

LOCAL AND GENERAL.

MAILS.—The mails which left Hobart on the 4th of June arrived in London on the 7th inst.

TELEGRAPHIC.—Communication with West Coast stations and Waratah was interrupted at 10.30 a.m. to-day.

CLAIM AND COVERMENT.—A lively discussion took place in the Legislative Council yesterday as to whether outside earnings and coverings for goods should pay duty. It appears that some goods that are imported into the colony come in iron tanks, which are of commercial value after they are emptied, whilst other goods are sent to the colony in boxes that also command a decent figure when their contents are taken out. The Government have had their eyes opened in the value of some of the outside coverings, and are determined to place a duty upon them. Some members of the Council thought that a line should be drawn at gin and brandy cases, as these were only fit for firewood when empty. Another member strongly objected to full ale, spirit, and wine bottles being subjected to duty. Ultimately, the clause bearing on the subject of the imposed duty was amended, so as to exempt any ordinary outside casing or covering from duty, but making outside or inside cases of commercial value for other purposes after it had been used, liable to duty.

SLAUGHTERING CARCASSES.—The question of the slaughtering of animals intended for human consumption being confined to the places provided for that purpose, under the eye of the officers there, formed subject of a little discussion during the consideration of the Launceston Corporation Bill in Committee in the House of Assembly yesterday. It was pointed out that at the present time meat was allowed to come into the city which was slaughtered outside. This, of course, should be subject to official inspection, but the facilities offered for evasion of such scrutiny were many, and were, no doubt, availed of. Mr Archer pointed out that it was somewhat of an anomaly that whilst the butchers objected to beef or mutton coming into the city, no objection was raised to pork at all, which was an article specially liable to transmit disease. Mr Sutton would have liked to have a clause introduced into the Bill giving effect to this, but as he did not wish to hinder progress, his main object being to pass the Bill through the Committee, he would allow it to stand over until next session of Parliament, when a small Bill to meet the requirements of the case could be brought before the House.

WHO WANTS WORK?—Some time ago a carpenter was sent to Green Ponds to fill a vacancy there, but it was found that the Benevolent Society yesterday that the situation was still open. It appears that there are three carpenters out of work at Green Ponds, but not one would accept the bill.

DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES.—Ministers, in continuation of their retrenchment policy, have decided on some changes in the officials of the Legislative Council and the Assembly. Mr E. C. Nowell, the present Clerk of the Council, and Mr F. A. Packer, Chief Clerk of the Assembly, will both retire on pensions at the end of the year. The position of Clerk of the Legislative Council will be given to Mr J. K. Reid, the present Assistant Clerk of that Chamber; whilst Mr H. T. Manning, Assistant Clerk of the Assembly, will succeed Mr Packer. By these changes the duties of both branches of the Legislature will in future be conducted by two officials instead of four.

THE SHEET-ANCHOR OF THE GOVERNMENT.—Mr Crosby informed the Council yesterday that the Government would lose a considerable amount of revenue in the passage of the Customs Bill through both Houses. With this in view he would be inclined to move that the Bill be only in operation two years. Under the Act the Government would lose some £13,000 revenue as compared with the Act now in force. The Chief Secretary said that he was perfectly unprepared to hear a member of the Council make such a proposal. The Customs was the sheet-anchor of the fiscal

of the Council make such a proposal. The Customs was the sheet-anchor of the fiscal system of the colony. If they limited the present Bill to two years they would at once part with their power of holding on to the Customs. By retaining this power they could deal with finance in every possible way. Mr Crosby contended that the rich man was looked upon as the man who should pay. If they drove him out of the colony everything would go down in value. Real estate and incomes were being taxed to their utmost, and if revenue does not come from those and other sources it would mean possibly repudiation by the colony. The subject then dropped.

