

1856.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

**DESPATCH FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WITH ENCLOSURES RELATIVE TO THE ERECTION OF COLONIAL LIGHTHOUSES.**

Laid on the table of the House June 24th, 1856, and ordered to be Printed.

Downing Street,
6th September, 1855.

SIR,—I have to communicate to you, for your information as to the views of Her Majesty's Government, and in order that you may bring them, whenever occasion shall require, under the consideration of your Executive Council, the following observations and proposal on the subject of Colonial Lights.

2. The great importance of a well-ordered system of Colonial Lights to the Trade and Shipping of the British Empire has suggested to Her Majesty's Government the propriety of inviting the co-operation and assistance of the Local Authorities in the Colonies, in order to bring about a more efficient and more economical system of management in the erection and maintenance of Colonial Lights than than which at present exists.

3. Since the passing of the "Shipping Law Amendment Act" in 1853, the control of the Lights of the United Kingdom has been vested in the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade.

4. It is proposed to apply the information and experience which the Board of Trade has acquired under that arrangement in assisting the Colonial Governments to effect such improvements in the management of their Lights as may be found desirable.

5. The accompanying printed Memorandum, which has been prepared by the Board of Trade with the assistance of the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House, fully explains the nature and extent of the assistance and information which that Department is prepared to afford to the Colonial Authorities, as well as the steps to be taken by those Authorities for obtaining such assistance and information.

6. In addition to the assistance which the Board of Trade are prepared to give as above mentioned, the "Merchant Shipping Act Amendment Act" (18 & 19 Vic. Cap. 91) recently passed, a copy of which I enclose, contains a provision for enabling Her Majesty, by Order in Council, to fix Dues to be paid for Colonial Lights. The nature and objects of this provision you will find fully explained in a letter from the Board of Trade to this Department, dated 15th August, of which a copy is also herewith enclosed.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) Wm. MOLESWORTH.

Office of Committee of
Privy Council for Trade,
Whitehall, 15th August, 1855.

SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 6th instant, I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, to transmit to you for distribution to the various Colonies, the accompanying copies of the printed Memorandum relating to Lighthouses and Light Vessels in the Colonies.

My Lords have not before replied to the above-mentioned letter, as it appeared to them that it would be desirable, in transmitting the Memorandum in question to the Colonial Authorities, to call the attention of the Governors and other Officers to those provisions of "The Merchant Shipping Act Amendment Act, 1855," which relate to the collection of dues for the maintenance and erection of Colonial Lights. If Secretary Sir William Molesworth should think such a course expedient, the following are points which will, in my Lords opinion, require special attention.

1. That the object contemplated by the Imperial Legislature is to assist the Colonies in erecting and maintaining Lighthouses, by providing Funds for the purpose by means of Tolls levied on the ships which derive benefit from the Lights, whether those ships go to Ports in the Colony in which the Light is situate or not.

2. That the principle upon which the Tolls are to be fixed and collected is the same as that adopted in this country.

3. That provision is made for procuring advances for building, as well as an annual income for maintaining Lights.

4. That whilst no Colony can be required to levy a tax against its will, the money when paid must, of necessity (being levied in different Colonies, as well as in the United Kingdom) be under the control of the Imperial Government.

5. That it is not the wish or the intention of the Board of Trade, in administering any funds so levied, to interfere with the Local Authorities, who will still have the management of the Lights, except so far as may be necessary to insure proper accounts, and a proper expenditure of the public money.

6. That whenever any application is made for assistance towards erecting or maintaining a Light, the Governor of the Colony or Possession should send all the information in his power, as to the number and tonnage of Vessels passing or deriving benefit from the Light, and the ports and places to or from which they trade. In giving this information, attention should be paid to the particular circumstances of the case, so that the Imperial Government may be enabled, in fixing the Toll, to determine what the amount should be, and at what ports it will be desirable to collect it. As a general rule, it will probably be found most convenient to collect the dues at the Port of Departure of the ship, rather than at the Port of Arrival, where both ports are British Ports, but the application of this rule must depend upon the circumstances of each case.

7. Where a Light is to be erected or maintained in one Colony, and Tolls will have to be taken in other Colonies, the communications from the first Colony should be so made as to enable Her Majesty's Government to communicate as early and as effectively as possible with the latter Colonies.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) T. H. FARRER.

H. Merivale, Esq.
&c., &c., &c.
Colonial Office.

MEMORANDUM to accompany a Circular from the Colonial Office to the Governors of Colonies, on the subject of Lighthouses required in the Colonies.

