

(No. 17.)



1873.

TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

RAGGED SCHOOLS.

REPORT FOR 1872.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, June 17, 1873.



FIFTEENTH Report of the HOBART TOWN RAGGED SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

YOUR Committee have again the pleasing duty of presenting a satisfactory Report. The whole three Schools continue in the same good working order. There has been no change in the teachers, nor in the monitors, nor any material difference in the number on the rolls, nor in the average attendance. The schools are full; and the attendance is fairly up to the teaching power your Committee has been able to provide. In Lower Collins-street the flood stopped for some time the school work, and made a considerable change in the inhabitants; in that School 150 children have left, and 154 new have been admitted. This fact excepted, there is no change to report except a small increase.

The average numbers have been as follows; viz.—in Watchorn-street, average names, 167; average attendance, 114: in Collins-street, average names, 180; average attendance, 134: in Cascades Road, average names, 186; average attendance, 129: showing a total on the books of 533, and a total attendance of 377.

Though somewhat less than last year, yet it seems worth while drawing attention to the large average attendances, so large comparatively in proportion to the numbers on the roll. In one School more than 6 out of ten; in a second nearly 7 out of ten; in a third $7\frac{1}{2}$ out of ten: an attendance not often seen among the free scholars in our Public Schools, and to which few Free Schools attain. This may be in part owing to the facts that the children are mainly drawn from the immediate locality, and that the Local Boards and the Ladies' Committees exercise a good local influence; but it shows also that both parents and children attach a more than ordinary value to the advantages these Schools afford.

During the last two years the experiment has been tried of assigning a few of the more active members of the Committee as a Local Board to each of the Schools; and this has been followed by the best results. The teachers have been encouraged: a regular visitation of the Schools secured; public examinations held, at which many of the parents attended; and prizes awarded for regularity, for good conduct, and for meritorious learning. All these things in the way of practical *training*, and not the mere learning of lessons, it has been the desire of your Committee to instil and foster. There is fair reading, spelling, writing, counting, and thinking encouraged in the Schools; and for the girls plain needlework. Your Committee have not thought it wise to encourage more in that direction; but there has been an assiduous endeavour, and they hope there always will be, to *train* these children in habits of punctuality, discipline, order, and work; in the sense and practice of truth, honesty, and honour; and to base this *training* on reverence to God, His word, and His commandments.

The lady Superintendents report:—

In Watchorn-street.—“During the last twelve months the School has gone on satisfactorily. The attendance has kept up well. The teachers have been attentive to their duties. Nearly 100 articles of clothing have been made by the elder girls, consisting of underclothing, frocks, and caps. Materials have been given by the Hon. Mrs. Du Cane, Lady Officer, and Mesdames Crosby, C. Crosby, and Salier; and Messrs. Hinsby and Calvert kindly supplied medicines while the whooping cough was in the School.”

In Collins-street.—The School has been in constant operation except during the flood. After a great change of scholars took place; but a good deal of work has been done both by the old and the new. 105 pieces of work in all have been finished in the School, consisting of dresses, underclothing, boys' jumpers, and a dozen boys' shirts. In July 200 articles of clothing were distributed. The materials have been provided chiefly by the ladies who regularly visit the School, among whom are the Hon. Mrs. Du Cane, Lady Officer, Mesdames W. J. T. Clarke, Tooley, Parsons, and Crosby. Materials were also given by Messrs. R. A. Mather and C. Crosby."

In the Cascade Road School.—"During the past year the girls have made 9 under garments, 8 pinafores, 24 pocket handkerchiefs, and 76 lined petticoats made of small pieces. These articles were given to the children last Christmas, and at the same time pieces of tweed and print to the value of £7 collected by Mr. Perkins. While short of work the girls have made for ladies 2 pairs of sheets, 12 pillow cases, 18 towels; and they are now preparing 12 under garments, 7 shirts, 24 frocks from material presented by Mrs. C. Crosby. The School is also under obligation to Mrs. Du Cane, Mrs. Allport, and Mrs. Napier; to Messrs. J. B. and R. A. Mather, Salier, and Brownell for contributions of working material."

