

IV

Robert Ungern-Sternberg

The consul appointed to replace Poutiata arrived in Melbourne in November 1895. His name was Robert Robertovich Ungern-Sternberg Freiherr von Pirkel, the scion of an ancient baronial line of Baltic Germans. He was born on 5 May (OS) 1845 in the province of Estland (Estonia) on the island of Dagö, now known as Hiiumaa,¹ and his family owned a large number of landed estates in the area.

In 1857, Robert Ungern-Sternberg's father sent him to school in Reval (now Tallinn), after which he studied law at the universities of Geneva and Berlin, and later the Imperial University in Odessa, where he graduated as a Doctor of Laws. However, Ungern-Sternberg chose a military career, and, in 1868, was commissioned in a horse guards regiment. In November 1875, the young officer was attached to Tsar Alexander II's retinue. He spent the Russo–Turkish campaign of 1877–1878 with the Emperor on active service and was present when the fortress of Nikopol fell to General Nikolai Kridener's forces in July 1877. From the end of 1879, he served in the Ministry of Internal Affairs until he was retired to the reserve in 1888, with the rank of major-general,² but after almost seven years of retirement he returned to work. Having passed the compulsory examination, and assisted by Count Aleksei Borisovich Lobanov-Rostovsky, then Minister

1 Rahvusarhiiv (National Archives of Estonia), File No. eaa1674_002_0000207_00039_m.png. Baron Roman Fedorovich Ungern-Sternberg, the well-known proponent of the White cause in Far Eastern Russia, was a nephew of R. R. Ungern-Sternberg.

2 *Sbornik biografii kavalergardov. Po sluchaiu stoletnego iubileia Kavalerhardskogo ee velichestva gosudaryni-imperatritsy Marii Fedorovny polka*, Vol. 4, 1826–1908, St Petersburg, 1908, p. 269; AVPRI: 159-464- 3335a, ff 14–17.

of Foreign Affairs and a personal friend, he joined the Foreign Ministry in June 1895. The documents on his appointment indicate that he took it up 'readily and willingly'. He departed for his new posting with his wife, née the Countess Wilhelmina Yevstafyevna von Berg.³

At his post in Melbourne, Ungern-Sternberg displayed his prodigious energy and capacity for work to the full. His dispatches clearly show the precision and clarity of a military man, and a certain pedantry in the presentation of facts, and at the same time a pronounced dislike for abstract debate. His appetite for work did not go unnoticed by his colleagues in the diplomatic service. The well-known lawyer and historian Mikhail Aleksandrovich Taube, a member of the legal section of the Foreign Ministry, recalled later, when Ungern-Sternberg became Consul General in London, 'the particularly valuable zeal ... displayed by our energetic Consul General Baron Ungern-Sternberg, a former army officer'.⁴ His immediate superiors also highly appreciated his work as consul in Melbourne. In April 1898, he was awarded the Order of St Stanislav, Third Class, and his service record described him as an 'extremely able officer'.⁵

In Melbourne, Ungern-Sternberg became very popular and had a wide circle of acquaintances. Being extremely learned, especially in the field of history, he had the ability to draw people to him. In April 1898, the consul and his wife left for Russia on leave and the cream of Melbourne society gathered to see him off. He was due to return in September of that year, as he told his friends in Melbourne, but he did not in fact come back to Australia. In July 1898, he was promoted to the post of consul general in London. That was to be his last posting. He worked in London for ten years, until his death on 4 August 1908.⁶

3 AVPRI: 159-749/1-1081, f. 229; *The Argus*, 6 August 1898, p. 9.

4 M. A. Taube, 'Zarnitsy'. *Vospominaniia o tragicheskoi sud'be predrevoliutsionnoi Rossii (1900-1917)*, Moscow, ROSEN, 2007, p. 89.

5 AVPRI: 184-520-779, f. 210.

6 *The Argus*, 6 August 1898, p. 9; AVPRI: 157-464-3335a, ff 17-18; *The Times*, 5 August 1908, p. 9.

48. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
30 (18) December 1895
No. 63

[...] I beg leave to bring the following matter to Your Excellency's attention.

The present dispute between Britain and the United States has resounded loudly in the Australian colonies.⁷ We have witnessed a veritable explosion of British patriotism, providing yet further evidence of the deep attachment between the colonies and the mother country. When we hear talk of Australian 'separatism', this term is actually inappropriate. We should rather speak of particularism. It is this which characterises the public life of the colonies: Australians cling passionately to their local autonomy, just as they cling to their six distinct governments with their chambers, ministries, majorities and all the trappings of modern constitutionalism. But one would search in vain for any trace of 'separatism'. In one of his latest harangues, Lord Brassey said, 'If you cease to belong to Britain, you will be neither freer nor stronger'.⁸ This felicitous euphemism served to remind Australians of a truth of which they were, no doubt, fully aware: without Britain they could not exist, for it is British power which guarantees the stability and functioning of their institutions, and British capital alone which feeds their economic prosperity. Britain is a splendid creditor. According to official figures, the Australian colonies, together with Tasmania, having a total population of 3,140,000 souls (equal to that of some Russian provinces, such as Kiev, Viatka or Perm, taken singly), have borrowed £215,000,000 from the mother country, of which £165,000,000 were lent to governments and £50,000,000 to banks, quite apart from private transactions.

At the same time, the British Government's colonial policy displays an attitude of boundless and imperturbable indulgence, the very opposite of the system which led to the rebellion in the American colonies in the

7 Deteriorating relations between Britain and the United States, almost bringing them to the brink of war, were linked to US intervention on the Venezuelan side in a dispute between Britain and Venezuela on the demarcation of the border between Venezuela and British Guiana.

8 Lord Thomas Brassey: prominent political figure in Britain and Australia; Governor of Victoria in 1895–1900.

days of Lord North and Lord Chatham.⁹ It can be illustrated by a recent incident. The governors are appointed by Her Majesty the Queen but paid by the colonies. Sir Thomas Buxton had just been appointed Governor of South Australia with an annual salary of £5,000 when suddenly the colony reduced it by £1,000.¹⁰ Mr Chamberlain was not in the least discountenanced.¹¹ He merely remarked that he was sorry to see South Australia in such straitened circumstances. And Sir Thomas, for his part, concurred. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 171–172. In French.

49. Ungern-Sternberg to the Personnel and Management Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Melbourne,
17 (5) February 1896
No. 114

[...] I have the honour to report that, in response to the instruction of 21 December (No. 4439) I have informed Mr Lewenberg, of Auckland,¹² that the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs has no plans at present to open an honorary consulate in New Zealand.

In connection with this, I beg to suggest to the Department that in the interests of the service it would be desirable to ask the British Government to extend the exequatur of the Russian Consul in Victoria to all the Australian colonies (with the exception of New South Wales, where there is an honorary consul),¹³ to wit, Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand.

9 Lord North: Frederick North, Second Earl of Guilford, British Prime Minister in 1770–1782. His hard-line taxation policy and refusal to make concessions led to rebellion in the American colonies and the American War of Independence. Lord Chatham: title of William Pitt the Elder, British statesman, opponent of North's harsh taxation policy.

10 Sir Thomas Buxton: Governor of South Australia 1895–1899.

11 Joseph Chamberlain: British statesman of conservative views, advocate of imperial expansion. Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1895–1903.

12 Nicholas Lewenberg: an entrepreneur of Russian extraction. In 1895–1897, he attempted to establish a business near Waikato, North Island, for the production and processing of sugar beet.

13 The Honorary Consul was E. M. Paul.

This measure is desirable for two reasons:

- (1) because the governments of the colonies are independent of one another, which means that an official position in one colony may not be recognised in another;
- (2) there are numerous Russian nationals now resident in Australia.

These people, mostly Finns and Letts who have deserted from British ships, for the most part earn good wages. (They never visit the Consulate.)

In the event of their death, if they have no relatives in Australia, their effects, to which Paragraph No. 1 of the Declaration of 1880 is inapplicable,¹⁴ pass into the safe-keeping of the trustees and guardians of unclaimed deceased estates, and subsequently, when no heirs declare themselves (there are no public announcements) into the colonial treasury.

