

# HOUSE . . . . No. 266.

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## Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 2, 1873.

The Committee on Railways, to whom was referred the communication of the Board of Agriculture concerning tariff for freight, report that it is inexpedient to legislate thereon.

The Committee append to their Report, as a portion thereof, a letter from the Board of Railroad Commissioners upon the subject-matter of the communication of the Board of Agriculture.

For the Committee,

C. R. CODMAN.

## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

RAILROAD COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE,  
No. 7 PEMBERTON SQUARE, BOSTON, March 27, 1873. }HON. E. P. CARPENTER, *Chairman of Committee on Railways.*

SIR:—We beg leave to return to you the accompanying memorial from Charles L. Flint to the Hon. John E. Sanford, in relation to a reduced freight tariff on agricultural products transported over the several railroads of the Commonwealth.

The object of this memorial, as expressed in the Resolve incorporated in it, is to secure "a lower tariff upon agricultural products on our railroads, or at least to place them on rates proportionately uniform with those denominated long, or through freights." The economical principles which regulate charges on railroads and proportion them to the distances which articles are carried, was discussed at considerable length in the annual report of this Board recently submitted to the present legislature (pp. 41, 42, 56, 66). It unquestionably costs far more proportionately to transport any articles of merchandise short than it does long distances. To disregard this economical principle as respects all articles of merchandise is manifestly impossible, without introducing the utmost confusion into the business of transportation, and inflicting very severe loss on the carriers and upon those living or producing at the greater distances. In the present case, therefore, the question is, whether, through the exercise of legislative power, an exceptional discrimination shall be made in favor of a particular class of producers.

It is a well-known fact that agriculture is not one of the more remunerative branches of New England industry. The legislation in this case asked for would seem, however, calculated to impose a burden or tax of an exceptional character upon one interest in the community, the railroad interest, in favor of another interest, the agricultural. If such a system is introduced the Commissioners fail to see the exact limit which would be imposed upon it. Undoubtedly all producers of articles requiring transportation to places of consumption would most gladly have a discriminating freight tariff in their favor imposed. This, however, would not seem to be practicable.

We therefore return the enclosed document without submitting the draught of any measure as one which we are prepared to recommend.

We remain, &c.,

CHARLES F. ADAMS, JR.,  
A. D. BRIGGS,  
FRANCIS M. JOHNSON,

*Railroad Commissioners.*

