not compensation, which was intended to be given to the sufferers, and that the help, necessarily, could only be of such a description as to tide them over their troubles for a time; and further, that it was not contemplated that the public funds could be used for the purpose of replacing the sufferers in the position they were in immediately before the outbreak of the fire, but that we hoped to be able, from private contributions and the Government subsidy, to give them a considerable measure of relief and assistance. This, we trust, we have done; and, further, we have reason for believing that with the timely assistance provided by the public and the Government subsidy, together with their own endeavours, the sufferers, for the most part, are gradually making their position equal to what it was immediately before the fire.

We are,

Sir,

Yours obediently,

E. M. FISHER.

F. R. SEAGER.

The Hon. the Premier.

FIRE RELIEF FUNDS.

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE.

	RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
General Fire Relief Fund	151 7 0	41 5 4
Bagdad Fire Relief Fund	36 13 0	36 13 0
Glenora ditto.....	137 19 0	137 19 0
New Norfolk ditto.....	36 6 0	36 6 0
Hamilton ditto.....	121 17 0	121 17 0
Dromedary ditto.....	410 3 10	410 3 10
Balance at Commercial Bank to credit of General Fund,		
1st March, 1901.....	..	110 1 8
	<u>£894 5 10</u>	<u>£894 5 10</u>

E.E.

Hobart, 30th April, 1901.

E. M. FISHER,

F. R. SEAGER.