

(No. 2.)



1864.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, HOBART TOWN.

REPORT FOR 1863.

Laid on the Table by Mr. Whyte, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
June 29, 1864.



FOURTH Annual Report of the BENEVOLENT SOCIETY of Hobart Town, for the Year ended 31st December, 1863.

THE Committee of the Benevolent Society has the satisfaction to report to its subscribers and the public of Hobart Town, that it has been enabled to relieve all real cases of destitution and distress brought under its notice during the year 1863, notwithstanding that the funds contributed during the year have fallen considerably below those received for the previous three years.

The year commenced with 30 cases on the books from 1862. 314 fresh applications for relief were made during the year; of these, 55, after thorough investigation, were refused assistance. Of the total applications 10 were from *husbands being out of work*; 25, *husbands in prison*; 47 from *illness*; 32, *husbands away* (of whom 13 had gone to New Zealand). This item was one-third less than in the previous year; and there can be no doubt that the Act passed by the Legislature to meet the desertion of wives and families, which this Society had petitioned for, was mainly conducive to this result. Fifty-three were persons *waiting to be invalided*, or waiting vacancies in the Invalid Asylums, these Institutions being full throughout the year; 24 were *widows*; 31 were *aged and infirm*; 21 were *destitute*; 18 were *accidents*; 2 were *blind*; 26 were *for children*, where parents neglected them, and could not be trusted with rations, from their dissolute habits. Of the 344 cases, 166 were adult males, 201 adult females, and 507 were children, numbering altogether 874 individuals, and being 54 more than was recorded for 1862.

No epidemic disease or any great public calamity caused the increase of cases for 1863; but employment was scarce for labourers in general, and particularly for those of inferior skill. Lodgings were paid in 22 cases.

The stores issued during the year were:—Bread, 46,991 lbs., being 1528 lbs. less than 1862; Meat, 20,069 lbs., being 1849 lbs. less than in 1862; Tea, 634 lbs. 5 ounces, being 88½ lbs. less than in 1862; Sugar, 4569½ lbs., being 255½ lbs. less than 1862; Oatmeal, 2580 lbs., being 1081 lbs. less than in 1862; Rice, 2983 lbs., being 607 lbs. less than in 1862; Sago, none, where in 1862, 134½ lbs. were issued. Of Soup, 14,784 pints were issued, being 504 pints more than in 1862. Soup to the value of £6 8s. 6d. was paid for.

Firewood was given to some poor families in addition to food, and to others it was supplied at cost price.

The contracts for the supplies of meat and bread were, as usual, tendered for quarterly. The prices were moderate, and, with one exception, the contractors fulfilled their obligations satisfactorily. Several tradesmen and others made donations of food to some extent, and thus materially aided the funds of the Society. The value of the articles contributed, estimated at the contract prices, have been credited to the contributors as subscriptions.

After the 5th March, it was found advisable to employ the Registrar, Mr. Witt, to visit, in rotation, from time to time, the cases applying for relief, and those already receiving it. The afternoons were devoted to this purpose, and 450 visits were paid, which resulted in weeding out many cases which had ceased to require relief or were found unworthy of it.

In reference to the Act for Industrial Schools, &c., alluded to in last year's Report, the Committee has to state, that the Government did not take any steps to get it enacted, but a private Member introduced an Act of a similar kind, which was passed. So far it has remained inoperative, though the condition of the neglected children is every day becoming more immoral and criminal.

The financial state of the Society is shown by the Treasurer's Account. The amount contributed during the year from subscriptions, donations, &c., is £533 1s. 4d.. In 1862 it amounted to £611 9s. Only £400 has as yet been drawn from the Government on account of 1863. The Committee was in hopes that at least £600 might have been raised by subscriptions, donations, &c., so as to enable it to draw an equal amount from the Treasury.

At the earnest request of the Government, the Committee undertook to make provision for lying-in cases, on condition that it should not be required to raise any part of the amount expended by private subscriptions, and that the total sum to be drawn from the Treasury for all purposes should not exceed the £800, to which the Government Contribution is limited. These cases have been kept distinct from the general business of the Society.

The Bank Book of the Society on the first day of this year, 1864, shows a balance of £393 0s. 2d. in favour of the Society, to which must be added £500 worth of Debentures. A legacy from the late Mr. William Cotton added £47 4s. 8d. to the funds. Two Elocutionary Entertainments, given by A. Cairnduff, Esquire, raised £18 17s. clear. Only one Church Collection was made for the funds of this Society during 1863,—*i. e.*, at the Wesleyan Chapel, Melville-street, the sum obtained being £13 9s. 2d.

The Committee has received valuable assistance from several Ministers of Religion, the City Missionaries, many ladies and gentlemen, and the Press of the City. The Registrar has maintained the high character for zeal and efficiency which has always before been awarded to him.

HOBART TOWN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY *in Account with the Treasurer for the Year 1863.*

1863.			1863.		
	Dr.	£ s. d.		Cr.	£ s. d.
June 30.	To Payments as per Pass Book for Six Months ..	503 8 2	Jan. 1.	By Balance	552 18 9
Dec. 31.	To Payments as per Pass Book, to this date (Six Months)	589 11 9	April 24.	Cash from Government	200 0 0
	Balance	393 0 2	Aug. 31.	Ditto, ditto	200 0 0
			Dec. 31.	Cash, private collections for the year	533 1 4
		<u>£1486 0 1</u>			<u>£1486 0 1</u>
Audited and found correct,			1864.		
	GEO. SALIER,	} <i>Auditors.</i>	Jan. 1.	By Balance	393 0 2
	HUGH M. HULL,				
				THOMAS GIBLIN, <i>Treasurer.</i>	