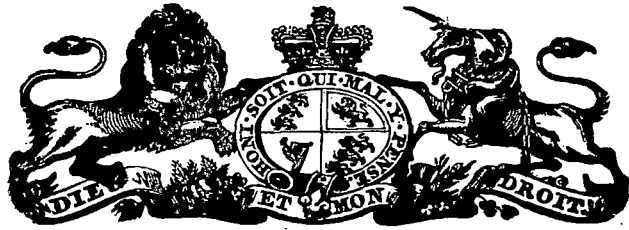


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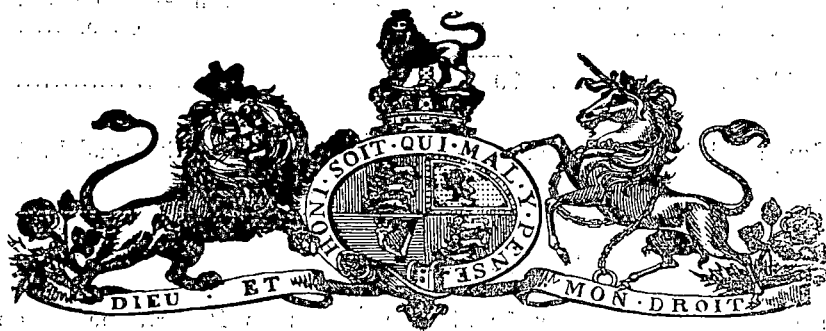
1889.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, HOBART:

REPORT FOR 1888.

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



TWENTY-NINTH Annual Report of the HOBART BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

In presenting the Report of the work done during the year 1888, the Executive Committee invite particular attention to items marked for special consideration.

It is not easy for persons unacquainted with the working of the Institution to gauge the amount of constant supervision that is required in order that the Society may do the work for which it was originated, viz., "to relieve the poor, the distressed, and the afflicted, and thereby discountenance as much as possible mendicancy and vagrancy, and to encourage industry among the indigent."

We are met face to face with this problem, how are the ranks of poverty and wretchedness to be reduced? For we find in not a few instances that for three generations the same families have been receiving aid either from this or some similar institution, and to all appearances the young generation growing up will follow in the footsteps of their parents.

But against this we have a hopeful sign in several of those who for a long time past have received help from this Society. Having improved their circumstances they have tendered grateful thanks for what has been done for them, and expressed themselves as not needing further assistance. Coming back to the work done during the year, 483 persons have received aid, and 56 cases of sickness have been supplied with medical comforts in the shape of cocoa, cornflour, and sago, and orders given for medicine at the hospital; 27 widows have had their wants and the wants of their children carefully attended to. But what about the husbands away, in gaol, and out of work? Some have gone away never intending to return; and as to those in gaol, could not some scheme be devised by the Government providing for a portion of their earnings to be given towards the support of their families? Those out of work must, in the majority of instances, it is feared, be numbered with the idle, the careless, and the unfit.

The Registrar's Report for the year 1888 is as follows:—

On the books from last year there were 60 cases, comprising 159 individuals. The totals for the year were 483, comprising 66 males, 133 females, 284 children—483.

Of the adults there were—50 cases of sickness, 8 husbands in gaol, 21 husbands out of work, 2 accidents, 22 husbands away, 27 widows, 17 destitute persons, 6 aged and infirm; total, 153.

Relief was given to 20 individuals going up country seeking employment, or going to the Dépôt at New Town.

The rations issued during the year were—Bread, 30218 lbs.; sugar, 4022 lbs.; tea, 749 lbs.; oatmeal, 1029 lbs.; rice, 2550 lbs. And for sick cases—Cornflour, 51 lbs.; sago, 40½ lbs.; cocoa, 24 lbs.

Wood and coals were given by friends to the amount of £64, which enabled the Society to supply fuel to the poor during the winter months. Blankets were also given by three friends to the amount of £8 3s. A friend, "Sympathy," sent £10, and another from M.A.G., £5, to be given in special cases in money, blankets, &c. It will be seen by the current account that the sum of £32 0s. 8d. was paid to the men working in the wood-yard, and that 147 dozen of kindling wood has been sold, amounting to £7 7s. 4d. Lodging tickets and rents for the homeless had been given amounting to £24 12s. 6s., and for special cases and cases for the hospital a sum of £7 13s. had been expended.

