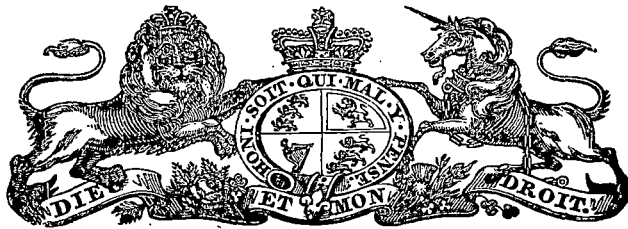


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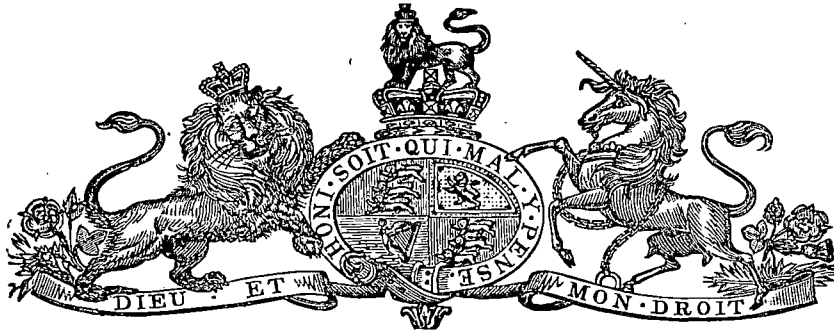
1892.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICER :

REPORT FOR 1891.

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



GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT, 1891.

Medical Department, Hobart, 2nd May, 1892.

SIR,

As the Government Medical Officer, I have the honor to submit my Annual Report for the year 1891.

The several duties connected with my office remain the same as they were last year, and have kept me fully occupied in carrying them out.

My duties in connection with the New Town Charitable Institution require my constant supervision of the cases of sickness amongst the aged inmates of that establishment. My visits there during the year amounted to 124, and on each occasion I invariably saw all the patients needing my services, and gave such instructions regarding their ailments as I considered necessary.

The majority of the patients are in an enfeebled and debilitated condition from old age and disease, and are in constant need of attention and nursing; hence the Hospital wards are always more or less crowded with this class of patients.

Should any case of urgency arise during my absence and my assistance be required, I am at once informed by telephone.

It is satisfactory to note that the sick patients frequently express themselves as well satisfied with their treatment and comfort, thus showing that their welfare is being kindly attended to by the officers and attendants.

The new system of paid attendants is working well, and upon its introduction at once proved a conspicuous improvement upon the former plan of employing the aged inmates to discharge the duties of nursing, who generally were not strong enough to cope with the work, nor sufficiently intelligent to perform it satisfactorily.

The wards, too, show a great improvement as regards cleanliness and comfort; and as several have been painted and decorated in a tasteful manner, they present quite a cheerful aspect.

The prevailing epidemic of influenza spread amongst the inmates during October and November in an alarming manner, and in consequence many were laid up in the general wards for several weeks. Every attention was paid to the numerous sick cases during this anxious time, and every precaution taken to prevent the spread of the infection, but it proved fatal to several of the old people before treatment could be of any avail.

There were six cases of cancer during the year. These cases were treated in a separate ward away from the general buildings. Every attention was paid to their comfort, and every endeavour made to alleviate their sufferings.

Two patients died of consumption and one of paralysis, at the comparatively early ages of 34, 37, and 45 years respectively.

Notwithstanding the early ages of these deaths, and including them, the average age of those who died in the Institution during 1891 was $75\frac{1}{4}$ years for males, and $70\frac{1}{2}$ for females.

The average number of inmates throughout the year was 389 males and 156 females,—being a total of 545. This number is considerably less than the total of 1890, when it reached as high as 592.

The mortality during the year was rather higher than in the previous one, being 120 males and 30 females; total, 150. This increase in the death-rate was mostly due to the epidemic of influenza, which proved so fatal to the aged.

The total number of prescriptions that were made up at the Dispensary of the Institution during the year amounted to 6713 for males and 461 for females; total, 8109.

One case of blindness from cataract was successfully operated upon, and the sight restored.

The visiting of the poor at their own homes in Hobart kept me busy throughout the year, as there was an unusual amount of sickness during several of the months—especially during the month of October, when the epidemic of influenza was at its worst. The number of cases attended by me in that month alone amounted to 98. The total number of cases attended by me during the year amounted to 426. Many of these cases were visited by me immediately upon receipt of urgent messages for my professional attendance, even without the necessary order from the Government Inspecting Officer; but, as a rule, a regular order from the Inspecting Officer is required before my professional services are available, and then it is understood to be only for those who are unable to attend at the Hospital for treatment.

Several of the cases seen by me were recommended for admission into the Hospital, as they were mostly suffering from ailments which required skilled nursing and the comforts of such an Institution as a well equipped Hospital, such as they were unable to obtain in their own homes.

As Health Officer for the Port of Hobart, the supervision of the Bills of Health of all vessels arriving from foreign parts comes under my care, but during the year I have not been called upon to investigate any cases of infectious disease on board any vessels. Smallpox was reported as having occurred in the island of Mauritius, but, happily, no vessels sailed from there for this port during the year.

As Chairman of the Board of Official Visitors to the Hospitals for the Insane, my time is much occupied in attending to the many details of the management of these Institutions both at New Norfolk and at Hobart. Reports of my visits to these Hospitals are forwarded monthly to the Government.

The number of miles travelled by me in the course of my various duties during the year amounted to about the same total as in the previous year.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

C. E. BARNARD, *M.D.*,
Government Medical Officer.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.