

(No. 94.)



1887.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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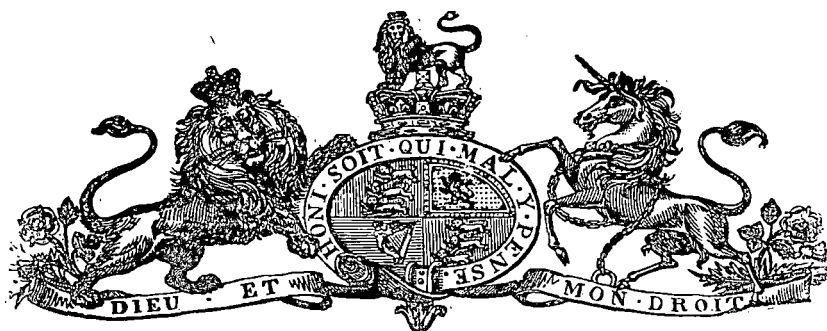
D R. S M A R T :

Correspondence relative to his Relinquishment of the Office of Chairman  
of Official Visitors to the New Norfolk Asylum.

*Return to an Order of the House of Assembly. (Hon. Nicholas Brown.)*

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Laid on the Table by the Minister of Lands, August 9; and ordered by the House  
of Assembly to be printed, August 17, 1887.



*Chief Secretary's Office, Hobart, 20th July, 1887.*

SIR,

THE Government contemplate amalgamating several of the offices now filled by separate Medical Officers.

The changes which would thus be made would involve your position as Chairman of the Official Visitors to the Hospitals for the Insane, and I am anxious, therefore, to give you the earliest possible intimation of the intention of the Government, as the reduction will commence on the 1st of next October.

The Government regret the prospect of losing your valuable services in connection with the Hospitals for Insane, but the necessity for combining the offices now filled by a staff unnecessarily numerous compels them to adopt this course.

I am sure that I need not express to you how sensible the Government are of the many and varied benefits you have conferred upon the public, and the assistance you have at all times so ungrudgingly rendered the Government in all matters connected with the welfare of the sick and the insane; and I trust the spirit which has animated you in the past may still induce you to afford the benefit of your experience upon questions of such deep interest.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

P. O. FYSH.

*The Honorable T. C. SMART, Chairman of Official Visitors,  
Hospitals for Insane, Macquarie-street.*

*Macquarie-street, Hobart, 23rd July, 1887.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant, intimating to me the very unwelcome intelligence that, on the 1st of October next, my services as Chairman of the Official Visitors to the Hospitals for the Insane will terminate.

In reply, I beg to thank you for your courteous and complimentary letter, and to add that, notwithstanding this, and the high tribute paid to my past services, I cannot but feel that, to a certain extent, I am the victim of a breach of faith on the part of the Government, and therefore take the liberty to remind you that when Experts from the neighbouring colonies had been brought to Tasmania and consulted with reference to the New Norfolk Asylum, and when the Government was in a state of extreme perplexity and embarrassment as to what should be done to rescue the Asylum and the Colony from a standing reproach, I was induced by the Government to resign my seat in the Legislative Council in order to undertake, at their urgent request, a task of no ordinary magnitude. Not only was I to conduct the duties of Chairman of Official Visitors, but also to become at once the adviser of the Government on all matters connected with the management and condition of the Asylum. I was also requested to design and arrange plans for its immediate conversion, if possible, into a modern institution; also to report and advise on all necessary alterations and improvements, and to conduct the entire correspondence between the Government and the Asylum, and in every way to devote my time and energies, together with the results of my long experience in hospital construction and organisation, to the complete restitution, or rather reconstruction, of an antiquated, dilapidated, and discreditable institution.

Whether, in conjunction with the other Official Visitors, I have fulfilled (in so far as the short period of time and the means at disposal would permit) the expectations of the Government and the public, I know not, but the Interim Report of the Official Visitors, dated 28th June, 1886, and the Annual Report for the same year, will furnish abundant evidence of the energy with which the task assigned to me was undertaken.

That the comprehensive designs submitted to Government for the re-organisation of the Asylum (and which for months occupied every moment of my spare time, no point being left untouched) were satisfactory to the Government and Parliament, is proved by the fact that they were adopted, and have been acted on to the letter, although no acknowledgment to this effect has ever reached me; and I cannot help feeling that, under the circumstances stated, and in view of the public approbation expressed at the time of my appointment, that I had a right to expect at the hands of the Government and the Country a claim to higher consideration than that of an abrupt termination to my services.

I am aware that the exigencies of the situation demand a careful revision of the public expenditure; but I venture to submit that the very special duties for which I was especially selected cannot be ignored if the Asylum for the Insane is to take its stand as a modern institution.

I heartily acknowledge that, in recognition of my claims on the ground of past services, you did me the honor to offer me a continuation of Government employment; but I regret to say that the overwhelming extent and multifarious character of the duties proposed rendered it impossible for me to entertain the offer, believing as I do that no one man, however energetic, could faithfully and efficiently discharge so onerous a combination of responsible duties.

I have, &c.

THOS. C. SMART, *Chairman Official Visitors.*

*The Hon. the Chief Secretary.*

THE communication with Dr. Smart with reference to "a continuation of Government employment," mentioned in his letter of the 23rd July, was conversational and conditional.

P. O. FYSH.

*Chief Secretary's Office, Hobart, 3rd August, 1887.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo, having reference to the contemplated re-arrangement of the medical duties at present discharged by several officers and their consolidation under one head.

The proposals of the Government will be submitted to Parliament solely with the view of reducing an expenditure which is considered far in excess of the requirements of the Service, and I greatly regret that, in the discharge of a public duty, I should, as in your case, appear to be treating an officer of the Government without due consideration; but Ministers feel bound to endeavour as far as possible to curtail the expenses connected with the Charitable Institutions, and are thus compelled to discontinue your appointment as a separate office, at the same time as they purpose relieving other gentlemen of certain medical duties which they have hitherto discharged under Government.

I have, &c.

P. O. FYSH.

*The Hon. T. C. SMART, Macquarie-street.*