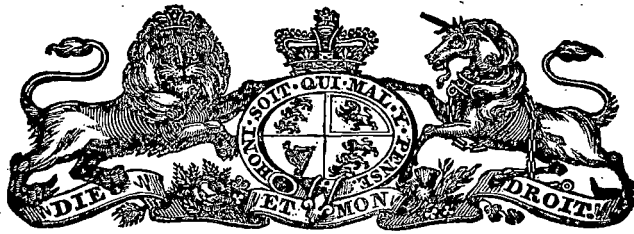


(No. 71.)



1876.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

BOARDING-OUT SYSTEM.

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATOR OF CHARITABLE GRANTS.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Secretary, and ordered by the House to be printed, September 26, 1876.



Administrator of Charities Office, 23rd September, 1876.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you that during the past week I have made a very careful personal inspection of the children supported by the Government under the Boarding-out System in the city of Hobart Town; and I now beg to transmit to you the following Report of the result of my examination.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE, &c.

In a few rare cases the children showed an evident delicacy of constitution, and in some others the effects of recent epidemics were apparent; but these were exceptions, and the majority of both boys and girls were in robust and healthy condition.

CLOTHING AND BEDDING.

A close inspection proved to my satisfaction that the guardians had in every instance provided an ample sufficiency of bedding, and a proper supply of suitable clothes. The everyday things in which I saw the children were in good condition, and their boots in serviceable order; and in each case a neat and tidy suit had been supplied for Sunday wear. Of under clothing there appeared to be no deficiency.

SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION.

In this particular I saw nothing to complain of. In some instances the children, if very young, sleep in the same room as their guardians; sometimes in the same bed: in others they have rooms to themselves; but I did not observe any over crowding. The bed-rooms seemed to be clean and well ventilated; and I was unable to detect any fusty or unwholesome smell in any of them.

FOOD.

My visits having been made in many instances at the dinner hour, I was enabled to see the description of food provided for the children by their guardians; and, both from what I saw myself and from the statements of the children themselves, I have every reason to believe that they all, without exception, receive an ample amount of good and proper food. Indeed, the fat and well-nourished appearance they present is in itself sufficient evidence of this fact.

CONDUCT.

The report of the children's conduct made to me by the guardians was generally favourable; and where a child was said to have been troublesome, he or she was represented as improving. Indeed, on inquiring into the nature of their delinquencies, I found them for the most part to be of a very venial kind. One had played truant from school on one occasion; another had an objectionable habit of kicking his toes through his boots; a third could by no manner of means be induced to refrain from wearing out the knees of his trousers at that pernicious game of marbles. In short, I could discover nothing more serious than the ordinary peccadilloes and occasional fits of fractiousness to which all children are more or less subject.

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL.

I was assured by all the guardians that the children under their charge were regular in attendance at school, except where they were either too young or were prevented by passing ailments; and this is confirmed by the tickets of attendance from the masters of schools.

ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH.

My enquiries on this head were also in every instance satisfactorily answered, and I believe truly; but, of course, I have no means of ascertaining absolutely the correctness of the statements made to me in this particular.

KINDNESS OF TREATMENT.

In every instance I inquired particularly of the children, apart from their guardians, as to their treatment; and, in every case, I was met by an unhesitating and prompt acknowledgment of the kindness of their acting parents to them. My visits were made without previous intimation, and could not have been anticipated: no opportunity, therefore, could have been afforded for tutoring; and, indeed, the frank and open manner of the children left no room in my mind to doubt the truth of their statements.

GENERAL REMARKS.

In former reports and correspondence with the Colonial Secretary I have so repeatedly expressed my strong preference for this mode of dealing with deserted and pauper children, that I need not now enter into any arguments as to its merits. It will suffice to say that the result of my recent visitation has served to confirm my views in this respect; and that I adhere to the opinions that I have previously given in regard to the Boarding-out System. In order, however, to carry out that system properly, increased agency and more frequent inspection is essential; and I would again urge upon the Executive Government the necessity of issuing Regulations under which Visiting Committees can be appointed, and provision made for the apprenticing out of the children as they come to an age when they should cease to be a burthen on the State.

Of the children boarded-out in Launceston and the country districts, comparatively few in number, I have received satisfactory reports.

I append a Return of the gross number of children boarded-out throughout the Colony,—showing the number of guardians amongst whom they are distributed, the largest number in charge of one person, and the average number also in each home.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. TARLETON,
Administrator of Charitable Grants.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

RETURN of the Number of Children boarded-out in Tasmania on the 23rd September, 1876.

DISTRICT.	Total Number of Children.	Number of Guardians.	The largest Number of Children in charge of one Person.	Approximate Average Number in each Home.
Launceston	14	5	8	3
Longford	3	2	2	2
Torquay	1	1	1	1
Russell	2	2	1	1
Fingal	3	1	3	3
Franklin	4	3	2	1
Richmond.....	3	1	3	3
Hobart	117	53	5	2
	147	68		

W. TARLETON.

Public Buildings, 25th September, 1876.