

(No. 56.)



1867.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

OUT-DOOR CHARITABLE RELIEF.

REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Innes, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
October 3, 1867.



THE Select Committee appointed to enquire into the System under which Out-door Charitable Relief is granted from the Public Revenue, and the Extent of such Relief, have the honor to submit the following Recommendations:—

1. THAT Out-door Relief of the Poor in Hobart Town and Launceston be committed to the Benevolent Societies in those towns.
2. That in each of the said towns an Inspector be appointed and salaried by the Government, to whom every case shall be submitted, and who, after personal inspection, shall have the power of suspending relief, pending a reference to the Government.
3. That a monthly Report be forwarded to the Government containing full details of each case, with the result of a personal enquiry by the Inspector, who shall visit and report upon the circumstances of each recipient.
4. That Paupers be relieved with money only in exceptional cases.
5. That the Government shall contribute four-fifths of the expenditure of the Benevolent Societies.
6. That the Warden of each Municipality or Police Magistrate of a District, assisted by other gentlemen to be nominated by the Governor, shall form a Relieving Board, and forward to the Government monthly reports similar to those required to be furnished from Hobart Town and Launceston.
7. That it is desirable that the inland transport of Paupers be prevented, and relief be afforded at the place where their poverty originated.

FRED. M. INNES, *Chairman.*

MINUTES of Proceedings of the SELECT COMMITTEE on OUT-DOOR CHARITABLE RELIEF.

MEMBERS.

MR. WILSON.
MR. KENNERLEY.
MR. SHERWIN.

MR. FYSH.
MR. INNES.

DAYS OF MEETING.

FRIDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER.

Present—Mr. Innes, *Chairman*, Mr. Kennerley, Mr. Sherwin.

WITNESS EXAMINED.—MR. B. T. SOLLY.

MR. B. T. SOLLY *called in and examined.*

By Mr. Innes.—Will you state to the Committee the system pursued in granting out-door relief? Upon application being made to the Colonial Secretary by Ministers of Religion, Wardens of Municipalities, Police Magistrates, or other individuals, the case is referred for inquiry to the Inspector of Police in Hobart Town and Launceston, or the Country Districts; where the information supplied is not sufficient, to the Warden or Police Magistrate of the District. The classes of cases admitted by the Government as justifying charitable assistance consist of those in which the father of the family is dead or has deserted his children, or where he is imprisoned, or physically or mentally disabled from working for their support. Excepting in cases where the mother may be unable to labour for the support of her family, the rate of relief is ordinarily

2s. 6d. per week for each child under twelve years of age, excepting one, thus:—If a woman's family consisted of five children under twelve, and her destitution was proved to the satisfaction of the Colonial Secretary, she would be granted an allowance of 10s. per week. Ordinarily, allowances are granted for the period of six months, their renewal requiring a fresh recommendation and a further investigation into the circumstances of the case. Where the report furnished by the enquiring Officer states that the woman is of bad character, given to drink, or unfit to have the disposal of a money allowance, it is customary to make arrangements for the expenditure of the grant in the payment of rent and the purchase of food and necessaries for the children: this is effected in Hobart Town through the Registrar of the Benevolent Society. In Launceston and the Country Districts such cases are rare; when they do occur, the agency of the Warden or the Police Magistrate is employed. Relief is sometimes granted to old people where there is evidence to prove their inability to labour for their own support: in these cases the allowance granted is less than the cost which would be incurred by the Government for their maintenance in an Invalid Depôt.

You have said the Inspector of Police is the Officer referred to respecting cases of relief in Hobart Town? I have.

Through whom, are you aware, are the enquiries referred to that Officer instituted? The enquiry is made through the Chief District Constable. Mr. Jones, with the assistance of one of the Detective Police, and lately by an Officer specially appointed for this duty with the rank and pay of a Sergeant of Police. The clerical work in connection with the applications, as also with those connected with the Queen's Asylum and the Hospital and Invalid Depôt in Hobart Town, is performed by another Officer, Sergeant Cattley, who also assists as far as he is able in the investigation of cases.

