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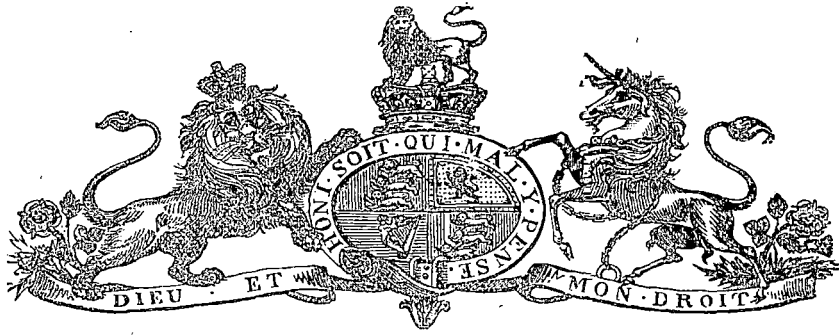
1891.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

TASMANIAN PRISONERS' AID AND RESCUE
SOCIETY.

REPORT FOR 1890-91.

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



TASMANIAN PRISONERS' AID AND RESCUE SOCIETY.

REPORT FOR 1890-91.

THE Annual Meeting of the members of the Society was held in the Mayor's Court-room on the evening of Tuesday, July 22nd, 1891. The Chief Justice (Sir Lambert Dobson) presided; and there were present the Revs. Canons Banks-Smith, H. Finnis, Father Hennebry, I. K. McIntyre, and Messrs. T. B. Mather, W. Tarleton, L. R. Castray, B. Shaw, B. T. Solly, W. M. Williams, G. Fagg, J. T. Soundy, R. Mather, W. Smith, and A. Eckford. Apologies were read from the Revs. G. Shoobridge and G. W. Sharp, and Messrs. G. S. Crouch, J. O'Boyle, and C. E. Walsh.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, the Hon. Secretary (Mr. A. Eckford) read the Committee's report for the year 1890-91, as follows:—

The Executive Committee have much pleasure in submitting their Annual Report of the work done and the progress made by the Society since its inauguration. It will be remembered that by the Rules of the Society it was compulsory that the Annual Meeting should be held in January of each year, but as the Society only entered upon its work in June, 1890, it was decided by the members generally, at the meeting held on 21st January last, that the Rules be altered as to the date of the Annual Meeting, and the same was fixed to be held in July of each year instead of in January.

The Committee have already presented an Interim Report, which met with the hearty approval of the members. It was also favourably noticed by the press, and the efforts of the Society warmly commended to the consideration of the public.

In presenting their report for the twelve months, the Committee feel that they had no light task in undertaking the work of aiding and trying to rescue prisoners as they are discharged from goal—a task which included both men *and* women—not *men only*, as erroneously supposed by some. In fact, the work is most onerous, and the large number of cases that have been inquired into during the year—numbering, in all, 237—will give some idea of the Society's operations.

The Visiting Committee being furnished with a list of the names of persons to be discharged during each month, and the date of discharge, &c., inquire into individual cases in order, and after due consideration, if the Committee feel justified in so doing, those released are assisted to return to their homes. In many instances work is found for them, and a start given by the purchase of tools, clothing, food, &c. In other cases, where they have no home to go to, temporary board and lodging are found for them, so that they may have an opportunity of getting some employment. Again, in others, situations are procured, whilst several have been assisted to rejoin their relatives in the other colonies. The Committee regret that, notwithstanding the most careful vigilance, there are many cases which have caused them disappointment. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in procuring employment for those discharged, owing to the unwillingness of employers to take that class of persons into their service. On the whole, however, the Committee have fairly succeeded in their endeavours. At the same time, whilst fully recognizing their responsibility, they have often given the prisoners a trial, even in doubtful cases, rather than refuse a helping hand.

The Society has not felt justified, as elsewhere, in engaging a paid agent, the whole of the work being undertaken by the Executive Committee.

It may be here observed that the recommissions out of the whole number assisted are comparatively few, the majority being among the short-sentenced class. This unfortunate backsliding is mainly due to that bane of the community—strong drink.

The Committee desire to give prominence to the urgent necessity for the establishment of an Inebriates' Retreat, and they trust that steps will be taken to approach the Government on the subject. In their intercourse with discharged prisoners, the Executive are repeatedly told, "Oh, if I could only keep from the drink! If it had not been for the drink I should not have gone wrong; but I will try and reform." The Committee feel so powerless to deal as they should like with such cases that they are constrained to emphasise the need for reformatory means that would help to wean those addicted to intemperance from their evil courses.

The Committee desire to acknowledge their great indebtedness to the Government for pecuniary aid by its granting £1 for every £1 subscribed by the public up to £100; also for a handsome and suitable supply of books for the Gaol Library; and for the privilege of franking all letters on the Society's business. The Government have likewise offered every facility to the Visiting Committee for communicating with the prisoners, and the courtesy shown by the Superintendent of the Gaol (Mr. Alfred Jones) and the other officers is worthy of recognition.

In their Interim Report in January last the Committee referred to the fact that a number of gentlemen, principally Wardens, Stipendiary Magistrates, &c., in Rural Districts, had kindly consented to become corresponding members of the Society, and had taken a warm interest in its work, especially Mr. John Henry, West Devonport, who voluntarily collected the sum of £10 17s. 6d. in addition to his own subscription of £1 1s. in aid of the funds of the Society, for which a vote of thanks was tendered to that gentleman. Very valuable information is from time to time obtained from these friends.

The thanks of the Society are due to the Sheriff (Mr. Bernard Shaw), to the Deputy-Sheriff (Mr. P. S. Seager), and to the Superintendent of Police (Mr. F. Pedder), for valuable assistance rendered to the Society.

Thanks are also due to the Mayor and Aldermen for the use of the Court-room and Town Hall free of charge, the latter on the occasion of the benefit concert.

The Society is likewise greatly indebted to the Press for its powerful advocacy and support.

In conclusion, the Committee would once more commend the Society to the public at large, in the hope that the charitably disposed will help in the good work,—work of an anxious and delicate nature, and fruits whereof will, they are confident, be made more manifest as time rolls on.

ROBERT MATHER, *Chairman.*

BALANCE SHEET.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To Subscriptions	136	7 6	By General Disbursement.....	35	10 9
Bank Interest and Cash refunded	3	0 0	Stationery.....	3	17 0
Government Grant.....	75	0 0	Hall Keeping and Lighting.....	0	17 0
			Advertising and Printing.....	15	0 0
			Loss on Concert.....	7	2 9
			Bank-books and Cheque-books	0	5 2
			Balance	151	14 10
	<u>£214</u>	<u>7 6</u>		<u>£214</u>	<u>7 6</u>

Audited and found correct.

C. J. PIESSE, }
E. HAWSON, } *Auditors.*

E. A. COUNSEL, *Hon. Treasurer.*