

(No. 7.)



1864.

T A S M A N I A.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, LAUNCESTON.

REPORT FOR 1863.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, 29 June, 1864.



REPORT of the LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, December, 1863.

THE Committee of the Launceston Benevolent Society appointed at the last Annual Meeting held in September, 1862, having found it necessary to postpone the time of holding the Annual Meeting to the end of the year, have now called the subscribers to meet them, in order that they may give an account of their stewardship.

The amount of destitution that has been relieved during the period that has elapsed since their appointment can only be understood and rightly estimated by those persons who have to administer the relief, and no recital of the various cases can adequately describe the benefits conferred on the whole community by the operations of this Society.

The numbers relieved during the present year are as follows; viz.—83 Men, 106 Women, 292 Children. 36 Women with families have been relieved whose husbands are away, and 12 whose husbands were in prison. A very large proportion of the want and distress which they have been called upon to alleviate may easily be traced to the depravity and improvidence of the class of persons relieved; and your Committee have been most painfully impressed with the difficulty of deciding in these cases between refusing bread to the destitute or appearing to countenance the unworthy.

They avail themselves of this opportunity of stating their firm conviction that the present plan of relieving the poor by private agency with funds obtained from a comparatively few individuals residing principally in Launceston is objectionable in principle and inadequate in result, the amount collected being less each succeeding year, and many persons who can well afford to give largely absolutely refusing their aid altogether; and notwithstanding the rule requiring one month's residence in Launceston previous to an applicant being relieved, they find that a great number of the poor from the country Districts come to Launceston when sickness and want overtake them. For these and other reasons they consider it to be the duty of the Legislature to provide funds from the General Revenue, and to appoint administrators from among the residents in town, who should be responsible for the proper discharge of their duties.

The Funds of the Society having become exhausted in October last, the Committee were compelled to reduce the amount of relief, and ultimately to advertise their intention to discontinue the operations of the Society. This induced a requisition to the Mayor of Launceston to call a Public Meeting, and at the said Meeting a number of persons volunteered to collect sufficient funds for the remainder of the year. This has been done, and your Committee have thereby been enabled to claim a further sum of £75 from the Government, which will account for the large balance in the Treasurer's hands; but as the expenditure of the Society averages £40 per month this sum will be exhausted in February, and the question again arises what is to be done for the future.

A considerable amount of correspondence has passed between your Committee and the present and former Ministries; but the result shows that nothing further will be done by the Government while the present arrangements exist.

Your Committee, therefore, while they are most willing to dispense the relief placed at their disposal, consider it would be supporting a system which they disapprove of if they were to canvas the town again for subscriptions; they therefore decline to take any steps to obtain funds by a plan they consider so objectionable.

JAS. JNO. HUDSON, *Chairman.*
C. T. WEETMAN, *Treasurer.*
JNO. TEVELEIN, *Secretary.*

THE LAUNCESTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY in Account with Treasurer.

Dr.	£ s. d.	Cr.	£ s. d.
1862. Balance in hand.....	92 6 8	Expenditure as per accounts audited	682 16 2
1863. Collections	204 15 6	Balance	130 8 2
Proceeds of Concerts, &c.	50 11 0		
Grant in Aid, 1862	100 0 0		
Ditto, 1863	300 0 0		
Extra Collection after Public Meeting	65 11 2		
	<u>£813 4 4</u>		
Balance.....	130 8 2		

Audited by J. Dakin and found correct.

C. T. WEETMAN, *Hon. Treasurer.*
 JAS. JNO. HUDSON, *Chairman.*