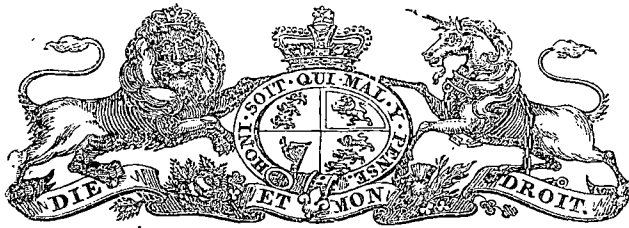


(No. 75.)



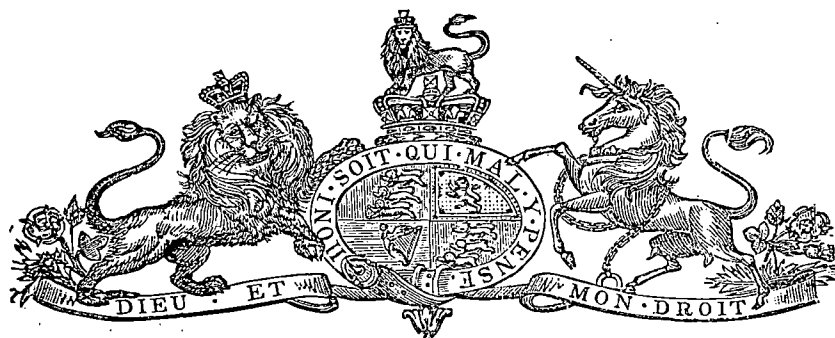
1893.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

HOBART SLAUGHTER-HOUSE :

REPORT BY THE ENGINEERING INSPECTOR OF THE
CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

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



HOBART SLAUGHTER-HOUSE.

To the Honourable the President and Members of the Central Board of Health.

GENTLEMEN,

PURSUANT to your instructions I have visited and inspected the Hobart Slaughter-house and its neighbourhood, and have the honour to report to you thereupon as follows :—

1. The slaughter-house and yards occupy about $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres of land fronting to the foreshore of the River Derwent a little to the north-eastward of the mouth of the Hobart Rivulet. This land was vested in the Corporation of the City by the *Hobart Town Slaughter Act* passed in 1858. Some of the buildings, probably those in masonry, were erected before that date, and others have since been added from time to time. The surface of the ground has naturally a slight slope towards the Derwent, and its height varies from about 2 feet above high water at the south-east side to about 8 feet above that level at the entrance gates on the north-west side. The annexed plan shows the distribution and arrangement of the various buildings and yards.

2. The public access to the yard is by a macadamized road from Lower Macquarie-street beyond the rivulet. On entering the establishment the cattle reception yards and sale-shed, numbered 3 and 4 on plan, are immediately in front and to the left hand. These are roughly paved with rubble stones. The animals stay but a short time in this department, whence they are drafted off into the separate pens and sheds of the various butchers. These sheds and pens, numbered 5 on plan, are on the south-east side of the ground, and are also paved with rough rubble stones. The sheep-pens, numbered 20 on plan, are to the immediate right of the entrance gate, and their floors are altogether unpaved. The piggeries, marked 15 on plan, are paved with rough rubble. Those numbered 22 on plan are built for keeping the pigs to be fed on offal, and are the best in the establishment, the yards being properly asphalted, and consequently easily kept clean. The piggeries marked 18 on plan have been made by the butchers holding the adjoining slaughter-houses, and, I understand, without permission of the authorities. They are built and floored with rough slabs of wood; it is quite impossible to keep them clean; and it is in them that most of the offal feeding is really done. There is a stable in connection with the establishment at the place marked 16 on plan. The buildings and yards described thus far are for the reception, sale, and feeding of animals: those about to be described are the slaughter-yards proper.

