

(No. 36.)



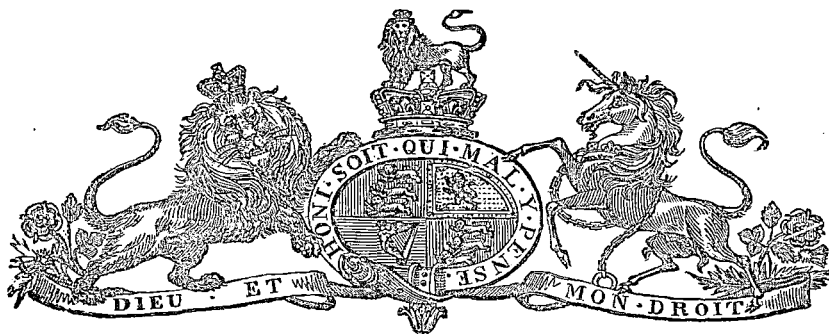
1866.

T A S M A N I A .

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

PROPOSAL OF NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT TO
SEND CONVICTS TO PORT ARTHUR.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Whyte, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
August 14, 1866.



(Copy.)

*Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, New South Wales,
29th September, 1865.*

SIR,

INFORMATION having been communicated to the Government of this Colony that the number of Convicts in the Establishment at Port Arthur is so much reduced that it is probable the Government of Tasmania would be able and willing to receive some of the Prisoners now confined in our Gaols, I have the honor, therefore, to enquire whether your Government is willing to negotiate with the New South Wales Government to take, upon terms to be agreed upon, a portion of our Criminals, with the distinct understanding that when their term of imprisonment has expired, or they may be ordered to be released under any Regulations which may be in force, they shall be brought back to this Colony.

2. I shall feel obliged by your communicating with me at your earliest convenience upon the subject, and stating, so far as you can, the conditions upon which your Government would be prepared to accede to such an arrangement.

3. Our object is to postpone, if not to render unnecessary, the erection of a large Prison upon an expensive scale. I am informed that the Establishment at Port Arthur admits of a most effective kind of discipline, and that the Buildings are of far greater extent than, under the altered circumstances of Van Diemen's Land, are ever likely to be required.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) CHARLES COWPER.

*The Honorable the Colonial Secretary,
Tasmania.*

(Copy.)

*Tasmania, Colonial Secretary's Office,
31st October, 1865.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th September, enquiring whether the Government of Tasmania would be willing to receive, upon terms, a portion of the Criminals of New South Wales, with the understanding that they should be returned to that Colony upon the attainment of their freedom.

In reply I have to state, that this Government could not entertain a proposition which would practically tend to make Tasmania the Gaol of the Australian Colonies; but this Government would be at all times ready to consider a proposition from the Continental Colonies to form a general Dépôt for Criminals at King's or any other suitable Island in the Straits.

To accomplish this, the Tasmanian Government would be prepared to recommend to Parliament the surrender of the exclusive rights of the Colony in the selected Island, upon conditions to be mutually arranged between the respective Governments; and I need scarcely point out to you the pecuniary advantages which would accrue from joint action in the maintenance of one general Penal Establishment for all the Australian Possessions.

I shall be glad to learn the views of your Government upon the practicability of such a scheme, and to give every consideration to any suggestions you may offer upon the subject.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES WHYTE.

*The Honorable the Colonial Secretary,
New South Wales.*

JAMES BARNARD,
GOVERNMENT PRINTER, TASMANIA.