What amount of cases have you on the books at present wherein that relief was granted originally on the report of Mr. Jones, and the amount per week paid? And will you also be good enough to furnish a return of cases wherein Out-door relief is granted to parents or immediate relatives of children in the Orphan School, and the amount of such relief?

Will you be good enough to state whether at the instance of the Government action has at any time been taken under the Act No. 3 of 6 Victoria, and what number of instances?

Through whom are the periodical disbursements made both in Town and Country Districts? Through the subordinate officer of the Inspector of Police.

By Mr. Sherwin.—Within the period of six months is there any further investigation? It was impossible to maintain a thorough system of surveillance until the appointment of the Special Officer before referred to. The advantages of this supervision are already very apparent. It is proposed, with the consent of the Board of Education, that all children of sufficient age, whose parents are receiving charitable assistance, shall be admitted on the Free List of the Public Schools under the Board. The enquiring Officer will visit each of the four Schools in Hobart Town once a week, and ascertain from the Master how far the children of each family have attended during the previous week: and the parents will be given to understand that the continuance of the allowance will depend upon their sending their children regularly to School.

Do you find the applicants frequently from a distance? Yes, a large number.

Do you find the examination connected with the examination of correspondence engross a large amount of your time? Yes, a very considerable portion.

Has not this part of your office-work gradually grown to its present importance? Yes, as will be seen by the tabular return which the Committee have called for.

Do you think the expenditure in out-door relief, under present arrangements, has reached its maximum? I am afraid not.

Are not like cases with those you relieve assisted by the Committee of the Benevolent Society who also dispense Government funds? Yes.

What necessity is there for a duplicate system of relief? So far as the Towns are concerned it might be practicable to adopt one organisation, but for the Country it would not answer.

Can you suggest any method by which the system at present adopted can be simplified? I will answer that question in writing.

What check have you against a twofold system of relief,—relief by the Government and by the Benevolent Society? Have you detected any cases of this kind, or are any distinctly sanctioned by the Government? I always require that the report shall state where relief is given by the Benevolent Society: in several instances it has been judged necessary to supplement that relief.

By Mr. Innes.—Will you furnish a return of the amounts payable at the present time from week to week, giving particulars as to the cases, the age, sex, number in family, cause of destitution, the party on whose recommendation or application the claim has been recognised, religious denomination of recipient, parent—whether originally free or bond, locality in which recipient resides, sum expended in each year under the system of out-door relief since its commencement up to 1st July, 1867?

THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER.

11.30.—No quorum present. *Present*—Mr. Kennerley, Mr. Sherwin.

Mr. Solly laid upon the table the following Returns :—

1. Return of amounts payable at the present time, with names of recipients.
2. Return of Invalids.
3. Mr. Solly's reply to questions.
4. Mr. Jones's reply.
5. Return of sums expended in each year in out-door relief.
6. Return showing number of men and women supported by Government.
7. Blank forms of application.

FRIDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER.

Present—Mr. Innes, Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Fysh, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Kennerley.

Resolved, That the present system of dispensing relief to the poor through the office of the Colonial Secretary, or of subordinate agents, is unsatisfactory, and ought not to be continued.

That the alarming growth of the charges upon the Colony for the relief or maintenance of Paupers in Hospitals, Invalid Depots, &c., &c., calls for special legislation, with a view to the creation of proper local and central organisation for eleemosynary purposes, as also to provide means to defray the expenditure incident thereto.

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER.

Present—Mr. Wilson, Mr. Innes, Mr. Kennerley, Mr. Sherwin.

Mr. Sherwin presents a draft Report, which he reads, in which some alterations were made.

Mr. Wilson moved, That the Report be adopted.

Question put and passed.

