

(No 18.)



1863.

T A S M A N I A.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

ABOLITION OF PORT DUES.

PETITION FROM INHABITANTS OF LAUNCESTON.

Laid on the Table by Mr. Wedge, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
June 26, 1863.



To the Honorable the President and Members of the Legislative Council, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of Launceston and the Northern Districts of Tasmania.

HUMBLY SHOWETH :

THAT whereas it is of the utmost importance to the Commercial prosperity of this Island that the Export of all its productions should be encumbered with as little expense as possible, and be placed at least on a par with the neighbouring Colonies with reference to any charges to which the Vessels conveying it to market are subjected, so that a demand for any of our productions may be met as favourably as at Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney.

And whereas it is now notoriously the contrary, and that parties desirous of supplying themselves with our produce cannot avail themselves of our market by reason of the excessive Rates of Freight,—and which Rates the Shipowners are compelled to charge to meet the heavy Port Charges to which they are liable. (See Memorandum at foot.)

Whereas it is well known that the only Port Dues to which a Vessel in Melbourne is liable is a Shilling per ton per Six Months, strongly contrasting with those which a Vessel coming to load in Launceston is liable to,—viz., Three Shillings per ton per voyage, none exempt; Two Shillings, if exempt from pilotage.

It is the opinion of the undersigned, and earnestly submitted to your Honourable House, that the payment of all Port Dues should be entirely removed from all Shipping; more especially as looking forward with a reasonable expectation that the development of our Coal Fields will require that all Ports be as free as possible from expenses; and feeling assured that in a short period the improvement in the Revenue, consequent upon the increased influx of Shipping, and the improvement in trade naturally following more extensive shipments of flour, grain, &c., would more than make up the expenses now charged upon Shipping, and our agricultural interest be placed on a par with Adelaide or Melbourne.

May it therefore please your Honourable House to take this matter into your earliest consideration.

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

[Here follow 356 Signatures.]

[MEMORANDUM.]

A Vessel of 100 tons pays in Melbourne for Six months' Harbour Dues, One Shilling per ton—£5.

A Vessel of 100 tons trading between Melbourne and Launceston will make at least Six voyages in Six months, and her expenses Inwards and Outwards per voyage are Two Shillings per ton—£60.