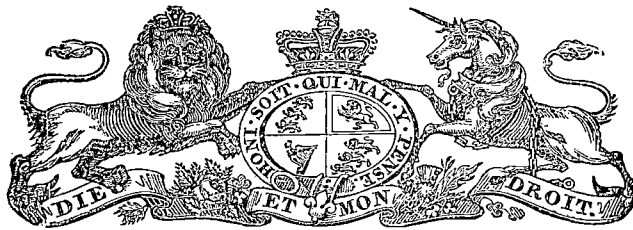


(No. 14.)



1896

SESSION II.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

BOARDING-OUT DESTITUTE CHILDREN:

REPORT FOR 1895.

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

Cost of printing—£1 6s.



BOARDING-OUT DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

REPORT FOR 1895.

Hobart, 26th March, 1896.

SIR,

The Central Committee for Boarding-out Destitute Children have the honour to submit the following Report for the year 1895.

On the 31st December, 1894, the total number of Children maintained under the Boarding-out System was 76—boys, 54; girls, 22; viz., in—

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Hobart	31	10	41
Launceston	11	4	15
Municipal Districts	12	8	20
	<u>54</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>76</u>

During the year 1895 the names of 21 children—boys 13, girls 8—were added to the boarded-out list, and 17—boys 13, girls 4—ceased under the following circumstances to be a charge upon the funds at the disposal of the Committee; viz. :—

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Apprenticed	1	—	1
Adopted	1	1	2
Taken by relatives	9	2	11
Died	1	—	1
Admitted Industrial School for domestic training	—	1	1
Committed to Training School	1	—	1
	<u>13</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>17</u>

leaving, on the 31st December, a total of 80, located as follows; viz., in—

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Hobart	33	15	48
Launceston	9	4	13
Municipal Districts	12	7	19
	<u>54</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>80</u>

four in excess of the number with which the year commenced.

The Committee before they undertook the responsibility of providing for the 21 children referred to above, carefully investigated the circumstances of each case, and satisfied themselves as to the genuineness of the representations made on the subject of destitution. Four of the children had been maintained as inmates of the New Town Charitable Institution for some time, and had arrived at an age when it was considered desirable to give them the benefit of training under the boarding-out system.

The children who by their apprenticeship, adoption, or return to relatives, ceased to be a charge to the public, were not permitted to be withdrawn from the care and protection of their foster parents until the Committee had good reason to believe they would have comfortable homes and a fair prospect of growing up useful members of the community.

The girl who was sent to the Industrial School for domestic training was boarded out in Hobart, and, having reached the age of twelve years, was placed in the charge of the Governors, in accordance with a special arrangement made a few years ago with the sanction of the Government.

The child whose death is recorded was an infant, also boarded out in Hobart, and was under the medical care of Doctor Smart. Cause of death, "Marasmus."

A lad boarded out at Campbell Town was charged with larceny. He pleaded guilty, and as his character for honesty was anything but good, the Justices committed him to the Training School for a period of five years.

The Committee met monthly during the year, and also devoted three afternoons to the annual inspection of the children and their homes.

The expenditure for the year was £1218 0s. 11d., less repayments amounting to £24 16s. 8d. made by relatives, a total of £1193 4s. 3d., leaving an unexpended balance of £306 15s. 9d.

The average cost per head per annum amounted to £12 6s. 0½d.

Although provision was made during the year for 97 children, 63 only were a charge for the full period of 365 days. The remainder, 34, were maintained for periods varying from 44 to 306 days. Average number of days, 298½.

Annual Inspection.

The Committee commenced their annual inspection of the children and their homes on the 2nd December, and continued it on the 3rd and 4th. The inspection was conducted, as usual, without notice to the foster parents, and gave much satisfaction to the Committee. The appearance of the children warranted the belief that they were well and kindly treated, and were in the care of foster parents who did them every justice. Their clothing was neat and clean, and the bedding was of good quality, and ample. The Committee were also much pleased with the general arrangements of the homes and of the sleeping apartments provided for the children. The rooms were well ventilated and kept in good order.

Changes in Homes.