MR. SOLLY'S REPLY TO QUESTIONS.

Can you suggest any method by which the system at present adopted can be simplified?

I would suggest an entire change in the present system,—one which would have the effect of relieving the Colonial Secretary of the duty of considering and deciding upon such cases.

But the plan I propose refers not only to out-door relief, but has reference to all Institutions for the maintenance of the sick, the destitute, and the orphan.

From the experience I have had I am convinced that, both on the ground of economy and to ensure the satisfactory working of any system for the relief of those requiring assistance at the public cost, all the Charitable Institutions in the Colony should be under one head, especially as relates to the issue of the authority for admission, or, in respect to out-door relief, the decision as to the amount to be granted.

The question frequently arises; whether it be the better course to admit an applicant into an Invalid Depôt, or to afford out-door relief, or whether the children of an applicant should be admitted into the Queen's Asylum? And again, it often happens that the father is an in-patient of the Hospital, and that the mother and children are left destitute by his inability to labour for their support. In all these cases, the enquiry once made, and the requisite information obtained and recorded, it would suffice for the final settlement of any application on account of any member of the family; but if the control of Out-door Relief is separated from that of the Depôts, Hospitals, and Orphan Asylum, two sets of enquiries would have to be made and two records kept, independently of which—unless a perfect understanding and interchange of information is maintained between the authorities controlling respectively the two sources of relief—assistance may be unduly or injudiciously granted.

I have said that, as regards the two principal towns, the machinery of the Benevolent Societies might be made available for the distribution of Out-door Relief. But there are objections, in addition to what I have already stated, even to that system; for persons from the country districts, where they have been in receipt of aid from Government, often remove to Town, where their antecedents are unknown; and if these persons were aware that, by thus changing their residence, they would change the spring or source from whence they derived the charitable allowances, they might and would, by false statements, seek to impose upon the Officers of the Society, who would not have the same facilities as the Government possess for obtaining accurate information from the authorities where the applicant formerly resided.

In all cases, unity of action is the best security against imposition; and as it could not be expected that the Officers of the Benevolent Societies could undertake to enquire into all cases in the respective divisions of the Island, there would still exist the necessity for two separate organisations,—and the result would, I fear, lead to but slight improvement in the existing system.

I would therefore propose that an Officer should be appointed, in whom the Government had perfect confidence, to be called the "Comptroller of Charitable Institutions." He would be Ministerially under the Colonial Secretary, but as "Head of a Department" he would have charge of the Hospitals and Invalid Depôts in Hobart Town and Launceston, and the Queen's Asylum, as well as the disbursement of all Government Out-door Relief. It would be his duty to inspect the various Establishments frequently, and conduct all correspondence with the Executive Officers in charge, submitting all matters of importance connected with the internal economy of the Institutions to the Colonial Secretary, but conducting all routine duty and authorising all admissions without reference.

He would, of course, require clerical and other assistance, but, I think, less than is now employed, while the duty would be, I anticipate, more efficiently performed.

I would suggest that, as regards Out-door Relief in the two towns, the Comptroller should issue an authority to the Registrars of the respective Benevolent Societies for the expenditure of a definite weekly sum in each case, forwarding at the same time, for the information of the Society (but to be returned), the documents connected with the application; and it would rest with the Officers of the Society, unless special directions were given, whether the relief was afforded in money, in payment of rent to the landlord, or in provisions.

By adopting this course, the Society would be made acquainted with every Town case entertained by the Government, and that fact being once known, it would tend to check attempts at imposition.

If practicable, it would materially assist his labours if such an Officer had the benefit of the advice and support of (say) four gentlemen who would afford their services once a week gratuitously, their functions being to aid him in the consideration of doubtful questions; and while the actual responsibility to the Government would remain with him, their practical assistance and experience would tend to ensure sounder decisions in cases of difficulty and importance.

