

(No. 9.)



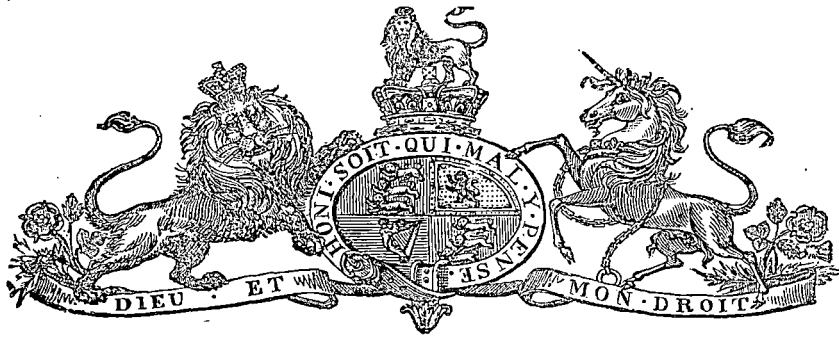
1863.

TASMANIA.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

GENERAL HOSPITAL.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—1862.

Laid on the Table by Mr. Whyte, and ordered to be printed, June 24, 1863.



HOSPITAL REPORT.

THE Board of Management of the General Hospital have the honor to lay before Parliament their Report for the year ending the 31st December, 1862.

They have little to add to the various points recapitulated in their Report for the preceding year, except to observe that the Vote which had been taken for £800, in order to complete the necessary improvements in the Hospital (details of which had been estimated for by the Director of Public Works, and were appended to the last Report), lapsed by reason of the dissolution of Parliament, after having passed the Lower House. The present Colonial Secretary has given an assurance that he will, at an early period, cause a Vote to be taken sufficient to provide for the necessary requirements of the Hospital, including baths and other contingencies; after which no further outlay will be needed for many years to come.

As some misunderstanding appears to exist in reference to the control of the Expenditure for Buildings, as well as the General Expenditure of the Hospital, it becomes again necessary to point out that, from the first appointment of the Board, the Government, and the Government alone, have exercised a control over the Expenditure. The Board have, in a previous Report, drawn attention to this circumstance. In alluding to the recommendation of the professional Accountant, Mr. Lovett, that Contractors' Accounts should be first sent for approval to the Board, the former Report contained the following paragraph:—

“To this important recommendation, that the Accounts of Contractors should be first sent to the Board, an objection has been raised by the Accountant of Stores, that, as Contracts are made annually, and as each Establishment furnishes Vouchers for itself for what it consumes in the way of bread, meat, and wine, &c., such a condition would be not only inconvenient, but unnecessary. It is a matter of no consequence to the Board, so long as it is distinctly understood by Parliament that the Board is not responsible for the details of the Expenditure, which are checked and controlled by the Government.”

When the Board was first appointed by the Government, in accordance with the Resolutions of Parliament, some discussion ensued upon the subject of its relative powers and responsibilities,—the Board contending that after the Hospital Estimate had passed Parliament (the Government, of course, taking care, before proposing it, to exercise the most rigid supervision over all its details), that then the control of such Expenditure should be vested in the Board, which should be held primarily responsible for the outlay. If that outlay was in excess of the Estimate, unless the Board made out a sufficiently strong case, and had previously received the sanction of the Executive Government, the necessity of some fundamental alteration in the constitution of the Board would then become apparent. In the meantime Vouchers should be rendered to the Treasury for every item of Expenditure. Such was the view which was entertained by a majority of the Board; nor was this in any way inconsistent with the powers and duties of the Executive Government, to whom it was constitutionally competent to hand over to the Body in question, constituted as it was under the authority of Parliament, the sum of money voted for the Institution which it was intended to manage, and holding that Body responsible for such Expenditure.

But instead of adopting this course, and so devolving upon the Board the entire responsibility of management, they decided upon keeping the entire power in their own hands, the Officers remaining in the same position as before, and the Board exercising only a nominal power in the administration of its affairs. The Board cannot help observing, that, had full control been entrusted to their hands, the result would have been more satisfactory in an economical point of view; because, situated as they were, unless suggestions came from the Officers of the Department itself, it was not very likely that any important economical change could be carried out, while all the Board could do was to endeavour to exercise, or to exercise, a negative control over the expenditure. Even in this

they were discouraged; for when they asked that the accounts of the contractors might first be submitted to the inspection of the Board, the contractors declined to send in their accounts. Had proper control been given them, no such anomaly as this would have existed, and the Institution would have been saved the detriment it was likely to sustain from a twofold authority of this kind: and it was the more incumbent that all doubt on this subject should be removed when, unlike entering upon a new state of things, the Board were called upon to take over an old Institution with all its Officers, and all the prejudices inseparable from long habit and association. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the fact of the Hospital having been thrown open, and the management of it being shared and participated in by the community, exercised a very salutary influence over the Institution. The Honorary Medical Officers vied with each other in their attention to the inmates and in effecting sanatory improvements; and the result has been to produce an Hospital, both Male and Female, which is creditable to the Colony, and which wins commendation from every stranger.

