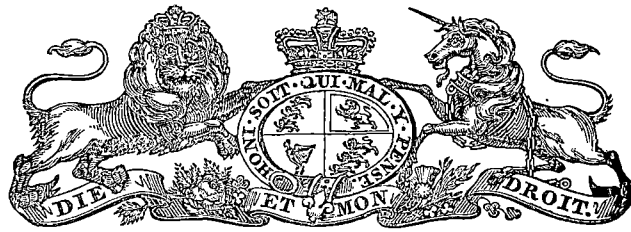


(No. 21.)



1888.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY :

REPORT FOR 1887.

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



LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

REPORT for the Year 1887.

AGAIN it is the pleasing duty of the Committee of the Launceston Benevolent Society to greet the members and their friends with a cordial welcome, and to invite them to review the business of the past year, and take counsel for the future advancement and well-being of the Society.

It is needless to dwell on the nature and objects of this Society. They are summed up in a few words. The Society succours old age and infirmity, helps the sick, discourages mendicancy, and, as far as practicable, prevents imposition. Where there exists no compulsory law for the relief of the poor, the benefits conferred by Benevolent Societies are manifest, and their encouragement a blessing.

Your Committee now proceed to lay before you a statement of the work performed during the past year. They relieved 91 men, 117 women, and 158 children. Compared with the year 1886, there is an increase of 16 men, 15 women, and 23 children. There were 106 applications for relief, 93 of which were allowed and 13 were rejected. Your Committee wish to impress that these rejections were not made hastily, but after careful enquiry. Five applicants were, after medical examination, pronounced to be without serious ailment, and fit for work; four were too well known to the police as intemperate and habitually idle; one had been offered work and refused it, and the others possessed relatives able to assist them; but, as if by arrangement, they preferred throwing themselves upon the bounty of the Benevolent Society. After their rejection, not one of the above mentioned troubled the Committee with a second application.

The customary treats were given to the recipients on the roll, and to some others, at Christmas and on New Year's Day, and the extra expenses were met by special contributions from benevolent friends.

Your Committee, which consists of 11 members, have held 46 meetings during the year, with the satisfactory result that 9 was the average attendance; and they request you to bear in mind that they perform other duties beyond an attendance at the weekly meetings. Each member (the Treasurer excepted) has the oversight of a given number of recipients, to whom he issues tickets for rations; and thus the members of the Committee become personally acquainted with their respective cases, and are enabled to answer enquiries and supply information at the weekly meetings, when the roll is called and reviewed. It is the duty of the Secretary to visit the recipients monthly, and at the end of the quarter to present a report of each case. The Chairman's calls of enquiry also are frequent.

When the dreaded smallpox broke out, Mr. Carter, then Mayor, requested of your Chairman the co-operation of the Committee to aid in supplying food and other necessities at the isolated houses; and the Chairman, having conferred with your Committee, was authorised to undertake the required duties in conjunction with the Secretary. It was also allotted to your Chairman and the Secretary to apply, for the relief of those who had suffered through the presence of smallpox, the sum of £29 6s. 6d., being a fund commenced by Mr. Wallace and the City Band, augmented by other kind subscribers.

From the Treasurer's Financial Statement about to be read, it will appear that there has been expended for firewood £28 7s. 9d., and for coal, £20 8s. 9d., making a rather large total of £48 15s. 9d. for fuel; but, on the other hand, it is gratifying to record that there has been no

occasion to lay out money in the purchase of blankets, of which 34 pairs, the gifts of friends, were distributed. The Treasurer will also report the receipt of £7 6s. 3d., being repayment to the Society for the expenses of supporting certain recipients.* This item is worthy of special notice. A donation of £20 from an absent friend, Mrs. Henry Reed, who keeps alive her interest in your prosperity, and a gift of £40 from an old subscriber, R. L., merit and receive grateful mention; also £15 from Mr. H. Thompson, part proceeds of a concert given by the Launceston Liedertafel, and several donations from thoughtful residents in the Town, who, at the time of the Jubilee Festival, preferred the claims of charity to an outlay in illuminations.

Your Committee gratefully acknowledge that they have been favoured with liberal donations of rice, oatmeal, and clothing of various kinds; and it will, they trust, be no departure from propriety that they venture to request a repetition of gifts so useful to the poor.

Your Committee are glad to observe that the burthen hitherto imposed upon them year by year, through the occurrence of *enceinte* cases, has in the past year been comparatively light; and that, in dealing with these unhappy cases, your Committee have had the invaluable assistance of Mrs. Baker and Mrs. Soltau, to whom heartfelt thanks are now tendered.

Your Committee repeat their annual thanks to the Medical Officers of the Hospital, Doctor Thompson and Doctor Pardey, whose goodness they also acknowledge in their having dispensed medicines, *gratis*, on the requisition of your Chairman, in cases gratuitously attended; and no less grateful are your Committee to the professional gentlemen, in private practice, whose services have on many occasions been sought, and generously accorded. Your Committee are also under obligations to the Press for furnishing weekly reports of their meetings, and thus keeping the operations of the Society before the public.

Your Committee enunciate their warning, and oft repeated request, that alms to street mendicants should not be given. The practice of giving money to the itinerant beggar, in most cases, encourages imposition. Let the charitable-minded send the applicant with a note to the Secretary, who will in every case institute enquiry, and relieve the deserving.

There has been much correspondence lately between your Chairman and Mr. O'Boyle, the Administrator of Public Charities, on the subject of boarding-out destitute children, and the relief required of your Society in peculiar cases. There were difficulties, but the Administrator, with an unflinching desire to accommodate, has given attention to your Chairman's representations; and your Committee have reason to hope that arrangements will soon be made for the better working of the system in Launceston.

Your Committee conclude with an appeal to the inhabitants of Launceston, and the Island generally, for a continuance of their support. Donations of money, clothing, articles of domestic consumption, and whatever may be considered serviceable to the poor, will be thankfully received; and their distribution will carry comfort to the aged, the sick, and the suffering.

E. L. DITCHAM, *Chairman*.

* Voluntary repayments by Relatives of the Recipients.

LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY *in account with Treasurer for Year ending 31st December, 1887.*

Dr.	£	s.	d.	Cr.	£	s.	d.
To Balance from 1886	19	4	4	By Government Grants	500	0	0
Meat	295	5	5	Repayment (for Recipients)	7	6	3
Bread	257	3	10	Subscriptions and Donations	482	7	6
Groceries	148	9	8				
Lodgings	10	0	0				
Midwifery	9	19	6				
Printing and Stationery	18	17	4				
Coal and Firewood	48	15	9				
Commission	11	9	0				
Secretary's Salary	75	0	0				
Cab-hire, and Milk	1	7	8				
Launceston B. and I. Society	52	0	9				
Balance in V.D.L. Bank	42	0	6				
	£989	13	9		£989	13	9

Audited and found correct,

G. BAKER.

4th February, 1888.

G. BABINGTON, *Hon. Treasurer*.

WILLIAM THOMAS STRUTT,
GOVERNMENT PRINTER, TASMANIA.