If the exequatur of the Consul in Victoria extended to the other colonies, he could in many cases, by requesting information and through official correspondence, from Melbourne protect the rights of heirs resident in Russia, and by reports to the Ministry on each individual case assist in locating those heirs.¹⁵ [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, f. 139. Copy. In Russian.

50. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
21 (9) February 1896
No. 117

[...] I beg to inform Your Excellency that the important plan to form an Australian federation may now be considered buried. Negotiations are continuing, but there is no longer any doubt as to their outcome.

¹⁴ The Declaration of 1880, signed by the British and Russian governments in August 1880, covered the mutual repatriation of estates left by deceased British and Russian seamen sailing on vessels of the two countries. Paragraph 1 dealt with estates not exceeding £50 or 350 silver roubles.

¹⁵ Ungern-Sternberg's arguments were heeded in St Petersburg. In November 1896, he was granted the official status of Russian consul in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand.

The plan envisaged the union of the various colonial governments in a single legislative and administrative centre. Her Majesty's Government lent it their full support, and might even be described as its main proponent.

Among the arguments in favour of federation, one above all was forcefully advanced by the British Government: the question of an Australian army. And in effect only a federal government might have had sufficient authority to attempt the delicate and ruinously costly enterprise of building a standing army in a country where radicalism is in power, there is no compulsory military service, and the worker to be enlisted to the ranks earns four roubles for eight hours work.

At present the 'armed forces' of the colonies amount to absolutely nothing, but are adequate for what is required of them. Can one imagine circumstances in which Australia would need to defend itself against aggression? To this we may reply that one cannot. A future Australian army will therefore be condemned to being merely a luxury – unless one day the deep and sincere loyalty of Australians should require them to place it at the disposition of the mother country. This last eventuality may not have been entirely unrelated to the warm interest shown by the British Government, and tirelessly and eloquently transmitted by the Victorian Governor.

In seeking the causes of this final failure, apart from economic and local factors, we may attribute much to the aversion felt by many Australians to a standing army: the radicals see it as a threat, and the land-owning class fears financial ruin. But the primary cause, the true cause, lies elsewhere. It is to be found in the spirit of special identity which has always and everywhere been the birthright of the Saxon races, owing to which amalgamation as such is repugnant to Australians.

Studying the political life of the colonies, one is struck by certain remarkable analogies with events in the United States when they achieved independence, and in Germany in the early days of the Zollverein.¹⁶

We are compelled to conclude that the colonies will form a federation only when there is a pressing and immediate need to do so.¹⁷ [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 7–8. In French.

16 Zollverein: customs union. See Document 33.

17 Ungern-Sternberg's assertions on this topic indicate that he underestimated the power of the centripetal tendencies at work in the colonies, and the scale of the federalist movement.

51. Ungern-Sternberg to Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Melbourne,
22 (10) February 1896
No. 467

Last year the Colonial Government in Melbourne sent Mr Cecil Hake, Chief Inspector of Explosives, to England to study the manufacture of smokeless powder with a view to establishing an independent Australian powder factory on the basis of the information thus gathered.

In view of the scale of importation of explosive compounds into Australia (£238,000 a year), planning for a factory capable of supplying both the mining industry and the defence requirements of the country has long been under consideration.

The aim of Mr Hake's journey was principally to select from the wide range of products the powder best suited to Australia's needs.

In a detailed secret report, Mr Hake has now recommended a smokeless powder called 'cordite', which has been studied at the experimental station at Waltham Abbey in England.¹⁸

Contrary to the wishes of the Government, that report has been published in the local newspaper *The Age*, in extract form.

I enclose the press article in the original, in case the Department wishes to communicate this to our War Department.¹⁹

I have been unable to procure a complete copy of the report; Mr Hake and the Secretary for Defence, both of whom I know well, assure me that the Ministry had decided to keep it completely secret. I judged it inappropriate to take the matter further, and did not know how much it might interest our specialists.

18 The Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey, Essex, began experiments to develop new types of explosives in the mid-1850s.

19 The enclosure, 'Smokeless Powder', from *The Age*, 12 February 1896, is not reproduced here.

I confined myself to enquiring of the Secretary for Defence whether the article in *The Age* was reliable, and he replied that it was.²⁰ [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 30–31. Copy. In Russian. Previously unpublished.

52. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
14 (2) April 1896
No. 179

[...] I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that in the course of the past week a further exchange of views has taken place in Sydney, in the presence of three Governors, on the question of an Australian army (mentioned in my report No. 117, of 9/21 February).²¹

It seems that the British Government attaches increasing importance to a prompt resolution of this matter. It is even recommending that it be treated separately from the plan for federation, which is being held up by many difficulties in the detail.

It is reported that during the last round of negotiations, direct overtures, so to speak, were made concerning the services which the mother country would expect of the future Australian army: in time of war it would be sent to India to replace troops called to a theatre of war.

Once again the negotiations did not lead to a satisfactory conclusion. It is true that the Australian ministers did declare that if the need arose a special detachment would be raised, at the colonies' expense, and dispatched to join the regular army, like the 600 men equipped by New South Wales for the campaign in the Sudan in 1885.²² But the memory of that unruly band is still fresh in the mind of the British High Command. Rowdy

20 In February 1896, the Minister for Defence in the Victorian Government was William McCulloch.

21 See Document 50. The reference is evidently to a meeting between the Governors of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia (Lord Hampden, Lord Brassey and Sir Thomas Buxton) in Sydney on 8 April 1896.

22 A 750-strong contingent of Australian troops was sent to the Sudan to assist the British in putting down the Mahdi revolt. Stationed in Suakin in March–May 1885, the Australians took little part in combat operations. They were used mainly to repair the railway line by which the British force received its supplies.

and ill-trained, those men were an embarrassment to their commanders and a singularly bad example to their comrades, and the enormous sums allocated by the Government in Sydney gave cause for murmurs of discontent. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 25–26. In French.

53. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
25 (13) April 1896
No. 202

[...] I have the honour to submit to the Imperial Embassy in London some data which I have obtained through official channels on the number of Russian nationals resident in the Australian colonies, according to the general census of the Australian population undertaken in 1891:

	Male	Female	Total
New South Wales	987	189	1,176
Victoria	911	261	1,172
Queensland	207	28	235
South Australia	156	33	189
Western Australia	56	15	71
Tasmania	33	5	38
New Zealand	289	31	320
Total	2,639	562	3,201

According to information received privately, the number of Russians in South Australia and Western Australia (especially the latter) has increased very significantly in recent years. [...]

AVPRI: 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, f. 34. In Russian.

54. Ungern-Sternberg to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Internal Department

Melbourne,
26 (14) September 1896
No. 319

[...] I have the honour, in response to the instruction of 7 August (No. 6698), to supply information concerning the person of Mr Damyon and his financial situation. He resides at 224 Williamson Road, Toorak, and has appealed to the Sovereign Emperor for financial support.

In the years 1857 to 1894 Mr Damyon managed the Russian Consulate in Melbourne, first as Vice-Consul, and later as Consul. In January 1894 he handed over consular affairs to the newly appointed Consul, A. D. Poutiata, now deceased.

Mr Damyon is 84 years old. In his youth he worked for many years for various companies in Russia, and still today speaks good Russian.

He came to Australia in the 1840s, established an independent trading company, and soon grew wealthy.

Until 1892 he was considered a rich man; he owned land and held shares in various commercial banks. However, when the terrible financial crisis broke upon Australia and the banks suspended their payments, British law required him, as a shareholder, and others like him to use his other properties to pay the banks' creditors. As a result, all his property was sold.

Although Mr Damyon has not approached the Consulate for support, I am fully aware of his extreme, even abject poverty.

In view of the universal respect in which he is held, the colonial government granted him the office of Customs Agent for life. This office is unpaid and yields only a modest income, proportionate to commissions from importers, and since there are many customs agents, and the public prefer to deal with younger ones (Damyon is now almost completely deaf), his earnings are negligible.

Damyon receives no assistance from his sons. Two of them hold junior clerical positions in small establishments, and the third, who has tried his hand at various trades, is at present idle and a burden to his father.²³ [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 104–105. Copy. In Russian.

