

P E T I T I O N

OF THE

WELLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

RELATIVE TO THE

CUSTOMS TARIFF.

*Presented to the Honourable the House of Representatives 21st September, 1880,
and ordered to be printed.*

TO THE HONORABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
IN THE COLONY OF NEW ZEALAND.

The Petition of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,—

That your Petitioners as Members of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce, and also as engaged or otherwise interested in trade and commerce, have taken repeated opportunities to bring under the notice of His Excellency's Government, and also of your Honorable House, the defective principle and unequal operation of the Tariffs enacted by the Customs Duties Acts of 1856 and 1858.

That your Petitioners feel that any mode by which duties are levied according to the gross weight or measurement of packages must be essentially unjust, as pressing with undue weight on articles of small value, while the more valuable are left comparatively or actually free.

That the present law is additionally objectionable because of the large discretionary power which is thereby given to the Commissioner of Customs, who has the power in the case of a large number of articles, of declaring whether they shall be chargeable with duty or admitted free.

That your Petitioners also feel that the number of articles now chargeable with duty makes the collection costly, and imposes unnecessary labour on the Customs Department, and also on the importers of goods.

That your Petitioners believe it to be practicable to confine the duties to articles few in number, but extensively used, and easily distinguishable; and that from these a revenue might be derived which, without unduly pressing upon any, should spread the fiscal burdens of the country over all classes of the community, while it might be so arranged as that the articles most heavily taxed should be those which may be classed among articles of luxury, or at the least, which are not absolutely necessities of life.

Your Petitioners therefore pray your Honorable House to take this matter into your consideration with the view of enacting such a Tariff as shall meet the requirements of the Government, and at the same time, relieve trade from unnecessary restrictions, and assimilate the Tariff of this Country to those in operation in the neighbouring Colonies.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

GEO. HUNTER,
Chairman.

Chamber of Commerce,
Wellington, 1st September, 1860.