

(No. 14.)



1883.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY :

REPORT FOR 1882.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 24, 1883.



TWENTY-THIRD Annual Report of the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, for the Year ending 31st December, 1882.

“WITHOUT natural affection” must be the key-note for this year also, as the desertion of families is still going on. There have been in the past year 22 wives deserted, many of them with large families.

These unnatural parents are only too glad to be rid of the responsibility by escaping to the other colonies, where, with the present machinery, they know that they are safe, and no fear of being disturbed. These men often marry in the other colonies, and probably desert their new wives when they are tired of them.

When will the different Colonial Governments enter into a mutual arrangement for the extradition of wife deserters? No other law needs so much notice, as the wife and children are left as a pauper legacy upon colonial funds.

One hundred and seventy-six cases have been relieved last year; some with cash, and some with only rations. As soon as they have been on the books of the Benevolent Society for about three and a half months they are transferred to the Government funds, when they become a Colonial charge, and remain permanent until they are removed by death.

Sometimes these cases are of extreme hardship—many of wife desertion, with five or six children.

There is one case that deserves especial mention. A young woman, about 26 years of age, left by her husband with six children. The infant has since died, consequent upon neglect. This family occupy two small rooms in Bathurst-street, and yet this woman prostitutes herself there, in the presence of her children, the eldest a boy only ten. This is her own confession to our Registrar, Mr. Witt, and she did not seem the least ashamed of such conduct. What are such children likely to become?

A resolution was passed at the last quarterly meeting to communicate with the Government to ascertain if some punishment could not be meted out in such a case, as a long term of imprisonment, and save the children by boarding them out. The Committee are aware that it may be said that it holds out a premium to such crimes in relieving such persons of their children. But are these children to be trained for thieves and prostitutes in saving a few pounds? This is very false economy.

There were left on the books of the Benevolent Society 26 cases, representing 112 individuals. Casual relief has been given to 21 individuals going up the country to seek work, or going into the Invalid Depôt.

Work has been given to 104 men in the wood-yard until they could get better employment. A man can earn, by working an hour in the wood-yard, more than enough to supply his wants for the day, and a person working for two hours obtains sufficient food to supply a family of four for two days. Men are occasionally allowed to work extra time to earn money for lodgings.

One hundred and fifty tons of wood and two tons of coal have been kindly given by friends of the Society, which has enabled Mr. Witt to keep many persons supplied with fuel all through the winter. Thirty tons more have been purchased by the Society for extra cases and cases of sickness.

Of the wood brigade, 142 dozen bundles of kindling-wood have been sold, realising £2 2s. Government House used to be a good customer.

THE Treasurer in Account with the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

1882.		Dr.	£	s.	d.	1882.		Cr.	£	s.	d.
Dec. 31.	To Balance in Bank—January, 1882		169	13	8	Dec. 31.	By Expenditure, per Pass Book...		869	2	6
	Subscriptions and Donations...		141	19	2		Balance		174	4	4
	Government Grant.....		400	0	0						
	Ditto, Repayments.....		115	14	0						
	Interest on Debentures, &c.....		216	0	0						
			<u>£1048 6 10</u>						<u>£1043 6 10</u>		
1883.	Jan. 1. To Balance		£174	4	4						

R. T. WESTBROOK, *Treasurer.*

Examined with the Vouchers, and found correct.

GEO. SALIER,
CHAS. E. WALCH, } *Auditors.*

CAPITAL Account of the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY arising from Legacies, Donations, &c., 1882.

	£	s.	d.
Debenture—T. Y. Lowes, Interest on.....	2000	0	0
Ditto	500	0	0
Ditto	300	0	0
Ditto	600	0	0
Ditto	100	0	0
Ditto	500	0	0
Deposit—G. T. B. Society	400	0	0
	<u>£4400 0 0</u>		
Savings Bank—Emergency Fund	150	0	0
(Premises, &c., Bathurst-street, £750) Deposit.....	100	0	0
	<u>£4650 0 0</u>		