THE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.—The usual weekly meeting of the Executive Committee was held yesterday afternoon. Present—The Rev. J. W. Simmons (chairman), and Messrs G. S. Seabrook, G. Kerr, T. A. Reynolds, J. Haily, and C. S. Butler. The report for the week ending July 12 was read, which showed that 81 full and 104 half-rations had been supplied, and that 166 families consisting of 127 men, 156 women, and 416 children, a total of 728 persons had been relieved. Fifteen applications were received for aid. The following donations had been received and were thankfully acknowledged—A box of fish from Messrs Wilson and Greeting, Mr C. D. Haywood, scores, a bag of carrots from Mr Sutton of Yanbridge.

THE WEATHER.—The weather during the past week has been exceptionally cold, which change may be attributed to the heavy fall of snow that has taken place on Mount Wellington and the adjoining ranges. The caretaker of the Springs but reports that the snow is ten inches deep round his dwelling, and that the cold is driving the wattle birds and parrots down to the sheltered gullies in droves.

A GOVERNMENT CASE.—A married couple, aged 74 and 65 respectively, reported to the Registrar of the Benevolent Society that they had walked from Green Ponds to Hobart in search of work, and required food. Mr Wilt said the applicants were fit subjects for the New Town Invalid Depot, but they would not go there, they would sooner starve. The Society gives relief to those in need, but they feel rather awkwardly placed when an aged couple who are really too old to work come to them for assistance, and will not be helped by Government who is the proper party for such a case.

A VERDICT QUESTION.—Juries that have been from time to time unpannelled to deliberate and decide on the case of death of any person have, when the cause is plainly one of suicide, giving the deceased the benefit of the doubt and brought in a verdict of temporary insanity. One of the jurymen at yesterday's coronal enquiry on J. W. Keeling, in reply to a query remarked that he did not believe any man could be in his proper senses and take his own life. Throughout the evidence not one of the witnesses alleged that Keeling was not in his right mind or eccentric in his behavior. A detective went so far as to say he was of a happy disposition and took the world comfortably. But the remark of the jurymen had weight with it and influenced the remainder into bringing in verdict of temporary insanity. The question is a serious one seeing that it cuts both ways. If a man cannot take his own life in his right senses, can a rash take another person's life in a balanced state of mind? The principal defence of murderers recently is that of insanity, but judges and doctors have clearly proved that most of the criminals have been perfectly sane at the time of the deed. For a man who is low-spirited and embarrassed, and who sees no end of trouble in this world, to take his own life to rid himself of all earthly cares may not be a right thing to do, but can it be called an insane action?

A THOUGHTFUL GIFT.—A praiseworthy example has been offered to the fishermen of the port by two toilers of the deep—Messrs Wilson and Greeting. Knowing their haul of fish would be more than they could dispose of through the city, they brought a box of fish of about 50 down to the Benevolent Society, where they were thankfully received. The Chairman said some families had taken a dozen or 15 of the fish with many protestations of

some families had taken a dozen or 15 of the fish with many protestations of thanks, but others were particular as to how many they took and the size of them. Among some of them there was no condition of hard-uppihness. Now that fish is so plentiful many of the fishermen could easily forward a supply of them to the Society for the benefit of the poor without feeling the loss.

THE UNEMPLOYED DEMONSTRATION.—One of the Committee of the Hobart Benevolent Society remarked yesterday afternoon that the recent open-air demonstration of the unemployed, together with the caricature of a skeleton, was not right, as it gave visitors a wrong impression of the pines. The distress was not so great as was made out. There were perhaps many cases of want that were not taken before the Society for relief, but from the tone of some people one would think all the unemployed were in a state of actual starvation. The colony had passed through a high state of prosperity, and was now suffering a reaction; but when it came to light that as per day in the country was refused and as per week and rations declined, it put a different aspect on the question. The difficult matter was to separate the wheat from the chaff, and until that was done, the unemployed difficulty would not be solved. Even some of those who were obtaining assistance from the Society were fastidious as to what they took, and the distress would be greatly alleviated if some of the unemployed were to accept what was offered to go into the country.

