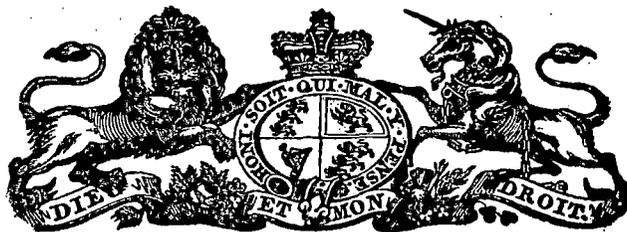


(No. 70.)



1878.

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T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

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**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BILL:**

PETITION.

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Laid upon the Table by Mr. Maclanachan, September 5; and ordered by the Council to be printed, September 6, 1878.



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

The humble Petition of the undersigned Presbyterians, formerly belonging to St. Andrew's Church,  
Hobart Town.

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, being formerly members and adherents of St. Andrew's Church, of Hobart Town, or descendants of such, having had it submitted for our consideration, and fully concurring in its provisions, are sensible of the urgent necessity of its being passed into law.

Your Petitioners are informed that an effort is being made to induce your Honorable House to withdraw the Church and Manse of St. Andrew's, Hobart Town, as well as other property, from the operation of this Bill: your Petitioners therefore respectfully urge your Honorable House to withhold your consent from this proposal.

Your Petitioners beg to set forth that they have been temporarily driven from the Church of St. Andrew's, but that they are, from old associations, still warmly attached to it, and cherish the hope of again returning to worship within its walls.

Your Petitioners also desire to set forth that St. Andrew's Church was mainly built by the contributions of those of whom they are the descendants, and that many of your Petitioners have largely contributed of their own means for the building of the Church, and the building, repairing, and furnishing of the Manse; and that they verily believe there is not a single member of the congregation at present worshipping in the said Church who has contributed a solitary five pounds towards the erection of the said Church or other buildings connected therewith.

Your Petitioners have further to state that a measure similar in its character and provisions to the one now before your Honorable House received the hearty approbation of a former venerated Minister of St. Andrew's Church—Rev. Dr. Lillie, and his large and influential congregation—as well as the whole of the Presbytery of Tasmania for the time being. That it was not carried into effect owing to the failing health and subsequent departure from the Colony of that reverend gentleman, and has since been kept in abeyance by the troubles which subsequently sprung up to mar the peace of the Church and hinder its general advancement. This measure is now painfully felt to be essential to the due administration of the affairs of our Church, the repression of vexatious and hurtful litigation, the security of its property, and the effective administration of its discipline.

Your Petitioners beg also respectfully to set forth that the Church of Scotland in Tasmania was never in ecclesiastical connection with, nor in any way subject to, the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland in Scotland, inasmuch as that Church has ever steadily declined to exercise any such jurisdiction, though always willing to render help and give advice. Principal Macfarlane, the highest authority on this subject, speaking in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on this question said, "The Assembly had no jurisdiction over these Ministers (that is to say) Ministers in the Colonies, nor gave them any status in our Church; they only extended to them a brotherly, or rather, he should say, a fatherly care, giving them such counsel and advice as they might consider best for their interest."

Your Petitioners would respectfully submit that there is no foundation for the assertion which has been made that the Church in Tasmania is forming itself anew and framing for itself new standards; on the contrary, it still holds firmly to the Church's ancient standards of religious belief and the same time-honoured forms of Church Government recognised in Scotland during bygone centuries. That they and all who are interested in the passing of this Bill are firmly resolved to adhere to their ancient faith; and we are persuaded that the due administration of our Church government under sessions, presbyteries, synods, &c. is the best safeguard and guarantee of the same; whereas, to set up one congregation on a separate and solitary basis, and sever it from all supervision and control of the Church Court, to the jurisdiction of which it has always been subject, would be a novelty unheard of in the history of the Presbyterian Church.

For these reasons your Petitioners humbly pray that such Bill may receive the sanction of your Honorable House, and that the Church and other property of St. Andrew's, Hobart Town, may be rendered subject to its provisions.

James Whyte—Believes that the first four allegations contained in a memorandum of the Rev. John Storie and others on the Bill referred to in this Petition are untrue; and the statement that £1190 had been invested in Trust by the Rev. John Storie is equally false, inasmuch as the money he refers to as invested in Trust was invested by the Trustees—the Hon. F. M. Innes and myself.

James Robertson.  
James Thos. Robertson.  
D. Macmillan.  
Russell Young.  
J. L. Livingston.

William M'Farquhar.  
Robt. Wilson.  
Angus Cumming.  
Rich. R. Wood.  
James A. Corrie.  
Edwd. Young.  
D. Barclay.  
Robert Officer.  
W. A. B. Jamieson.  
J. W. Campbell.  
F. B. Campbell.  
David Macmillan.  
James Mackey.  
David Mackey.  
D. M'Gregor.