55. Ungern-Sternberg to V. N. Kovalevsky, Director of the Department of Trade and Manufacturing, Russian Ministry of Finance²⁴

Melbourne,
15 (3) October 1896
No. 338

[...] I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that in a separate package I have dispatched to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing samples of the highest-quality merino wool of the latest cut, in the hope that a comparison of these samples with wool procured abroad by our manufacturers, mainly at third hand, will be of some interest.

It is now the shearing season in Victoria, and sheep graziers lavish generous hospitality upon their acquaintances.

I took up some invitations to visit the district of Ballarat, which has the best fine-fleeced sheep in all of Australia, and where, by a happy coincidence, the graziers escaped the banking crisis of 1893.

The properties there are very large, and not being mortgaged, bring handsome returns to their owners. The graziers are therefore well placed to take advantage of all the latest innovations in agriculture.

²³ Damyon's appeal for regular support was unsuccessful, but early in 1897 the Russian Government made a single payment of £120.

²⁴ Vladimir Ivanovich Kovalevsky was Director of the Department of Trade and Manufacturing from 1892 to 1900.

The properties I visited are all well known in the world's wool markets for the superior quality of their product, which has won prizes at the World Fair in Chicago. The properties in question, where I received the said samples, are: Ercildoune (40,000 head of sheep), Trawalla (42,000), Carngham (28,000), Langi-Willi (18,000), and Stoneleigh (48,000).²⁵

Shearing is done partly with the aid of steam-powered motors, but on the whole this innovation has not yielded the expected results, so manual labour predominates. In our currency, the shearers receive nine roubles per hundred sheep (in Russia, I believe they are paid between three and five roubles) for hand-shearing and seven per hundred for machine-shearing.

My stay in the Ballarat district has convinced me that rumours of the unviability of sheep-rearing in Australia are without foundation. The only graziers in difficulty are those whose properties are mortgaged to major trading companies dealing in wool, and therefore exploiting them.

The climatic and soil conditions in Australia are so favourable to sheep-breeding that even the exorbitant cost of labour is of no consequence.

A farm-labourer hired by the year receives, in our terms, ten roubles a week all found (except for tobacco and drink) and works eight hours a day for five days and only four on Saturdays. It is true that he is an excellent worker, and the number of such full-time workers is very limited. A large property like Ercildoune (40,000 head), for example, has only twenty: to mind and maintain the fences and protect the water supply. Barns, sheds and stockyards are non-existent: the flocks graze in the open throughout the year with no shepherds to mind them.

It is too early to judge Australian wool prices in the current season, since public auctions are only just beginning and the market is still very slack, something which is attributed to restraint on the part of American buyers, who fear changes in the currency values in connection with the coming US presidential election.

25 Ungern-Sternberg lists localities and farms to the west, north and northwest of Ballarat. Ercildoune was established in 1838 by the Livingstone-Learmonth brothers, and was one of the best-known sheep stations in Australia. Trawalla, founded in 1838 by the Hamilton family, became the property of Rear-Admiral W. B. Bridges in 1887. One of the first owners of Carngham, from 1843, was Philip Russell. Langi-Willi also belonged to Russell from 1859, and Stoneleigh belonged to the Russell family from 1847.

In spite of this, we may probably suppose that the final prices are likely to be higher than last year's because the total yield for 1895 was relatively low on account of the drought, which compelled graziers to sell off their flocks for slaughter (in New South Wales alone, some 9,000,000 head of sheep were disposed of in this way).

A comparison of my samples with the varieties of wool (Australian and South American) bought by our manufacturers in the German, Belgian and French markets – wool which is said to be essential to our manufacturing industry – shows how desirable it would be for our manufacturers to send their specialised agents to the Australian wool auctions, or at least the London auctions, where, as I know, they do not appear. The sums they overpay to German, Belgian and French trading companies for second-rate wool at second and third hand must also be very considerable.

I consider it my duty to bring this to Your Excellency's attention. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 108–109. Copy. In Russian.

56. Ungern-Sternberg to Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Melbourne,
2 November (21 October) 1896
No. 358

I have the honour to present some intelligence collected by the Consulate on the state of the supply of kerosene in Australia.

With the exception of a trifling amount produced locally, all kerosene is obtained from America.

Australia's sources of oil, and those of New Zealand in particular, are of poor quality. They are being exploited by two joint-stock companies in New South Wales (Australia Kerosene Oil & Mineral Co. and New South Wales Shale & Oil Co.), and one company in New Zealand near the township of Orepuki.²⁶

From 1865 to 1894, a total of 804,069 tons of crude oil was extracted; in 1894 21,700, and in 1895 59,426 tons.

26 Orepuki: a township in the South Island of New Zealand, near Riverton.

New Zealand oil is now processed exclusively as lubricating oil.

From New South Wales, export of kerosene has been in the amounts shown below:

To	1892	1893	1894
Victoria	3,559 t.	2,997 t.	1,328 t.
Britain	7,717 t.	6,236 t.	8,019 t.
Dutch East Indies	18,578 t.	8,064 t.	5,884 t.
Italy	1,045 t.	4,064 t.	1 t.
USA	1,210 t.	603 t.	152 t.
Spain	3,438 t.	1,735 t.	–
Brazil	4,180 t.	–	–
Chile	1,950 t.	2,328 t.	1,914 t.
others	3,119 t.	1,718 t.	1,561 t.

These figures are taken from the work of the official Government statistician A. Coghlan.²⁷

American kerosene is sent in wooden crates, each of which holds two metal containers – each container holding four British gallons or five American gallons. It is purchased from the American Standard Oil Company at the production site, and delivered to Australia by middlemen, partly on commission, but in most cases it is ordered by Australian importers.

Since 1891 the quantity of American kerosene imported into Australia is as follows:

1891	1892	1893	1894	1895
8,433,336 gal.	8,583,832 gal.	8,686,080 gal.	10,958,528 gal.	10,645,936 gal.

Since 1st January this year the amount imported from America is as follows:

State	Gallons
Victoria	2,947,040
New South Wales	1,358,200
Queensland	888,000
Western Australia	239,800

27 Sir Timothy Augustine Coghlan, New South Wales public servant and the colony's first government statistician.

State	Gallons
South Australia	1,002,080
New Zealand	1,061,800
Total	7,496,920

Tasmania obtains its kerosene from the neighbouring colonies.

Prices in Sydney on 7/19 October 1896 are as follows:

American 150 grade: 1 shilling, 1½ pence per gallon

Colonial: 11 pence, 11½ pence per gallon

The duty payable on kerosene in New South Wales is three pence per gallon; in Victoria six pence per gallon.²⁸

Russian kerosene appeared in Melbourne a few years ago. A London firm made a trial delivery of 35 crates. The trial was unsuccessful, which was to be expected, given the dominance of companies interested in trading with America. Our kerosene was sold for 6 pence a gallon. We must assume that, if it were to be marketed again today, the same coalition would immediately form, and the sparse population of the Australian continent means that the market is too restricted for us to succeed in the face of the competition. Furthermore, freight costs would give the American product a significant advantage.

In order to verify the above information, I asked the leading purveyor of kerosene here, Couche, Balder & Co., to tell me if the figures in the Consulate's possession were correct. In reply they confirmed their accuracy, and added:

The question of Russian Kerosene Oil has been closely studied by us for some years past, and when in Europe about four years ago our Senior tried to obtain accurate information from persons who had control at Baku or Batoum,²⁹ but at that time it was found the interests were so divided that nothing definitive was forthcoming. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 124–125. Copy. In Russian. Published in part; see [Ungern-Shternberg R. R.] 'Ot rossiiskogo konsula v Mel'burne. Vvoz kerosina v Avstraliuu', *Vestnik finansov, promyshlennosti i torgovli*, No. 4, 1897, pp. 203–204.

28 Alongside the measurements in gallons, the author gives the equivalents in pails (*vedra*), the liquid measurement used in Russia: 1 pail (*vedro*) = approximately 12 litres.

29 Baku: the capital of Azerbaijan, on the west coast of the Caspian Sea; Batoum, now Batumi, is a port on the Georgian Black Sea coast.

57. Ungern-Sternberg to Imperial Embassy, London

Melbourne,
17 (5) November 1896
No. 372

I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of my dispatch of 5/17 November this year (No. 370) to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing on the establishment of a regular steamship service between Japan and Australia.

