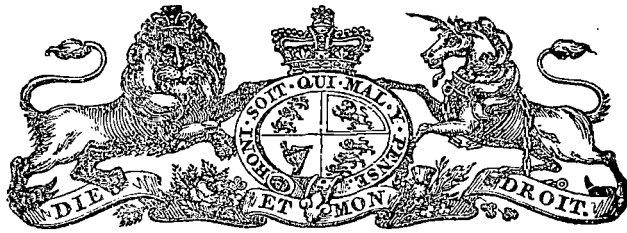


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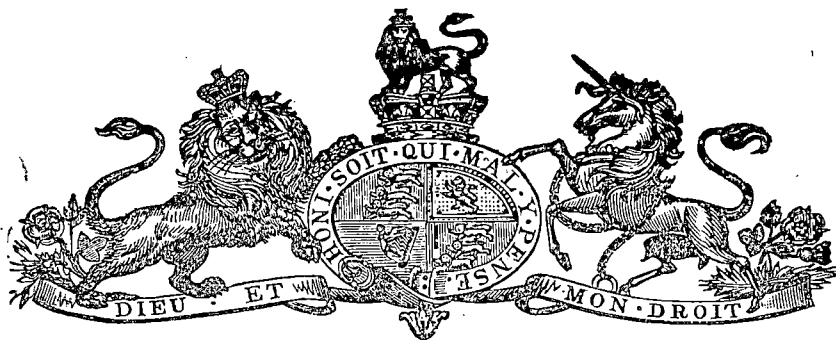
1890.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY :

REPORT FOR 1889.

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



THIRTIETH Annual Report of the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

THE Annual General Meeting of the Hobart Benevolent Society was held at their Board-room, Bathurst-street, on Thursday, January 30th, 1890. The Mayor (Hon. J. Watchorn, M.L.C.) presided, and there were present—Rev. J. W. Simmons (Chairman Executive Committee), Messrs. C. Butler, G. S. Seabrook, J. Baily, G. Kerr, C. Harbottle, G. Hiddlestone, J. E. Salier, J. B. Mather, T. J. Crouch, Robey, and G. S. Crouch (Hon. Secretary).

The Mayor expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present that night to preside at such a meeting, one, he might say, of the most pleasurable duties he was likely to experience during his mayoral year. (Cheers.)

Mr. G. S. Crouch (Hon. Secretary) then read the Annual Report as follows :—

Thirty years ago this Society was founded in order to relieve the poor, distressed, and afflicted ; and thereby to discountenance, as much as possible, mendicancy and vagrancy, and to encourage industry among the indigent. The record of work for last year, as supplied by the Registrar, may serve as an illustration of continued effort. It is as follows :—

“On the books from last year there were 59 cases, comprising 131 individuals.

“New cases for the year, 148, comprising 59 males, 126 females ; children, 152 males, 117 females—454. Of the adults there were 60 cases of sickness, 18 husbands away, 4 husbands in gaol, 30 widows, 7 husbands out of work, 8 destitute persons, 5 accidents, 16 aged and infirm ; total, 148.

“Relief was given to 19 individuals going up country seeking employment, or going to the Dépôt at New Town. The rations issued during the year were :—Bread, 45,134 lbs. ; tea, 1127 lbs. ; sugar, 6086 lbs. ; oatmeal, 1894 lbs. ; rice, 3321 lbs. ; and for sick cases—cornflour, 52 lbs. ; sago, 86½ lbs. ; cocoa, 63 lbs. Wood and coals were given by friends to the amount of £62 2s., which enabled the Society to supply fuel to the poor during the winter months. Blankets were also given by a friend to the amount of £10. ‘Friend’ (no name) gave £10 for sick cases.

“It will be seen by the current account that the sum of £15 8s. 11d. was paid to the men working in the wood-yard. Lodging tickets and rents for the homeless had been given, amounting to £42 12s., and for special cases £7 6s. had been expended.

“The Christmas and New Year Treat, which was much appreciated, was provided at a cost of £31 1s. 6d., as the subjoined statement will show :—Flour purchased, 400 lbs. ; flour given, 270 lbs. ; raisins purchased, 250 lbs. ; raisins given, 100 lbs. ; cake purchased, 550 lbs. ; cake given, 16 lbs. ; and packets of lollies for the children.

“The usual investigation of cases has been made during the year, including Government cases.

“The collection of subscriptions has been continued.”

The daily meal and the winter fire do not by any means cover the work of this institution. It may be a letter from a far-off land seeking information concerning some wanderer : some thoughtful life in another corner of old England, interested in a group of young men, writes asking information concerning occupations, prospects of employment, and wages : some depressed son or

daughter of toil, feeling the home supply is not sufficient, comes for aid, when probably an encouraging word nerves the worker once more, who goes away feeling that charity is not needed, but cheerfulness and courage to face the battle of life. Again, some stranger, not knowing where to look for employment and reduced to extreme want, seeks food, and with it is directed on the way to obtain work. Perhaps, too, some husband, detained from home long beyond expectation or intention, wife and children are compelled to seek temporary aid. Members sitting at the Board, and recalling facts illustrative of each suggestion, may regret that such points should be mentioned: but time, tact, and care are involved; and it is right that subscribers should feel that the work of the Society is not to keep people in poverty, but, if possible, to lift them right out of it. These points, too, should be taken into consideration when the cost of the working of the Society is considered.

