

tions have received, through the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a Despatch from Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, inclosing a French Imperial Decree, with the accompanying Ministerial Report (translations of which are subjoined), abrogating certain restrictions imposed by the French Ordinance of the 8th February, 1826, on the importation into France, in British vessels, of the produce of Asia, Africa, and America.

I.—REPORT TO THE EMPEROR.

SIRE, *Paris, May 10, 1854.*

The Treaty of Navigation concluded between France and England on the 26th January, 1826, has for its basis an entire reciprocity. In order to insure the execution of the Treaty, an Ordinance issued on the 8th February of the same year, prohibited, in an absolute manner, the importation for consumption in France of merchandise the produce of Asia, Africa, and America, laden in English entrepôts.

The same Ordinance prohibited the importation, under the British Flag, of European produce, except from ports of the United Kingdom, or of her possessions in Europe.

These restrictive measures were only introduced into our Custom-house system in return for corresponding measures which in virtue of the Navigation Act of 1666 figured in the maritime code of England.

These restrictions have been ever since their existence the subject of strong remonstrances on the part of commerce and industry.

On several occasions the Government has departed from the rigour of the provisions of the Ordinance of 1826; for instance, an Ordinance of the 8th July, 1834, removed the prohibition to the importation from England of raw silks, foulards, India cashmeres, rum, and tafia.

Quite recently, and pursuant on the enquiry as to the situation of the cotton-spinning industry, your Majesty, earnestly desirous of affording greater facilities to that industry, made a Decree, on the 30th of December last, abolishing, in the case of that textile material, the restrictions prescribed in the Ordinance of 1826. At the same time your Majesty ordered me to examine if it would not be desirable entirely to abrogate that prohibition.

The examination to which I have devoted myself, in concert with the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Finance, has convinced me, Sire, that no interest demands the further maintenance of prohibitions which have lost all character of utility.

In consequence I have the honour to propose to your Majesty to approve the subjoined Decree, the object of which is to replace our maritime and commercial relations with England on the footing of common right.

Commerce and Industry will applaud, Sire, a measure which bears witness once more to the interest which your Majesty takes in all which can contribute to the prosperity of the country.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) P. MAGNE.

Minister Secretary of State to the Department of Agriculture, Commerce, and Public Works.

II.—DECREE.

NAPOLÉON, by the grace of God and the national will, Emperor of the French, to all whom it may concern, greeting:

On the report of our Minister, Secretary of State to the Department of Agriculture, Com-

merce, and Public Works, referring to the Treaty of Navigation concluded on the 26th January, 1826, between France and England; referring to the Ordinance of the 8th February, 1826, respecting the execution of the aforesaid Treaty, we have decreed, and decree, as follows:

Art. 1. The dispositions contained in the third article of the Ordinance of the 8th February, 1826, are hereby repealed.

Art. 2. Our Ministers Secretaries of State to the Department of Agriculture, Commerce, and Public Works, and to the Department of Finance, are charged, so far as concerns their respective Departments, with the execution of the present decree.

Done at the Palace of the Tuileries, the 10th May, 1854.

(Signed) NAPOLÉON.

By the Emperor,
The Minister Secretary of State
to the Department of Agriculture
and Commerce, and Public
Works.

P. MAGNE.

*Board of Trade, Whitehall,
May 29, 1854.*

THE Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Plantations have received, through the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a Despatch from Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, inclosing a French Imperial Decree, with the accompanying Ministerial Report (translations of which are subjoined), modifying the duties hitherto levied upon raw wool imported into France, in French bottoms, from the Cape of Good Hope, and from countries situated beyond that Cape and beyond Cape Horn.

I.—REPORT TO THE EMPEROR.

SIRE, *Paris, 12th May, 1854.*

The development of the commercial and maritime relations of France with the countries situated beyond Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope, especially with Australia, has always been the object of your Majesty's solicitude. With this view a Decree, issued on the 5th March, 1852, reduced from 20 to 15 per cent. the duty levied upon raw wools imported under the French flag from the countries situated in the zone above indicated.

But this measure, as I have reported to your Majesty, has not produced all the effects that might have been expected from it. The difference between the general duty on wools and the special duty established on Australian wools had not sufficed to induce shipments, which are always very expensive, and the results of which are long in developing themselves. On the other hand the system of *ad valorem* duties was not well suited to transactions with Australia.

Your Majesty had ordered me to devise a combination which, without prejudicing the interests of our agriculture, might be more adapted to operations which it is so important to encourage.

It appears to me that I should fulfil these conditions by proposing to you, Sire, to substitute for the Tariff specified in the Decree of the 5th of March, 1852, a duty according to weight, calculated at the rate of 10 per cent. on the value of Australian wools in French ports. Thus classified, the Tariff will be of easy and simple percep-