

(No. 72.)



1878.

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T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

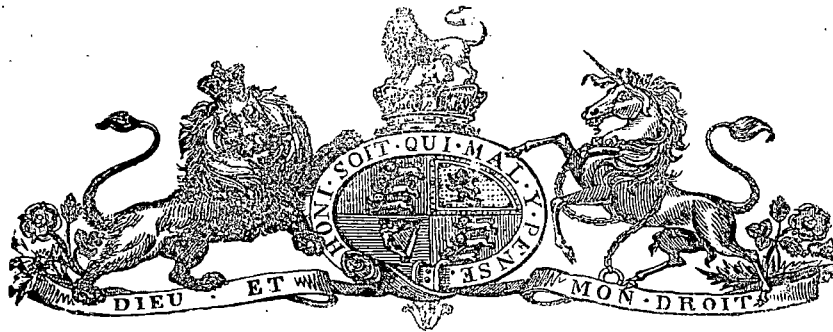
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**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BILL:**

P E T I T I O N S.

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Presented by Mr. Crowther, Mr. Innes, and Mr. James Lord, September 10; and ordered by the Council to be printed, September 11, 1878.



*To the Honorable the President and Members of the Legislative Council,  
in Parliament assembled.*

The humble Petition of the undersigned Presbyterians in Tasmania.

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT whereas there is now before your Honorable House a Bill, intituled "A Bill to regulate the Affairs of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania," heretofore called the Church of Scotland, we the undersigned Office-bearers of St. John's Presbyterian Church, Hobart Town, having had it submitted for our consideration, fully concurring in its provisions, and being sensible of the necessity of such a measure being passed into law,

Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that such Bill may receive the sanction of your Honorable House.

*[Here follow 11 Signatures.]*

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Petitions in the same terms were presented at the same time—

By Mr. Crowther :

From Members and Adherents of St. John's Presbyterian Church, Hobart Town, with 205 Signatures.

By Mr. Innes :

From Presbyterians, Fingal, with 32 Signatures.

By Mr. James Lord :

From Presbyterians, Clarence, with 18 Signatures.

From Members and Adherents of the Church at Sorell, with 21 Signatures.

From Friends and Adherents of the Church at Bream Creek, with 30 Signatures.

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*To the Honorable the President and Members of the Legislative Council,  
in Parliament assembled.*

The Petition of the undersigned, being residents in Campbell Town and its neighbourhood.

HUMBLY SHOWETH :

THAT your Petitioners have been informed that there is a Bill before your Honorable House professing to provide for the future regulation and management of the affairs of the Church of Scotland.

That your Petitioners are Members or Adherents of that Church, that they are not willing to leave its communion, and that they deprecate as unpromising and dangerous the present proposal of certain of its professing Office Bearers and Members to form a new Presbyterian Church with new standards of doctrine and new laws, and to transfer to that new church important and valuable properties.

That most of the ecclesiastical buildings belonging at present to the Church of Scotland have been erected in part by subscription, in part by grants of public money, and under the statutory provision that they "shall be and continue to be for ever dedicated to the uses and be appropriated to the service" of "that particular denomination."

That by the census of 1860-1 the Presbyterians were taken under three divisions—"Church of Scotland," "Free Church of Scotland," and "United Presbyterian,"—and that the £8000 of debentures now held by the Presbytery of the Church of Scotland is the amount granted under the Commutation Act for the use and service of the Members of the Church of Scotland, as distinct and separate from the Presbyterians of all other denominations.

That out of the nine Presbyterian Ministers who are understood to press on this new legislation, eight are known to be in professed dissent from the Church of Scotland.

That your Petitioners are of opinion that the present Bill proposes to transfer the congregations, properties, and debentures of the Church of Scotland to a new body; and by an Act, injurious and unjust, to deprive your Petitioners and others of legal and statutory rights, unless they consent to renounce connection with the church to which they belong and take their place as members in a new ecclesiastical foundation, of whose future faith, forms, and discipline they have no guarantee whatever, and in the wisdom and competence of whose founders they have no sufficient confidence.

May it therefore please your Honorable House either to reject the present Bill, or so to amend the same as to secure from infringement the temporal rights and the religious liberties of your Petitioners and of others proposed to be affected.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

[ Here follow 13 Signatures: ].