

1876.

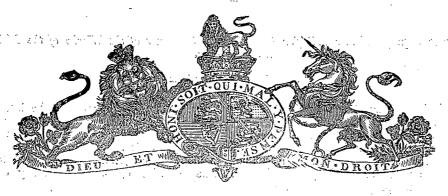
TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

HOBART TOWN WATER BILL.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Brought up by Mr. Lewis, October 6, 1876, and ordered by the House to be printed.



REPORT of Select Committee on the Hobart Town Water Bill.

Your Committee have carefully considered the proposed Bill to amend "The Hobart Town Water Act, 1860," which was referred to them, and have held several sittings, and examined Mr. A. Randall, the Director of the Hobart Town Waterworks, as to its various provisions.

Your Committee have made several alterations in the Draft Bill, and consider that it is now in a shape in which they can recommend it to the House for adoption.

Your Committee have appended to their Report the evidence of Mr. Randall, and certain documentary information which was supplied by that gentleman.

D. LEWIS, Chairman.

Committee Room, 6th October, 1876.

EVIDENCE.

Wednesday, October 4, 1876.

ALFRED RANDALL examined.

By the Chairman.—You are the Director of the Waterworks of Hobart Town? I am.

By Mr. Giblin.—Is the Bill now before the Committee founded upon your suggestions? Principally so.

Did you in August, 1875, report to the Corporation fully upon the proposed Bill? I did.

Will you produce to the Committee a copy of that report? Mr. Randall handed in copy, attached hereto, accordingly.

Has your experience since that report induced you to alter your opinions with respect to that measure? Not in any manner.

By the Chairman.—What is the reason that the water rate upon property is proposed to be abandoned? It would be more simple to make one general domestic rate, which it is proposed by this Bill to do.

By Mr. Giblin.—What is the reason that it is proposed to alter the rate named in Clause 56 of 24 Vict. No. 9? Under 24 Vict. No. 9 the conjoint domestic and public water rate was limited to $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. per annum, but I find it necessary that the rate should be increased to $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

By the Chairman.—Will you give reasons for that advance? At the present time the income is barely sufficient to meet current expenditure without any renewal of the most important portions of the works, besides making no provision for sinking fund as required by Section 70 of the 24 Vict. No. 9.

By Mr. Giblin.—Can you not suggest some more defined limit to the power of rating than that afforded by Section 16 of the proposed Bill? Yes. I hand in draft of a proposed clause, which I think will meet the case.

By the Chairman.—Do you think that the 13th Section is not required? Yes.

By Mr. Giblin.—Are you of opinion that the following words should be added to Clause 15 of the Bill; viz., "or retrospectively in order to raise money to pay charges and expenses already incurred?" Yes

In Section 19 do you recommend any reduction of the penalty? No.

Do you recommend the 9th and 10th Clauses as printed should remain unaltered? Certainly.

By the Chairman.—You approve of the proposed new Clause 13? I do.

By Mr. Giblin.-Do you concur in the new Clause 14 as printed? Yes.

Mr. Randall handed in a report.

REPORT upon a proposed new Bill for the better Maintenance of the Works of the Hobart Town Water Supply.

THE Revenue derivable from the Water Rates being inadequate (after the payment of the interest on the cost of construction) for the maintenance of the Works in efficiency, to meet the increasing demand for the supply of water to the City of Hobart Town and the suburbs, renders it necessary to increase the Revenue to meet these demands. For this purpose a Bill is being drafted, to be introduced into Parliament, whereby the Council may obtain such powers as will enable it to adopt the required alterations, and to apply the meterage system, already affirmed by the Council. The following epitome will briefly describe the principal sections of the proposed new Bill:—

At the conclusion of Section 36, 24th Vict. No. 9, (no alterations being made in the preceding sections) it is proposed to add the following:—

"The Council may supply any person with water for domestic, and for other than domestic purposes, by measure, at such rates, upon such terms, and subject to such conditions as the Council may adopt within the limits of this Act."

These conditions as regards the domestic supply, or the domestic and other supply conjointly, will be found explained by an example showing the working of the proposed new Rates.

In respect to water supplied for purposes not domestic, such supply will be afforded by the Council by measurement wherever the consumption is likely to exceed 5000 gallons per quarter. The Council may supply any consumer with water upon special agreement, until such times as a meter can be attached for determining the quantity used, or if the quantity of water required is likely to be less than that stated; but the Council shall have power to attach a meter wherever it may consider necessary, and the minimum quantity charged for shall be 5000 gallons per quarter.

The charge for water so supplied shall not exceed Two Shillings per 1000 gallons, excepting that supplied to the Shipping, which will remain as at present,—viz., 2s. per tun of 250 gallons.