Baron Ungern-Sternberg
Consul, Melbourne

Attachment to No. 372

Copy of dispatch of 5/17 November (No. 370) to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing

Referring to §§ 91 and 92 of the Consular Regulations, I have the honour to report that the arrival here last week of the Japanese steamer *Yamashiro Maru*, of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha steamship company, finally marks the inauguration of the first regular steamship communication between Japan and Australia.

The aforementioned company, which is also well known in our Far Eastern ports, plans to make two regular return voyages a month, by agreement with the Japanese Government and fares calculated by the mile, between Yokohama, Kobe, Nagasaki and Australian ports: Hong Kong, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

The *Yamashiro Maru* (2,527 t.), which has now arrived here, was built at the Armstrong yards in England, and during the last war had guns fitted and was converted into an armed cruiser.³⁰ According to the Japanese honorary consul here,³¹ other vessels of this line are of a more modern type and larger deadweight (5,000 to 7,000 t.).

30 Last war: the reference is to the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–1895 concerning control over Korea.

31 The Japanese consul at the time was Tsunejiro Nakagawa.

The future of this enterprise may perhaps be considered secure from a commercial and economic standpoint, but it remains highly dubious in view of Australia's reluctance to admit Asians.

The so-called 'Coloured Immigration Restriction Bill', is not only in force; it is extremely popular throughout Australia.

Taking account of this public mood, the colonial governments quite recently collectively declined to take part in the trade treaty of 1894 between Britain and Japan, which recognised the Japanese as fully equal in this respect.³²

After the arrival of the Japanese steamer, its captain gave a ceremonial luncheon last Friday. (I did not attend.) The Japanese Honorary Consul, who is a broker here, delivered a speech, during which, among other things, he pointed out the injustice of the aforementioned law. The speech was met with general indignation, and since then the newspapers, with a single exception, have not ceased to subject it to severe censure. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-820, ff 140–142. Copy. In Russian. Previously unpublished.

58. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
25 (13) January 1897
No. 425

[...] I beg to inform Your Excellency that on 12/24 April E. Paul, our consul in Sydney, will have been performing consular duties for forty years. Vice-Consul in 1857, he was appointed Consul by imperial decree on 21 December 1874.³³ In 1882, after our Pacific Squadron's visit to Sydney, on the recommendation of Admiral Aslanbegoff,³⁴ he was awarded the Order of St Stanislav, Third Class.

32 'As reported by the Consulate in dispatch No. 152 to His Excellency the Ambassador on 11/22 March this year' (not reproduced here) (Ungern-Sternberg's note). (In the late nineteenth century, the Australian colonies vigorously opposed any rapprochement between Britain and Japan. The 1894 trade agreement was unpopular as it was seen as a threat to local industry and might lead to an influx of Japanese immigrants.)

33 Paul was made honorary consul in Sydney by order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Order No. 15) on 7 September 1874.

34 Rear-Admiral Avraamy Bogdanovich Aslanbegoff held command of a detachment of the Russian Pacific Fleet in 1881–1882. He visited Sydney and other Australian ports in 1881–1882 with a squadron consisting of the cruiser *Afrika* and the clippers *Plastun* and *Vestnik*.

During his long career, Mr Paul has witnessed the arrival of the following men-of-war in Sydney: the *Bogatyr* (1865), the *Boyarin* (1870), the *Izumrud* (1872), the *Afrika*, *Vestnik* and *Plastun* (1884), the *Rynda*, with His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Alexander on board, and the *Nayezdnik* (1894).³⁵

The archives of the Sydney consulate testify to the fact that our sailors have never departed the city without voicing their satisfaction and sincere gratitude to our Consul for the astute readiness with which he placed himself at their service and was helpful to them. His home became the daily meeting place of our naval officers; even his Imperial Highness several times honoured it by his presence.

In Sydney Mr Paul is universally respected. Despite the rumours which circulated in the French community last year, which I deemed it my duty to report confidentially, his financial situation is thoroughly satisfactory. Mr Paul is no longer engaged in private business on his own account, but continues to serve as principal agent in Australia, as before, for the major London concern Schweppe & Co. Ltd (manufacturers of mineral water), with whom he has a valid contract.³⁶ He has a personal fortune, and resides with his wife in his own house at Darling Point, an elegant district of Sydney.

I beg to convey some details, both personal and professional, in case Your Excellency should wish to request an Imperial honour for Mr Paul on the occasion of his fortieth year of service. I know that he would be delighted beyond measure, and his gratitude itself, given his popularity, would bring handsome rewards.

Mr Damyon, the former Consul in Melbourne, was awarded the Order of St Stanislav Second Class last year,³⁷ although he has neither comparable distinctions nor a comparable position in society.

35 This account contains a number of inaccuracies. The corvette *Bogatyr* visited Sydney in March 1863; the *Afrika*, *Vestnik* and *Plastun* in December 1881 and January 1882; the *Rynda*, on which the Grand Duke Alexander was a midshipman, in January–February 1888; and the *Nayezdnik* in December 1888 and January 1889. The cruiser *Kreiser* visited Sydney in 1894.

36 Schweppe & Co. Ltd, producer of mineral water, was founded in London by Jacob Schweppe in 1792. In 1873, Queen Victoria granted the company a royal warrant of appointment as official purveyor of its product to the royal house.

37 No confirmation has been found of the assertion that Damyon was awarded the Order of St Stanislav Second Class. He did, however, receive the Order of St Stanislav Third Class in 1883.

If Your Excellency should see fit to pursue the matter I have had the honour to place before him, and to seek an award for Mr Paul, it would be desirable that the award be not inferior to that conferred upon his junior colleague in Melbourne.³⁸ [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-779, ff 38–39. In French.

59. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
29 (17) January 1897
No. 439

[...] I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government has taken a step with regard to the Colonies which has been received here with great satisfaction: it has appointed the Chief Justice of South Australia, Mr Way, Australian Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council,³⁹ which has its seat in Westminster.

Until now this great judicial institution was predominantly British in character.

Australians are pleased to view Mr Way's nomination less as a political concession than as an act of courtesy towards them. It should perhaps also be seen as a step towards the unification of the Empire, so deeply desired, especially if the rumour is borne out that Canada and the Cape Colony are to receive the same favour.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was established quite recently, during the reign of William IV (1830–1837). At first its functions were purely consultative, but were subsequently extended. At present, any plaintiff from any part of the British Empire may have recourse to the Judicial Committee as the supreme and final authority.

38 Paul was awarded the Order of St Stanislav Second Class only in 1912, fifteen years after Ungern-Sternberg's recommendation.

39 Sir Samuel James Way: eminent South Australian lawyer and statesman. From 1875 until his death in 1916, Chief Justice of South Australia. Appointed in January 1897 to the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council, but served on it only until the autumn of that year.

In its structure the Judicial Committee resembles that of the First Department (administrative) and the Cassation Departments (common law) of our Senate.⁴⁰ As in Russia, its interpretations of the law acquire the force of law *ipso facto*, and become precedents by which all courts must be guided.

The new member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, with whom I have the pleasure of being personally acquainted, is a man of true distinction, as well as being a learned and experienced lawyer. His appointment has received unanimous approval. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 21–22. In French.

60. Ungern-Sternberg to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing, Russian Ministry of Finance

Melbourne,
19 (7) February 1897
No. 465

Further to my dispatch of 3/15 October 1896 (No. 338) to the Director of the Department, concerning wool,⁴¹ I have the honour to report that I have taken the liberty of sending another packet, the third, containing more wool, from the 1896 season, via the Imperial Embassy in London.

This wool obtained the highest price of the season: 2 shillings and 11 pence per pound; and one batch fetched as much as four shillings. That batch came from Mount Bute, the property of the heirs of Sir Samuel Wilson, in the Ballarat district of the colony of Victoria (with 52,000 head of sheep).⁴²

40 Governing Senate: in the Russian Empire, supreme organ of executive and legislative authority, established by Peter I in 1711 as a consultative body for the Tsar. By the end of the nineteenth century, its importance had declined to a supervisory role, as well as functioning as the highest appeal court.