After repeated consideration, both by the Executive and General Committees, resolutions were passed to the effect that it was not advisable to register the Society under "The Charitable Institutions Act;" but that, if necessary, the Annual Meeting should be asked to consider the propriety of applying to Parliament for an Act of Incorporation. In consequence of this determination, the Hon. the Chief Secretary intimated his intention of withdrawing all Government work from the office at the close of the year. It would have been gratifying to the Committee to have continued service, in the hope of benefit to the poor and to the State. They cannot, however, regret being relieved of an irksome and well-nigh thankless task.

This care of the poor is a great care, but little understood. Must the cancer of poverty eat into the life of our Australian States? Thousands and tens of thousands of pounds are annually expended on charity in lands said to be waiting for labour. "The Poor Law principle," remarks Canon Blackley, "compels not only the rich to pay for the poor, or the fortunate to pay for the unfortunate, but it makes all the thrifty, poor as well as rich, pay for all the wasteful, in addition to fulfilling that duty of providing for themselves which the wasteful have chosen to leave unfulfilled." "If," observes Mr. Peek in 'Social Wreckage,' "the workman squanders his means in times of plenty, and makes no provision for old age, it is greatly owing to the fact that he has been taught that the country has provided legal sustenance for the destitute, irrespective of desert, and that there are numberless soft-hearted people ready to supplement it." The defects of administration, according to Mr. Arnold White in his 'Problems of a Great City,' are three in number. 1. The competition between institutions carrying on similar work. 2. The enormous sums wasted in administration. 3. The absence of any palpable relation between charitable work and endowment, and their effects on the solution of the social problem, and, therefore, on the welfare of the community. Under such circumstances it is pleasant when a lady enters the office, and, presenting a cheque for £100, requests that the interest may be devoted to providing fuel and food for the winter. Against this, "the nature of the task, the failure of bygone efforts, the apathy of the comfortable classes, discourage fresh attempts to set forth remedies for evils visible to all."

It may be well to note that in 1887 the Society paid away in cash on account of the Government the sum of £883 10s. The Committee having asked a larger discretion in this matter, in 1888 cash allowances were reduced to £246 16s. 6d., and in 1889 to £209 15s. 6d., thus confirming the universal testimony of similar institutions, that money gifts under any circumstances are fatal to the proper administration of charitable relief.

J. W. SIMMONS, *Chairman of the Executive Committee B.S.*

The Treasurer in Account current with the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

R. T. WESTBROOK, *Treasurer.*

LIST of Donors and Legatees to the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|-------------|---------|---------|
| 1860.—Fredk. Manning, Esq., Donation | 200 | 0 | 0 |
| 1861.—John Shipley, Esq., Legacy | 132 | 0 | 6 |
| 1862.—J. R. Wilson, Esq., ditto | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| „ John Bowers, Esq., ditto | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Ruth Pudney, ditto | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 1863.—Wm. Cotton, ditto | 47 | 4 | 8 |
| 1867.—Wm. Dove, ditto | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 1870.—Henry Hopkins, Esq., ditto | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Hon. T. Y. Lowes, M.L.C., ditto | 2000 | 0 | 0 |
| 1875.—Wm. Brodribb, Esq., ditto | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| „ James Therry, Esq., ditto | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 1879.—John R. Bateman, Esq., ditto | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| 1880.—L. Eherenfried, Donation | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| 1883.—Very Rev. W. J. Dunne, ditto | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| 1884.—Miss E. H. Tinson, Legacy | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 1888.—Charles Abbott, Esq., ditto | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| 1889.—Mrs. R. Walker, in memory of her Mother, Mrs. J. Cameron, of “Heathfield,” Davey-street, ditto | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | <hr/> £3984 | <hr/> 5 | <hr/> 2 |

CAPITAL ACCOUNT.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|----|
| As per List..... | 3984 | 5 | 2 |
| Amount on Deposit at Bank..... | 997 | 11 | 10 |
| „ in M.P. Building Society | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| | £5581 | 17 | 0 |
| Society's Premises, Bathurst-street..... | £1000 | 0 | 0 |
| | £ | s. | d. |
| Fire and Flood Emergency Fund, on Fixed Deposit | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Accrued Interest | 42 | 10 | 4 |
| | £142 | 10 | 4 |

INVESTED CAPITAL.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|----|
| Debenture, due January 1st, 1893 | 2000 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ October 10th, 1890 | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ April 1st, 1890..... | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ „ 1891..... | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ October 5th, 1894 | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| Deposit V.D.L. Bank, due April, 1889 | 565 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ February 25th, 1890 | 116 | 17 | 0 |
| „ „ September 17th, 1890..... | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ January 15th, 1891..... | 500 | 0 | 0 |
| „ M.P. Building Society, December 6th, 1890 | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| | £5581 | 17 | 0 |