

FIRST REPORT.

THE Committee to which were referred the PUBLIC ACCOUNTS for 1847, and the ACCOUNTS of the TRINITY HOUSE of QUEBEC, with power to report from time to time; beg leave to present the following as their FIRST REPORT:—

Your Committee, in obedience to the Order of Your Honourable House, referring to them the Accounts of the Quebec Trinity House, have proceeded to the examination thereof, and have to Report, for the consideration of Your Honourable House, that the expense incurred by the Corporation for the hire of a Steamer, necessary in the execution of the important duties connected with the navigation of the St. Lawrence, appears to Your Committee exorbitantly high,—amounting for the last year (1848) to the sum of £1,942 10s. currency, and the year before to £1,657.

It appears by the information obtained by Your Committee, that the first contract entered into by the Corporation for the employ of a Steamer, was in March, 1846, with William Stevenson, pursuant to public notice in the newspapers, calling for tenders, and that his was the only tender submitted, being £1,300, for which his Steamer (the St. George) was to perform a trip in the spring from Quebec down the St. Lawrence, to lay down the buoys at their different positions, and another in the fall to lift them. She was also to perform two other trips,—one in June, the other in September, to visit and take down all the necessary supplies to the different Light-houses. For any extra work she might be called upon to perform for the Corporation, the Contractor (Mr. Stevenson) was to be paid extra, at the rate of £50 per day. This Contract has been renewed from year to year, to the present, inclusively, on the same terms, but under a separate Contract for each year,—tenders being previously called for, by advertisements in the Quebec and Montreal news-

papers, during the months of February and March of each year.

The heavy expense for steamboat hire in the service of this department, has suggested to Your Committee the expedience of recommending to the consideration of Your Honourable House, an appropriation for the purchase or construction of a suitable steamer, to be at the disposition of the Quebec Trinity House, as recommended by Captain Boxer, R. N., Captain of the Port and Harbour Master at Quebec; and for which purpose, Your Committee beg to recall to the recollection of Your Honourable House an appropriation of £6,000 was made in a Bill passed by it in the Session of 1844-5, and sent up to the Honourable the Legislative Council, where it was thrown out.

Your Committee also deem it their duty to notice the highly objectionable fact, in their view of the matter, that the Contractor (Mr. Stevenson) with the Trinity House for the steamboat services alluded to, is, and since the 15th October, 1846, some months after the period of his entering into the first Contract with it, has been a member of the Corporation,—and that in the former capacity he has received, since his appointment to it, upwards of five thousand pounds currency of the public money at its disposal, and, accordingly, to call the attention of Your Honourable House to the circumstance.

ROBERT CHRISTIE,
Chairman.

7th April, 1849.

NOTE.—*The Evidence and Appendix attached to the preceding Report, was destroyed by the Fire of the 25th April instant.*