The price charged is not likely at any time to reach the maximum as above given—that proposed for ordinary consumers being at the rate of 1s. 6d. per 1000 gallons; and for Breweries or other manufacturing purposes, requiring a large supply, in order to facilitate these industries, 1s. per 1000 gallons.

The Council will supply and attach the meters to be used, charging a rent to the consumer for the same: the Director of Water Works or other Officer to have power to enter premises, either for affixing or inspecting such meters.

Further particulars on this subject will be found in the Bye-laws, as also the Regulations as to the fittings to be used, the competency of plumbers to be employed for attaching or repairs of private service-pipes, and various other matters.

Sections 52 to 59, 24th Vict. No. 9, to be repealed, and others introduced based upon the following scale of rates:—

The Rates for the supply of water shall not exceed the following:-

On every house or tenement of the assessed annual value of £10 and under, 18s. per annum.

On every house or tenement above the assessed annual value of £10, 1s. 9d. for each £ sterling on the amount of the annual valuation up to £40 inclusive, and 1s. 3d. in the £ on the amount of the valuation in excess of £40.

Tenements built and used for storage or other purposes not domestic, of the assessed annual value of £12 and under, shall be subject to a rate not exceeding 8s. per annum; and on tenements thus used above the assessed annual value of £12, a rate not exceeding 8d in the £ on the amount of valuation up to £30; 4d in the £ on the amount of valuation in excess of £30 up to £100; and 2d in the £ on the amount of such valuation above £100.

Upon any house or tenement built or used as a dwelling which may remain unoccupied for not less time than three clear months, from one quarter-day to another of the financial year, one-fourth of the ordinary domestic rate shall be payable by the owner of such tenement, instead of the full domestic rate, for such time as the same may remain unoccupied.

And upon unoccupied stores or other buildings of that description, not used as dwellings, a rate of one-half of that levied upon such buildings shall be paid in like manner by the owners of the same during such time that they remain unoccupied.

The proposed scale of Water Rates for the domestic supply, &c. will give an increase upon the present revenue of about £2000. It is probable also that the meterage system, intended to be applied principally for purposes not domestic, and for large consumers, will further add to the revenue. It is at the least far

to be preferred to the haphazard manner at present adopted, being perfectly equitable and calculated to prevent undue waste, at the same time the price of water will be so arranged as to afford a liberal supply being used for breweries, manufactories, &c.

It is intended to abolish the public rate, making one rate only for domestic purposes, and having a distinct rate for buildings used as warehouses, stores, &c.,—a large reduction in both classes being made for unoccupied houses, stores, &c. It will be apparent that unoccupied houses should not be entirely exempted, protection against fire being afforded whether occupied or not, besides the fair proportion of the cost and working expenses constantly going on: it will be sufficient to state that a far more liberal reduction has been made than is usual under such circumstances.

It is contemplated to allow garden-taps and other uses to be made of the water in addition to the domestic supply to those consumers when drawing the whole of their supply through meters; the minimum rate of payment being that upon the assessment, so that they will have privileges proportionate to the rates paid. If, however, the quantity used exceed that allowed according to the price per 1000 gallons charged, say at 1s. 6d. per 1000 gallons, then the extra quantity at that price must be paid for in addition to rates as shown in the Tables.

EXAMPLE.

The proposed new Water Rate for domestic purposes upon a house assessed at £50 per annum is £3 10s. per annum, or 17s. 6d. per quarter. This will be the minimum charge whether the supply be drawn through a meter or not; but if a meter be affixed, and the quantity consumed does not exceed that allowed at the rate per 1000 gallons proposed, say at 1s. 6d., no additional payment will be demanded although the water may have been used for gardens or any other purpose; but, as already stated, any used in excess must be paid for at the same rate. The rates as above will allow of a daily consumption of 128 gallons.

TABLES.

I.—SHOWING the present Water Rates for Domestic and other purposes, and the Revenue derived therefrom; also of proposed Rates and the Revenue to be derived.

PRESENT RATE (1875.)—For Domestic purposes $1\frac{1}{2}d$. in the £, being 10d. in the £ upon the assessed annual value as domestic rate, and $2\frac{1}{2}d$. in the £ as a public rate.

PROPOSED RATE.—On every house or tenement of the assessed annual value of £6 and under, a rate of 10s. per annum.

On every house or tenement of the assessed annual value above £6 and not exceeding £10, 15s. per annum.

