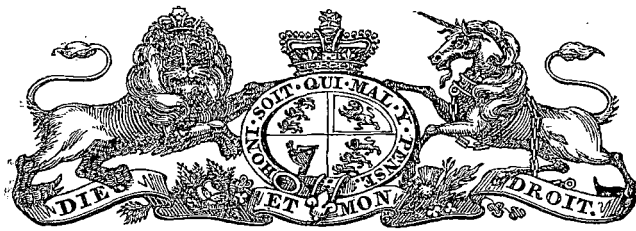


(No. 52.)



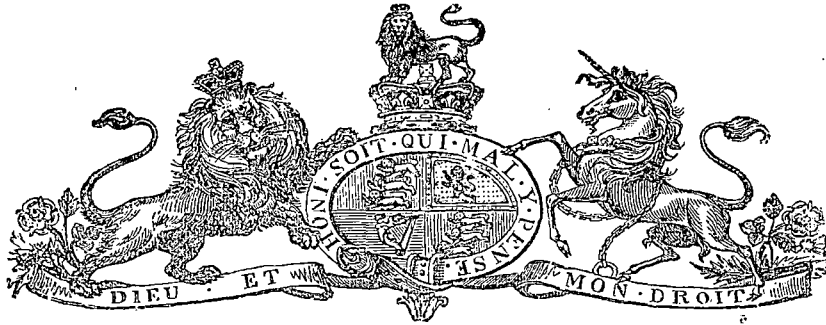
1892.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

QUEEN'S DOMAIN:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 1891.

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



QUEEN'S DOMAIN.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 1891.

To the Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

SIR,

1. THE Queen's Domain Committee have the honor to forward to you, for presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of their proceedings during the past year.

2. Good progress has been made with the alterations at the freestone quarry near Government House, in levelling and filling up and sloping the banks. Prison labour has been more or less available for this work, which, when completed by the necessary grassing and planting, together with a broad footpath laid out between the slopes, and suitably fenced, and with the removal of the existing cottage, will be a decided improvement to the Domain, by the removal of an eyesore which has long disfigured the main approach from the City to Government House and the Botanic Gardens.

3. Several fresh plantations of choice shrubs have been formed in various parts of the Domain which from their variety and brightness of colouring are proving exceedingly attractive as a relief to the more sombre hues of the indigenous forest.

4. The trees that have been pollarded are for the most part doing well and bursting with new leaves and branches, and not a few dead and decaying trunks and stumps of old trees have been cut down and cleared away, much improving the general aspect, besides opening up the views and displaying the surrounding scenery to greater advantage.

5. Upon the recommendation of the Committee the Minister gave authority for the supply of forty additional seats, which have been distributed in suitable localities for the accommodation and comfort of pedestrians in the Domain.

6. Copies of the Regulations as authorised by the Governor in Council have been printed on calico and posted in various conspicuous parts of the Domain; but as these placards, from being necessarily placed high up for protection, are rather out of vision for passers-by, besides being liable to be defaced by weather, they will be superseded by large painted boards, to be fixed at the several entrances to the Domain so as to be readily distinguishable.

7. Although the roads are not under the actual control of the Committee, yet, as connected with the general improvement of the Domain, approval may be expressed of the excellent piece of new road leading from the back gate of Government House to the Powder Magazine, and along the sides of which an avenue of horse-chestnuts have been planted, which in the course of a few years cannot fail to become highly ornamental.

8. The road sanctioned to be laid out in front of the residences in the Glebe to be fenced in with posts and chains, to prevent vehicles of every description from crossing in all directions and cutting up the turf, is greatly required, and the Minister has informed the deputation from the Committee who waited upon him to urge on this important work that he was unable to comply with the request at that time for want of funds. It is hoped that this most necessary work will not be much longer delayed.

9. The Committee are desirous to draw under attention a rather important point with regard to the duties entrusted to them by the Act of Parliament creating the Commission. The object sought to be attained is expressed in the Title and Preamble to be the "better care and management of the Queen's Domain," and beyond this the Act is silent, and does not further define any special functions of the Committee, excepting that the expenditure of the funds placed at their disposal for the maintenance and improvement of the Domain shall receive the approval of the Minister from time to time; in fact, that no expenditure of money shall be made without previous Ministerial authority. In the opinion of the Committee the fair inference from the language of the Act is opposed to the assumption of power by the Minister to originate works in the first instance, instead of reserving the exercise of his authority and control later on, by approval or otherwise, of proposals for new works when submitted to him officially by the Committee prior to their adoption. Two instances in point are quoted to illustrate the grave inconvenience of this dual control.

One is the case of the permission granted by the Minister to the Hobart Corporation, without the consent or knowledge of the Committee, to open a new quarry for stone on the Park-street side of the Domain. At first sight it seemed to be counteracting the efforts of the Committee, who were actually engaged in the endeavour to transform such an ugly object as an open quarry into a scene of picturesque beauty. Whatever differences of opinion might exist in the minds of the Committee as to the propriety or otherwise of such concession being granted, there was none as to the slight in the omission to have had the matter previously referred to them: on this point there was a complete unanimity of opinion. The Minister having met the Committee on the ground, in conjunction with the Mayor and Aldermen, while strongly pressing the necessity for this work, at once frankly expressed his regret at the omission complained of, and promised that plans of the proposed workings should be submitted for their consideration and approval.

The other instance was in the Minister taking the initiative in fixing the site for holding Wirth's Circus in the High School quarry, which had been planted with ornamental trees. Obviously there was the liability to damage and injury at the hands of larrikins and others hanging about the Circus. There was some diversity of opinion in regard to the spot chosen; for, while some of the Committee highly approved of the site selected as the best for the purpose, others, although not actually disapproving of the choice of site, objected to the premature intervention of the Minister as calculated to fetter the discretion of the Committee.

It is satisfactory to know that the actual damage was on this occasion very trivial; and it certainly must be conceded that the position selected, sheltered as it was from the high winds, was the most snug and convenient one in promoting the comfort of visitors to the Circus.

10. The amount of money received and expended for the year 1891, duly signed by the Chairman and certified to by the Auditor-General, has been published in the *Gazette* (February 27, page 500), in conformity with the terms of the Act of Parliament.

J. BARNARD, *Chairman.*
Hobart, 12th April, 1892.