

(No. 17.)



1891.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY :

REPORT FOR 1890.

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



LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

REPORT for the Year 1890.

THERE has been no change in the Board of Management or officers during the past year.

The number of Board meetings during the year was 48, giving an average attendance of 9 out of 11 members.

The Society has now completed its jubilee, having been permanently established in 1840. No special donations or subscriptions were received to distinguish this from any other year.

The Board are thankful to report that, although the year has been one of unusual distress, and business at one time paralysed on account of the strikes, subscriptions are nearly equal to last year.

During the year relief has been given to 139 men, 228 women, and 240 children; total, 607. On the roll at the end of the year there were 29 men, 62 women, 109 children; total, 200. These included 16 married couples and 38 widows.

The Society is relieving many cases of long standing on the books—viz., 1 of 21 years; 1, 18 years; 1, 15 years; 2, 10 years; 1, 9 years; 4, 6 years; 6, 5 years; 6, 4 years; 4, 3 years; and 10, 2 years.

There have been two deaths amongst recipients during the past year.

There were 10 cases of confinement of single women during the year.

The Society distributed 55 pairs of blankets, and firewood to the value of £48 10s. 10d.

The usual Christmas and New Year supplies were distributed to those on the roll and others, comprising for the two weeks the following quantities:—2112 lbs. bread, 1006 lbs. beef and suet, 433 lbs. flour, 440 lbs. sugar, 55 lbs. tea, 124 lbs. currants, 124 lbs. raisins, and 167 packets spice.

The Treasurer's statement shows balance in hand £46 12s. 10d., as against £102 15s. at the close of 1889. The extra number of casual or temporary cases of relief has caused the extra expenditure. The Society relieved in 1890 145 more cases than in 1889, and there are now 10 more cases on the roll than in 1889.

For some short time the Secretary (Mr. Hugh Fraser) has not been able to give his usual active attention to the duties of his office through sickness. Mr. George Baker is at present taking charge of the Society's books.

The Secretary's office has been removed from Charles-street to 13, Upper Elizabeth-street. Tickets, with the Secretary's address and hours when at home, have been issued to subscribers with a view to their distribution to persons soliciting relief. Very few of these tickets were presented to the Secretary. The Society again remind subscribers that no persons in actual want go unrelieved.

In October the Society was invited to send delegates to a Conference on Charity Organisations,

commencing in the Town Hall, Melbourne, on Tuesday, November 11th, under the presidency of Professor Morris. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were requested to represent the Society. On their return the Chairman reported to the Board as follows:—

“The Conference on ‘Charity,’ lately held in Melbourne, which, at your request, Mr. Birchall and myself attended, passed off most successfully. The delegates from the various colonies were most cordially received—nearly 100 being present from all parts of Australasia and New Zealand. His Excellency the Governor of Victoria opened the proceedings. Professor Morris, of the Melbourne University, Chairman of the Melbourne Charity Organisation Society, delivered the inaugural address, and presided at most of the subsequent meetings.

“A number of papers treating on charity and kindred subjects were read by various delegates, which were afterwards freely discussed.

“Mr. Birchall read an able paper on ‘The Organisation, Objects, and Working of the Launceston Benevolent Society, embracing a period of fifty years,’ which paper compared very favourably with those read by delegates from similar societies.

“Several of the treatises referred more particularly to larger centres of population than Tasmania, in which centralisation and organisation were recommended, such as exist in South Australia and New Zealand, where the Government dispenses all charities, and by means of special rates meets nearly all expenses.

“The idea most prominent throughout several of the papers was the making of charity a matter of mere mathematical science. One paper, read by Dr. Garran, of Sydney, was entitled ‘The Application of the Scientific Method to Charity;’ another, by the Rev. F. L. Jackson, on ‘The Causes of Poverty, and the Remedy of them from a Scientific Standpoint.’”

This Society is considerably in advance of many similar institutions in Victoria and New South Wales in its method of administering relief, and in its simple and effective way of management.