Circumstances rendered it necessary to transfer some of the children to other foster parents, but no serious cause of complaint arose during the year.

Attendance at School.

The children who were old enough to go to School attended regularly, and the foster parents were also fully alive to their obligations with regard to the attendance of the children at Sunday School.

Health of Children.

The Committee are pleased to be able to report very favourably on the subject of the health of the children during the year.

Visiting Committees, &c.

The Committee have again much pleasure in bearing testimony to the kind and generous assistance rendered by the several Visiting Committees, Hobart and Launceston, in the promotion of the happiness and comfort of the children.

Supervision was also exercised over the children in Hobart by the Inspecting Officer. In Launceston the interests of the children were watched over by a Visiting Committee, assisted by the Superintendent of the Territorial Police and the Inquiring Officer. The Police Magistrates, Wardens, and Superintendents of Police reported periodically respecting the boarded-out children in other parts of the Colony, and afforded the Committee valuable aid in their efforts to obtain good homes for the children, and to ensure compliance with the regulations in the matter of attendance at school and Sunday-school.

Apprentices, &c.

With a few trifling exceptions, the apprentices and adopted children conducted themselves very creditably. The Inspecting Officer kept in view such of these children as resided in and about Hobart, and the Chairman of the Committee corresponded each quarter with the employers of those who had homes in the country, and collected the amount due under the indentures. A

special circular was also addressed to the Police Magistrates and Wardens of the several districts in the Colony in which there were apprentices, requesting a report as to their behaviour, and the treatment they received at the hands of those with whom they had been placed, and the replies were of a very satisfactory nature.

Each apprentice has a bank-book, and at the end of last month, when the books were made up at the Savings' Bank, there were 38 accounts, and the amount to the credit of the apprentices was £151 9s. 4d.

During the year payments amounting to £48 ls. were made to six apprentices whose conduct had been such as to justify the Committee in handing to them the amounts to their credit in the Savings' Bank on the completion of their indentures.

Fox's Bequest.

The sum of £7 12s. 2d., the share of this bequest apportioned to the boarded-out children in accordance with the decision of Parliament in the year 1889, was received, and equally divided amongst the 80 children whose names appeared on the boarded-out list at the close of the year.

Staff.

The Committee regret that circumstances have not yet enabled the Government to provide the Inspecting Officer and Clerk, Messrs. Judge and Burton, who were retrenched in the middle of the year, with other employment. They, however, trust the assurance to the Chairman, that advantage would be taken of the first opportunity to recognize the faithful services of these officers for upwards of twenty-one and nineteen years respectively, will be given effect to.

The Committee are glad to be in a position to state that Mr. Pearce, who succeeded Mr. Judge, has discharged his duties in a painstaking and creditable manner.

Mr. Frank Lovett's appointment as Secretary has also given the Committee much satisfaction. In the changed conditions under which the boarding-out system is now administered, much responsibility necessarily devolves upon Mr. Lovett, and the Committee trust their recommendation that he should receive adequate remuneration will meet with favourable consideration at the hands of the Government.

Constitution of Committee.

Two vacancies occurred during the year, one by the resignation of Mr. William Lovett, to whom the thanks of the Government were awarded for his long services, and the other by the death of Mr. Tarleton.

The Committee express their deep regret at the demise of Mr. Tarleton, whose strenuous exertions some eighteen years ago brought about the abolition of the system of massing a large number of children in an institution at New Town known as "The Queen's Asylum for Destitute Children," and the substitution of the present beneficial mode of dealing with the orphan and indigent of tender years. The late Mr. Tarleton, from the date of the inauguration of the boarding-out system to that of his death, evinced the warmest interest in its working, and was a most active and zealous member of the Central Committee, ever on the alert to safeguard the rights of the children, and to protect them from neglect or injustice. The vacancies have been filled up by the appointment of Messrs. B. T. Solly and Albert Reid.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

J. O'BOYLE, *Chairman.*

FRED. J. SALIER.

J. G. PARKER.

THOS. BENNISON.

C. J. ATKINS.

GEO. RICHARDSON.

B. TRAVERS SOLLY.

ALBERT REID.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.