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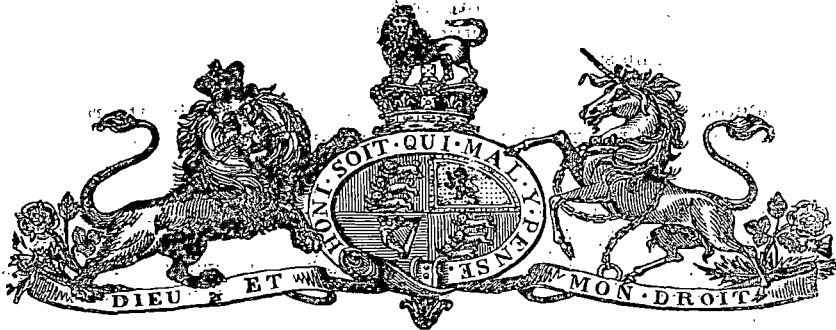
1891.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

TOWN OF STRAHAN :

REPORT BY ENGINEERING INSPECTOR.

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



TOWN OF STRAHAN.

To the Hon. the President and the Members of the Central Board of Health.

GENTLEMEN,

I TOOK advantage of my passing through Strahan on my visit to Zeehan last month to confer with the members of the Local Board of Health, and with some of them to make an inspection of the town; and I have the honour to report to you as follows:—

1. I inspected the town of Strahan in the month of February, 1890, and reported to you (Parliamentary Paper No. 34, 1890) on the then condition of the town and on the measures I should recommend to improve it. I regret to say that on my second visit, in March, 1891, I found that, with the exception of a little work done at two of the hotels and at the clearing out of the Manuka Rivulet, hardly any of the suggestions have been carried out, and consequently the condition of the town has become worse as the population has greatly increased.

2. Since my previous visit Strahan has been proclaimed a Town under the Town Boards Act, and a Town Board elected. This Board is the Local Board of Health. It has not yet passed any bye-laws, nor organised any sanitary service, nor appointed an Officer of Health.

3. One of the greatest nuisances in the place is that caused by total want of regulation in respect of the tents and huts occupied by the unsettled portion of the population. These are scattered about, some on Crown land, some on private property. They are surrounded by dirt and refuse of all sorts. They have no privies, but the bush all about is made abominable with human ordure.

4. To remedy this condition of things I would suggest that, with respect to camps on private property, the owners of the land should be served with orders under the 102nd and following sections of the Public Health Act, 1885, to abate and discontinue the nuisance. With respect to camps on Crown land, it is desirable that they should be immediately under the control of the Local Board. For this purpose I would suggest that a special locality suitable for camping on should be set apart and temporarily placed at the disposal of the Local Board, which should allow the pitching of tents thereon according to some definite system, and should itself undertake to put up the necessary privy accommodation and perform the necessary sanitary service under the conditions referred to below. The carrying out of this undertaking should form part of any contract the Local Board may make for sanitary service in connection with the town generally.

5. Land suitable for this camping-ground exists on each side of the Strahan and Zeehan Railway, being part of the reserved land marked T1 on the plan of the town. It lies comparatively high and dry, with sandy subsoil, and is near to the Manuka Rivulet, which is the only available water supply. I recommend that the Local Board should be granted use of part of this land, subject to resumption by the Government at any time when it might be required for railway or other purposes.

6. When this land is available I would suggest to the Local Board to make an order under the 22nd section of the Act above cited, to the effect that no tent or hut should be pitched or set up in the town except under the following conditions, namely:—

- (a) If the tent be on private property it shall be set up only by the owner of the property or by some one to whom the owner has given permission in writing; it shall be provided with a privy made and fitted to the satisfaction of the Local Board; and shall have a proper receptacle to the satisfaction of the said Board, wherein shall be deposited all refuse; and shall have a proper place wherein all slops shall be thrown and treated to the satisfaction of the said Board; and
- (b) If the tent be set up on Crown land it shall be set up only in such place as the Local Board may appoint, and the person occupying it shall pay to the Local Board one shilling for every week during which it is occupied, in return for which the Local Board will provide privies with the necessary sanitary service, and proper receptacles for refuse.

7. The railway contractors' slaughter-house and stables were in the same place as described in my former Report, and were in a very unsatisfactory condition. I was told that they were about to be removed. Mr. Gaffney's slaughter-house has been given up, but one occupied by Mr. Martin on the button-grass plateau in the township is in a bad state, with dirty yards, in which pigs are fed on the refuse and offal. A third slaughter-house is a little to the west of the creek on the Government reserve marked C1 on the plan of the town: this is not properly constructed, but, as it is at present surrounded with ti-tree swamp, it is not creating a nuisance.

8. I attended an informal meeting of the Local Board, at which I reported the result of my inspection, and strongly urged the necessity of the framing of bye-laws, the organising of a sanitary service, and the diligent administration of Health Acts.

9. In conclusion, I beg to earnestly renew the recommendation I made in the 7th paragraph of my Report of last year in reference to the Esplanade. Already matters are worse than they were, and every day the increase of the township will aggravate them. I also heartily endorse the recommendation made by the Deputy Surveyor-General in his Report dated 27th January, 1891, as to the desirability of making a road round the head of the eastern arm of the bay to the township land sold near the cemetery. This road should be so made as to secure some depth of water outside so as to avoid the exposure of the foreshore at any state of the tide.

I have the honour to remain,
Gentlemen,
Your faithful Servant,

A. MAULT, *Engineering Inspector.*

Hobart, 25th March, 1891.