The Conference, after lasting six days, was brought to a close by a very enjoyable *conversazione*.

Selections from the papers read will be printed, and copies forwarded to all the delegates, so that this Committee will have an opportunity of perusing them.

Another Conference is to be held in Melbourne in November, 1891.

Some very valuable recommendations were made during the Conference, and were embodied in a series of suggestions to that body for adoption. The following are the suggestions referred to:—

1. This Conference suggests that all charitable societies should keep records of every case of poverty brought under their notice—giving details as to causes of poverty, whether those relieved have been married or single, condition of the houses in which the poor live, number and ages of members of family, kind of work engaged in, wages (daily and weekly) earned, amount and kind of relief given—and should forward such statistics at stated periods to a central body such as the Charity Organisation Society.

2. This Conference suggests that in each colony there should be adequate provision for the maintenance of distressed aged people (not being of the criminal class) who are at present sent to gaol on charges of vagrancy or having no lawful or visible means of support.

3. This Conference suggests that, with a view of checking the abuse of hospital accommodation by patients who, well able to pay, occupy the beds to the exclusion of the destitute sick, systematised inquiry be made into the circumstances of all applicants.

4. This Conference suggests that the expediency of establishing labour colonies, somewhat on the German plan, to which able-bodied mendicants and unemployed could be referred, should be brought under the notice of the charitable in the different colonies.

5. This Conference suggests to the Legislative bodies in each colony that maintenance orders, made in any one colony against deserting husbands or fathers of families or putative fathers of illegitimate children, be enforceable in any other colony on the original order; and that power should be given to issue maintenance orders where intention to desert is shown, or in defendant's absence if he have left the colony; and that power should be given for the issue and enforcement of maintenance orders against deserting mothers.

6. This Conference suggests to the Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions in Victoria that it is inadvisable to establish Foundling Hospitals, but recommends an extension of the “Home” system, where mothers and infants are both received.

The Suggestions Committee desires to express its fullest sympathy with several resolutions submitted to it, dealing with rescue and reformatory work, and the raising of the standard of public morality, &c., but thinks it wise to confine itself for the present to the foregoing suggestions arising out of the proceedings of the Conference.

JOHN STEPHENSON, *Chairman*.

LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

ACCOUNT of Receipts and Expenditure for the Year 1890.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance to credit, 31st December, 1889, as per last statement.....	102 16 0	Meat	267 15 0
Contributions.....	361 15 9	Bread.....	215 17 6
Refund of relief granted, &c.	6 0 2	Groceries	146 4 7
Government—		Secretary's Salary.....	125 0 0
Balance of conditional and unconditional grants for 1889.....	250 0 0	Commission collecting Subscriptions.....	17 14 9
On account, ditto, ditto, for 1890	250 0 0	Printing, Advertising, Lodgings, Temporary Relief, Midwifery Charges, &c.....	83 0 5
Treasury Bond matures	100 0 0	Firewood.....	48 10 10
		Blankets	13 16 0
		Equitable Building Society—Amount of Treasury Bond	100 0 0
		Delegates' Expenses attending Conference, Melbourne	6 0 0
		Balance to credit at Bank of Van Diemen's Land	46 12 10
	<u>£1070 11 11</u>		<u>£1070 11 11</u>
Balance to Cr.	46 12 10		
Audited and found correct.			
	G. BAKER, Auditor.		T. GLADMAN, Hon. Treasurer.
January, 1891.			

LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

STATEMENT of Assets, 1st January, 1891.

	£ s. d.
Equitable Building Society—Deposits	1788 0 6
Launceston Savings Investment and Building Society—Deposit..	403 18 8
To credit at Bank of Van Diemen's Land.....	46 12 10
	<u>£2238 12 0</u>
Audited and found correct.	
	G. BAKER.
1st January, 1891.	
	T. GLADMAN, Hon. Treasurer.