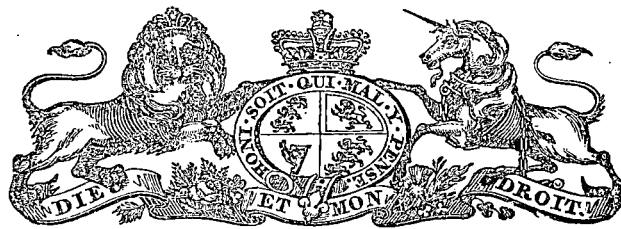


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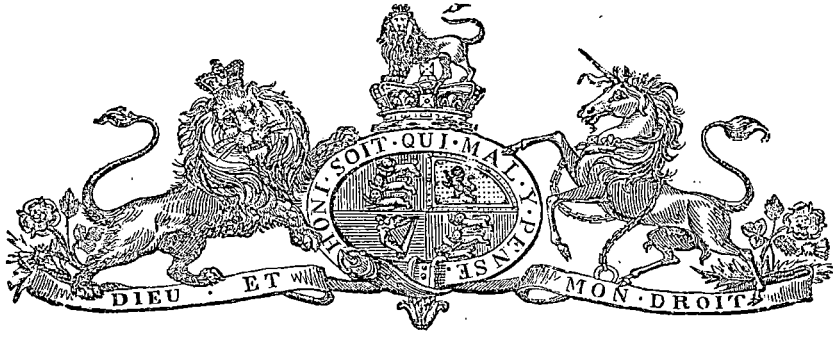
1861.

T A S M A N I A.

GENERAL HOSPITAL.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Innes, and ordered by the House to be printed,
20 August, 1861.



General Hospital, 14th August, 1861.

Sir,

I HAVE the honor to forward to you the following Extracts from Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Management, held on the 2nd August instant :—

“Draft of Annual Report read.”

“Resolved that it be received and adopted.”

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

GEORGE TURNLEY, *Secretary.*

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

REPORT of the Board of Management of the General Hospital.

THE Board of Management of the General Hospital, was appointed in January 1859; and consisted of Twelve Members: Mr. Heuty was elected Chairman. This Hospital had been previously under the control and management of the Imperial Government, which charged this Colony with the cost of Colonial patients and invalids, according to the scale of diet and medical comforts adopted; including the cost of repairs to buildings, which was distributed over the whole number of patients and invalids. The Board was appointed in obedience to the Resolutions of Parliament, which decided on reversing the system then in existence, and of exercising control over these and other kindred Establishments, charging the Imperial Government with the cost of their patients and invalids in the same way as had been the practice of the Imperial Government towards the Colony. The necessity of this movement was the more apparent from the preponderating number of patients that were being every year transferred to the Colony, and the consequent increasing charges imposed upon it, under an arrangement sanctioned by the Secretary of State, without any regard to Colonial interests; whereby any man who had become free (no matter how long, or how many times, he had committed crime) became chargeable upon Colonial funds for the rest of his life; and as if to consummate this injustice, this process of exhaustion was further precipitated, by “Regulations” facilitating the freedom of such men.

An erroneous notion has prevailed, (which it is necessary to correct) with respect to the Establishment being supported altogether from Imperial funds. By the arrangement above mentioned, the principal charge was gradually but steadily devolving upon the Colony; and it is only right that the Colony, which has to pay so great a proportion of the whole charge, should exercise the chief control; and that such Institutions as an Hospital should be thrown open, and every question affecting them be thoroughly ventilated, as has been done in the Mother Country, for the benefit of the present and future generations and for the advancement of science.

The Board has no desire to animadvert upon departmental control; it may be good, or it may be bad, but the late experience of the Crimean War has shown that it may be defective, and needs the quickening influence of public opinion. A Medical Department is not one over which a Government can exercise a supervision, it stands apart, and can be responsible only to itself. In such cases it seems the safest course to invite the co-operation of the public, and to conduct Hospitals and Charitable Institutions upon the principle generally recognized as the soundest and most beneficial in the mother country. The only objection that could be urged against the adoption of this course would be, perhaps, the prevalence of public apathy, or the tendency of such bodies to dispute and disagree. These two objections neutralize each other, Happily no such apathy exists in this Colony, and the conflict of opinion after all, is more salutary than stagnant silence.