On tenements assessed above $\{1s. 6d. \text{ in the } \pounds \text{ on first } \pounds 40, \text{ and } \pounds 10 \text{ per annum } \{1s. \text{ in the } \pounds \text{ on the amount above } \pounds 40.$

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Number of occupied Tenements.	Annual As-sessed Value.	Present Rate.	Proposed Rate.	Amount realised by present Rate	Amount to be derived from proposed Rate.	Number of occupied Tenements.	Annual As- sessed Value.	Present Rate.	Proposed Rate.	Amount realised by present Rate.	Amount to be derived from proposed Rate,
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II.—DOMESTIC Water Supply, Suburbs of Hobart Town

Number of Tenements.	Annual Value.	Present Rate.	Proposed Rate.	Amount realised by present Rate.	Amount to be derived from pro- posed Rate.	Number of Tenements.	Annual Value.	Present Rate.	Proposed Rate.	Amount realised by present Rate,	Amount to be derived from pro- posed Rate:
	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
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18	13	$0\ 13\ 6\frac{1}{2}$	0 19 6	12 3 9	17 11 0	- 13	50	2 12 1	3 10 0	33 17 1	45 10 0
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						376	Total	l Domestic,	Suburbs	£598 12 31	£797 15 6
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£ s d.

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.. 797 15 6 Domestic—Hobart Town..... Suburban Total Domestic £5044 2 3

Increase upon present Revenue

III.—WATER Rate for Stores or other Buildings not used as Residences. The proposed rate on Stores, &c. is—Annual assessed value of £12 per annum, 6s. per annum 6dd. in the £ on annual value up to £30. Above £12 $\begin{cases} 6d. \text{ in the £ on amount above £30 up to £100.} \\ 3d. \text{ in the £ on amount above £100.} \end{cases}$

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Number.	Annual Value.	Present Rate.	Proposed Rate.	Amount realised by present Rate.	Amount to be derived from pro- posed Rate.	Number.	Annual Value.	Present Rate.	Proposed Rate.	Amount realised by present Rate.	Amount to be derived from pro- posed Rate.
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Increase.... £78 15 5

RECAPITULATION.

	Amount realised.								
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	£6220 6 8	81	£8223 3 4½		£2002 16. 8				

ALFRED RANDALL, Director of Water Works.

August, 1875.

Town Hall, Hobart Town, 4th October, 1876.

SIR

In supplementing the evidence I had the honor of giving this morning, I beg to be allowed to draw attention to the consumption of water in Hobart Town, as compared with what is considered an average full supply elsewhere, in order to show the urgent necessity of the alterations proposed to be effected by the adoption of the meterage system for special supplies, and wherever sufficient reason is found to exist, or by desire of the consumer, for domestic, or for "partly domestic and other than domestic purposes."

I have on many occasions measured the quantity of water passing through the receiving house above the storage reservoir, and have found that the quantity in the driest season has exceeded what is generally considered an abundant supply for a population of more than double that of Hobart Town.

An extract from my notes of the 24th March last shows that the quantities received from the various sources were as follows:—

This alone gives an average of 43.6 gallons per head for a population of 20,000, and allowing for that from the Cascades (not measured), the total quantity could not have been less than 60 gallons per head; and yet with this large quantity it was found to be barely sufficient for a constant supply, although not allowing it to be used for street watering.

On the 5th ult. the water was being drawn from the distributing reservoir between the hours of 2 and 3 p.m. (not the time when the greatest quantity is consumed) at the rate of 1,318,700 gallons per diem, or nearly 66 gallons per head for a population of 20,000; to this quantity should be added that drawn from the main before entering the distributing reservoir, which will probably make the total consumed for that day about 70 gallons per head.

The average consumption of water is usually considered equal to 20 gallons per head per diem; allowing, however, for a more liberal use for domestic, manufacturing, sanitary and other purposes, it should not exceed 30 gallons.

Each year shows an increased demand upon the supply without a proportionate increase in the revenue. The present extravagant demand is equal to at least a full supply for a population double that of Hobart Town; therefore nothing further is requisite to show the necessity of a check being applied to the undue consumption of water, and for which purpose, as also to arrive at a fair charge for the quantity used, meters are elsewhere generally attached to the service pipes of large consumers.

By supplying manufacturers at a cheap rate, which it is proposed to do, no injury will be done to trade by the apparent restriction in the use of water, but on the contrary every one will feel that he is only called upon to pay for the quantity consumed.

Meters will not necessarily be attached to the service pipes for the ordinary domestic supply, but in proportion to the rates paid, based upon the assessed annual valuation, so will a proportionate quantity of water (according to the price charged per 1000 gallons) be allowed; therefore if the consumer, in addition to the use of water for domestic purposes, requires it also for the washing of carriages, watering gardens, &c., it will be necessary in such case to apply a meter, and if economy is observed and the quantity used does not exceed that allowed according to the amount of rates paid, no additional demand for payment will be made. At the moderate charge proposed, 1s. 6d. per 1000 gallons, a liberal quantity will be allowed; if that be exceeded, the excess thus consumed will also be charged for at 1s. 6d. per 1000 gallons.

This principle is adopted both in Melbourne and Adelaide, and I am informed with very beneficial results.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED RANDALL, Director of Waterworks.

The Chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Assembly upon the proposed Hobart Town Water Act, 1876.