WHEN the authorities in a Colony are desirous of applying to the Mother Country for assistance in the construction of any Lighthouse or Light Vessel, application should be made to the Colonial Office, and a copy of the printed Form annexed, marked A, should be carefully filled up, with complete answers to all the questions, and sent with the application.

The Colonial Authorities should at the same time name some person in London as an Agent, who is to be the party responsible for all payments, and who will for that purpose give such orders and make such contracts as may be necessary, and who will in so doing be guided by the advice

and direction of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade will confine themselves strictly to the function of giving such advice and direction as may be necessary for procuring the proper execution of the works required by the Colonial Authorities, but they will not open any account, or make themselves responsible for any payments whatever.

In giving instructions to the Agent, it must be understood by the Colonial Authorities, that as it will be necessary for the Board of Trade to employ an engineer and other professional men, their expenses are to be included with those of the works, and paid by the Agent accordingly.

If it is the desire of the Colonial Authorities that the material should be shipped or forwarded by any particular vessel, special directions are to be given to the Agent, who should also be directed to effect the necessary insurances, should they be determined upon.

As considerable care in the management of Lighthouses and Light Vessels, and in the economy of the oil and wicks, the cleanliness of the reflectors, burners, glasses, &c., is requisite. the directions which the Trinity House have issued for the guidance of their own Light Keepers are herewith annexed, that Colonial Authorities may have the advantage of their long experience, and adopt them in the management of the Colonial Lighthouses, if they should think fit; and as the Colonial Authorities may have occasion to construct Light Vessels, there are annexed to this Memorandum the dimensions of the Light Vessels used in this country, and all other particulars necessary for the building of such vessels, and for tendering for contracts to build them, and for their equipment and maintainance. Should it be necessary to apply to England for the lanterns and lighting apparatus, the dimensions given in the annexed paper will be strictly adhered to, so that the construction and fitting of the vessel may all go forward in the Colony, and the vessel be ready to receive the lanterns by the time they arrive.

F O R M A .

PARTICULARS to be sent from the Colonies when ASSISTANCE is required in the CONSTRUCTION of a LIGHTHOUSE.

Questions.	Answers.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State the geographical position of the light required. 2. Describe the nature of the foundation on which the tower is to be erected. Send a specimen if of rock; and if of sand or marshy ground a sketch of the borings 3. The elevation of the site above high-water mark (If possible, send a ground plan and elevation of the site of the tower.) A contour plan is the best if it can be procured. 4. Are there materials on the spot, or in the Colony, from which the tower and buildings may be constructed? What are they, and how far from the site? At what price per ton could they be conveyed there, or should all the materials be sent from England? Are there facilities for landing stores and other materials near the site? 5. If labourers are to be had in the Colony, state the daily wages of masons, bricklayers, carpenters, smiths and day labourers. 6. Can fresh water be had at the proposed site of the lighthouse; or how far will it require to be conveyed if it be found at a distance? 7. Will any Engineer or Workmen be required to be sent from England to erect the buildings or fix the lantern and apparatus? 	

Questions.	Answers.
<p>8. State the purpose for which the light is wanted, whether for a harbour or a sea light, and the distance at which the light should be visible, and the area over which the light is required to be exhibited.</p> <p>9. Is there any light within fifty miles of either side of the proposed light, and what is its character, fixed, revolving, bright, or coloured, or other characteristic?</p> <p>10. Is there any contiguous hill over which the light will be required to be seen, and if so, state its height above that of the site of the proposed tower and its distance off it?</p> <p>11. What oil is intended to be used, and from what source will the supply be derived?*</p> <p>12. What provisions with regard to wicks for the burners should be made for the present and future use?</p> <p>13. Will any trained Light Keepers be required?</p> <p>14. Is there any particular vessel or conveyance by which the Colony wish these materials should be sent out?</p> <p>15. State the name and address of the Agent in London who is to be responsible for the payments, and all expenses incurred in carrying out the application from the Colony.</p> <p>16. State any other particulars that may seem to be necessary.</p> <p>17. If a Light Vessel be required, say in what water she will ride; and answer the before-going questions so far as they can be applicable to a Light Vessel.</p>	

* It is of importance that the oil or other material proposed to be used in the lamps, should be of that description which can with certainty be procured at all times in the locality; the point is one which should be considered and determined in the first instance, as the description of lamp and other apparatus to be used in the lighthouse, necessarily depend upon the nature of the material from which the light is to be obtained.