41 See Document 55.

42 Mount Bute: a property to the southwest of Ballarat, belonging to Sir Samuel Wilson. His eldest son and heir, Captain Gordon Chesney Wilson of the Royal Horse Guards, was married to Lady Sarah Isabella Wilson, née Churchill. Ungern-Sternberg appends a note, saying that the estate was in the process of being transferred to the heir. Lady Sarah's brother, Lord Randolph Henry Spencer-Churchill, was the father of Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister in 1940–1945 and 1951–1955. Capt. Wilson was killed in action at the First Battle of Ypres, in November 1914.

Rather than being sent to London for auction, Australian wool is increasingly being sold at local auctions, as the following figures show.

Sales in Australia (bales):

1886–87	1890–91	1892–93	1894–95	1895–96
372,000	595,000	803,000	873,000	890,000

As the total volume exported in the 1895–96 season was 1,952,000 bales, the proportion marketed locally was 45%.

On the basis of these figures, taking account of the fact that Russia alone of the major countries sends no buyers to the Australian auctions (although it is generally acknowledged that Australian wool is essential to our industry), and supposing that were Russian buyers to visit Australia, even if they bought nothing, the position of our manufacturers in the European wool markets would naturally be stronger, I raised before the Director in my dispatch of 3/15 October last the question of encouraging our manufacturers to send a Russian buyer on a trial mission to next season's auctions.

In case my suggestion concerning this matter should receive consideration, I have gathered some information on the conditions in which buyers here work.

An auction is always preceded by an exhibition of all the available wares, so that the buyer has every opportunity to inspect them and assess their value. The buyer also has the choice of a wide range of major firms which offer brokerage services: for purchase by order at the auction itself, for dispatch of goods to Europe, as well as for cashing bills of exchange. Over and above that, these firms also have special rooms in their offices where clients can work, with all the office staff at their disposal. For all this they charge 0.5% of the price of the goods purchased.

For Russian buyers it would probably be most convenient to approach the large French company Wenz & Co. (Rheims, Buenos Aires and Melbourne).

Payment is effected immediately upon purchase by bills of exchange guaranteed in London, with bills of lading attached to guard against any possible abuse. A bill of exchange is invalid without a bill of lading. Buyers issue bills of exchange on the basis of their letters of credit. I attach some samples of such letters.

In addition, the buyer should be equipped with a special letter of credit to cover his travel and other expenses, since he will be unable to obtain cash using the letters of credit mentioned above. Return fares and expenses for the season 3/15 October to 15 December, approximately converted to roubles, are as follows:

Russia to Marseilles return: 300 roubles
Marseilles to Melbourne return, first class: 1,100 roubles
Expenses en route: 300 roubles
Board and lodging (2 months at £6 week): 480 roubles

Total: 2,180 roubles

Add 30% for general and unforeseen expenses: 654 roubles

Total: 2,834 roubles.

As the season begins on 3/15 October, the buyer should depart from Russia no later than early September. The splendid French steamers of the Messageries Maritimes line make the journey from Marseilles to Melbourne in 30 days.

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 28–29. Copy. In Russian. Published in part; see [Ungern-Sternberg R. R.] 'Ot rossiiskogo konsula v Mel'burne. Torgovlia sherst'iu v Avstralii', *Vestnik finansov, promyshlennosti i torgovli*, No. 13, 1897, p. 811.

61. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
22 (10) February 1897
No. 468

[...] I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that Mr Chamberlain has invited the seven premiers of the Australian Colonies to attend the jubilee celebrations of Her Majesty the Queen as guests of the British Government.⁴³

43 The celebration of Queen Victoria's 80th birthday (24 May 1897) was combined with that of the 60th year of her reign (20 June 1897). It was held on 22 June 1897.

The premiers' first instinct was to decline, on the pretext that their duties prevented them from leaving Australia. However, owing to the weight of public opinion, highly flattered by the courtesy of such an official invitation, and the insistence of the Governors, the premiers soon found themselves obliged to accept.

Following an audience with Lord Brassey, Sir George Turner, the Premier of Victoria, who had been the first to decline and thus, it seems, set an example to his colleagues, has just sent Mr Chamberlain a cable signalling his humble gratitude and compliance.

While the invitation from the Secretary of State for the Colonies was no doubt intended to bring to the fore, on this solemn occasion, the ties which bind the Colonies to the mother country, the premiers' refusal – however unfortunate it may have appeared – was certainly by no means grounded in any hostility to Mr Chamberlain's motives.

The wish to avoid making the journey to England sprang solely from personal considerations: the fear that during their absence the opposition might move to overthrow them.

The Australian premiers, whose merits and real personal qualities should not go unrecognised, are professional politicians: they live on their annual salaries of £1,400, and it is of vital importance to them not to be deprived of that income.

Sir George Turner, for example, one of the most outstanding of them, was a solicitor with no clients and mayor of a suburb before the whims of parliamentary favour placed a ministerial portfolio in his hands. A single vote would suffice to reduce his ministry to a minority and send him back to his cardboard boxes, empty of files, in his small office in Little Collins Street.

In these circumstances, Australians find it natural and just that, before agreeing to go, he should extract from the leaders of the opposition a formal promise to attempt no aggressive moves during his absence.

We must assume that his colleagues in the other colonies have taken similar precautions. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 25–26. In French.

62. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
23(11) February 1897
No. 471

[...] I have the honour to report that, having no direct address for packages, I have sent to the Imperial Embassy a parcel containing some wool, and most humbly request that you will not decline to forward it to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing.⁴⁴ [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, f. 33. In Russian.

63. Ungern-Sternberg to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing, Russian Ministry of Finance

Melbourne,
26 (14) February 1897
No. 473

[...] I have the honour to report that I have collected information concerning Russian vessels arriving in Australasia and departing all Australian ports in the year 1896.

To this end I have contacted the customs authorities in all the colonies separately, as well as our honorary consul in Sydney.

From the information thus received, it emerges that in 1896 no Russian ships called at the ports of four of the colonies: Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

44 Ungern-Sternberg appended a copy of his dispatch of 7/19 February 1897, addressed to the Finance Ministry's Department of Trade and Manufacturing. See Document 60.

A single sailing vessel, the *Paul*, 744 tons (the master is a Mr Kron; the vessel, built in Libava in 1856, is owned by S. V. Schroeder of Riga) called in New Zealand and sailed for London with a cargo of timber.⁴⁵

Tasmania was visited by the *Winefred*, 1,359 tons (the master is Captain Laine; the vessel, owned by Söderlund of Raumo, Finland, was built in Chester in 1855).⁴⁶ It sailed for France, also carrying timber.

South Australia was also visited by the *Winefred*,⁴⁷ and by the sailing ship *Hermes* (1,053 tons, built in Newcastle in 1875; the master is Mr Svanstrom and the owners I. Lindblum of Åbo).⁴⁸ It sailed for St Nazaire (France) with cargo to the value of £5,575.

The combined tonnage of the three vessels is 3,156 tons.

I consider it my duty to add that none of the masters notified the Consulate of his arrival, as laid down in the consular regulations (Paragraphs 47–56).

The master of the *Winefred* replied to a note from the Consulate, saying that he did not understand Russian, and did not reply at all to a cable and messages in English.⁴⁹

Consequently the Consulate has faced no small difficulty in delivering letters, with the aid of various commercial agents, sent from Russia to members of the crew. Six of them have unfortunately not reached the addressees at all.

While the number of Russian vessels in Australian waters is very limited, the number of Russian sailors, mostly Finns, is considerable. Most of them occupy good positions (for example, on the British ship *Lochee* –

45 *Paul*: sailing under the Russian flag, reached Kaipara Harbour in New Zealand on 1 August 1896 from Brazil, and took on a cargo of timber for delivery to Britain. No further detail is to hand concerning the master or owner, whose names are here transcribed from the Cyrillic.

46 *Winefred*: British sailing ship that, since 1894, had been sailing under the Russian flag. She reached Hobart on 27 January 1896, with a cargo of wheat from Adelaide and was then loaded with timber. Her owner was Johan Wilhelm Söderlund (Söderlund & Co.), of Raumo. According to Australian sources, the master at this date was Wilhelm Fagerholm, who had replaced Frans Wilhelm Laine. In 1896, Laine held command of another Russian (Finnish) vessel, the *Fennia*, which reached Australia in early 1897. See Document 64.

