

(No. 13.)



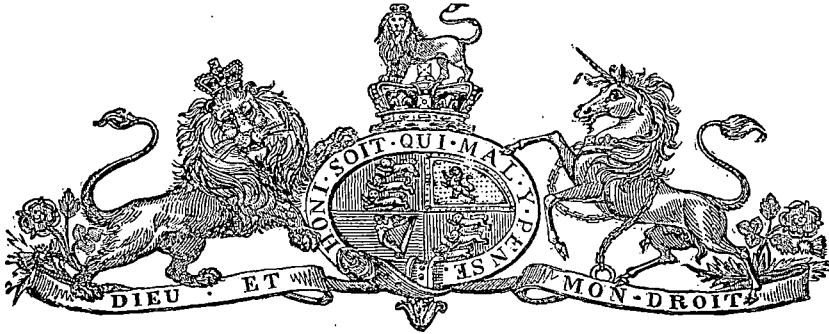
1857.

T A S M A N I A.

P E T I T I O N

OF THE MERCHANTS AND SHIPOWNERS OF HOBART TOWN TO
THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY IN RELATION TO THE MARINE
BOARDS BILL.

Presented by Mr. Nutt, and ordered by the House to be printed, 28 October, 1857.



To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly of Tasmania, in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Merchants and Shipowners of Hobart Town.

SHOWETH :

THAT your Petitioners have had under their consideration the Draft of the Marine Boards Bill now in progress through the Houses of Parliament of this Colony ; and while they cordially approve of the establishment of a Board in Hobart Town for the purposes contemplated by the Bill, they are nevertheless of opinion that some of the provisions contained in the Bill are open to grave objection, and, if they should be enacted without alteration, would materially impair the beneficial operation of the Act.

That the first objection which presents itself to the minds of your Petitioners relates to the constitution of the proposed Board. By the 4th, 6th, 7th, and 23rd Sections of the Bill, after providing that the Mayor and Collector of Customs of Hobart Town shall, *ex officio*, be two of the Wardens, it is proposed that the three other Wardens of whom the Board is to consist shall be appointed by His Excellency the Governor in Council, and shall be removable at his pleasure,—that vacancies shall be supplied in the same manner,—and that the Wardens shall have salaries. On this subject your Petitioners entirely agree with the Report lately presented to His Excellency by the Commissioners for enquiring into Public Departments, in which it is recommended that the management of the Ports should be vested in Local Boards composed of the representatives of the Merchants and Shipowners of the Port, with the assistance of the Collector of Customs and Mayor ; for which recommendation the Commissioners assign the very satisfactory reasons that this system has been working for many years in England in the Trinity Boards of London, Hull, and Newcastle, with such advantage as to have been extended to other places ; and that by it “persons representing the interests more immediately concerned in the good government, effective working, and economical administration of the Department will form the governing body ;” and the Commissioners add the expression of their belief, “that no difficulty will occur in inducing competent persons to devote the necessary portion of their time to the performance of the duties.” Your Petitioners are therefore of opinion that, until a Chamber of Commerce shall be called into Corporate existence in Hobart Town, the three non-official Wardens should be elected by the registered Shipowners of the Port owning Vessels of Fifty Tons burthen and upwards, and the Merchants carrying on business in Hobart Town, who, though not Shipowners, shall, during the year preceding the election, have paid Wharfage Dues to the amount of Fifty Pounds, to be certified by the Collector of Customs ; that the election should be for two years ; vacancies by death or resignation to be filled up in the same manner ; and that no salary should be attached to the office of either of the Wardens except the Master Warden.

The second objection relates to the proposed enactment of various matters of detail by the Bill, some of which your Petitioners are of opinion would be unnecessarily burthensome, and others they consider would operate as an inconvenient restriction of the powers of the Board to make Bye-laws. Sections 22, 47, 54, and 55 come within the first of these grounds of objection ; and your Petitioners think they should be wholly expunged. The Sections from 35 to 43, both inclusive, relating to obstructions on the wharfs, and also Sections 51, 53, 56, 57, and 58, both inclusive, relating to the regulations for Vessels lying in Port, come within the latter ground of objection ; and your Petitioners are of opinion that, in order to enable the Board to deal effectually with the subjects of these latter Sections by their Bye-laws, they should have the power of appointing penalties to the amount of Twenty Pounds instead of Ten Pounds only as provided by the 89th Section.

The third objection applies to Sections 61 and 64 of the Bill, so far as those Sections purport to impose a Port Charge for every removal of a Vessel in Port. Your Petitioners are of opinion that only two Port Charges should be imposed on this account,—one on the arrival, and the other on the departure of a Vessel,—unless the personal services of the Harbour Master to effect any other removal should be requested by the Master of a Vessel. Your Petitioners are also supported in this opinion by the Report before referred to, from which it appears that it was stated in evidence before the Commissioners that the restriction at present existing with respect to the removal of Vessels without incurring these charges presses prejudicially on the Mercantile community.

A fourth objection applies to Sections 70, 71, 72, and 73, relating to Pilotage; your Petitioners being of opinion that in all cases in which the Master of a Vessel has obtained a certificate of qualification from the Board; it should be in his option to accept or refuse the services of a Pilot to take his Vessel in or out of the River Derwent: and your Petitioners are also of opinion that a Colonial Trader going on a Foreign voyage should be subject to the charges in respect of voyages of that description for that voyage only, and should recover her character of a Colonial Trader immediately on resuming the Colonial trade.

That your Petitioners fully concur in the prayer of a Petition lately presented to your Honourable House against a clause in the Schedule to the same Bill by which Steam Vessels would be placed on a more favourable footing with respect to Light-house Rates than Sailing Vessels.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that the several objections which they have pointed out as existing to various clauses of the said Bill may be taken into consideration by your Honourable House, and that the objectionable clauses may be expunged or modified accordingly.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Brown & Co.	H. Lipscombe.	King & Patterson.
Gilles Brothers.	H. Sansom.	O. H. Hedberg.
Tondeur, Lempriere, & Co.	J. Lewis.	H. J. Marsh.
Crawford M. Maxwell.	R. Dall.	W. Paterson.
Henry B. Tonkin.	W. Fisher.	W. J. Thomas.
W. Carter & Co.	J. F. Lloyd.	Louis Phillips.
A. & R. Kisson.	John Austin.	G. S. Wilson.
S. Moses.	Marsh & Chapman.	Robinson & Bain.
William Murray.	Francis Butler.	H. T. Armstrong.
R. Andrew Mather.	Edward Lucas.	Lavington Roope.
John Perkins.	Samuel Lindsay.	Philip Leigh.
Isaac Wright.	Charles Bayley.	E. M. Fisher.
John William Paterson.	William Chamberlain.	A. Gellie.
Maning Brothers.	William Lyons.	William L. Crowther.
Phillis Seal.	Thomas Paterson.	H. Gerrand.
John Bilton.	J. Park.	H. Best.
John M ^c C. Browne.	William Knight.	Brent & Westbrook.
Geo. W. Walker.	Daniel Graham.	Robert Parkinson.