

PETITION
OF THE
AUCKLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

The Petition of the Chamber of Commerce of Auckland to the Honourable the House of Representatives of New Zealand in Parliament assembled,—

HUMBLY SHEWETH, —

1st. That by the “Customs Duties Act, 1864,” a very serious addition has been made to the taxation of the country.

2nd. That the additional taxes thus imposed are found to affect very injuriously the trade and commerce of the country, more especially as regards spirits, tobacco, and cigars, the duties on which are so heavy that they amount to a premium on smuggling and illicit distillation to the great injury of both the revenue and the fair trader.

3rd. That the great inconvenience to the mercantile community is caused by the absence of any proper information as to what articles are included in sub-sections four and seven of the said Act.

4th. That with especial reference to the term “Oilman’s Stores,” the indiscriminate taxing of a variety of articles defined as coming under that heading has been found to act very mischievously, the duties on some imports, as shown by the Schedule embodied herein, being out of all proportion to their value, and in fact prohibitory of their import.

5th. That whilst this Chamber fully recognises the duty and necessity of upholding the credit of the country at all risks, it is of opinion that by a reduction of the duties on spirits, tobacco cigars, wine, ale, and beer, to the old rates, the revenue would be benefitted, and smuggling and illicit distillation discouraged; and that by spreading taxation over a wider area of imports upon a graduated scale of measurement duties, a very considerable revenue might be raised without pressing unduly upon any particular class of imports.

6th. That although this Chamber is of opinion that a graduated and discriminating scale of measurement duties would be a good and effectual way of raising a revenue, it is also of opinion that upon many articles of imports, duties should be levied by weight.

7th. That it would be advisable that no duties should be imposed upon goods by measurement or weight which shall amount to a higher rate than 10 per cent. upon the Invoice value.

8th. That all raw materials and unmanufactured articles tending to develop the industry and resources of the country, and all articles in the building and fitting out of shipping, should be admitted free of duty.

9th. That this Chamber is of opinion that taxation should be imposed solely for the purpose of revenue, and not for protection.

10th. Your Petitioners would humbly submit to the consideration of your Honourable House the following Schedule, as showing the operation of the present Tariff upon one particular class of imported goods: —

| <i>Goods.</i> | <i>Per cent. of Duties on Home cost.</i> |
|-------------------------|--|
| ¼ Sardines | 17 per dozen |
| ½ ” | 20 ” |
| Pint Pickles | 70 ” |
| ½ Pint Salad Oil | 37 ” |
| Bottled Fruits | 70 ” |
| Bottled Mustard, ½ lbs. | 24 ” |
| ” ” lbs. | 28 ” |
| Confections, lb-Tins | 30 ” |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----|-----------|
| Salmon, lb-Tins | 17 | ” |
| Assorted Sauces ½ pints | 37 | ” |
| Lea and Perrins’ Sauce, ½ pints | 21 | ” |
| Currie Powder, lbs. | 44 | ” |
| Vinegar, Bottle, quarts | 80 | ” |
| Starch | 28 | per cwt. |
| Patent Groats | 40 | per dozen |
| Sago | 67 | per cwt. |
| Arrowroot | 32 | ” |
| Currants | 40 | ” |
| Dried Fruits | 30 | ” |
| Washing Powder | 40 | ” |
| Table Salt | 80 | ” |

11th. That in the framing of any new Customs Duties Act, a Table of Duties on a principle similar to that adopted by the Imperial Government, should be prepared for general information.

And your Petitioners would humbly pray that relief may be afforded by your Honourable House from the present unequal and excessive taxation.

And your Petitioners will ever pray,

By order and on behalf of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce,

J. A. GILFILLAN

Chairman

Auckland, 6th July, 1865.