47 En route to France from Tasmania. (Ungern-Sternberg's note.)

48 *Hermes*: reached Australia from Hudiksvall, Sweden, on 16 January 1896, and sailed in mid-February for Dunkirk with a cargo of ore. No further detail is to hand concerning the master or owner, whose names are here transcribed from the Cyrillic.

49 The cable and notes had the sole purpose of establishing where to send the letters to the crew, which had accumulated in the Consulate. (Ungern-Sternberg's note.)

1,812 tons, registered in Dundee – almost all the crew are Finns and natives of St Petersburg region).⁵⁰ Those without positions who have come to the Consulate have all without exception received consular assistance and been taken on by various masters at wages between £2 10s. and £4 a month. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 40–41. Copy. In Russian.

64. Ungern-Sternberg to the Personnel and Management Department, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Melbourne,
No date [April 1897]
No. 559

In the last two months a total of seventeen sailors have deserted three Finnish ships, the *Lochee*, the *Fennia* and the *Winefred*, in South Australian ports.⁵¹

In only one case were the men captured and returned thanks to official intervention by the Consulate. In the other cases, the masters did not notify me as they did not know that as from October last year the Consulate's sphere of operation has been extended to the other Australian colonies.

The official British press announced the extension of my jurisdiction (I sent a copy of the newspaper to the Department at the time).⁵²

It seems, however, that the Government press published no announcement,⁵³ which may explain why the masters remained in ignorance. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, f. 116. Copy. In Russian.

50 The mixed nationality of the *Lochee's* crew may be due to the fact that in 1896 this British ship was sold to the shipowner John Rivell, of Nystad, now known as Uusikaupunki, in Finland.

51 See Document 63 on the *Lochee* and the *Winefred*. The Russian (Finnish) barque *Fennia*, under Captain F. W. Laine, reached Port Adelaide at the very end of January 1897 with a record cargo of Baltic timber worth approximately £15,000.

52 Official British press: apparently a reference to a report which appeared in the *London Gazette*, 13 November 1896.

53 Government press: apparently meaning the *Victorian Government Gazette*.

65. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
10 June (29 May) 1897
No. 610

[...] In connection with the recent New Zealand census, I wrote to the Premier of that colony and asked him to provide the Imperial Consulate with the official report on the results of the census.⁵⁴

From that very substantial work, received today by courtesy of the Premier, I take the liberty of presenting the following figures:

The population of New Zealand comprises 703,360 souls of both sexes, not counting the native Maori, whose number is in rapid decline: on 12 April 1896 they numbered 39,864.

There were 365 individuals born in Russia: 330 of them male, 35 female.⁵⁵ Adherents of the Orthodox Church numbered 116: 99 male and 17 female.

We may assume that this total does not include the (numerous) Levantines and Syrians,⁵⁶ some of whom attend the Catholic mass because there is no Orthodox priest in New Zealand. This assumption is confirmed by the following categories: Roman Catholics (97,525), Catholics undefined (1,279) and Catholics Apostolic (247). [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, f. 114. In Russian.

54 Premier: i.e. Richard Seddon.

55 Cf. the different figures given in Document 53.

56 i.e. mostly Greeks and Christian Arabs from the Levant (Lebanon) and Syria.

66. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Embassy, London

Melbourne,
18 (6) June 1897
No. 619

[...] I have the honour to submit to the Embassy herewith a copy of my dispatch of 5/17 June this year (No. 617) to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing, concerning the drought. [...]

Annex to No. 619

Copy of dispatch of 5/17 June (No. 617) to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing

I have the honour to report that this summer, from February until June, the farmers of Australia, in particular the sheep graziers, have suffered cruelly from drought. Older residents aver that this drought is truly without precedent.

Now, with the onset of the Australian winter, rain has begun to fall, but the general situation has not yet improved.

No doubt the Australians, with their Anglo-Saxon energy, will soon recover from the calamity, but we must nonetheless assume that the consequences of the drought will very acutely affect the economic situation of the colonies for some time, and quite probably even have an effect on European markets.

The present increased rate of gold exports, which I have had the honour to report,⁵⁷ is closely linked to the fear that a fall in agricultural production will lead to a temporary decline in exports, leading to a new deterioration in the trade balance, which already, despite a huge preponderance of exports over imports (on average £12,000,000 a year), thanks to interest payable on colonial and private loans, was far from being in Australia's favour.⁵⁸

57 Ungern-Sternberg's dispatch No. 587, dated 7/19 May 1897 on Australian gold exports is not reproduced here.

58 Ungern-Sternberg appends a note referring to an earlier dispatch, No. 210, of 8 May (26 April) 1896. This dispatch has not been located.

I permit myself to cite certain figures taken from the reports of the Melbourne customs office alone for April and May of this year. They clearly show a rapid rise in gold exports and a fall in agricultural output:

Export commodity	April 1897 (£)	May 1897 (£)
Gold coin	637,703	901,665
Silver coin	–	20
Gold ingots	–	12,348
Silver ingots	–	33
Butter	45,827	30,820
Frozen meat	21,218	18,294
Wool	105,186	56,480

When compared with last year's exports, the current figures for gold exports illustrate the situation even more clearly:

	April 1896	May 1896	April 1897	May 1897
Gold exported	£441,974	£640,277	£637,703	£914,066

In the first five months of 1896 and 1897, also at the Port of Melbourne alone, gold exports were as follows:

1896	1897
£1,869,261	£3,755,003

Butter exports, which from Australia as a whole reached over £1,000,000, have fallen very significantly, and will probably temporarily cease altogether. (A few days ago the press even reported that dealers here had demanded the return of 1,000 tubs of butter from their London warehouses.)

As to the state of the wool market, one can only conjecture, as the season does not open for four months.

There is speculation that average prices will rise to £14 a ton, as they did in 1891, but even with an increase on that scale the loss to Australia will be appreciable, compared to 1895 and 1896.

	Bales sold	Price per bale	Total proceeds
1895	2,001,000	£11.00	£22,011,000
1896	1,846,000	£12.00	£22,152,000
1897 (projected)	1,346,000	£14.00	£18,844,000

Direct and indirect losses due to the drought have yet to be calculated, but are sure to be very great. In places they have reached as much as 60% of the total herd. The colonial governments and private associations formed for this express purpose are now engaged in raising funds to relieve the small holdings which have been affected, and much has already been done. The larger property-holders mostly find assistance and salvation in cheap credit and the competition which exists between the banking institutions, so, in spite of the scale of the disaster, a general economic crisis is not to be expected. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 118–120. Copy. In Russian. Published in part. See [Ungern-Sternberg R. R.] 'Ot rossiiskogo konsula v Mel'burne. Zasukha v Avstralii', *Vestnik finansov, promyshlennosti i trgovli*, No. 33, 1897, p. 274.

67. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
7 July (25 June) 1897
No. 638

[...] I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that Her Majesty the Queen's diamond jubilee has been celebrated on a grand scale throughout Australia and particularly in Melbourne, with much display of loyal devotion.⁵⁹

Australian patriotic fervour, which was already warm, was maintained and nourished during the celebrations by cables from London, several times a day, reporting details of the ovations which greeted the representatives of the Colonies.

In the attached I take the liberty of drawing Your Excellency's attention to one example of such reports.⁶⁰ They are generally thought to issue directly from the Colonial Office.

59 Diamond jubilee: see Document 61.

60 *The Argus*, 28 June 1897, not reproduced here.

However, these reports have not always produced the same result. If there was much satisfaction with the reception accorded to the contingent of Militia, the same cannot be said of the honours bestowed upon the premiers. Australians are extremely egalitarian, and at the same time jealous of the prestige of royalty. For these very different reasons, the excessive prominence of the premiers has incurred some displeasure.

We may suppose that the general esteem shown for the representatives of the Colonies has been intended to prepare the ground for the talks which have commenced in the Colonial Office. At present the premiers are attending a conference there, presided over by Mr Chamberlain.⁶¹ Its aim is to discuss measures leading to the implementation of the 'Greater Britain' project, which is certainly high on the agenda.

The 'Greater Britain' project, if implemented, will mean a new turn in British colonial policy: its relations with the colonies, which heretofore have been entirely those between protector and protected, will be transformed into a true federation, in which expenses and onerous restrictions will be borne by all the parties.