GO INTO THE COUNTRY.—A single young man applied to the Benevolent Society yesterday for relief. Fortunately, a member of the Committee knew the applicant, and informed his colleagues that the man was an excellent tradesman, and could get work if he would take it. The applications for this kind of relief are frequent, and the Committee are now determined to carefully refrain from relieving single men. They have only themselves to look after, and the country is undoubtedly the best place for them when there is no work for them in the city. In future the Committee are going to stop giving them assistance, and recommend their going away out of the town to help themselves.

DECIDED.—The usual fortnightly meeting of the Fern Bower Lodge, No. 281, was held last evening. The meeting was opened at 8 p.m., Brother F. Gibbons, A.D., being in the chair. After the usual business was over the following officers were installed and invested with their collars of office for the ensuing half-year by the District President, Brother Ford (Oak Leaf Lodge), assisted by P.D.P. Brother Thompson—A.D., Brother Willmott; V.A.G., Brother Parker; secretary, Brother M. Henry; treasurer, Brother H. Gillon; guardian, Brother Latham; R.A.B., brother B. Reid; L.A.B., Brother Bransgrove; R.V.A.G., Brother Keating; I.V.A.B., Brother Hayton. At the request of Brother Reid the District President made a presentation to the lodge. Visiting brethren from the Oak Branch and Oakleaf Lodges were accorded voices of thanks. The room was beautifully decorated with ferns and evergreens for the occasion, and was much admired.

GRVY COUNCIL.—The Council will meet on Monday, when the following business is to be transacted—Reports from the various Committees as follows:—Public Works—On petition for repairs to Melbourne street, also tide channel. Waterworks—On letter from Mr. H. Dobson, offering land one chain in width on each side of the Boxer Creek, etc.; on letter from the Secretary Tasmanian Club, re charges from water by meter, etc. Sanitary—On letter from Mr. Arthur Pearce re complaints against a corporation employee. Police—On petition from licensed cab owners and drivers against further license being granted, etc.

TASMANIAN EXHIBITION.—In consequence of applications having been already received by the General Manager of the Tasmanian Exhibition for more than the space at their disposal, it has been decided by the directors to add 500 additional feet of space to the Tasmanian Court.

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CLIENTS FOR CHARITY.—Two rather cool requests for relief were received by the Executive of the Hobart Benevolent Society yesterday. One was from a person who occupied his own freehold property, while the other was from a man who was recently bedridden in his own dress suit at an entertainment. The Committee fortunately happened to know these things, and refused to relieve the applicants.

STATE SCHOOLS.—This morning plans for the new State School in Macquarie street were forwarded by the Minister of Public Works Department to the Premier and Chief Secretary, as head of the Education Department, for their inspection and consideration. The plans were subsequently returned, both Ministers having approved of them, and it is the intention of the Minister of Public Works to call for tenders for the erection of the building as soon as the necessary grant has received the sanction of the Legislative Council.

A DISTRESSING CASE.—Amongst the 15 applications for aid at yesterday's meeting of the Benevolent Society was one to relieve a husband and wife with eight children, whose ages range from two years to 25. The father had been out of work two weeks, but had not been in constant employment for four years. He was also in delicate health, and his family was unable to provide for themselves, through being out of work. The Society, in their benevolence, at once granted the relief applied for.

SUPREME COURT CASE.—In a report of term sittings of the Supreme Court, which appeared on Tuesday last, one of inaccuracies occurred. Mr H. J. Evans instructed counsel for the lodger of the court, and not Mr Henry, whilst the name of the applicant was Hansgrove, and that of the caretaker Norman, not Courne.

A POINTED REMARK.—At yesterday's meeting of the Hobart Benevolent Society the Chairman, during a discussion on the present distress, made the following pointed remark:—"The poverty in the city of Hobart was largely created by the people leaning too much on the Government, and because they did not understand leaning on themselves." Mr Butler said people who had no one depending on them should go into the country. The Rev. J. W. Simmons stated that tramps were daily coming into town from all parts of the country, wishing to see the sights, and using the distress as a cloak for their laziness.