Nor has the influence of the Board, where it could be exercised, been less satisfactory in an economical point of view, as evidenced at the Brickfields' Depôt, where the cost of invalids has been reduced from £27, which was their cost under Imperial Management, to £18 8s. This has been effected chiefly by the adoption of the recommendations of the Superintendent in concurrence with a Committee of Management; and the Board, being anxious to mark their sense of that Officer's usefulness, and of his inadequate salary for the duties performed, upon two distinct occasions recommended that his salary be raised £50 a year; but the Government upon both occasions rejected that recommendation, thus indirectly tending to discourage everything like reduction in the expenditure, and to deter Officers from adopting any plan calculated to diminish the cost of Establishments under their control. We are far from saying that such was the object of the Government, but such was undoubtedly the practical effect of such proceedings. The suspicion was unavoidable that, if contrast was to be made at all with the old order of things, it was to be to the disadvantage of the new, in an economical point of view, notwithstanding every exertion on the part of the Board to consult economy.

The negative control, however, exercised by the Board has not been without its good effect; and it is satisfactory to know that the cost of Patients for 1862 in the Hospital is a fraction under Two Shillings per diem, while that of the Invalids at the Brickfields scarcely exceeds One Shilling.

Besides the Patients in the Hospital, a great number of Out-patients are treated, and a considerable quantity of medicine dispensed. This, of course, entails an additional duty upon the House Surgeon and Dispenser of the Establishment, not originally within the scope of their duties.

The Board have been gratified with the confidence reposed in the Hospital, as evidenced by the desire of many paying Patients to resort to it, for whom there exists no separate accommodation; but, as the present class of Patients passes away—the natural result of the penal character of the Colony—they feel satisfied that much may be done towards making the Hospital self-supporting, and so relieving the Government of a great part of the expense. Unfortunately, the depressed condition of the Colony, coupled with the many aged persons wholly devoid of all means,—who, of course, by reason of the former penal character of the Colony, bear a greater proportion to the rest of the population than they do in any other country,—forbids the hope of a speedy relief in this respect; but all that can be done in the way of utilising the labor of Invalids, and of checking indiscriminate pauperism, will be done by the Board.

During the past year there were admitted into Hospital 1194 Patients, of whom 836 were males and 358 females. Of the latter, 317 were Patients and 41 were Invalids.

There were remaining under treatment at the date of last Annual Return 143 Patients; so that the total number treated during the year ending 31st December, 1862, was 1337. Of these 1019 were discharged, 143 died, and 175 remained under treatment.

During the past year 7 persons died on the day of admission, 10 on the day after, 13 on the second day, 3 on the third, 8 on the fourth, 3 on the fifth, and 3 on the sixth.

Of the Patients admitted, there were 96 self-supporting, 87 paid for from Imperial funds, and 1011 were Colonial paupers.

Of the 175 who remained under treatment at the close of the year, there were 1 self-supporting, 11 supported by Convict funds, and 163 Colonial paupers.

The number of Out-patients in 1862 was 3188; number of Visits, 5099; and Prescriptions, 6758.

In conclusion, the Board have much satisfaction in recording their appreciation of the manner in which the House Surgeon and Officers of the Establishment have performed their duties during the past year.

RETURN showing the Diseases treated in the General Hospital during the Year 1862.

	NO. OF CASES TREATED IN			DIED.
	HOSPITAL.	OUT PATIENTS.	TOTAL.	
Diseases of the { Stomach and Bowels	43	351	394	3
{ Lungs	141	775	916	46
{ Eyes	48	100	148	
{ Brain and Nervous System ..	94	62	156	21
{ Skin	10	67	77	
{ Liver	22	9	31	5
Abscesses and Ulcers	138	295	433	9
Rheumatic Affection	147	315	462	
Wounds and Injuries	149	429	578	14
Venereal Affections	87	169	256	2
Fevers	10	3	13	3
Dropsies	8	14	22	1
Other Diseases	440	599	1039	39
TOTALS	1337	3188	4525	143

GEORGE TURNLEY, *Resident Medical Officer.*

BRICKFIELDS.

The strength of this Establishment on the 1st January, 1862, was 156. Received during the year, 232; discharged, 161; died, 21; remaining on 1st January, 1863, 206. The average age of those that died was 64 years.

The Quarters formerly occupied by the Superintendent have been converted into a ward; also new Latrines have been built, and other improvements have been effected. The Governor in Council, on the application of the Board, granted £60 for the above improvements. Most of this work was done by Invalids.

The grounds are still being reclaimed, and the produce used in the Establishment and credited to the Government.

The different Clergymen and City Missionaries have been most assiduous in their attention to the Inmates.

The Establishment contains beds for 224 Invalids, without crowding; but beyond this no more accommodation can be afforded. Should any further accommodation be required, a new wing will have to be built and the cook-house enlarged.

There are only four servants that are paid the full wages; viz., £36 per annum with rations. The rest, being Invalids, are allowed a small sum monthly.

Expenditure during the year 1862, £3774 6s. 11d.; number of rations issued during the same period, 74,914; average daily number, 205½; average cost per annum for each pauper, including all charges, £18 8s., which is a fraction over 1s. per diem.

The general good conduct of the Paupers and Servants under the charge of the Superintendent deserves special remark. Two cases only have occurred that required the interference of the Police; and five expulsions for bad conduct during the year have taken place.

A. KENNERLEY
THOS. MACDOWELL.
JNO. REGAN.
GEO. HUTTON.
D. LEWIS.
STEPHEN SHEEHY.
A. KISSOCK.
R. OFFICER.
GEO. SALIER.