After entering upon their duties the Board proceeded to draw up Rules for the conduct of the Hospital, and in accordance with these the House Surgeon and other Officers formerly connected with the Hospital were elected, with the exception of the Purveyor, who resigned; the duties of this office were amalgamated with those of the Superintendent, Mr. Seagar, and have been satisfactorily performed. A Weekly Committee and a Finance Committee were likewise appointed.

Candidates were invited for the office of Honorary Medical Officers, and Four gentlemen were duly elected; namely—Drs. Crowther, Smart, Bright, and Doughty. The Board has derived much valuable information and assistance from these gentlemen, in suggestions for the improvement of the Wards, and the general management of the Hospital. They have been unremitting in their attendance, and the result has been aided by the publicity given to the proceedings of the Board, and the knowledge of the fact of the Hospital being thrown open to public inspection, that a general sense of confidence has been diffused throughout the community in its efficiency as a Charitable Institution. It was previously regarded, not so much in the light of a remedial, as a penal institution under convict control and as the Colony was fast emerging from associations connected with the past system; it seemed desirable to teach the Colonists to look to it as a Colonial Hospital for the benefit of their fellow men, and gradually to raise it to the character of an Educational Institute, with all the appliances and all the improvements that modern science, which has made such extraordinarily rapid advances in this direction, might suggest.

Besides the Hospital, the Brickfields Invalid Depôt was placed under the charge of the Board. This establishment which is situated at some distance from the Hospital, at the top of Argyle-street, consists of male invalids. It was deemed desirable to place this depôt under the charge of a Committee of the Board, and to appoint a Superintendent to act in conjunction with that Committee under the Board; such Committee to be subject to annual election. It was further contemplated to enlarge this Building with the view of accommodating an additional number of Invalids, so as to relieve the Hospital altogether from a class of decrepit men who ranked in it as patients, and to confine it to its legitimate function, as an Hospital for the treatment of acute and active disease. Other considerations of an economical character likewise dictated this course. By separating the two establishments and keeping the items of expenditure distinct, the cost of maintaining patients and invalids, instead of being confounded together could be at once distinguished and ascertained, and it would be understood in what particulars the charge for patients exceeded that of invalids.

The Board did not contemplate the possibility of equalizing the rate for both; it must be obvious that an Hospital, for the reception and treatment of patients in every form of suffering, and acute disease, would require a greater expenditure for supervision and medical comforts, than would an Establishment for Invalids. But the promiscuous mingling together of patients and invalids, could not but be productive of confusion, and the Board regarded it as anomalous, and an abuse in fact, of the purposes of an Hospital. The Board would have been glad to have relieved the Hospital likewise of female invalids, but these being now kept distinct from the female patients, for whom, an admirable Hospital, replete with every convenience, has been constructed on the opposite side of the street, the presence of the female invalids will not materially interfere with the arrangements for the conduct and management of the Hospital.

Three separate Reports were received at an early period by the Board:—

1st. A Report upon the Medical requirements of the Hospital, drawn up by the Honorary Medical Officers.

2nd. A Report upon the Building improvements, necessary to be effected in the Hospital, by a Committee of the Board.

3rd. A Report upon the Brickfields Depôt, drawn up likewise, by a Committee of the Board.

These reports contemplated extensive alterations; but as no sum was specifically voted by Parliament towards this purpose, the Board had to content itself with making a few minor improvements, which, nevertheless, served to relieve the Hospital during the prevalence of a severe epidemic, which occurred in the course of the year, and which caused a great pressure upon the resources of the Hospital. In that period it is well known, that disease, as well as distress, prevailed to an alarming degree amongst the lower classes of Hobart Town, and numbers were brought to the Hospital in a dying state; but, although additional charges had to be incurred, the Board has the satisfaction of feeling that every thing which human aid, or human skill could devise with the means at their disposal, has been done, under the advice of the Medical Officers, to alleviate this misery.