FRUIT EXPORT.—With reference to the action of the New Zealand Government in introducing a Bill dealing with insect pests in that colony, and the resolution adopted at a meeting of local fruitgrowers held at Hobart yesterday, the Premier (Sir Edward Bradford) has forwarded a despatch to the Premier of New Zealand on the subject. The despatch embodies the resolutions, and expresses the hope that whatever legislation is decided on the subject, the colony of Tasmania will be exempted from the list of colonies from which the importation of fruit into that colony will be prohibited. The Premier has also pointed out the great injustice that would be experienced by Tasmanian fruitgrowers were the proposed legislation carried out, especially as all the fruit sent from Hobart is subjected to a rigid system of inspection before being shipped.

CHARITABLE RELIEF.—As showing the good work the Benevolent Society are doing, the following figures will give a good idea as to the cost of providing relief for the unemployed for one month:—biscuits bread, £22 18s; 900 pails soup and soup can and ladle, £4 10s 6d; groceries, £22 11s 3d; gas, £3 2s 3d; sundries, £3 12s 6d; total, £50 11s 5d. The Chairman stated that there were £80 to the credit of the Society, and after paying the above accounts only £13 6s 7d would remain for the Executive to face the remainder of the year with. From the capital they had at fixed deposit they would only have about £50 due for interest in December, so that some £400 would have to be taken out of their capital account to carry on the charitable work.

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QUEENBOROUGH.—On Wednesday evening an "At Home," organised by Mrs R. G. Warner, assisted by the choir of the Queenborough Mission Church and friends, was held in the building. Canon Banks-Smith presided, and there were present also, Rev R. Dixon, Mrs Banks-Smith, Mrs Christerson, Mr Eckford, and others. The "At Home" took the form of a tea meeting. The room was tastefully decorated with ferns, flowers, and flags, and bore a festive appearance. After the tea had been partaken of a programme of music was gone through, in which Messrs Clark, Norman, Wood, Mrs Smith, and Miss Eva Hill took part. Miss M. Warner acting as accompanist. A Bruce auction was held, and some goods, kindly given by friends, were disposed of. Canon Banks-Smith, before the meeting closed, referred to the good work done by Mrs Warner, and how much he and those interested in the parish felt with respect to the same. He trusted if Mrs Warner left them on a visit to England that she would return and resume her work. Mr Eckford also in a short speech referred to Mrs Warner's work, and thanked her on behalf of the choir and mother's meeting for her great assistance and devotion to those meetings. Warm applause was given Mrs Warner. The singing of "God Save the Queen" closed the proceedings. The net proceeds received were about £12, and this is to go towards the Organ Fund.

A BOY'S BRIGADE.—Mr George Kerr, one of the Committee of the Hobart Benevolent Society brought under notice of the institution the advisability of reviving what was known as the Boys' Brigade. It used to be a common custom for boys to hawk round bundles of pine at 1d each, but it was found that it was not a profitable venture. Mr Kerr considered that the bundles were perhaps too large, and that pine cones could be had very cheaply, and if the bundles were so arranged as to leave a margin of profit citizens would have a bundle of fire kindlers for a penny, besides helping lads to earn an honest livelihood. The matter is to be taken into serious consideration by the Executive Committee.

Wool, SKAGEN.—In another column is an extract from a circular issued by the General Manager for Australia of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited (Mr David Elder), relative to the conduct of future business. The local agent (Mr Nicholas J. Brown) notifies that he will be glad to receive early intimation of intended consignments of wool or other produce for sale either in Melbourne or London, and will be prepared to make liberal advances on shipments.

BLIND SOCIETY.—On Friday next a concert is to be given by the Orpheus Club and Hobart Choral Society in the Town Hall in the presence of His Excellency the Governor and Lady Gormanston, Sir Edward Bradford, and the Ministry, in aid of the funds of the Blind Society.

HOBART GAS COMPANY.—The time for the payment of accounts now due to this company has been extended until Monday, after which date no discount will be allowed.

NEW AUSTRALIA GOLD-HAVING MACHINE.—A public trial of this machine is to be made at March's yard, Collins street, at 2 p.m. on Monday next.

MAIN LINE RAILWAY.—This evening a local train is to leave Hobart at 10 minutes past 8, and the mail train at 10 o'clock.