

(No. 60.)



1859.

T A S M A N I A.

RURAL POLICE RATE ACT.

P E T I T I O N.

Presented by Mr. Meredith, and ordered by the House to be printed, 2 September,
1859.



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

The humble Petition of the undersigned Residents in Glamorgan.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT your Honorable House in conjunction with the Legislative Council passed an Act, intituled "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 induce the Inhabitants 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 Honorable 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 infinitely more than a landed proprietor, pays a Police Rate only upon the annual rental of 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 this 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 Honorable 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 59 Signatures.]