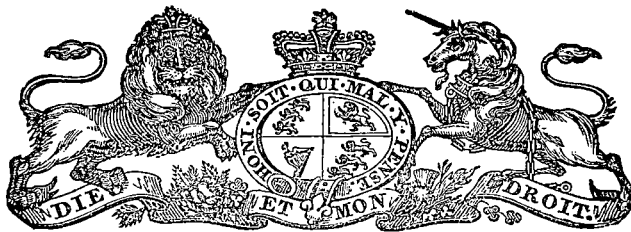


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1880.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

C I T Y R E L I E F:

R E P O R T O F T H E E X E C U T I V E C O M M I T T E E O F T H E
B E N E V O L E N T S O C I E T Y.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, August 26, 1880.



REPORT of Executive Committee of the Hobart Town Benevolent Society upon the Administration of Charitable Grants, from 1st March to 30th June, 1880, inclusive, in the City of Hobart Town and Suburban Townships.

Hobart Town, 1st July, 1880.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit for your consideration the Report of the Executive Committee of the Hobart Town Benevolent Society, for the four months which have elapsed since the Committee entered upon its duties of Administration of Charitable Grant Relief for the City of Hobart Town and suburbs.

The change was made from the Argyle-street Government Relieving Depôt to the Office of the Hobart Town Benevolent Society on the 1st day of March last without any inconvenience to the poor people receiving relief, notice having been given to the people on Friday, the 27th February, that the next issue would take place at the Benevolent Society's Depôt in Bathurst-street.

On Saturday, the 28th February, and on Monday, the 1st March, all the preparations were made, so that the first issue of cash and rations took place on the 2nd March, on the usual day.

On the Tuesday of each week cash is paid to those in receipt of aid in this form, and also to the foster parents of Boarded-out Children; and to those who receive rations a part is supplied to them on the Tuesday, and the balance of the week's rations is received by the people on the Friday. With this arrangement the people have been well satisfied, never having expressed any disapproval.

On Thursday, 4th March, the usual day for Committee Meeting, about one dozen cases were taken up for consideration and enquiry; and at that meeting a resolution was passed to sit in Committee on Tuesdays and Thursdays in each week, to get through the cases with as little delay as possible.

During the first four weeks the Committee investigated 123 cases, and required all the people who were able personally to appear; during the second four weeks 127 cases were enquired into,—making a total of 250 cases receiving pauper aid.

In pursuing these enquiries some cases were discovered of parties having relatives who were well able, and who should support their relations; these persons were brought to book, and the necessary steps instituted to recoup the Government for the outlay. We also found some cases in which the parties would not submit themselves to the investigations of the Committee, and were consequently struck off relief.

On Saturday, the 6th March, all the Boarded-out Children were brought down to the Depôt for inspection by Dr. Hall, and were regaled on the occasion by the Society. All were comfortably clad, and the children showed that they were well cared for. The children have been visited on different occasions by Dr. Hall and Mr. Catley, the Enquiring Officer; and care is exercised in the choice of guardians or foster parents, and that the religion of the Children shall be respected in placing them suitably either with Protestant or Catholic guardians.

On the 6th May last the children who had attained the age of 12 or over were brought before the Committee by their foster parents, and were examined by Dr. Hall as to their physical condition for service; only two girls were considered by him as fit to be sent out, and for these good situations were obtained. In response to advertisements that were inserted in the *Mercury* for situations for Boarded-out Children, from 20 to 30 applications were sent in for two children,—and on two occasions; showing the demand there is for strong children for service.

With regard to the expenditure in the issue of rations: In the No. 1 Scale there has been a considerable reduction as contrasted with June 30, 1879; but with No. 2 Scale there has been a slight increase,—which may be accounted for that many who were receiving No. 1 are changed to No. 2, as being more suited to their age; many of those now receiving aid are aged and infirm people and cannot be expected long to remain. The difference in No. 2 Scale is that it contains less bread and more groceries and is more suitable for aged people. In No. 3 Scale there is a decrease of 12 as compared with 1879. A list of the different Scales is appended for the information of the Government, although the Acting Administrator will most probably be in possession of the lists.

The issue of rations stands thus for the corresponding period of the year, 1st March to 30th June, 1879 and 1880:—

	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.
Rations, 1879.....	1875	676	103
Ditto, 1880.....	1627	695	91
	<u>248 (decrease.)</u>	<u>19 (increase.)</u>	<u>12 (decrease.)</u>

The value of the total reduction in this branch is £35 17s. 9d., as under:—

	£	s.	d.
No. 1—248 Rations, at 3s.....	37	4	0
No. 3— 12 Rations, at 2s. 2d.	1	6	0
	<u>£38</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
By Increase—19 Rations, No. 2 Scale, at 2s. 9d.....	2	12	3
	<u>£35</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>9</u>

The cash expenditure from 1st March to 30th June, inclusive, is as near an approximation as can be arrived at. For convenience we reckon by 4 weeks of delivery, and then abstract of work: the time is 17 weeks and 3 days.

The expenditure of cash in 1879 and 1880 is for the corresponding period, 1st March to 30th June:—

	Maintenance.	Boarding-out.
	£	£
Cash, 1879	371	556
Cash, 1880	313	585
	<u>£58 Decrease.</u>	<u>£29 Increase.</u>

The reduction in the Pauper Relief is £58, and there is an increase in the Boarding-out System of £29, so that the total reduction on this branch of relief is £29, and in rations of about £36; so that there is a reduction of £65 total.

