

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1844.

AUGUSTA:
WM. R. SMITH & Co., PRINTERS.

1844.

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 52.]

[HOUSE.

PETITION AND RESOLVE

RELATING TO THE

BRITISH COLONIAL TRADE.

[W. R. SMITH & Co....Printers.]



P E T I T I O N .

To the Hon. the Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled :

The undersigned, citizens of the State of Maine, would humbly represent, that the vital interest of the State are suffering to a degree which demands the immediate and decided expression of disapprobation of the citizens of the country at large, and especially of the State of Maine, of the longer continuance of the present commercial relations existing between this country and the British Colonies, tending as it does directly and effectually to paralyze and destroy our commerce, especially that part of it engaged in the coasting trade, thereby not only driving us from our legitimate pursuits upon the Ocean, but striking at all the industrial pursuits of our citizens. The products of industry in the Provinces are identical with those of this State, and the inequality of the price of labor under the different governments is such that we cannot compete with them in our own markets under the present arrangements.

Maine has no adequate protection. It may have been and probably was supposed by our representatives in congress, that the small duty on wood and lumber, and a few of the agricultural products of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, would check the influx of their products into our Atlantic cities and afford some protection to our coasting trade; but time has developed the fact, that under the construction given to the Tariff by the government, it is but a show of protection.

The number of entries of British vessels in our New England ports from the Colonies has more than doubled since the enactment of the present Tariff, and they are actually driving us out of our own markets. The public journals record the entry of nearly one

hundred British vessels during the past year in the single port of Portsmouth. One hundred vessels from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia with wood, lumber, &c. have entered at the port of Gloucester during the past year, and only one cargo has been received from Maine. The Boston journals have recorded from week to week the arrival of British vessels in great numbers in that port; and the same is true of all our principal ports.

It is not strange at all, when we consider the protection which the British government always affords its subjects, in all their commercial pursuits, and the advantage derived from their locality, and the present state of trade with the United States, that they should avail themselves of all the facilities enjoyed by them of doing our carrying trade. We think there is good reason to believe that there is another part of the trade not recognised by the laws of either country, carried on largely at both ends of the voyage, which gives them a two fold advantage in undermining our coasting trade.

We see in the enormous increase of entries of foreign tonnage (*mostly British*) in the United States within the last ten years, (which increase is more than five hundred per cent. while that of American tonnage is only about fifty per cent.) an alarming omen of what our trade and commerce must come to. Maine has more capital invested in navigation in proportion to her population and wealth than any other State; and such is her climate and her locality that this is and must be for a long time to come, if not always, the main spring of her prosperity if properly fostered; if not, it must as it now does, facilitate her extreme depression, inasmuch as Maine has no manufactures to fall back upon as some of her sister States have; and consequently has no incidental protection of her industry, but is made tributary to her more famed associates to an enormous amount in the consumption of the products of their *protective industry*. One specimen of which is the amount of nearly six dollars on the iron, hemp and duck used in the construction and support of each ton of navigation.

Your petitioners believing that the present state of things in this connexion is such, that unless some adequate remedy is speedily applied that the evils complained of will increase upon us as they

have the last few years in a mathematical ratio. And believing that it is within the proper and legitimate sphere of State legislation to express the opinion of the State upon any prominent subject of general interest, and decidedly so when a great interest of the State is at hazard; *we do humbly pray your honorable bodies* to take such action upon the subject, by resolves or otherwise, as in your wisdom you may deem proper, to induce congress so to legislate upon the subject, by the laying of a discriminating tonnage money, or by additional duties on lumber, lime, wood, spars, spiling, fish, *fresh and salt*, oats, potatoes, in the absence of which our revenue must suffer, our State nursery for the national defence upon the ocean be crippled, our sources of industry must be paralyzed, and the current of it changed from that for which we as a State possess great natural advantages, under proper governmental protection, to pursuits uncongenial with those which our locality, climate, soil, forest, and population so directly indicate as our natural means of prosperity. *And as in duty bound will ever pray.*

John N. Swazey,	M. G. Buck,
James B. Parker,	Sam'l Swazey,
Bliss Blodget,	J. O. B. Darling,
Charles Brewster,	Thomas H. Swazey,
Daniel Dix,	Jos. L. Buck,
Jesse Y. Hinks,	H. D. Brookman,
Nathan Atwood,	J. R. Folsom,
Nathan White,	Reuben Stubbs, 2d,
Franklin Spofford,	Edward Lampher,
John N. Swazey, 2d,	Rowland Basteen,
Wm. H. Buck,	Jas. M. Carter,
E. Barnard,	Schuyler Cobb,
Jonas Blood,	Henry Darling,
Joseph B. Bradley,	Theo. C. Woodman,
M. H. Blood,	Solo. Skinner,
L. Hancock,	Loring Skinner,
Geo. P. Harriman,	Ebenezer Crocker,
Cha's Barnard,	Phineas Heywood,
Geo. L. Bradley,	Nahum T. Hill,

BRITISH COLONIAL TRADE.

E. G. Goodnow,	Henry Silsby,
Edw'd H. Parker,	David N. Davidson,
H. P. Fifield,	Robert Allby,
Eliphalet Parker,	B. F. Farnham,
Hiram Simpson,	Sam'l Farnham,
S. Little,	Edsley A. Harding,
H. A. Andrews,	John Grant, jr.,
J. P. Hooper,	John Dodge,
Jonathan Harriman,	Wm. H. Genn,
E. A. Upton,	Joshua H. Genn
N. Bassett,	Dudley P. Genn,
Ralph Devereux,	William P. Swett,
Samuel Dow,	J. H. Brown,
Thomas Snow,	Richard Atwood,
Foster Hardin,	Daniel L. Valley,
Lewis Wardwell,	Thomas Tracy,
John W. Hinks,	Peter Stephenson,
Daniel Abbott,	Ephraim Bridges, jr.,
John Douglass,	A. D. Darling,
Joseph Buck,	Jos. Rice,
George Furbush,	Sewall B. Swazey,
John Silsby,	Geo. W. Parker,
Abram Morris,	Joseph G. Stover,
Truworthy P. Perkins,	John Hopkins, 2d.
John Buck,	

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in relation to the British Colonial Trade.

WHEREAS the foreign and coasting navigation of
2 Maine is now languishing under an onerous rate of
3 duties which amount to nearly six dollars per ton on
4 the articles which are used in the construction of
5 vessels ; and her coasting trade is greatly impaired by
6 the now existing arrangement between the United
7 States and Great Britain, which may be rescinded on
8 notice being given by either party : Therefore

RESOLVED, That our Senators in Congress be in-
2 structed, and our Representatives be requested to
3 present to the consideration of our National Legisla-
4 ture, the facts connected with the trade between the
5 United States and the British Colonies, under the
6 arrangement now in force ; and to exert their influ-
7 ence to rescind the same as soon as practicable, and
8 to reduce the duties on articles which enter into the
9 construction of vessels, and that the duties which are
10 now merely nominal on lumber, wood, spars, spiling,
11 lime and oats be increased.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
March 16, 1844. }

The foregoing Petition and Resolves were laid on the table, and
300 copies ordered to be printed for the use of the House.

WM. T. JOHNSON, *Clerk.*