

To the Honorable Members of United States Senate and House of Representatives, in Congress assembled:

The Memorial of the undersigned inhabitants of the county of Los Angeles, in the State of California, respectfully represents—

That for want of a Port of Entry within the district of country in which they reside, its business and trade labor under the most serious disadvantages, its growth and settlement are materially retarded, and great discontent prevails among the people.

So numerous and aggravated are the evils under which your Memorialists suffer, for want of a Custom House, that they can but feel some little delicacy in bringing them to the notice of your Honorable Body: for it is fully believed, that in no section of the United States, have there ever existed obstructions of so serious a character to the prosperity of Trade & Commerce, and which have been so long and patiently endured by the same number of people, as those to which your Memorialists are and have been subjected.

The country in which your Memorialists reside is in a peculiar condition; and hence results a marked singularity in the state of its trade. Its proximity to the mining region has caused it to be substantially denuded of its laboring population; and hence, although strikingly agricultural in its natural features, it has for the last two years been dependent on a foreign supply for not only the greater proportion of its Bread-stuffs, but for even the coarser articles of Peas, Beans, Oats, Barley &c. &c. These are brought usually from some of the South American ports, taken to San Francisco, and thence re-shipped to San Pedro. It thus appears that not only are the people of this region compelled to obtain the more costly fabrics of manufactures at another port, but even articles of the most common consumption, at what additional cost the following facts will testify.

The freight alone from San Francisco to San Pedro, for the last two years, has never been less than twice the amount of what is charged for conveying the same articles from New York to San Francisco. The expenses upon a cargo of flour for sending it from the warehouse in San Francisco to San Pedro, have been as high as ten dollars & twenty-five cents per barrel, and have never been less than five dollars and seventy-five cents.—One of your Memorialists has paid, for the expenses of a single cargo of goods from San Francisco to San Pedro, fourteen thousand dollars. In fine, the average additional cost upon goods purchased at San Francisco is not less than 30 per cent. upon their being landed at San Pedro.

Not alone would this entire amount be saved to your Memorialists by the establishment of a Custom House at San Pedro, but many articles of trade which cannot now be procured at all at San Francisco, would be brought to the former point. The people of this region are to a large extent of the Spanish race, and whole cargoes of goods could be imported from Mexican ports, and sold at a large advance, that are never found at all in the market of San Francisco, in consequence of the population there being so essentially American in its character.

Was there a Custom House at San Pedro, cargoes of coffee and rice would be brought there from Central America; Panoche (a coarse kind of sugar) from Mexico; flour from Chili; and sugar from Peru. To say nothing of the enormous cost of re-shipping these articles from San Francisco, and which has been already alluded to, the original cost of them at San Pedro would be much less than at the former place. In freight alone there would be a material reduction. For, not only is the voyage some six hundred miles less, but, from there not being the same inducements and facilities for desertion by his crew, as at the north, a master could afford to run his vessel to San Pedro from a southern port, at a much less rate than he could to San Francisco.

—With a bare allusion to the enormous expenses of unloading and storage at San Francisco, and which, of course, is included in the first cost to the purchaser at Los Angeles, and to the great loss of time, delay and expense to the merchant of the latter place in going north to make his purchases, we pass to consider the amount of trade, actual and prospective, in this country.

The amount of actual sales of goods landed at San Pedro for the last two years, has been little short of one million of dollars per annum. This amount was formerly much more, as it is well known that, at the time of the Old Missions, there was more business done at the port of San Pedro, than at any other port on the Pacific north of Acapulco. In touching upon the probable increase of trade in this section, we cannot withhold alluding to the fact that the district of country in which your Memorialists reside is infinitely superior to that of any other portion of California, to sustain a dense population. It contains, without a doubt, a larger amount of arable and irrigable land in a single body, than any other portion of the State. It is well known that