

"That in France the lighthouses number 330, and are under the control of the Department of Commerce. The estimated expenditure for the year 1872 was about £187 per lighthouse.

"That in the opinion of your memorialists the comparison of the relative cost of the English and French lighthouses shows clearly the economical advantages derivable from having the lighthouses directly under the control of a Government department.

"That other countries, amongst them America, France, Prussia, Russia and Spain, have ceased to charge shipping for the maintenance of lights. British shipping is not, therefore, taxed in this respect when trading to the ports of those countries; but the imposition of this tax in this country forms an argument made use of by foreign nations against admitting British vessels to other privileges.

"That in 1845 a select committee of the House of Commons, appointed on the motion of the late Mr. Joseph Hume, recommended 'that all expenses for the erection and maintenance of lighthouses, floating lights, buoys and beacons on the coast of the United Kingdom be henceforth defrayed out of the public revenue.'

"That in 1860 a select committee, appointed to enquire into the state of the merchant shipping, recommended 'that the nation generally should pay the cost of maintenance of lights.' That your memorialists have the strongest conviction:—

(1). "That the transfer of the powers exercised by the Trinity House and other bodies to one properly-constituted governmental department, would not only be attended by a very large saving in the cost of maintaining the lights, etc., but would tend greatly to increased efficiency and uniformity of system.

(2). "That defraying the cost of maintaining and erecting lighthouses, buoys, beacons, etc., out of the consolidated fund, instead of by a direct tax on shipping, is equitable and just in principle, and would effect a material saving to the nation."

I may state that the late Lord Palmerston entertained a similar opinion to that expressed by Mr. Hume's committee; and even Mr. Lowe, who refused the request year before last, intimated that, probably as a matter of economy as well as of justice, the shipping of the world would have to be relieved from this tax. It may seem a small impost, but \$150 a trip on a vessel of 1000 tons making three or four trips a year became a very considerable burden, in addition to the taxes imposed by the Dominion. There are a great many anomalies connected with this tax. For instance, if a Canadian vessel goes to New York and loads for London she pays heavy light dues; but if she loads for Antwerp or any other continental port, she passes the same lights but pays no light dues. The tax is, therefore, virtually a premium in favor of continental trade as against trade with Great Britain. I therefore move:—

"That the Executive Council do present a respectful remonstrance to the Imperial Government through His Excellency the Governor General against the continued taxation of Canadian ships in Britain for the support of lights and buoys, showing that all lights and buoys throughout the Dominion are supported solely by Dominion funds and are free to ships of all nations."

The motion was seconded, and carried unanimously.

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