This is the first part of the programme which has now been tabled for discussion. It comprises the following:

- (1) colonial participation in maintaining the Royal Navy;
- (2) differential tariffs in the colonies to favour British goods.

Cables received this morning cover the first sessions. It appears that disagreements have already emerged.

The premiers are asserting that the budgets of the Colonies will not permit any increased expenditure. Here they are, no doubt, correct: the balance of colonial finance has long been guaranteed by a surplus in revenue.

61 Conference: the first Colonial Conference, attended by Joseph Chamberlain and the prime ministers of eleven self-governing British colonies, who were in England for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. There was discussion of ways to strengthen the Empire, and above all bolster its defence capacity. Later colonial conferences (renamed 'imperial conferences' in 1911) would become the instrument by which the British Government endeavoured to maintain the unity of the Empire and slow the incipient process of disintegration. The self-governing colonies and dominions, for their part, strove to extend their prerogatives and reduce their dependence on London.

As for differential tariffs, the premiers are prepared to agree. In return they are seeking only the following concessions:

- (1) the inclusion of Australian funds in those known in Britain as ‘*Sûretés pupillaires*’;⁶²
- (2) subsidies for shipping companies operating the postal service;
- (3) exemption from British income tax for persons in Britain who hold Australian assets (as they already pay tax in Australia).

While we expect to learn before long whether accord can emerge from the diversity of opinions, it is difficult – in view of the insignificant potential benefits – to comprehend the reasons which have led the Colonial Office to depart from its traditional *laissez faire* policy with regard to the Colonies, and seek to replace the very popular status quo with a system which distantly perhaps, but nevertheless de facto, recalls the regime of contributions and monopolies of George III and Lord North.⁶³

That regime, as we know, led to the loss of the American colonies, when the colonists claimed, in return, the right to send their representatives to the British parliament and were met with refusal.

If, contrary to all expectations, the idea of a ‘Greater Britain’ is realised, the historical lessons of the last century will certainly not be forgotten: members of parliament representing the nine million people who make up the white population of Canada, Australia and the Cape will be only a question of time. However, those new members will inevitably be either ‘home rulers’ or radicals, and probably both. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 134–136. In French.

62 *Sûretés pupillaires*: originally, property held in trust and managed by a guardian to produce income for a minor. Later the term acquired a broader sense: a form of investment with minimal exposure to risk of the principal.

63 Regime of contributions: the reference is to the British Government’s repressive taxation policy applied to the American colonies. See also Document 48.

68. Ungern-Sternberg to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing, Russian Ministry of Finance

Melbourne,
31 (19) July 1897
No. 656

Further to my dispatches Nos 588, 621 and 655,⁶⁴ and guided by Paragraph 88 of the Consular regulations, I have the honour to suggest that the Department consider the matter of entrusting a local firm which has representatives in all the main Australian ports – not officially, but simply by means of an exchange of letters – with the establishment and maintenance of a Russian shipping agency. This would be of benefit in view of the increasing volume of Russian maritime traffic in Australian waters and the distance separating many Australian ports from the Russian Consulate in Melbourne.

The advantages of such a measure would be as follows:

- (1) whenever ships' masters had cause to appeal to a court of law, they would be able to obtain more effective assistance from legal consultants than by turning to local lawyers. NB: by agreement with the local authorities, the Russian Consul in Melbourne now has the power to transmit by telegraph requests for deserters to be handed over, so this matter does not present any problems;
- (2) masters would have greater security in the matter of cargo, as a major company would always be quicker to find freight, and on more favourable terms than the small agents with whom they now deal;
- (3) perhaps most important of all: with time, by this means the opportunity would be opened for our vessels to come here with cargo from Russia, in particular, timber, which a large agency, acting as a broker, could sell here by commission without risk to the shipper.

NB: I will send a separate dispatch about the importation to Australia of timber for construction and mining works, which is increasingly assuming large proportions (Australian timber is unsuitable for these purposes).

⁶⁴ These dispatches are not reproduced here.

There would be much greater advantages in establishing such an agency than in appointing commercial vice-consuls. Leaving aside the fact that it would be highly inconvenient to appoint such vice-consuls in all Australian ports, it is extremely difficult to select them and, judging by the experience of other countries, almost always unsuccessful: if commercial vice-consuls occupy a position in society and in business, they are usually idle, and if they are small businessmen they have no influence. In the latter case, moreover, they are more than likely to order goods on commission from the country they represent, which often leads to regrettable complications.

On the subject of the proposed agency I have held private and of course purely preliminary talks with the director of Dalgety & Co.,⁶⁵ which has a special shipping department and offices in Sydney, Brisbane, Newcastle, Adelaide, Port Pirie, Western Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania. Its head office is in London. (I wrote of this in my dispatch No. 588.)

I am sure that this company will gladly take on the operation of such an agency, without any special remuneration, if an official proposal is made by the Russian Consul.

I enclose a draft of a letter which I could send to Dalgety & Co. if the Department approves it. The agreement proposed in it would permit the master of any ship flying the Russian flag, ipso facto and at any time of his choosing to approach any office of Dalgety & Co. as a client and avail himself of that great company's services. His right to do so will remain entirely optional, that is, he is not obliged to exercise it if, for example, he is already chartered or under obligation to a charter party, or simply does not wish to.

The purpose of the proposed agency is to render assistance to ships' masters whenever such assistance is required.

The question very naturally arises: why should Dalgety & Co., which enjoys such considerable financial turnover, undertake anything which offers such negligible returns? I have asked myself this question more than once, and come to the conclusion that on the one hand they are motivated by a wish to enter into direct commercial relations with Russia at last, and on the other by the idea that by extending their sphere of operations into Russia they will further raise the already high prestige of the company in the local world of commerce. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-859, ff 152-153. Copy. In Russian.

65 On Dalgety & Co., see notes to Document 13.

69. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
20 (8) September 1897
No. 703

[...] Last year the Imperial Embassy informed me in dispatch No. 584 of 21 May/2 June that the Most Holy Synod had resolved (1) to appoint the Reverend Hieromonk Nifont, a member of the Jerusalem Spiritual Mission, to the position of priest in Melbourne, and (2) to place the newly established Orthodox Church in Melbourne under the stewardship of the Most Holy Metropolitan of St Petersburg.⁶⁶

To date, however, the aforementioned hieromonk has not arrived.

A few days ago, the former Prior of the Orthodox Church in Baghdad, Archimandrite Dorotheios, arrived and offered his services to the Melbourne Orthodox community (which consists entirely of Levantines).⁶⁷ The local Orthodox gladly welcomed him and appointed him priest with an annual stipend of £120, with lodgings etc.

Archimandrite Dorotheios has made a most agreeable impression upon everybody.

He brought with him a letter for me, which I beg to attach, from the chargé d'affaires of the Imperial Consulate in Baghdad.⁶⁸ [...]

AVPRI: 184 (London Embassy) -520-859, f. 163. In Russian.

66 Most Holy Synod: the supreme state organ governing Church affairs in the Russian Empire. Dispatch No. 584 is not included in this collection.

67 Poutiata, the first Russian consul in Australia, had also attempted to meet the spiritual needs of the Orthodox in Melbourne. His correspondence with Konstantin Pobedonostsev, Supreme Procurator of the Holy Synod, led to the decision to send Hieromonk Nifont, from the Russian Spiritual Mission in Jerusalem, to Melbourne. However, Nifont declined to serve in Australia, so Archimandrite Dorotheios was sent instead, appointed by the Jerusalem Patriarchate. But Dorotheios did not stay long. The then small Orthodox community in Melbourne could not afford to maintain him. Moreover, his haughty and lordly demeanour irritated his parishioners. See also Documents 98 and 109.

68 The copy of the letter is not reproduced here.

70. Ungern-Sternberg to the Department of Internal Affairs of the Russian Ministry of Finance

Melbourne,
2 November (20 October) 1897
No. 756

[...] On 8/20 September last I had the honour to report the arrival here from Baghdad of Archimandrite Dorotheios and his appointment by the local Greeks as priest in the Orthodox community with a monthly stipend of £10.

However, after the first month the Greeks have refused to pay his stipend, claiming that the members of the community are too poor.

