

(No. 46.)



1871.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

K I N G B O R O U G H.

P E T I T I O N F R O M R E S I D E N T S F O R A L T E R A T I O N O F F I N A N C I A L
S Y S T E M.

Presented by Mr. O'Reilly, 10 November, 1871 ; and ordered by the House to be
printed.



*To the Honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly, in
Parliament assembled.*

The Petition of the undersigned Residents in the Electoral District of Kingborough.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT your Petitioners, encouraged by the remunerative prices which the large repaying export of jams ensured for some years to the growers of small fruits, entered largely into the cultivation of raspberries, currants, gooseberries, &c. ; and in many instances, to enable them to do so, purchased allotments from the Crown under Waste Lands Act.

That owing, as your Petitioners believe, to the duties imposed on jams and green fruits in the neighbouring Colonies, and in some measure to the effects of our own fiscal policy,—which burthens out of all just proportion those articles of common and general consumption which are essential to the maintenance of the working and industrious classes,—the small fruit, upon which the labour and capital of your Petitioners have been for years expended, is now comparatively valueless ; and your Petitioners are thereby not only deprived of all hopes of future remuneration, but lose the time, capital, and labour already expended.

That while the prices of all articles of clothing, implements required to carry on clearing operations in the bush, tea, sugar, meat, tobacco have been enormously raised by taxation, every product of the bushman's industry is so reduced as to cease to repay the labour of production ; and all that remains to the labourer as compensation for hardships, which it is impossible for your Honorable House to estimate the severity of, is a scant supply of the lowest species of vegetable food necessary to sustain life upon.

That such of your Petitioners as are debtors to the Crown for the most part are also hopelessly indebted to Hobart Town and local storekeepers, to whose timely assistance in helping them to meet the Government instalments they owe even the shelter of huts ; and now, when the labour of years has become valueless by the closing of our usual markets, and that the legislation of the other Colonies, provoked in a great degree as your Petitioners believe by that of our own Parliament during the Session of 1870, has all but closed the markets of the other Colonies against us, we submit to the consideration of your Honorable House this statement of our case, with a view of strengthening our prayer : That your Honorable House will refuse to support any Ministry which refuses to recommend a fundamental change in the land policy,—a change which will secure to the clearer and cultivator of the now valueless estate of the Crown immunity from confiscation of the fruits of years of unparalleled and severe labour whenever misfortune, unfavourable seasons, or low markets place himself and his property at the mercy of the Treasurer for the time being.

And further, your Petitioners respectfully pray your Honorable House to cause the present Financial system, which presses so unequally upon the different classes of the community, to be so altered as to render the necessary and essential articles of labouring and industrious life less costly to those classes upon whose well-being and labours the material progress of the Colony is dependent.

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

[Here follow 286 Signatures.]