

(No. 85.)



1861.

TASMANIA.

P E T I T I O N No. 124.

E D U C A T I O N.

Presented by Mr. Field, and ordered by the House to be printed,
1 October, 1861.



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

The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the District of Westbury.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

1. That, while your Petitioners are fully aware of the financial difficulties under which the Colony is at present laboring, and are anxious to see its expenditure reduced to the lowest scale compatible with the necessary requirements of proper government, they are equally sensible that the future advancement and prosperity of Tasmania will, in a great measure, depend upon the manner in which the native intellect of the Colony is strengthened and developed by a judicious system of Public Education that will secure "the greatest good to the greatest number."

2. That your Petitioners regret to see the public funds of the Colony frittered away upon "Councils of Education" and "Superior Scholarships" at a time of great financial difficulty, while hundreds of poor children are excluded from the Public Schools because their parents cannot afford to pay the School fees, which have recently been augmented—through a reduction in Teachers' Salaries—to such an extent, that scores of poor children, in the District of Westbury alone, are virtually deprived of secular instruction.

3. That your Petitioners, on looking to the extent and population of the Colony, have strong reasons for believing that its educational affairs could be more efficiently and economically managed by *one* Board than (as at present) by two Boards and a Council of Education, and by Public Teachers' having fixed Salaries, and the School Fees transferred to the Treasury as Inland Revenue.

Your Petitioners therefore pray, that your Honorable House will refuse to sanction any "Grant in aid of Superior Education," until the Public Schools of the Colony are placed upon such a footing as will enable Teachers to admit the children of the working classes upon such reasonable terms as your Honorable House may deem suitable to their limited means.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

[*Here follow 95 Signatures.*]