

*Board of Trade, Whitehall,
December 22, 1862.*

THE Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade have received from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the following translation of the articles of a decree regulating the entry, &c., of vessels, at the Island of Saint Croix, received from Her Majesty's Minister at Copenhagen:—

1.

No ship or vessel arriving from or bound to any place beyond the Customs' District of St. Croix, or which departs from one Customs' District on the island to another, shall be allowed to communicate with its coasts, except at the public loading or discharging places in the harbour of Christiansted, and in the roadstead of Fredericksted, save when permission to do so, in accordance with section 5, has been obtained, or in cases of distress as mentioned in section 2. Neither shall it be permitted for any ship or vessel, on such a voyage, to enter any bay of the island, lie to, or keep off or on, or anchor off these coasts, except with permission, or in cases of distress, as before stated.

Communication with the coast of the island shall not only be considered to have taken place, when landing has been effected direct from the ship or by the assistance of boats or other craft belonging to her, or, when persons or goods have been landed from the ship, or when persons or goods have been taken on board from the coast, but also when any vessel or other craft from the coast runs alongside the ship, or any boat or craft belonging to her.

2.

If any ship or vessel, in consequence of distress, or being short of provisions, or under other extraordinary circumstances, shall be obliged to enter any bay of the island, or to lie to, or keep off or on, or anchor off the coast, the master of such ship is bound to make a report on the subject, setting forth the cause of such proceeding, to the Inspector of Customs, at the first Danish Custom-house he touches at, in order that further inquiry may be instituted.

If, in the event of such distress, it should prove necessary to communicate with the shore, a signal of distress must be hoisted on board as early as possible, and such communication, by boats from the shore or by landing from the ship, must be confined to what is absolutely necessary, and evidence to this effect must be produced by witnesses, as far as circumstances will admit. If the vessel arrive from a place infected by or suspected as infected by contagious disease, or, if suspicious cases of illness have occurred on board during the voyage, the quarantine laws are to be strictly observed.

3.

No boat, lighter, or other craft used on the island of St. Croix for pleasure, for fishing purposes, for collecting ballast or limestone, or for discharging or loading ships, or for other similar purposes, shall be allowed to have communication with the ships or vessels referred to in section 1, while they are under sail or at anchor outside the harbour of Christiansted, or the roadstead of Fredericksted, or with any ship or vessel sailing past the island, unless permission to do so shall have been obtained in conformity with section 5; or in cases of distress as stated in section 2. In the last mentioned case the person in charge of the boat or lighter shall as early as possible state

what has occurred to the nearest quarantine officer or inspector of customs, without reference to the duty imposed by section 2 on the master, to make a report on the subject.

4.

On the coast, beyond the towns, it is the duty of the quarantine officers to enforce the observance of this decree; and, as soon as an infringement of its clauses or anything causing suspicion comes to their knowledge, they shall take such steps and precautions as circumstances may permit, until the arrival of the proper customs or police authority, to whom they have to make an immediate report on the subject. The proprietors and superintendents of estates on the coast are also required to report to the quarantine officer or to the customs or police authority, nearest at hand, as early as possible, any breach of the regulations laid down in sections 1, 2, 3, which may come to their knowledge.

When, in cases as those mentioned in section 2, communication between a vessel and the coast becomes necessary, all persons concerned shall, until it has been ascertained that the ship does not come from a place infected by or suspected as infected by contagious disease, and has had no suspicious case of illness on board during the voyage, use every precaution provided by the laws of quarantine, and more especially by the ordinance of February 8th, 1805, paragraphs 32 to 37.

5.

As this decree makes no alterations in the regulations laid down in the ordinance of April 9th, 1764, cap. 4, section 5, and cap. 7, section 1; and in the law of June 30th, 1850, sections 1 to 15, nor imposes any restrictions on the rules now in force with reference to the superintendence of such ships by the quarantine, customs, or police authorities, so also shall the rules and regulations issued by, or that may be issued by, the Government of the Danish West India Islands, especially as regards the maintenance of order in the harbour of Christiansted, and the roadstead of Fredericksted, in future have full force. The said government are authorised, when circumstances may require it, to allow exceptions to be made in the regulations stipulated in sections 1, 2, 3, and to permit customs' authorities, on the spot, to sanction such exceptions, in accordance with rules to be stipulated.

6.

Violations of the regulations laid down in sections 1, 2, 3, of this decree, shall be punishable with fines varying from 10 to 100 West India dollars, and any infringement of section 4, with fines varying from 2 to 20 West India dollars, provided no breach of the quarantine laws, liable to severer punishment, shall have been committed.

The ship, with reference to which the offence has been committed, shall be held responsible for the fine and the expenses incurred in consequence, unless it be proved that it has been used for such purpose without the knowledge and against the will of the owner or the master.

Questions respecting violations of this decree, are to be tried and judged as public police cases; but the master of police shall, before judgment is passed, submit a report of the enquiry held, and of the facts brought forward to the government, who have to decide whether the case shall go to judgment or be abandoned.