The Estimates for the several Institutions would all pass through this Office; and suggestions, based upon a thorough knowledge of the internal economy and working of each, would, I believe, lead to economy in their preparation, and prove more satisfactory both to the Executive and to Parliament.

Of one thing I am confident, that, independently of increased efficiency in the general management of our Charitable Institutions, the saving that might be effected would far exceed the amount of salary that would have to be paid to an Officer such as I have suggested.

RETURN of the Sums expended in each Year under the system of Out-door Relief since its commencement to the 30th June, 1867.

1862.....	£	s.	d.
1862.....	48	14	6
1863.....	235	14	1
1864.....	452	16	9
1865.....	1154	5	4
1866.....	2119	6	3
To 30 June, 1867.....	1327	11	4
TOTAL.....	5338	8	3

W. LOVETT, Assistant Colonial Treasurer.

Colonial Treasury, 24th September, 1867.

MEMO.—Amount recoverable from the Imperial Government for the Year 1866, £145 8s. 4d.

RETURN showing the Number of Men, Women, and Children who on the 30th of June were partially supported by Government, and who under former practice would have all been admitted into the Queen's Asylum, or the Male or Female Invalid Depôt.

DISTRICT.	No. of Men.	Women.	Children.
Hobart Town	2	5	94
Launceston	1	..	19
Franklin	1	1	26
Kingston	2	2	21
Westbury .....	..	..	21
New Norfolk	1	1	11
Sorell	1	1	7
Campbell Town .....	..	..	5
Oatlands .....	..	..	4
Green Ponds	2	1	4
Longford .....	..	..	4
Glamorgan .....	..	..	3
Glenorchy	3	3	3
Horton .....	..	..	3
Hamilton .....	..	..	2
Deloraine .....	..	..	2
Brighton .....	..	..	1
George Town	1	1	..
	14	15	230

Male Children

122

Female ditto

108

TOTAL.....

230

Cost in the respective Institutions.

Men and Women, 29 at £18.....

£

522

Children, 230 at £20

4600

£5122

MEMO.

These Men, Women, and Children now cost the Government £2093 per annum, but £151 17s. 8d. of that amount is paid from Imperial Funds.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 29th August, 1866.

B. TRAVERS SOLLY.

SYNOPSIS of the following Sixty Invalids.

CIVIL CONDITION.						RELIGION.					
Male.		Female.		Unknown.		Male.		Female.		Unknown.	
Free.	Bond.	Free.	Bond.	Male.	Female.	Protestant.	Roman Catholic.	Protestant.	Roman Catholic.	Male.	Female.
4	20	12	17	3	4	22	2	24	9	3	—

Amount of Expenditure per week..... £10 17s. 0d.

