

[No. 4.]—Memorial to Congress relative to the Pembina settlement.

November 1, 1849

Preamble, etc.

To the honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled: The memorial of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Minnesota, respectfully represents, That from information believed to be true, there are more than one thousand inhabitants at Pembina, in this Territory, on the Red River of the North, and near the line dividing the British and American possessions, portions of whom are white, but mostly half-breeds, who subsist by means of agriculture and the chase, they are a hardy, industrious and intelligent people, and a majority of them were induced to settle within the jurisdiction of the United States to escape the tyranny of the Hudson Bay Company, acting by authority, or color of authority of the British government, and their numbers are rapidly increasing. But notwithstanding they have sought an asylum upon American soil, they are still pursued by the oppression of the aforesaid company, against which there can be no adequate protection, except by the interposition of the United States, under the forms of law. The aforesaid Company make no scruple of seizing the property and persons of these colonists, even in their houses. They send large companies of well equipped hunters into our Territory, sweeping the buffalo ranges for hundreds of miles, destroying the game, and carrying off twice a year, immense quantities of buffalo skins, meats and tallow, of great value, while American hunters, who purchase furs upon British soil, are immediately seized and imprisoned, or otherwise severely punished, and with a view to cripple the trade of these infant colonists, they refuse to receive the coin of the United States for goods. British goods are sent freely into the country, free of duty, and the products of British subjects are taken to various points on the Mississippi valley for sale and to exchange for American commodities, while exorbitant duties are extorted from the colonists on all their commodities so soon as they reach the lines of the British settlements.

The aforesaid Company traffic in spirituous liquors with all the tribes of Indians in their vicinity, as well upon American soil as otherwise, furnishing them with an abundant supply, engendering misery, and jeopardizing the lives of the colonists. These unprotected people have sent to the authorities here, statements of their grievances, which we believe to be well founded, and they supplicate for relief. Your memorialists confidently believe that the dignity and honor of the United States demand that the wrongs and injuries above set forth should be redressed, or at least a repetition of them prevented.

Your memorialists therefore earnestly solicit the establishment of a military post at Pembina, and with a view to provide for the present and increasing wants of these people, they further solicit the purchase of the Indian title of occupancy, to a tract of land of suitable dimensions, and that provisions be made for the survey and sale thereof to actual settlers, in such manner as your honorable body may deem most practicable. And they further solicit the extension of the civil jurisdiction of our government over the people aforesaid; in this connection we further state that a valuable trade has commenced between the settlers of the Red River of the North and the towns and settlements along the valley of the Upper Mississippi, that nearly four hundred carts, loaded with the pro-

ducts of the chase, have come down from that country this season, and returned with commodities received in exchange, and already a line of settlements is being extended by emigrants along the Eastern banks of the Mississippi above the Falls of St. Anthony, as far as the Indian occupancy has been extinguished, and for the purpose of protecting these settlers, and for the encouragement of those who are wending their way thither, the developement of the great resources of the country, and to prevent the frequent collisions of the Chippewa, Winnebago, and wandering tribes of the Sioux Indians, and confine each tribe within its proper limits. Your memorialists conceive it to be of the highest importance that a military post should also be established at a point near Sauk Rapids, and another at White Bear Lake, the head of Sauk river, and a military road constructed along the line of these posts to Pembina. Such are the natural resources and advantages of the country, with its healthful climate, that when these objects are accomplished, we feel assured the foundation will have been laid for making it at once, one of the most populous portions of the Great West.

And your memorialists would further represent that goods can be imported from Europe through the United States, by the way of the Mississippi, to the settlements of the Hudson Bay Company, at least three months earlier than by the way of the Hudson Bay, and with less expense, and it is believed that the establishment of a port of entry at St. Paul, with the privilege of drawback, would secure to our citizens the carrying trade of all foreign goods required at their settlements, and thereby give an additional impetus to the settlement and prosperity of this portion of our country. Your memorialists therefore pray, that all the matters above set forth may receive the early and earnest attention of your honorable body, and that such action may be had thereon, as in your wisdom may seem meet and proper.

APPROVED, the first day of November, one thousand eight hundred and forty-nine.

Port of entry at
St. Paul prayed
for.

November 1, 1849.

[No. 5.]—A Memorial to the Congress of the United States.

To the honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled: Your memorialists, the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Minnesota, would respectfully recommend to your honorable body, the appropriation of such sums of money as you may deem necessary, for the purpose of building a Territorial Prison, at some point in said Territory which your honorable body may select.

Prayer, etc.

Your memorialists deem it necessary to make known a few of the reasons why an appropriation is asked. From the sparsely settled condition of the counties, some are two poor build county jails, and it is plain to your memorialists, that years will elapse before they will be in a condition to do so.

Reasons for pe-
tition.

Your memorialists would represent that as in all communities, there are those who not having the proper fear of the laws of God and man before their eyes, commit crimes that call on justice for punishment, and as there are no means of obtaining that object (where imprisonment might be a necessary punishment) otherwise