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1876.

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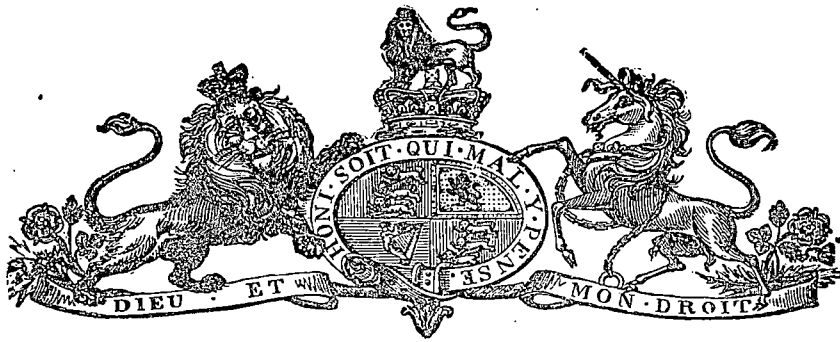
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

CASCADE GAOL BUILDINGS.

MINUTE BY SIR JAMES MILNE WILSON, M.L.C.

*Presented to the Honorable Mr. Moore, Minister of Lands and Works, 13th
March, 1876.*

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands and Works, and ordered by the
House to be printed, September 19, 1876.



MINUTE by SIR J. M. WILSON of his Views and Reasons against the Expenditure of the Parliamentary Vote of £5000 in the erection at the Cascades of Buildings for Gaol Accommodation.

THE Prisoners at the several Establishments in the Colony number as follows:—

	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>
Gaol and House of Correction, Campbell-street.....	127	..
Port Arthur.....	77	..
Cascades, Invalids under sentence.....	20	60
Launceston.....	62	25
TOTAL.....	286	85

These numbers are substantially correct, but accurate returns could be furnished by the Sheriff.

The 127 prisoners in Campbell-street include 50 men tried at inferior Courts, their sentences ranging from 7 days up to 2 years.

There were 76 persons convicted at the Supreme Court, Hobart Town, in 1873 and 1874—nearly two-thirds of whom were “old convicts.” Last year, 1875, there were only 24 convictions, thus showing that crime is decreasing.

In two years hence the number of male prisoners, from obvious causes, will in all probability be reduced to 200, followed with gradual diminution.

Under this aspect of the limited number of prisoners, the erection at the Cascades of Gaol accommodation for males involves a useless and unnecessary expenditure of money, and would entail the cost of a duplicate staff of officers essential to the proper control and discipline of an *additional Gaol* for Males, and which if carried out will in a few years, most likely, bring up the annual expense per man to at least £40. Such a result would speedily lead to the abandonment of the projected costly buildings.

There are other substantial reasons for postponing the outlay of money in patching up old and unsightly buildings, unsuitable for any other uses than those to which they are now appropriated.

Ample accommodation is to be found in the Gaol and House of Correction, Campbell-street, for upwards of 300 prisoners; and with an outlay of from £1000 to £1500 it could be made *thoroughly secure and suitable for their proper classification*, with workshops complete. The annual expense per head would be about £22 exclusive of credit for labour.

The expense for supervision of 300 men, such as they are, *chiefly pauper criminals*, would not be much in excess of the cost of *one-third* of that number: this alone is a cogent reason in favour of *one Gaol*.

After deducting from the *total* of 286 prisoners the pauper criminals at Cascades, and also the short-sentenced men at Launceston, who probably would be detained in the Northern Capital for gang labour, there would *not remain* 250 men to occupy the Gaol in Campbell-street. But under any circumstances, with the limited outlay indicated, *more* than sufficient convenience would be available in the principal Gaol if all the male prisoners in the Island were concentrated there. Thus a *secure, effective, and economical* mode of Penal Discipline could be maintained.

J. M. WILSON.
13 March, 1876.

ADDENDUM.

IN accordance with the provisions of the Prison Act of 1868, 38 prisoners out of the 77 at Port Arthur will have been released before the *close* of 1879. Death and other casualties may further decrease the residue.

J. M. WILSON.