District.	Male.	Female.	Civil Condition.				Religion.				Amount per Week, and Date of Commencement.	Total Amt. per Week. s. d.		
			Male.		Female.		Male.		Female.					
			Bond.	Free.	Bond.	Free.	Protst.	R.C.	Protst.	R.C.				
Bothwell, 3 cases.	1	..	1	1	3 6	from 1 April, 1867	} 12 0
	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	5 0	1 June, 1867
	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	3 6	24 June, 1867
Gordon, 5.	..	1	1	1	..	5 0	April, 1865	} 24 0	
	1	1	0	..	0	..	1	..	1	..	6 0	22 Nov. 1865		
	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	4 0	1 July, 1866		
	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	5 0	1 May, 1867		
New Norfolk, 2.	..	1	1	1	..	3 6	1 May, 1865	} 8 6	
	1	..	0	..	..	..	0	..	..	..	5 0	1 Feb. 1866
George Town, 2.	1	1	1	..	0	..	1	..	1	..	10 0	1 May, 1865	} 13 6	
	1	..	0	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3 6	1 Oct. 1865
Glenorchy, 2.	..	1	1	1	..	4 0	1 Dec. 1865	} 11 0	
	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	7 0	1 June, 1866		
Green Ponds, 1.	1	..	1	1	4 0	4 April, 1866	4 0	
Sorell, 6.	1	1	1	6 0	1 June, 1866	} 31 0	
	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	6 0	1 July, 1866
	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	7 0	1 Sept. 1866		
	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	5 0	1 May, 1867
	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3 6	1 July, 1867
Hobart Town, 24.	..	1	0	1	..	5 0	Sept. 1865	} 92 6	
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	2 0	25 Oct. 1865
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	3 6	1 Nov. 1865
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	5 0	1 Jan. 1866
	..	1	..	..	0	..	..	..	1	..	3 6	1 Jan. 1866
	1	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	10 0	9 Jan. 1866
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	3 0	26 July, 1866
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	4 6	24 July, 1866
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	3 6	14 Aug. 1866
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	3 0	1 Sept. 1866
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	4 6	15 Sept. 1866
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	4 6	17 Oct. 1866
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	2 0	1 Nov. 1866
	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3 6	1 Jan. 1867
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	5 0	24 Dec. 1866
	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	5 0	1 Jan. 1867
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	2 0	15 Feb. 1867
	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	3 0	1 Mar. 1867
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	3 6	1 April, 1867
	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2 6	1 July, 1867
1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	3 6	23 Aug. 1867	
1	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	5 0	1 Sept. 1867*	
1	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	3 6	1 Sept. 1867	
1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2 0	14 Sept. 1867	
Richmond, 1.	1	..	1	1	3 0	1 Sept. 1867	3 0	
Hobart, 4.	1	1	1	2 6	7 Nov. 1866	} 17 6	
	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	2 6	14 Feb. 1867.
	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	7 6	19 Aug. 1867		
	1	1	1	..	1	..	0	..	..	1	5 0	1 Sept. 1867

* Now in Hospital.

CIVIL CONDITION.				RELIGION OF PARENTS.			
MALE.		FEMALE.		FATHER.		MOTHER.	
<i>Bond.</i>	<i>Free.</i>	<i>Bond.</i>	<i>Free.</i>	<i>P.</i>	<i>R. C.</i>	<i>P.</i>	<i>R. C.</i>
110	46	82	76	107	47	87	70
Unknown 3		Unknown 2		Unknown 5		Unknown 2	

		£	s.	d.
Hobart Town.....	273 Children cost	26	11	2
Hobart	51 ditto	5	7	0
Brighton	7 ditto	0	14	0
Campbell Town	2 ditto	0	12	6
Deloraine	20 ditto	1	19	6
Franklin	45 ditto	3	12	0
Green Ponds	7 ditto	0	18	0
Hamilton	3 ditto	0	5	0
Launceston	19 ditto	2	4	0
Longford	2 ditto	0	7	6
New Norfolk	16 ditto	1	7	0
Oatlands	9 ditto	1	2	6
Richmond	9 ditto	0	15	0
Sorell	7 ditto	0	13	6
Westbury	20 ditto	1	13	6
Gordon	20 ditto	1	18	6
Glamorgan	4 ditto	0	12	0
	<u>514</u>	<u>£50</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>

The above is a Synopsis of the Return of Weekly Payments made to Parents and others by the Government in Tasmania.

MEMO. of the Cost of Charitable Institutions and Out-door Relief for 1866.

	<i>Imperial.</i>	<i>Colonial.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	£	£	£
Queen's Asylum	2771	7486	10,257
General Hospital, Hobart Town	497	6741	7238
Ditto, Launceston	124	3217	3341
Brickfields .....	..	..	4206
Out-door relief .....	..	..	3000
Paupers at Port Arthur .....	..	..	1093
Grants in aid of Benevolent Societies ..	..	..	1300
Grants in aid of Reformatory .....	..	..	100
Grants in aid of Ragged School .....	..	..	200
	<u>3392</u>	<u>17,444</u>	<u>30,735</u>