During the prevalence of the Influenza, the great majority of the patients were brought into the Hospital in an exhausted and sinking state; which occasioned a greater expense than ordinary; a more generous diet, and the use of stimulants being essentially necessary in the treatment of such cases. The record appended by the House Surgeon will show, that many died almost immediately after their admission. It is now an admitted fact, which modern experience has forced upon the reluctant adherents of routine system, that a generous treatment is the best that can be resorted to, even upon economical grounds in cases of epidemic, and that where it is adopted, patients are apt sooner to recover, and sooner to be discharged than they are likely to be when the system is weakened; which not unfrequently ends in the patient contracting malingering and chronic disease, if he does not at once sink from prostration. It must also be borne in mind, that in this climate, however fine and exhilarating it undoubtedly is, in cases of attack from Influenza, the system will soon sink unless it is sustained.

It has not been in the power of the Board, owing to the inadequacy of the kitchen and its defective cooking apparatus, to vary the diet of the patients as they could wish; but the new arrangements will afford an opportunity for introducing improvements into this important branch of Hospital treatment, and also of effecting a considerable reduction in the expense. During the period referred to, besides the inmates of the Hospital and the Brickfields, a great number of poor out-patients were treated, and the Dispensary made up no less than Four thousand five hundred and ninety-one prescriptions.

The Board upon personal inspection found the Hospital itself to contain the most heterogeneous elements:—

- 1st. Male patients.
- 2nd. Male invalids who ranked as patients.
- 3rd. Female patients in the building at the back.
- 4th. Female invalids likewise ranking as patients.
- 5th. Women and children of tender years.

The Board applied itself at once to relieve, as far as they could, this state of things, which was the more onerous, as they had to contend with an exceptional period of disease.

By alterations at the Brickfields accommodation was gradually contrived for fifty additional invalids, who were drafted thence from the Hospital; the number of invalids when the Board took charge being eighty, and one hundred and thirty at the close of the year.

They made a request to the Comptroller-General, which was promptly acceded to, to accommodate a number of female invalids at the Female Factory until arrangements could be provided for them at the Hospital. Temporary accommodation was thus obtained for thirty female invalids.

It was suggested that the building opposite the Hospital, and occupied as the Comptroller-General's Office and Sheriff's Department might be made to answer the purposes of a Female Hospital, having formerly been used as such, and a Committee of the Board having examined it by the permission of the Comptroller-General, reported upon its eligibility for the purpose. Quarters, however, having to be provided for the Comptroller, a considerable delay ensued, and it was not until after the meeting of Parliament that the Board was in a position to effect any very substantial improvements.

Parliament had in the meantime voted £4000 towards the building requirements of the Hospital.

The arrangement made by the Government, with respect to this Grant is, that the Board decide on the improvements and the Public Works Department carry them out.

The Board again reviewed their original Report; and in conjunction with the Director of Public Works, decided on converting the Comptroller's Office into a Female Hospital for sick patients; and reconstructing the old Ward, hitherto used as such, so as to form a receptacle for Female Invalids.

It was also decided to build a new kitchen with modern kitchen range; to enclose the verandah situated at the back of the more modern ward, with a glass window frame opening in all compartments by which the effect of the sea breeze (blowing in often very coldly, and very violently, and affecting the patients with lung diseases) would be mitigated, and a large space be thus rendered available as a dining hall; the capacious ward hitherto used as such, being thus made free for the accommodation of Patients.

The Board is indebted for this as well as many other valuable suggestions to Dr. Smart who has been indefatigable in seeing to the Hospital arrangements being carried out.

It was also determined to open up and re-organize the interior of the old Female Hospital, which the Board had no hesitation in condemning as unsuited to the purposes for which it was used; being positively revolting to the stranger, crowded as it was with sick patients in small and ill-ventilated rooms; with invalids and with women and young children who were represented to the Board as being of too tender years to be admitted into the Orphan School.

Besides these improvements, others relating to the Officers Quarters; the enlargement of the Dispensary; the construction of bath-rooms; the re-construction of water-closets; the laying on of gas and of water; the new shingling of the Hospital; and other sanitary measures were proposed

and have been completed or are in course of completion. In all these arrangements the Board has derived much valuable assistance from the Director of Public Works, and when they are all completed the Board confidently hopes that the General Hospital will present a creditable appearance in every respect, such as every Public Hospital ought to do, with all the appliances of modern science; thoroughly clean; thoroughly well ventilated, and provided with a varying scale of diet, and a copious supply of pure water.

