

(No. 5.)



1869.

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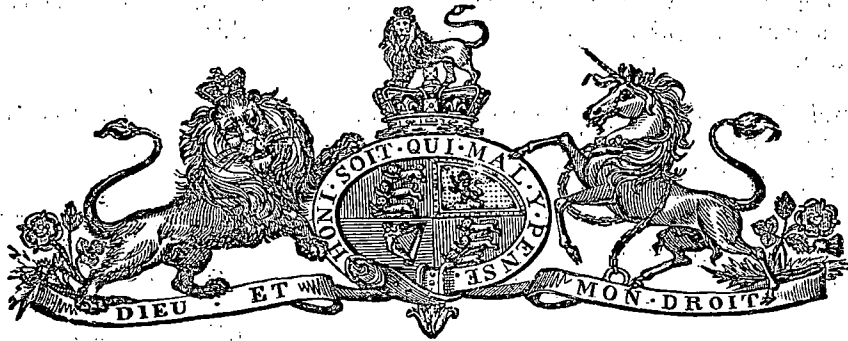
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INVALID DEPOT, LAUNCESTON.

REPORT FOR 1868.

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Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, August 24, 1869.



*FIRST REPORT of the Launceston Invalid Depot, 1869.*

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THE applications for relief by aged and worn-out men for admission into the General Hospital as Invalids being far more numerous than the beds which could be made up for their accommodation, it was determined by the General Government to form a separate Establishment for their reception.

The old Military Barracks having been relinquished by the Imperial Government to the Colonial Government, and a Parliamentary Grant obtained to effect the necessary alterations, all the buildings have been thoroughly repaired and adapted to the use of the Invalids, and all appliances provided. The grounds have also been partially cultivated.

The whole of the above works have, in a great measure, been entrusted to the Superintendent of the Penal Establishment, Mr. J. F. Cox, who, in the absence of the Director of Public Works, has been indefatigable in the superintendence of the prison gangs who were chiefly employed in the labour of renovation.

On the 8th June, 1868, thirty-nine Invalids were removed from the General Hospital. By the month of August accommodation was provided for thirty-six additional; and before the end of the year the number amounted to eighty-nine Inmates.

During the above period there were:—Admissions, 145; Discharges, 49; Deaths, 8.

The expenditure for the above seven months has been £526 18s. 6d.,—being an average cost of 8d. per diem for dietary.

When the grounds are brought under cultivation the presumption is that the expense will be diminished.

The contemplated cost for 1869 for the whole Establishment, computed for one hundred Inmates, is £1795 8s. 4d.

The present Staff consists of—1 Superintendent, £50 per annum; 1 Warden, £75 per annum; 1 Head Wardsman, £36 10s. per annum; 5 Wardsmen, 4d. per diem each; 1 Gate-keeper, 1s. per diem; 1 Cook, 1s. per diem.

Some of the Patients are bed-ridden with chronic disease. The majority are hale, being incapacitated from labour through old age or some debilitating infirmity.

The average age of the Invalids is sixty-three years. Protestants 66; Roman Catholics, 22.

Many of the Invalids attend Divine Service at the Chapel attached to the Penal Establishment, on Sunday forenoon. In the afternoon of that day Lay Readers conduct Service, under the direction of the Episcopal Chaplain. Clerical visits are also paid at other stated times.

Very few of the Invalids are capable of performing any work beyond that of Messmen, and weeding and keeping the yards clean. The most active are Wardsmen, and receive four-pence per day. Tobacco is allowed to most of the men.

The area of the ground is about five acres. So far as the season would permit, the available portion has been broken up and partly planted,—prison labour having been employed therein.

The next season will, doubtless, yield a sufficient quantity of vegetables to supply the wants of the Establishment. A bank has been thrown up against the river, shutting out the high tides which before inundated a considerable portion of the ground. This reclaimed surface will prove a valuable addition.

The several Wards, when quite finished, will afford accommodation for 100 Inmates; and it may be hoped that that number will be the maximum, and meet all the genuine cases of distress of men suffering from infirmity and imbecility.

The Board of Management desire to record their appreciation of the labours of Mr. Cox, who, *con amore*, has taken the superintendence of the Establishment, and to whom it is mainly due that the whole is now in such a state of order and efficiency.

ISAAC SHERWIN, *Chairman.*

JAMES ROBERTSON.

W. S. BUTTON.

JOHN T. SALE.

H. DOWLING.

JOHN MURPHY.