

(No. 65.)



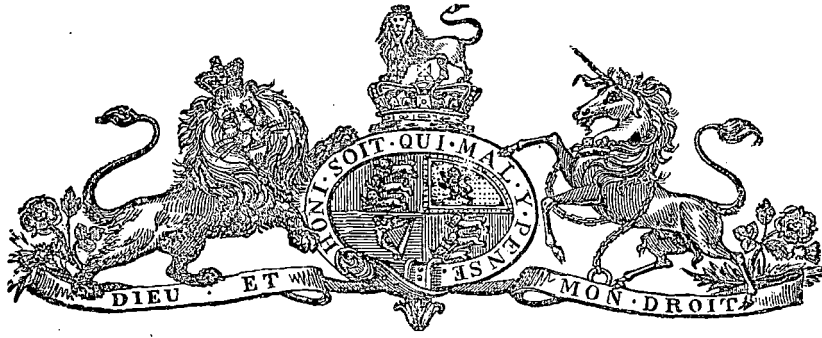
1866.

T A S M A N I A .

INCOME AND PROPERTY TAX BILL.

PETITION FROM LAUNCESTON AGAINST.

Presented by Mr. Lette, and ordered by the House to be printed, 28 August,
1866.



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

The Petition of the Inhabitants of Launceston adopted in Public Meeting.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

1st. That this meeting is of opinion that it will be inexpedient and dangerous, and altogether without precedent, suddenly to abandon, in the present depressed state of the Colony, so large a proportion of the Customs' Duties, and increase by direct taxation the existing burdens of the Community, already greater than in any of the other Colonies. That such a system, if adopted, can only tend to obstruct the progress of the Colony, and prevent the arrival of Immigrants to settle on our agricultural land.

2nd. That the Bill for better securing repayment of Moneys raised by the issue and sale of Debentures is a direct inroad on the Constitutional authority of Parliament, which, by assuming that the public lands of the Colony are of insufficient security, may injure its financial credit, and depreciate the value of its Debentures. That while the proposed Bill is unconstitutional in principle, it will be grossly unequal and oppressive in operation, and will place in the hands of the Executive Government the uncontrollable power of levying a yearly tax of uncertain and unlimited amount.

3rd. That the additional taxation proposed by the Ministers to be raised by the imposition of a permanent assessment on lands and other real property already charged with the entire cost of local taxation, as well as prospectively with the full responsibility of providing for the repayment of the public debt, is manifestly unjust and injurious, and must prove ruinous to many owners of property; the inevitable effect of which, also, will be to depress trade, and drive capital from the Colony.

4th. That a large reduction may be effected in the expenditure of the Government without detriment to the public service; and therefore this meeting strongly protests against any additional taxation whatever, fully convinced that an adequate revenue to cover all necessary expenditure can be readily derived from fixed Customs' Duties upon a limited number of articles of import which enter most largely into general consumption; and hereby records its deliberate conviction that the financial policy which the Ministry are now attempting to force upon an unwilling community, without even hinting at that Retrenchment which is so imperatively demanded, is in direct opposition to the distinct pledges they made to the Parliament and to the public upon their assumption of office,—that they would derive the revenue from "fixed Customs' Duties only,"—is most unjust in principle, and injurious in operation, and clearly demonstrates that they are not entitled to the confidence of your Petitioners, of the Parliament, or of the community.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that your Honorable House will withhold your assent to the said proposed Bills.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

WILLIAM HART, *Chairman of Meeting, Acting Mayor.*