

(No. 34.)



1858.

---

T A S M A N I A.

---

P E T I T I O N.

CROSS ROADS ACT AND RURAL MUNICIPALITIES ACT.

---

Presented by Mr. Gibson, and ordered by the House to be printed, 30 September, 1858.



*To the Honourable the Members of the House of Assembly of Tasmania,  
in Parliament assembled.*

The Petition of the undersigned Ratepayers of the Western Portion of the District of  
Port Sorell, County of Devon.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT so much of the "Cross and Bye Roads Act," and of the "Rural Municipalities Act," as relates to the qualification for voting thereunto,—also that portion which regulates the plurality of votes,—are most unjust in their nature, and injurious in their tendency.

They are unjust, inasmuch as they deprive the small owners and occupiers of property of one of the dearest rights of British Citizens—that of having a voice in the Elective Institutions of their District; while, at the same time, they are forced to contribute to those Institutions through the medium of direct taxation.

They are injurious in their tendency, inasmuch as they confer an arbitrary power upon property; a qualification which has never yet failed to secure to its *worthy* representative that preponderance in Council necessary to its protection without the aid of class legislation. Hence, your Petitioners submit, the Rural Districts hesitate to avail themselves of the principles of self-government as accorded to them by your Honourable House,—a feeling which will more widely prevail when the people will more generally feel the results of the plurality of votes enjoyed by a few individuals in each Road District.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly, but very earnestly pray, that your Honourable House will be pleased to amend the said Acts in such manner that all Ratepayers may have *one* vote,—that no man may have more than *five* votes,—and that the same may apply to all Rural Municipalities and Road Districts throughout the Colony.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

[Here follow 104 Signatures.]