The Board has much satisfaction in being able to state that the Female Hospital is now complete, and is in every respect a most creditable institution, which will bear a favourable comparison with any other of a kindred character elsewhere. It is capable of accommodating 50 patients, has good airy well-ventilated wards, good kitchen with separate bath-room, with quarters for the Matron (who has also charge of the female invalids), and possesses besides separate rooms, well fitted up, for paying patients quite distinct from the other parts of the building.

The mode of ventilation in several of the Wards suggested by Dr. Stuart, by admitting air under the floor from an external valve, and allowing it to enter the room through perforated zinc plates, forming three sides of the small wooden platforms on which the beds of the patients are placed, is found to act admirably; there being in each room in the chimney, two of Arnott's patent ventilators to allow the escape of the air, which now enters the room gradually, and without any rush, as was anticipated, but, diffuses itself over the whole chamber with an equable flow, and without any disagreeable current.

It is under the control of the House Surgeon, who resides in the immediate neighbourhood. Since it has been opened it has been visited by several ladies, and the Board has especially to thank Mrs. Nixon, Lady Young, and other ladies, for the kind solicitude evinced by them in visiting the sick patients in the wards.

The Superintendent of the Male Hospital, Mr. Seagar, resides within it, as does also the Dispenser. The former keeps the books and stores of the Establishment, subject to the inspection of the Finance Committee.

Dr. Turnley, the House Surgeon, resides in the immediate vicinity; and to him is entrusted under the Board, the control of the Officers of the Establishment, at the Colonial Hospital.

The Male Invalid Depôt at the Brickfields, is under the charge of Mr. Witherington as Superintendent; subject to the Committee of the Board. He has charge of the stores and books of the Establishment, and renders his accounts every month. Dr. Turnley visits the Establishment as Medical Officer, twice a week. As the accounts of the two Establishments are kept quite distinct, it might be desirable that a portion of the salary of the House Surgeon, equivalent to the duty performed, should be charged against the Brickfields Establishment.

It was decided at the Brickfields, to build a cottage for the Superintendent, and two additional wards capable of accommodating upwards of one hundred and thirty invalids;—the Board being led to believe from time to time, that such accommodation would be required in order to relieve the Hospital of this class of patients. The cottage has been built; and one of the wards is completed. Both are substantial and valuable improvements: the ward being capable of holding 60 invalids. It is spacious and airy, and the roof is sustained by iron girders.

When the former Quarters of the Superintendent are altered, as proposed by the Director of Public Works into a provision and clothing Store, and the buildings at present used as such, (which are attached to the other wards), are converted into a ward; ample accommodation will be provided for eighty invalids. The cost of making this alteration will not exceed One hundred Pounds. Under these circumstances, it will not be necessary to proceed with the building of a second ward as originally contemplated, as there is ample room, even at present, for forty more invalids; and, it is to be hoped that this class, although constantly growing larger, is not destined to increase much beyond the existing number.

The previous measures adopted by the Board to contrive room for the relief of the Hospital have not at all tended to overcrowd the Depôt. These were the substitution of smaller iron bedsteads, and the conversion of the office quarters into a ward. The ventilation is everywhere good, the improvements suggested by the Board for the purpose, being the construction of a double set of windows instead of one, which was the necessary consequence of its having been formerly a penal Institution. The Board does not consider that a similar space is required for the accommodation of infirm old men as for patients with active bodily disease, the former require as much warmth as possible, consistently with a free current of air passing through their apartments; the active patient requires a cool temperature, his body being often in a state of fever, and his breath infecting the air around him. For the same reason, and because constant care and attendance are not required as in sick wards, the amount of light formerly used at the Brickfields in the wards at night has been diminished.

Most of the other improvements originally suggested in the Report have been carried out. A verandah has been erected with seats on two sides of the Quadrangle, and is found the greatest comfort to the invalids; the open shed in the centre of the Quadrangle has been boarded and converted into a comfortable sitting and smoking room while the room originally used as such has been converted into a wash-house and bath-room. The kitchen has been improved, also the hospital kitchen, a new clothes store and reception room have been added, and many other minor improvements have been effected, amongst which may be mentioned the introduction of water from a well in the upper part of the ground by means of iron piping into the wash-house. The establishment is in every respect most creditably clean and in efficient order. Every possible precaution is adopted to prevent abuse or the possibility of its being converted into a receptacle for the idle and dissolute. While a good and wholesome diet is provided care is taken that medical comforts are only given where actually needed and recommended by Dr. Turnley, and in consequence of permission to visit the town being frequently abused, a prohibition has been put to passes for such purpose, except where good and sufficient reason is shown to grant them. If it were not for the observation of some such rules, or if a too credulous and confiding laxity were allowed to prevail, the Dépôt would be inundated with inmates, and no building that the Board could raise would suffice to contain them. But while thus guarding against abuse the Board thinks it right to add that they are provided with every comfort, well housed, well clothed, with an abundance of good diet; that they have also religious instruction provided for them, and that they are frequently visited by benevolent individuals, amongst whom may be mentioned, particularly the Under-Sheriff, Mr. Crouch.

