

1853—4.

VICTORIA.

HARBOR TRUST—PILOTAGE.

PETITION.

Ordered by the Council to be printed, 3rd April, 1854.

UNTO THE HONORABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE COLONY OF VICTORIA.

The Petition of the undersigned, Masters of British and Foreign Ships, at present lying in Hobson's Bay.

SHREWETH—

That although your Petitioners are only sojourners in this Country, they have the honor to represent the most magnificent fleet of Merchant Ships ever assembled at one place out of Europe or America, and they make no doubt that any suggestions they may offer will meet the favorable consideration of your Honorable House.

That your Petitioners have suffered great inconvenience, delay, and loss, from the defective accommodation and bad management of the Harbor, but assuming this subject now to be in the hands of the Merchants of Melbourne, they shall confine their remarks to a subject which comes nearer their business, viz.—the present Pilotage System of the Port.

Your Petitioners would consider it invidious to institute a comparison between the Pilotage System of London, Liverpool, or any other old-established Port, and that of a new country like Victoria; but they cannot avoid comparing the perfect organization of the Pilotage System in California, where some of your Petitioners have practically benefitted by the energy and activity of the Pilots, who are ready, in all weathers, to board every Ship approaching their Coast, whilst in this Country a Ship is rarely boarded outside the Heads, and has to pass the most difficult part of the entrance before she comes under the charge of a Pilot.

That your Petitioners attribute the greater part of the late Wrecks and Accidents at the Heads to the inefficiency of the Pilotage Establishment, and would humbly pray that should a Harbor Trust be appointed for Melbourne, this service be placed under its charge,—that ships should be boarded outside the Heads and run up to Hobson's Bay under the same Pilot without stoppage,—that a Steam Tender be employed to carry the Pilots to the Heads with despatch,—and that the Pilots be liberally remunerated in proportion to the energy they exhibit and the actual work they perform;—and your Petitioners are firmly of opinion that the adoption of these suggestions would tend greatly to remove the stigma which attaches to the Port of Melbourne among Ship Owners in England and America, and promote the prosperity of the Port.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.—

[Here follow 127 signatures.]

By Authority:—JOHN FERRES, Government Printer, Melbourne.