Besides these large distributions of useful clothing in all the Schools, there has been the annual dinner party celebrated on the 7th of March. As the day threatened to be wet and stormy, the feast took place in the malt-house of Messrs. Walker, Hampden Road. At this 326 children were gathered. His Excellency, Mrs. Du Cane, and several friends of the School were present during the day; and, with plenty of good fare inside and active games outside, the fête was much enjoyed both by the children and by the visitors.

In concluding their Report, your Committee would add a few words on three practical points; on the means of securing attendance, on the future of the children, and on the state of the funds.

1. Your Committee understand that, during the last year, a new Free School has been opened in Murray-street, under the Board of Education; and that it has now an average on its books of about 150, and an attendance of something above 100. In this School the numbers and attendance may be expected to increase. There is now, therefore, provision made by these four Schools for the free education of 700 children; and your Committee venture to think that this ought fully to meet the honest necessities of the Town. The main thing to be aimed at henceforth is to secure or compel attendance. If the whole mass of children whose names are on the roll could be regularly gathered within these four Schools, the streets and lanes would be nearly cleared of those who are receiving only the bad education to be got in them; and, to assist in securing this important end, your Committee would suggest that His Excellency's Government be memorialised to make it a condition henceforth, in dispensing the public charity, that the parent or guardian shall produce a certificate from the teacher of one of these Free Schools, or some other, that the children for whose maintenance they receive public aid are in regular attendance.

2. Your Committee have found it as yet beyond their power to launch any large plan for securing the continued oversight and industrial training of the boys and girls who leave the Schools, and leave so young. As to some 20 boys and 25 girls who were taught in Watchorn street within the last two years, it is known to the master that they are now in respectable situations, and doing well. But it is still a subject of serious concern to your Committee that these children should not be lost so early to good care and good influence; and they desire to press afresh on the sympathy of those who are looking to the future of these young colonists with anxious interest, the importance of organising some means for maintaining in connection with them a continued oversight and training.

3. As to the state of the funds: your Committee receive a grant of public money to the extent of £300 a year; and for this they undertake to give a plain sound education to upwards of 500 children; they undertake the entire responsibility of keeping up a staff of teachers; of keeping the buildings in repair; of providing books, prizes, fuel, and superintendence; of providing work for the girls, and a large amount of clothing—perhaps 600 articles every year. In addition to this £300, they have received during the year, in the shape of subscriptions from friends of the Association, about £100 more. Your Committee are not grumbletonians, and have never been; but it is plain that this amount is entirely inadequate. The salaries of both male and female teachers are too low by far for the work they do; and, were it not that a few generous friends are bestowing gifts, which are never published, perhaps to the same amount as the acknowledged subscriptions, the Schools must inevitably be closed. During this last year some £10 has been given for prizes; nearly 400 children could not be dined and fêted and entertained for less than another £10; the work provided, and material bestowed in gifts, could not amount to less than £30 or £40; whilst a few ladies—most active among whom was that old and tried friend of the Schools, Mrs. Woolley—regretting the reduction on the female teachers' salaries, raised a sum sufficient to bestow on each of them a donation of £5. In view of all these facts the Committee appeal for larger and more subscriptions. They say respectfully that they ought to have £100 more this year. Mr. Hopkins's legacy alone, as will be seen from the balance sheet, brought them safely through the last year.

The Treasurer in Account with the HOBART TOWN RAGGED SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

		Dr.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.				Cr.		£ s. d.	
Oct.	To Cash Balance brought for-							Oct.	By Cash	Printing and Advertising...	6	6	0
1871	ward	23	13	2				1871		Fuel	17	14	6
	to Subscriptions and Donations	80	14	5						Stationery, Books, &c.....	14	10	4
Nov.					104	7	7	Nov.		Repairs and Furniture.....	26	6	4
1872.	From H. M. Government,				375	0	0	1872.		Insurance.....	3	18	0
	five quarters									Tuition.....	421	7	6
										Interest at Bank.....	1	13	5
					477	7	7						
	Balance due Bank..				12	8	6						
					<u>£491</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>1</u>						<u>£491</u>
													<u>16</u>
													<u>1</u>

THOS. WESTBROOK, *Treasurer.*

Examined and found correct.

J. W. WOOLLEY, } *Auditors.*
CHAS. CROSBY, }

November 22nd, 1872.