The Committee do not take credit to themselves that they have effected this reduction in four months, for they are well aware that the Department was being rigidly scrutinised by the late Administrator and by Mr. O'Boyle for the first two months of the year. I would also respectfully observe that while it has been the Committee's aim to keep down all unnecessary outlay, they have been equally desirous that all legitimate claims upon the public purse should have full consideration; not any necessitous case that has been brought before it has been overlooked.

The increase in the Boarding-out cases has been occasioned by retaining children under foster parents after they have attained the age of 12 years, at which period the Government expect them to begin to work. Out of 17 children that were examined 15 were unfit physically to be sent out to service, but these children will soon again come under observation to ascertain if they are stronger than when last examined. Six new cases have also been taken on to the books of the Boarding-out System, and cases are continually arising needing the reception and boarding-out of neglected children and children of dissolute drunken parents.

The Abstract of the Boarding-out cases stands thus:—1 reduced, able to assist in earning her own livelihood; 2 have been adopted satisfactorily; 1 deceased; 4 have been surrendered to their relatives; 1 transferred to the Industrial School, could not be controlled; 3 have gone to service on trial; six fresh cases have been added to the Boarded-out cases at intervals since the 17th March,—who have also required to be clothed according to the Regulations before or upon handing over to the foster parents.

A list of Clothing supplied for Boys and Girls is appended for information of the Government.

The Enquiring Officer, Mr. Catley, and Mr. Judge, at present assisting, have gone over these Returns, and checked them and re-checked them, so that I believe they are quite reliable; and I believe that the amount that is set down as the probable expenditure on the Estimates for 1880 and 1881 will be ample for all purposes.

The Enquiring Officer is assisted by Mr. Witt, the Registrar of the Benevolent Society, in his duties of visitation; but Mr. Catley has also the duty of General Hospital to take the particulars of cases admitted, to ascertain the ability of themselves or their relatives to contribute towards their maintenance whilst under medical treatment. It is Mr. Catley's duty also to attend at the Police Court for the obtaining admission of children to the Boys and Girls' Industrial Schools, and to the Catholic Orphanage. One case has been admitted to the Boys' Home, one girl to the Catholic Orphanage, two girls to the Industrial School.

I would also respectfully draw your attention to the Four Weeks Abstracts which are sent in from time to time accompanied by reports of progressive information.

I cannot close this Report without mentioning a question which arose at the last quarterly meeting of the General Committee respecting the delivery of bread three times a week, instead of as at present twice. It was contended that the bread, just like home-made brown bread, good, sweet, wholesome bread, delivered hot from the oven twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays, became dry and hard before it could be used. On the other hand the experience of several of the Committee, who use the brown bread in their families from choice, was mentioned; and also the practice in country households baking once a week bread or damper which kept sufficiently fresh for the use of families in the country. It was, however, carried to the vote, when four members voted for the delivery three times a week, and four for the continuance of the present mode of delivery; the voting was a tie. The Chairman, *ex officio*, gave his casting vote in favour of the delivery three times a week.

To test the matter more certainly the Executive Committee decided to put the question to the recipients of relief themselves to ascertain if they had any complaint to make about the bread or the mode of delivery to them twice a week, and whether they wished any alteration made. Every individual coming for relief was asked the question, and the matter was fully explained to any who seemed dull of comprehension; but not one single complaint was made, all were perfectly satisfied with the bread and with the mode of dividing the week for the delivery. Some said it did not last long enough, and some that if they could get more bread they would come for it, but none wished to have three journeys for the same quantity. It is very satisfactory that it has been thus settled for ever, as the additional day would have been a great hindrance to the clerical work and have necessitated additional help, and have prevented the necessary visitations.

Aged and infirm persons belonging to the Government relief receive the benefit of one distribution of fuel as well as those who receive aid from the Benevolent Society; and the old people are very thankful for the help that has been afforded them by a grant of an old blanket or two, though only a few having been received only a few could be dispensed.

Persons who are awaiting invaliding, females more especially, are kept by the Benevolent Society and provided with lodgings and rations; one case has only recently occurred in which a woman was kept for a calendar month before a vacancy occurred for sending her in to the New Town Dépôt. At this season of the year, when the Dépôt is full, women have oft-times to remain a fortnight before they can gain admittance. It would be a great convenience to these poor women if increased accommodation could be provided for them. This is very much needed on account of the habits of many of these women who go about the streets begging.

Yours respectfully,

R. ANDREW MATHER,
Chairman Executive Committee Benevolent Society.

To the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

A. TABLE showing the Amount of Bread, Tea, Sugar, Rice, and Oatmeal contained in each of the three following Scales of Rations as now issued on the part of the Government by the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Society.

Scale.	Bread.	Tea.	Sugar.	Rice.	Oatmeal.	Remarks.
	Loaves.	Ozs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	
No. 1.	8, 16lbs.	6	2	1	1	Intended principally for families.
No. 2.	4, 8lbs.	8	3	2	2	For elderly people who cannot eat much bread.
No. 3.	Nil.	12	4	2	2	Issued to very old people only who are not able to make use of much solid food. The full ration in this case is very rarely required.

The No. 1. Ration cost is estimated at 3s. ; No. 2. ditto 2s. 9½d. ; No. 3. ditto 2s. 2½d.

BOYS.		GIRLS.	
Boots, pairs	2	Boots, pairs	2
Caps or hats	2	Hats	2
Jackets	2	Jackets	2
Socks, pairs	3	Dresses	2
Vests	2	Chemises	2
Trousers, pairs	2	Stockings or socks, pairs	3
Shirts	2	Drawers, over 8	2
Belt	1	Petticoats	2
Flannels*	2	Piñafores	2
Handkerchiefs	2	Flannels*	2
		Handkerchiefs	2
		Collars, over 12	2
		Nightgowns	2

* For those children who wear them by direction of a medical man