

MEMORIAL

OF THE

LEGISLATURE OF MINNESOTA TERRITORY,

PRAYING

*The ratification of certain treaties with the Sioux and Chippewa Indians
in that Territory.*

FEBRUARY 28, 1852.

Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

MINNESOTA TERRITORY, SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
St. Paul, February 7, 1852.

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to enclose herewith a certified copy of a memorial relative to ratification of the Indian treaties made during the last summer.

I am requested to ask that you will cause the same to be presented to the Senate of the United States.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
ALEXANDER WILKIN.

HON. HENRY H. SIBLEY.

*To the honorable the Senate of the United States, the memorial of the
Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Minnesota respectfully represents:*

That on the twenty-third day of July and fifth day of August last, two treaties were concluded respectively at Traverse des Sioux and Mendota, in this Territory, by and between the United States commissioners, Luke Lea, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and Alexander Ramsey, governor and superintendent of Indian affairs of this Territory, and the Sioux and Dakota bands of Indians of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers, whereby a vast extent of fertile and valuable lands, embracing an area of from thirty to forty millions of acres, was ceded to the United States on terms more favorable than it is believed, under all circumstances, could ever again be obtained. This tract includes the most valuable part of the Sioux country lying west of the Mississippi river, and all the lands they owned within

the state of Iowa, and for agricultural purposes is unsurpassed, if equalled, by any other portion of this Territory or the contiguous States. It is also believed to be rich in mineral wealth, and recent explorations tend to the confirmation of this belief.

The present and future welfare, and the immediate prosperity of this Territory, mainly rest upon the ratification of these treaties. Thousands who have resolved to make this Territory their future home, are now anxiously awaiting the final action of your honorable body; and already hundreds of claims have been made on these lands by the most enterprising of our citizens, under a firm conviction that the stipulations of these treaties will be confirmed. But in the event of their non-ratification, difficulties of the most serious nature may ensue, deplorable to the poor Indians, disastrous to the frontier settlements, and eventually involving expenditures of great magnitude to the government.

The various bands of Indians, whose home this country has been from time immemorial, now earnestly hope that the treaties solemnly and under many difficulties concluded with them, will be carried out in good faith by the government.

They already feel the pressure of a concurrence of, to them, untoward circumstances. The rapid approach of white settlements near their old hunting-grounds, leads to the absolute necessity of a speedy change in their habits and modes of life, while the game on which they formerly subsisted is fast disappearing, and they now entertain a deep conviction that their future existence, as a people, solely depends upon their abandoning the precarious life of a hunter, and adopting that of "tillers of the soil," for which purpose the most wise, judicious and liberal provisions have been made by the United States commissioners, in the treaties concluded.

This conviction, beyond all others, led the Indians to accept the propositions of the government, through its commissioners, for the cession of their country, to obtain annuities, which would enable them to commence a new mode of life, and to concentrate the different bands under more favorable auspices, thereby carrying into practical effect the humane and paternal policy of the government towards the Indian tribes.

Your memorialists would further respectfully represent, that on the twentieth day of September last a treaty was concluded at Pembina, in this Territory, between Governor Alexander Ramsey, commissioner on the part of the United States, and the Chippewa Indians, whereby a large and fertile tract of land, well timbered and highly suited for agricultural purposes, lying on each side of the Red river of the north, was ceded to the United States on the most favorable conditions.

Already there is established at Pembina a flourishing colony of energetic inhabitants, natives of this northwestern region, and either citizens of the United States by birth or adoption; and many more are now anxiously awaiting the ratification of this treaty to become citizens, and to obtain a right in fee-simple to the soil, and their future permanent homes; and thereby establish on a fixed basis a rising colony which will prove of inestimable benefit on our northwestern frontier; and, besides, its early ratification would confer a justly entitled boon on a meritorious class of our population.

Your memorialists, in conclusion, beg leave to represent that the early ratification of all these treaties is the most serious and earnest desire of the population of this Territory; and as the representatives of the whole peo-

ple, your memorialists most respectfully and urgently pray for their early ratification during this session of your honorable body.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. D. LUDDEN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
 WM. HENRY FORBES,
President of the Council.

Approved February 6, 1852.

ALEX. RAMSEY.

I, Alexander Wilkin, Secretary of the Territory of Minnesota, do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of a memorial passed by the Legislative Assembly of said Territory, and filed in my office, after having been signed and approved by his Excellency Alexander Ramsey, Governor of said Territory.

In witness whereof, I have hereto affixed the great seal of said Territory, and signed my name, this 7th day of February,
 [L. s.] A. D. 1852.

ALEXANDER WILKIN,
Secretary of Minnesota Territory.