At the Hospital, the utmost circumspection is likewise used, in the admission of this class of patients. At the outset, and when an alarming epidemic and great distress prevailed, the Board felt its first duty to be, to afford as wide relief as possible, and that such a period was not one for the passing and enforcement of rigid rules; but, that it was better to incur the risk even of imposition in a few instances, than to close the gates of relief, against a multitude of deserving though indigent persons. The Board however, has not been unmindful of the trust confided to them by Parliament; they have studied to act with economy, at the same time that they have sought to improve the efficiency of the Institutions placed under their charge, and while they look forward to a diminution of expenditure, they desire to point out, that that expenditure was necessarily augmented the first year of their office, owing to causes over which they had no control. They may mention, for example, that although the number of invalids at the Brickfields has now nearly doubled, there has been a reduction of expenditure, in management and superintendence, equivalent to Four hundred Pounds a year.

Appended, is a list of the cases treated during the year 1860, in the Hospital, prepared by the Medical Officer in charge. The Board has the satisfaction of recording that their efforts in carrying into effect the new system, have been generally aided by the Officers in charge, and that the House Surgeon has co-operated with the Honorary Medical Officers, and they trust the same spirit will continue to animate them, and indeed every Member of the Board, in the discharge of a duty which, they owe no less to science than to humanity, in seeking to place the Hospital and the Institutions connected with it, upon a firm, a lasting, and a popular basis. The Members of the Board have cheerfully given their attendance upon all occasions, and although they might have something to complain of in respect to the somewhat anomalous and unsatisfactory position they were placed in, between Parliament on the one hand and the Government on the other, their powers and responsibilities being undefined, they have nevertheless, persevered in their endeavours to achieve a public good, keeping this alone steadily in view, and disregarding all obstacles which in any way tended to impede the attainment of this object.

The Board has also much satisfaction in annexing a very valuable Report prepared by Dr. Smart, on the past and present state of the Hospital, bringing it up to the present date, and enumerating the improvements still remaining to be effected, in order to complete the Hospital in all departments. For this purpose an additional sum will have to be voted by Parliament, which the Board after much consideration and estimate of absolute requirements, and having due regard to the financial exigencies of the Colony, has decided upon restricting to £1000, leaving the sum of £150 to be expended upon the Brickfields. For these requirements the Director of Public Works, who has given his valuable assistance to the Building Committee in determining their limit and estimating their cost, has furnished the adjoined outline and estimate.

WM. HENTY,	STEPHEN SHEEHY,	A. KISSOCK,
R. OFFICER,	HENRY COOK,	G. HUTTON,
ALFRED KENNERLEY,	JOHN REGAN,	W. BENSON.
T. MACDOWELL,	D. LEWIS,	
C. M. MAXWELL,	GEORGE SALIER,	

A P P E N D I X.

DURING the past year there were admitted into Hospital 1274 patients, of whom 913 were Males, and 361 Females, of the latter 334 were Patients, and 27 were Invalids.

There were remaining under treatment at the date of the last Annual Return 210 Patients, so that the total number treated during the year ending 31st December, 1860, was 1484; of these 1141 were discharged, 158 died, and 185 remained under treatment.

During the past year 11 persons died on the day of admission, 12 on the day after, 7 on the second day, 3 on the third, 7 on the fourth, 7 on the fifth, and 5 on the sixth.

Of the Patients admitted, there were 59 self-supporting, and 221 paid for from Imperial Funds; also 994 were Colonial Paupers.

Of the 185 who remained under treatment at the close of the year, there were three self-supporting, 14 supported by Convict Funds, and 168 were Colonial Paupers.

The mortality at the Brickfields was twelve only during the year.