

1884.  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

# REPORT

OF A

COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

TO CONSIDER THE

CAPITATION GRANT FOR ORPHANAGES.

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*Laid on the Council Table by the Honorable M. Fraser, C.M.G.,  
27th August, 1884.—Ordered to be Printed.*

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PERTH:  
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# REPORT.

His Excellency the Governor having been pleased to appoint the undersigned to be members of a Committee to make an inquiry as to the desirability, or otherwise, of increasing the amount paid per head as a grant from Public Funds to the Orphanages, we beg to report as follows:—

The Committee, being desirous of obtaining the most reliable information on the question submitted to them, invited the attendance of the certified managers of the several Orphanages which receive grants-in-aid from public funds, namely, the Very Revd. Doan Gogg, Manager of Perth Girls Protestant Orphanage; the Very Revd. M. Gibney, Vicar General, Manager of Roman Catholic Boys Orphanage at Subiaco, and Girls Orphanage in Perth; the Venerable Archdeacon Brown, Manager of the Boys Protestant Orphanage at the Middle Swan.

From the Minutes of the proceedings herewith forwarded for His Excellency's information, it will be seen that the minimum daily cost per head of the orphans taken collectively in the four Orphanages above referred to is 11½d., the maximum cost 1s. 2d.

It appears that the cost of the Orphanages, beyond the Government grant of 8d. per head, has been principally met by contributions from bazaars and small sums from private sources, with the exception of the Roman Catholic Orphanages, where, after payment of actual necessary expenses from Government allowance and local contributions, there remained deficits averaging £336 for the years 1881, 1882, and 1883; and the Manager states that were it not for special funds raised by extraordinary efforts outside the Colony, from which he was enabled to meet these deficits, the Institution must before this have been closed.

We would specially bring under notice that the Managers are unable, in the absence of more liberal aid, to provide for the inmates of these institutions absolute necessities, such as increased accommodation, more nutritious diet, lavatories, &c.,—wants which, if supplied, would materially add to the cleanliness, comfort, and health of the children. The Managers of the Boys Orphanages have brought prominently forward the advantages which would follow from the introduction of a system of industrial training, which at present is found to be impossible from the want of sufficient funds. We have come to the conclusion, with the foregoing facts before us, that it is required on financial, and desirable on philanthropic grounds, to increase from public funds the present grant to the Orphanages of 8d. per head to 1s., an amount which will only be equal to the allowance granted annually to the inmates of Native Missions.

In concluding our Report, we think it right to bring under Your Excellency's special notice a statement made by Archdeacon Brown, with reference to industrial training in the Orphanages, namely: "No regular system of outdoor training is carried out, chiefly because of the restrictions that seem to me to be imposed under 'The Elementary Education Act,' as applied to industrial training." It appears that under the provisions of the Act an attendance of a certain number of hours daily is required before a grant can be made; this does not leave sufficient time for the industrial training, which we consider of primary importance towards enabling the orphans to obtain their future livelihood. It therefore appears to us worthy of careful consideration, whether it would not be advisable to relax the provisions of the Act, or amend it, so as to allow more time for industrial training without a forfeiture of the Educational Grant.

A. O'GRADY LEFROY,  
W. E. MARMON,  
G. RANDELL.

Perth, 3rd June, 1884.



After payment of actual necessary expenses from Government allowance and local contributions, there remained the following deficits:—

<b>BOYS ORPHANAGE:</b>		
For 1881	...	...
" 1882	...	...
" 1883	...	...
		£347 12 11
<b>GIRLS ORPHANAGE:</b>		
For 1881	...	...
" 1882	...	...
" 1883	...	...
		£410 8 8

which were met by the Manager from special funds.

- 1.—The flow of local private charity has been so small that, were it to cease altogether, it could not materially affect the institution.
- I have no reason to think that private charity would be lessened in any appreciable degree; in fact, the local contributions are so small that but for the special funds referred to in my reply to Question No. 2, and raised by extraordinary efforts outside the Colony, the institutions must before this have been closed.
- 4.—The previous answers show that an increased vote would be expended in reducing the annual deficit, but even supposing that this could be met from any special source, I can still see how to expend Government may see fit to give the institution; notably, in the establishment of a system of industrial training.
- 5.—The amount contributed towards the partial support of children by their parents and friends was, in—

<b>BOYS ORPHANAGE:</b>		
1881	...	...
1882	...	...
1883	...	...
		£41 0 0
<b>GIRLS ORPHANAGE:</b>		
1881	...	...
1882	...	...
1883	...	...
		£74 16 0
		82 5 0
		95 6 8

The Venerable Archdeacon Brown, Manager of the Middle Swan Boys' Protestant Orphanage, stated, in reply to questions referred to him, as follows:—

- 1.—The cost per head for each orphan is as follows:—
- |            |     |         |                               |
|------------|-----|---------|-------------------------------|
| For 1880-1 | ... | £18 0 0 | per annum or 1s. 6d. per diem |
| " 1881-2   | ... | 18 15 0 | " 1s. 6d. "                   |
| " 1882-3   | ... | 21 0 0  | " 1s. 2s. "                   |
- 2.—This question cannot easily be answered, as the orphanages draw from a common fund, and few subscriptions are given to the separate institutions. The Swan Orphanage drew, in the last year referred to, in round numbers, £410 as its share of the Government subsidy, including the Grant for an Assisted School. It received from private sources:—
- |                             |     |          |
|-----------------------------|-----|----------|
| From General Fund           | ... | £172 0 0 |
| Special Subscriptions       | ... | 10 10 0  |
| Towards private maintenance | ... | 17 10 0  |
- 3.—I do not think that increased payment would tend to lessen the flow of private charity; there is not the least danger of this. The deficiency made up by subscriptions, donations, and the biennial bazaars never covers the actual wants of the institution, but leaves it deficient in many things that, though not necessary to its existence, are very essential to its success.
- I believe there are no institutions in the Colony so readily contributed to as the orphanages. May I respectfully add, there is on many minds a strong feeling that in contributing towards the maintenance of pauper children somewhat less than two-thirds of their cost of maintenance, and so weakening the general capabilities of the funds, the Government is hardly meeting its fair obligations.
- 4.—The erection of a verandah is greatly needed for the comfort, if not the health, of the children and of the adult inmates of the institution. A good lavatory is required, and may well take precedence of the verandah. All the clothes washing is done on the premises, and a separate and commodious washhouse is greatly needed. A playground for the boys in very hot and in wet weather is much required. An institution of the same nature in England would be replete with conveniences that we have never had funds to provide.
- 5.—Parents or friends of children contribute scarcely anything towards their maintenance; the law gives no real aid, it can imprison a drunken parent, but this is no relief to the funds.

Archdeacon Brown was further asked:—

- (a).—Whether any regular system of industrial training is pursued at the Swan Orphanage?
- Reply.—No regular system of outdoor training is carried out, chiefly because of the restrictions that seem to me to be imposed under "The Elementary Education Act," as applied to industrial training; the children are, however, all employed at work in and out of doors.
- (b).—Do you consider that it would be to the interests of the children and the community, that a system of industrial training should obtain in such institutions?
- Reply.—I consider that it would be in every respect beneficial.