The Christmas and New Year treat, which was much appreciated, was provided at a cost of £31 2s., independent of generous gifts, as the subjoined statement will show:—

Flour—Purchased.....	450 lbs.	Raisins & Currants—Purchased.	168 lbs.
Given.....	250 lbs.	Given.....	165 lbs.
Total.....	700 lbs.	Total.....	333 lbs.

Cake—Purchased, 700 lbs.; packets of Lollies for the children 100, and 14 lbs. Paper Bags.

The usual investigation of cases has been made throughout the year:

The collection of subscriptions has been continued.

In addition to the Society's cases set forth in the Registrar's Report, the Committee exercise supervision, on behalf of the Government, of pauper cases in Hobart and suburbs, entailing a large amount of time and attention, as the subjoined list of cases will in some measure indicate.

There were on the books of the Government account a total of 297 adults and 145 children, distributed as follows:—56 women; 11 single men, blind, aged and invalid; 19 married couples, very aged; 21 widows, with 69 children; 4 families, men blind, 12 children; 2 women, husbands away, 13 children; 4 women, deserted, 11 children; 3 women, fathers invalids, 12 children; 1 woman, husband in depôt, 3 children; 5 women, husbands under sentences, 25 children.—Total children, 145.

Nineteen cases were transferred from the Society; 15 cases were reinstated after being off the books for some time for various reasons; 27 cases were taken off the books, their circumstances having improved by husbands discharged from gaol and able to earn something, others being kept by their friends, widows married, 24; 2 cases, ditto hospital; 9 deaths; 12 cases to the lying-in establishment; 568 cases sent to the Depôt at New Town.

The total cost in cash was	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Rations distributed:—	...	246 16 6
Bread, 78,860 lbs.....	314 4 0	
Tea, 3049 lbs.....	108 0 0	
Sugar, 16,667½ lbs.....	118 0 0	
Oatmeal, 8953 lbs.....	60 10 5	
Rice, 8953 lbs.....	74 13 10	
		675 8 3
		<u>£922 4 9</u>

Taking the year 1880, when the smallest amount was distributed by the Administrator of Charitable Grants for the 10 years previously, as recorded in the Report of the Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions, Appendix B.—viz. £2234,—and the total cost of 1888—£922,—it will be seen that a saving to the Government of £1312 is effected, so that the Society is not only doing a good work among the poor, but assisting the Government to reduce the charitable allowances.

The records of the Society reveal the startling fact that over 400 children in Hobart and suburbs are leaning on public charity for bread. Many of these little ones are being trained to pauperism, coming as they do for their own and their parents' dole. What manner of men and women will these children be? Are there not settlers in the country districts who would be glad to train the boys to labour and the girls in the many departments of domestic life? Probably some direct preparatory training would be necessary before these children could be recommended either for town or country service. The vital issue remains, shall these children be trained and made useful colonists?—shall they continue to be trained as paupers, or shall pauperism be restricted to a very narrow circle indeed? Such is the consideration which is respectfully submitted to the subscribers of the Benevolent Society, and to every colonist taking an interest in the well-being and prosperity of the land.

Appended is a copy letter forwarded to the Hon. the Chief Secretary.*

J. W. SIMMONS, *Chairman of the Executive Committee B. S.*

* This letter has been printed separately. See Parliamentary Paper, No. 11.

INVESTED CAPITAL.

	£	s.	d.
Debenture, due January 1st, 1893.....	2000	0	0
" " January 15th, 1890.....	500	0	0
" " October 10th, 1890.....	500	0	0
" " April 1st, 1890.....	600	0	0
" " " 1891.....	100	0	0
" " October 5th, 1894.....	500	0	0
Deposit V.D.L. Bank, due April 14th, 1889.....	300	0	0
" " " February 25th, 1890.....	116	17	0
" " " April 14th, 1889.....	265	0	0
" " M.P. Building Society, December 6th, 1889.....	600	0	0
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	£5481	17	0
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Examined, 12th March, 1889.

ALFRED CRISP, *Mayor.*

J. W. SIMMONS, *Chairman of the Executive Committee.*