

(No. 20.)



1859.

T A S M A N I A.

R U R A L P O L I C E R A T E A C T.

P E T I T I O N F R O M G L A M O R G A N.

Presented by Mr. Gregson, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
9 September, 1859.



To the Honorable the Legislative Council of Tasmania, in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Residents in Glamorgan.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT your Honourable House, in conjunction with the House of Assembly, passed an Act entitled "*The Rural Police Rate Act.*"

That your Petitioners have, as loyal subjects, paid their respective Rates under this Act without a single Distress Warrant having been executed.

That your Petitioners have always looked upon this Act with aversion.

That your Petitioners do not conceive that the present state of the Colony, and of Agriculture in particular, is capable of bearing a tax of this oppressive nature,—a tax from which they derive no benefit, and over the disbursement of which they have no control; as it is not likely, for some time to come, that this District will be sufficiently populous to avail themselves of the *Rural Municipalities Act*.

And your Petitioners consider it is no sound argument to say, that, because the Inhabitants of Hobart Town and Launceston voluntarily rate themselves, that therefore the Country Districts are to be taxed by Proclamation. As well and as justly might a Water Rate be levied upon the Rural Districts.

Your Petitioners respectfully beg to remind your Honourable House that, in another respect, the cases of the Towns and Country Districts vary greatly: for a Merchant who may have a hundred thousand pounds embarked in his affairs, and who requires Police protection more than a Landed Proprietor, pays a Police Rate only upon the annual rental or half that amount—as the case may be—for his counting-house and store, whilst the Farmer and Landed Proprietor are called upon to pay a rate upon nearly all their capital, and the latter, in some cases, upon every shilling of the capital which he possesses.

The present Act tends, to a certain degree, to discourage improvement upon Landed Property at a time when the reverse policy, as your Petitioners conceive, is needed: for it is well known, that Agricultural pursuits in the District, at the present time, are in a depressed condition, as proved by the quantity of land out of cultivation.

Your Petitioners, therefore, respectfully pray that your Honourable House will repeal *The Rural Police Rate Act*, which is both obnoxious to their feelings and injurious to their interests.

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

[*Here follow 60 Signatures.*]