3. The pens for cattle and sheep intended for immediate slaughter are marked 8, 17, and 19 on the plan, and are in proximity to the slaughter-houses. They are unpaved. The slaughtering piggeries, marked 11, are asphalted. The pigs are slaughtered in the passage between the styes, the blood running off by surface drains. The cleaning and dressing is then done in the building, partly of masonry and partly of wood, marked 7 on the plan. The floor of this building is asphalted, but the sides are of rough pervious material. The sheep and cattle are slaughtered in the buildings numbered 12 and 13 on the plan. Each compartment of those let to butchers serves for slaughtering, hanging, and dressing. The slaughtering places are paved with flags, and the other portions asphalted. The blood runs into little cesspits built of rough masonry, whence it is baled out before the washing up is done. The walls between the compartments are formed of wood that cannot be properly cleansed. Though a by-law provides for the whitewashing of these slaughter-pens every three months, most of them looked as if as many years had elapsed since the last whitewashing. The by-law relative to the "clearing up" of the slaughter-pens appears to be carried out only as far as the floors are concerned, the nature of the walls making it, as above-mentioned, impracticable to properly cleanse them. Such part of the garbage and offal, &c. not thrown immediately to the pigs in the styes marked 18 is carried to the midden pits marked 10 on

the plan, where the dung and refuse from the rest of the establishment is also thrown. These middens are said to be emptied every day, but from what I saw it is evident that this emptying is very incompletely done, and a considerable residue left, as the matter at the bottom of the pit was by no means fresh. This emptying is done by a contractor, who conveys the dung and offal in carts to his farm and orchard at Glenorchy. The drainage of the establishment is at present effected by the surface gutters shewn on the plan, which convey into the river the sewage, principally consisting of the water used in washing up, mixed with the blood and other matters to be removed. This sewage has proved to be so noisome on the foreshore that the complete reconstruction of the drainage is under consideration.

4. Adjoining the public slaughter-house there is a boiling-down house, numbered 14 on the plan, constructed of wood, and having a brick chimney rising but little over the roof.

5. There is a small wooden building, numbered 21 on plan, which is used as a slaughter-house for the stray dogs, healthy or diseased, brought in by the police.

6. The establishment is under the management of a Superintendent, who is the Inspector of Stock, and who has under him an assistant inspector, a clerk, a carpenter, and three labourers. Considering the extent and nature of the buildings and yards, and the limited number of the staff, the places cleansed by them were fairly well-kept whenever I saw them in dry weather. In wet weather it is quite impossible for such a staff to cope with the work spread over some two acres of ground with but very little proper pavement. Of the portions of the establishment that the butchers have to keep clean, the most offensive features were the pig-styes, numbered 18 on plan, and already referred to. The rough slab paving permits the filth to soak into the soil, and at the same time effectually prevents any proper cleansing. They stand in close proximity to the pens, in which the slaughtered meat is kept for periods varying from 12 to 48 hours. Another objectionable feature is the manner in which the dung and offal are disposed of. One by-law provides that "all offal" is to be removed by the butchers by eight o'clock in the morning after the slaughtering has taken place; yet much of the offal is, as we have seen, not removed, but given to pigs kept in the yards. Another by-law enacts that "all manure and filth of every description" is to be placed in the manure tanks (middens), and under this by-law much of the offal is also allowed to be put into the middens.

7. Speaking generally, the establishment is neither properly constructed nor properly arranged for a public slaughter-house, and there are many details of its management that need amendment.

8. As regards construction, if the slaughter-yards are to be kept in their present place the following are the principal details to be attended to:—The whole of the roadways, yards (including the sale and feeding-yards if they are to be continued at the slaughter yards), and buildings should be paved with a hard and impermeable material such as asphalt, laid to proper falls so as to be readily drained and cleansed.

The covered pens for the animals about to be slaughtered should be well separated from the slaughter-houses, the drainage from which should not run through them.

The slaughter-houses should have their walls lined for six feet from the floor with smooth impermeable material.

The drainage should be so arranged in the slaughter-houses as that the blood should be received in moveable receptacles with air-tight lids.

The meat-hanging and cooling rooms should be arranged so that, while separate from the slaughter-house, the carcasses could be swung into them; they should be, while protected from direct sunshine, as open as possible, with every opening protected by fly-proof wire gauze or other such material.

The drainage should be carried out beyond the new jetty.

A properly fitted destructor, with dessicators, &c. should be built, as far off from the slaughter-houses as conveniently practicable.

9. With respect to arrangements other than those incidentally mentioned above, the following are indispensable:—

The stable should be removed to some convenient place outside the entrance gates.

The privies should be removed outside the slaughter yards proper.

The boiling-down house should be removed some considerable distance away from the neighbourhood of the establishment.

The feeding pig-styes should be altogether done away with.

The dog slaughter-house should be removed quite outside the yards—say to the neighbourhood of the destructor.

The midden pits should be filled up and abolished.

The bone and offal store marked 25 on plan should be removed.

