

(No. 12.)



1881.

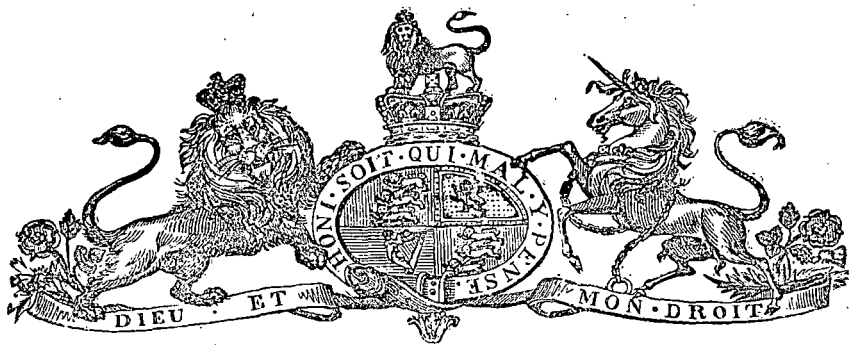
T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

CHARITABLE AID IN HOBART AND
SUBURBS :

REPORT FOR 1880.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 19, 1881.



Hobart, 27th June, 1881.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to furnish a Report of the ten months that have elapsed since the Executive Committee of the Hobart Benevolent Society took over the distribution of Charitable Aid for Hobart and suburbs, and the care of boarding-out children in the same district.

The Society took over the responsibility on the 1st March, 1880. The transfer was made without the slightest difficulty or inconvenience to the recipients of relief, as the issue took place from the Depôt in Argyle-street, on Friday, the 27th February, and notice was given to the people that the next issue would take place at the Benevolent Society Depôt, on Tuesday, the 2nd March. On the Saturday and Monday the removal was made, and the arrangements were all completed and ready for the people on the Tuesday morning.

The first step taken by the Society was thoroughly to investigate each case singly as to its merits and necessity, and each case was dealt with upon the respective claim; and I would here state that the Society found ample scope in re-adjusting the various cases which came before it. Every individual in their turn was ordered to attend. For about eight weeks the Committee sat twice a week, on the Tuesday and the Thursday, after the first meeting on the 4th March, when a resolution was passed to sit twice in the week until all the cases were disposed of. In pursuing the enquiries many cases were well known to the Committee, having come before the Society in some way or other prior to going on the books of the Government.

Without any hardship to the recipients, except that they would rather have money, in some cases a reduction was made, and in others rations were substituted for cash, and where found impolitic to entrust money with them the rent was ordered to be paid by the Registrar, Mr. Witt.

In the course of investigation some cases were discovered of persons having relatives who were well able to support them. These parties were, through the help of Mr. Quodling, brought to book, and were compelled to refund what had been expended, and they are now compelled to pay up monthly.

It was found desirable in some cases to order the parties to work in the wood-yard at the Depôt and to receive food for their labour from the Society, thus relieving the Government entirely of the charge; and where it is necessary, parties are allowed to earn money for lodging tickets.

There were some cases in which the parties would not subject themselves to the examination of the Committee, and were consequently struck off the books.

The number of cases taken over by the Committee was 223, and the number that stood on the books on the 31st December, 1880, was 205, being a diminution of 18, though there were 27 cases from the Benevolent Society transferred to the Government books.

It may seem needless to repeat what I have so often reiterated that the cases are kept on the books of the Benevolent Society for over three months, often three and a half and even four months when we have expectation of the parties going off the books; many who receive assistance voluntarily give up the aid, with thanks, before the expiration of the three months, or they are forced off if able to work and maintain themselves. When it is ascertained that the cases are really permanent they are then transferred to the Government books.

The supervision that is now exercised must necessarily tend to eventually considerably reduce the expenditure; and I am certain that the care exercised has put a wholesome check upon the supposition "that all that people have to do is to apply and get cash and rations." Cash is what is most desired, and never given except under special circumstances. In most cases now where cash is given it is through the Registrar, Mr. Witt, to pay rent. Parties who have been well conducted for a long period and are in receipt of cash, to them it is still continued.

On the 1st of March, 1880, there were on the books 80 cases receiving rations only, 49 cash only, and 94 cash and rations.

On the 31st December, 1880, there were on the books 81 cases in receipt of rations, 40 cash, and 84 cash and rations.

The returns of rations are as under for 1880:—

	<i>No. 1 Scale.</i>	<i>No. 2.</i>	<i>No. 3.</i>
1st March	380	162	22
31st December	347	151½	20
Decrease.....	33	10½	2

equal to 45½ rations, value 3s., in amount £6 16s. 6d.

When taken over the cash expenditure per month was £74 13s. 3d., and on the 31st December the amount was reduced to £64 0s. 8d., a reduction of £10 12s. 7d. per month.

I beg leave respectfully to assure you that the Committee, in their dealing with the public funds, are as jealous of any increase of expenditure as if it were their own, and yet they are equally careful that no unnecessary hardship should be inflicted upon those who crave relief from them. None are allowed to want,—Mr. Witt is authorised to give temporary relief in all cases until the matter can be investigated; and I beg leave respectfully to assure you that I can with confidence assert that as long as the Society is under the present management there will be no fear of the poor being sent empty away.

I have the honor to remain,
Sir,

Yours respectfully and obediently,

R. ANDREW MATHER, *Chairman.*
Ex. Com. B. S.

To the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

It has occurred to me since writing the above that I ought to mention that no people have been compelled to go into the Invalid Depôts, it has been through request to be admitted because they could not care for themselves on account of their very helplessness.

R. A. M.