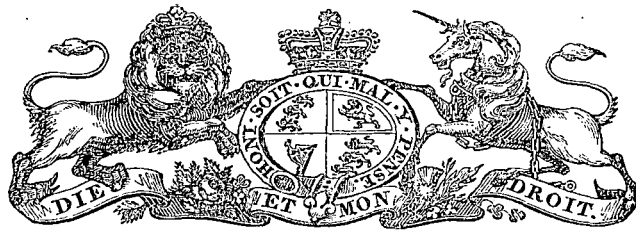


(No. 27.)



1886.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

V A C C I N A T I O N :

REPORT FOR 1885.

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



ANNUAL REPORT on VACCINATION, for the Year 1885.

Vaccination Office, 16th March, 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit the following report of Vaccinations for the year 1885.

The sum total of children vaccinated during the year, according to returns in this office, was 1707, of which number 582 were vaccinated by the Northern, and 1035 by the Southern Public Vaccinator, and 90 at the Vaccination Rooms, Hobart.

This compares favourably with the number of Vaccinations in 1884, which was 1648; but still it is far below the proper proportion that the vaccinated should bear to the number of children born in each year.

Out of this total 1707 only 148 children were of the age of six months and under, and 169 over six months and under one year, while 1390 were above the age of one year.

Of these numbers 1597 cases were successful, and 52 unsuccessful, owing to various causes; while the remaining 58 were not seen after vaccination, as they failed to appear for inspection, as is required, on the eighth day.

During the twelve months commencing 1st July, 1884, and ending 30th June, 1885, there were born in the Colony 4623 children. After deducting the mortality for the same period, which is estimated at 23 per cent., there should have remained none unvaccinated at the end of 1885, except, perhaps, in the few instances which have been postponed by medical advice, had the provisions of the Vaccination Act been strictly enforced; whereas it appears, according to the returns from the General Registrar's Office, that the number of vaccinations in respect of children born during the twelve months specified above does not exceed 10 per cent.—thus leaving a very large percentage unaccounted for. It is thus evident that, taking one year with another, the number of children that are in the Colony wholly unprotected against smallpox must be increasing to an alarming extent.

The above figures also show a large falling off in the vaccination of children under one year; some of them from an evident reluctance on the part of the parents to consent to the operation being performed at so tender an age. In cases where children are weakly this delay may be permissible, but with sturdy, healthy children the sooner this important protective course is accomplished the better in all respects, for it is a well established fact that children pass through this ordeal without the slightest detriment to their health. During the past year not one case out of the whole number of vaccinations has been reported to this office as having unduly suffered in any way from the operation.

This favourable result, no doubt, is to a great extent attributable to the great care which has been exercised by the Public Vaccinators in the selection of lymph from healthy children only, as well as in the general performance of their duties.

Calf lymph, received nearly every week from Dr. Penfold, of Sandhurst, Victoria, has also been freely used by the Public Vaccinators with some degree of success, but their reports show that full

reliance cannot be placed upon its always "taking" during the hot weather of the summer months; this probably owing to the virus becoming inert after the lapse of any length of time between its removal from the calf and its application to the arm.

From the extended intercourse which now prevails between all parts of the world, promoted so largely by constant steam communication, an outbreak of smallpox might at any time, despite the utmost vigilance on the part of the authorities, be proclaimed to be in our midst; and if parents could but realise their amazing folly in leaving their children wholly unprotected from the ravages of this terrible disease, they would at once hasten to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by the State to guard against this dreadful scourge.

In conclusion, having regard to the important benefits which the Vaccination Act is designed to confer upon the community, it is to be deplored that so much apathy should exist in the public mind, and that no efforts at all commensurate with the magnitude of the interests at stake should be made to enforce the highly salutary provisions of this most useful Act of Parliament.

I have the honor to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

C. E. BARNARD, *M.D.*,
Superintendent of Vaccinations.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.