10. As to management, the following points should be attended to:—All slaughter-house garbage, dung, offal, and blood should be placed in airtight receptacles and removed every day either to be used on land or be treated in the destructor.

All yard manure and sweepings should be loaded into proper standing carts, and in like manner removed every day.

No pigs, except for immediate slaughter, should be allowed to enter or be kept in the yards.

The walls as well as the floors of the slaughter pens should be cleansed every day after the slaughtering and dressing are finished.

The dogs to be destroyed, whether healthy or not, should not be allowed to enter the gates of the establishment.

11. It is indispensable that the above details of construction, arrangement, and management should be carried out if the slaughter houses be continued in their present position. As this carrying out would cost a considerable sum, and would not remedy all evils, it is worth the while of the City Authorities to seriously consider the question of removing the establishment to a better site. There are many advantages to be gained by such removal.

12. In the first place, the arrangements for the reception of animals could be placed on a much better footing if there was sufficient land available for grass paddocks, with feeding sheds and shelter for such animals as were not intended for immediate slaughter. These reception paddocks and feeding-sheds, while having direct and enclosed communication with the slaughter-houses, should be further removed from them than at present. In such a place the necessary repose of the animals after a voyage or land journey, and the feeding of them, could be much better secured than in the small yards and crowded and bustling precincts of the present establishment:

13. In the next place, the unfavourable and unwholesome surroundings of the present site would be avoided. On one side the gas works are immediately adjoining, from which proceed, and it is inevitable that there must proceed, fumes of ammonia and gas and other emanations that, to say the least, certainly do not improve the the flavour of meat hung up to cool in the neighbouring sheds.

Further on, and within 100 yards of these meat sheds, there is the Hobart Rivulet. At no part of its course through the city is this common sewer in so bad a condition as here, for here it has the greatest quantity of sewage matter in it, gathered not only from the sewers, closets, and stables directly discharging into it, but also from those discharging into the subsidiary streams of the Park, Melville-street, Goulburn-street, and other rivulets; and here this sewage is dammed up by every incoming tide to deposit its mud, and this mud in its turn is exposed to sun and air for some hours at every out-going tide. No artificial arrangement would give sewage a greater chance to work mischief.

Still further on, and within 150 yards of the slaughter-house, are the sheds for the reception, and wharf for the shipment, of the pails containing the nightsoil collected from the entire city. However carefully this service may be done, it cannot fail to be accompanied by some nuisance, and so in fact it is. This is certainly an establishment that ought not to exist in such proximity to the place whence the meat supply of the city is derived.

It is hardly conceivable that such source of the meat supply of a city could have three more objectionable neighbours than large gasworks, a shallow open tidal sewer, and a nightsoil receiving-shed and loading-wharf.

14. In the third place, much better buildings for the whole service would be secured by newly constructing them instead of attempting to patch up and adapt the present ones.

15. In conclusion, I may say that the recommendations herein made are based on the practical experience of sanitary authorities at home and abroad, and they are all of them in accord with those made by the Royal Commission of 1889 on the sanitary condition of Melbourne.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

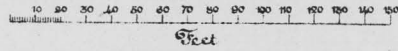
Your faithful Servant,



A. MAULT, *Engineering Inspector.*

Hobart, 29th April, 1893.

HOBART SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Scale



1. Superintendents House
 2. Paddock
 3. Sale Shed
 4. Sale Pens
 5. Cattle Sheds & Yards
 6. Office
 7. Pig Slaughtering & Cleaning House
 8. Sheep Pens
 9. Privies
 10. Middens
 11. Piggeries & Slaughtering Place
 12. Slaughterhouses let to Butchers
 13. Public Slaughterhouse
 14. Boiling-down House
 15. Piggeries
 16. Stable
 17. Cattle & Sheep Pens
 18. Pig-styes built by Butchers
 19. Sheep Pens
 20. Sheep Pens
 21. Dog Slaughtering House
 22. Offal feeding yard & piggeries
 23. Iron shed
 24. Sanitary nail shed
 25. Bone & offal shed
-  Iron & Wooden Buildings
 Brick & Stone Buildings

MAIN LINE RAILWAY

Approach from Macquarie Street

DRILLYARD

GAS WORKS

KEROSENE STORES

Ground in course of reclamation

HOBART

SANITARY DEPOT

RIVULET

WHARF

To accompany Report
A. Munier
29th April: 1893

NEW JETTY