

(C. 1176.)

*Board of Trade, Whitehall,
August 14, 1867.*

THE Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade have received a Despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Riga, with a copy of a decision of the Council of State, relative to charges on Trade and Navigation at the Port of Riga, of which the following is a translation:—

Regulation for the Abolition and Alteration of certain Charges on Commerce and Navigation at Riga, brought into operation on the 1st July, 1867.

By decision of the Council of the Empire, dated the 1st April, 1867, it has been determined:—

I.

To abolish the undermentioned taxes which have hitherto been borne by the Commerce and Navigation of Riga:—

1. *Taxes received by the Crown; viz.:*

(a)—Fire money; (b)—Poor money; (c)—Harbour money.

2. *Taxes received by the City of Riga; viz.:*

(a)—Lastage duty at 5 copecks per last (entrance and clearance together), on every vessel entering the Port of Riga; (b)—Bridge money per last on every vessel quitting the Port of Riga; (c)—Town quay money; (d)—Allowance money (bewilligungsgeld); (e)—Store money for placing vessels along the banks and quays of the Düna; (f)—Bridge money, for making vessels fast to the Düna Bridge.

3. *Taxes levied for the benefit of the General Governor and his Chancery; viz.:*

(a)—Quay and stage money for all vessels entering the Port of Riga; (b)—Taxes called (accidenzien) fees.

4. *Taxes levied for the benefit of the Custom House, its Functionaries and Servants; viz.:*

(a)—Passport duty on ships leaving the port; (b)—Charges on measurement certificate of every ship; (c)—The first Custom House fees (accidenzien); (d)—The second Custom House fees (accidenzien); (e)—Taxes for the benefit of the Seamen's Widow and Orphan Fund.

5. *Taxes levied for the benefit of the Exchange Committee; viz.:*

(a)—The tax of 14 copecks per vessel; (b)—The tax of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the value of trade with Great Britain and other foreign countries.

6. *Tax levied for the benefit of the Captain of the Port; viz.:*

1 Ruble 24 copecks per vessel.

7. *Taxes levied for the benefit of the Lutheran Churches and Charitable Establishments; viz.:*

(a)—Church money; (b)—Tax for the benefit of the Riga Orphan House; (c)—Tax for the St. George's Hospital; (d)—Tax for the Russian Poorhouse.

II.

The tax now existing for the benefit of the city of Riga of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the value of all goods

imported and exported at the Port of Riga, shall be reduced by one-half from the year 1868; that is to say, that from the 1st of January, 1868, only $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. shall be levied on all goods imported and exported, the town taking upon itself (a)—To keep up the Mercantile Courts and Police of Riga; (b)—To increase the Police and Fire Brigade as may be necessary.

III.

To carry out the principles above mentioned, the Commerce and Navigation of Riga will continue to pay the following taxes:—

1. *For the benefit of the Crown.*

(a)—A lastage duty of 5 copecks per last on all vessels measuring 10 lasts and upwards; (b)—A tax of 90 copecks for the stamped paper used for ship's pass, and 15 copecks on the declaration of the Captain; (c)—A tax of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the value of merchandize descending the Düna by river carriage.

2. *Taxes levied to be administered by the Exchange Committee.*

(a)—The second $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the value of imports and exports, on the condition that the Ministers of the Interior and Finance shall watch that the amount received shall be especially applied to the payment of the interest, and to extinguish the loans raised by the body of merchants for the construction of the Winter Harbour, the building and furnishing of the Exchange, or for other expenses directly beneficial to commerce and navigation; (b)—The third and fourth taxes of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., as well as that of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the value of imports and exports, under the condition that the Local Authorities shall report to the Minister of the Interior relative to the possibility of suppressing these three taxes, so soon as the loans to the payment of which they are to be applied shall have been disposed of, or shall propose their reduction, should the keeping the harbour in a satisfactory condition render a permanent tax necessary; (c)—The tax of 1 copeck per last on all outgoing vessels for the benefit of the Marine Hospital and the construction of a Hospize.

3. *With the character of a voluntary contribution,* the tax for the benefit of the Seamen's Widow and Orphan Fund, and of the Riga Seamen Society; the amount of this tax is left to be decided by the shipowners of Riga, without placing shipowners of other ports under the obligation of subscribing to it.

IV.

The temporary tax of 15 copecks per last on all merchants' vessels quitting the port, applied to deepening the navigable canal of the river, is changed into a tax of 10 copecks per last, which shall be levied equally on all merchants' vessels entering and quitting the port, on the condition, however, that the produce of this tax shall be exclusively applied to deepening the bed of the river and to no other purpose.

V.

To replace the taxes which have been suppressed, and especially the tax of 5 copecks per last, the quay, shore and bridge duties, as well as the tax called (Bewilligungsgelder); there is provisionally established, for the benefit of the city of