As an elder of the community personally introduced Archimandrite Dorotheios in the Imperial Consulate, and as that choice seemed to me fully satisfactory, I felt it my duty to make every effort – in a purely private capacity, of course – to persuade the community to reconsider, but in that I was unsuccessful.

As a result, the Archimandrite finds himself in a very difficult situation. He cannot afford the fare back to Constantinople, to whose patriarchate he belongs. For that he needs at least £50.

In these circumstances, it is easy to foresee that he will soon be entirely without funds and in a state of extreme poverty.

In order not to permit a worthy Orthodox priest, whom all have seen in his priestly vestments, to fall inevitably into humiliating destitution, I beg to request permission to assist Archimandrite Dorotheios at official expense, and if need be supply him with the fare to Colombo, where ships of the Volunteer Fleet call and whence he could sail for Constantinople.

In reporting the above, I beg to suggest that in view of the extremely difficult situation it would be desirable to receive the Department's instructions by cable.⁶⁹ [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-859, f. 170. Copy. In Russian.

⁶⁹ Ungern-Sternberg received the required instructions and was able to give Dorotheios the financial support needed to leave Australia.

71. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

20 (8) December 1897
No. 807

In my dispatch of 11/23 March 1896,⁷⁰ I had the honour to bring to Your Excellency's notice the fact that, fearing that Japanese immigration might compete with the all-powerful white worker, the Australian Premiers at their conference in Sydney had declined to adhere to the trade agreement reached between Great Britain and Japan on 16 July 1894.

Since that time the Japanese Government has made repeated efforts, both in London and with the Australian Premiers, to arrive at an arrangement which might mitigate the rigorous prescriptions of the Aliens Act and allow Japanese trade to develop in these parts. To this end the Japanese consul has recently sent a memorandum to the Premiers, which I take the liberty of submitting to Your Excellency in summary form from the press.⁷¹

However, since these repeated efforts have not led to any understanding but instead awakened the malevolent vigilance of the Labor Party (which has an absolute majority in the parliaments), it appears that the Japanese Government has resolved to secure its own foothold in the Pacific. It has commenced talks with a syndicate of small investors, who bought a group of Pacific islands from some native chieftains at the time when sugar-cane growing still promised great profits, with a view to re-selling them. These islands, the main one being 'Torres', are said to possess an excellent harbour in the north of the New Hebrides, at 14 degrees south and three or four days' sailing from Sydney.⁷²

Talks have begun in the greatest secrecy. We may suppose that they will soon culminate in a formal acquisition, which will probably be concluded in the name of the subsidised company Nippon Yusen Kaisha. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-779, ff 299–300. In French. Previously unpublished.

⁷⁰ This dispatch has not been located.

⁷¹ The Japanese consul at the time was Tsunejiro Nakagawa. The summary of the memorandum is not reproduced here.

⁷² Ungern-Sternberg is referring to the main island, now called Hiw, in Vanuatu, then known as the Torres Islands, and the port of Yögevigemëne. The islands had lost much of their population to 'blackbirding'. Hence the desire of the Japanese to acquire them.

72. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
29 (17) December 1897
No. 817

[...] I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that a few days ago the Premier of New South Wales, Mr Reid, received a cable from Vladivostok signed Zovoroff,⁷³ enquiring at what price 750 tons of frozen meat could be delivered to Vladivostok.

The cable was evidently the work of some private agent and had no official standing. It may have been simply a hoax. Nevertheless, it has given rise to an outcry throughout Australia. The press has seized upon it to declare in no uncertain terms that Australia must not send supplies to Russian forces in the Far East.

Yesterday Mr Reid, the Premier, interrupted his holiday at Mount Kosciuszko to put an end to the excitement. In an interview on this subject with the owner of the *Sydney Morning Herald* he has just stated that he was very glad to receive the cable in question, that he hopes that it was official in origin, and that Australians should consider themselves fortunate in finding a market for their products in a friendly country such as Russia. [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-779, ff 51-52. In French.

73 Zovoroff: as given, possibly a corruption of Suvoroff. If so, it is probable that the reference is to Mikhail Ivanovich Suvoroff [Suvorov], well known in Vladivostok as a merchant, developer and philanthropist.

73. Ungern-Sternberg to the Department of Trade and Manufacturing

Melbourne,
No date [early 1898]

Annex to No. 885

Copy of No. 876

I have the honour to report that I have collected information concerning Russian vessels which have visited Australian ports in the course of 1897. To this end I contacted separately the customs agencies in each of the colonies within my Melbourne jurisdiction, and our Honorary Consul in Sydney,⁷⁴ which, however, does not fall within my jurisdiction. On the basis of the information thus obtained, I have compiled the table below. Unfortunately I am unable to add details concerning the ships mentioned in it, because I did not obtain most of the information from the captains, and that published in the well-known Lloyd's Register is still very meagre with regard to our ships.

The number of Russian ships in Australian waters has risen, as follows:

	1895	1896	1897
Victoria	0	0	2
S. Australia	1	2	4
NSW	0	0	4
W. Australia	0	0	2
New Zealand	0	0	1
Tasmania	0	1	0
Queensland	0	0	0
Total	1	4 ¹	13

¹ The total '4' is as given. This should clearly read '3'.

In January this year the *Yarkand* arrived, and the steamers *Varunga* and *Cuthana* are expected.

[...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-779, f. 63. Copy. In Russian. Previously unpublished.

⁷⁴ i.e. Edmund Paul.

74. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
21 (9) February 1898
No. 886

[...] I seek Your Excellency's permission to report that I am leaving Melbourne for a brief sea voyage.

During my absence, which will last only two weeks, my secretary will be working under the guidance and supervision of my French colleague.⁷⁵

I am obliged to take this voyage to treat a kidney infection, an ailment which frequently afflicts Europeans living in these latitudes. [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-779, f. 60. In French.

75. Ungern Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
1 March (17 February) 1898
No. 896

[...] I have the honour to bring to Your Excellency's attention that the Australian Premiers, in conference in Melbourne, have just been notified of a grand plan for a submarine cable linking Australia to the mother country by way of the Cape of Good Hope. It will be 13,000 leagues long and will cost up to £3,000,000.

At present, communication by telegraph relies on a single line which runs for 19,000 leagues, crossing the whole Australian continent before reaching from Cape Darwin to Java, Singapore and Madras. It belongs to two major companies, which are in effect merged in one: the Eastern Telegraph Co. Ltd and the Eastern Extension Australia and China Telegraph Co. Ltd. A treaty with the colonies assures these companies an

75 The French consul general in Melbourne at the time was Léon Adolphe Dejardin.

annual subsidy of £32,000 until the end of 1899, and at the same time guarantees a gross income of £227,000, plus £10,000 for New Zealand, although the rapid progress of telegraphic communication is making this guarantee superfluous.

However, the line functions very badly, both because of frequent submarine volcanic eruptions between Port Darwin and Java, and because of the difficulties of monitoring it in the Australian interior, which is desert. A week does not go by without communication breaking down, to the great detriment of the world of business.

In view of the general dissatisfaction occasioned by this state of affairs, the companies declare that they are prepared to lay the large submarine cable at their own expense, if in return the agreement now in effect is prolonged for a further twenty years.

We may say with certainty that the Australians will willingly subscribe to this arrangement, but it appears difficult to obtain the same contribution – which is essential – from the colonies, and from the Cape Colony and Natal, where the number of transactions is more restricted.

At present the men of the Cape are seeking some less burdensome scheme. It seems that they have conceived the idea of allocating to the cable, as a profitable investment, the million pounds which they had offered with such a flourish to the mother country, to mark the Queen's jubilee, for the construction of a cruiser to be called the *Afrikander*. As the consent of the British Government to this substitution is hardly in doubt, the million pounds not yet having been spent, we should perhaps consider the venture of the cable financially assured. [...]

AVPRI 184 (Embassy in London) -520-779, ff 70–71. In French. Previously unpublished.

76. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
14 (2) March 1898
No. 913

[...] I have the honour to report that State Councillor Reutovsky, entrusted at the highest level with the study of the gold-mining industry,⁷⁶ has arrived in Melbourne.

Yesterday Mr Reutovsky set out for Ballarat and Bendigo. From there he intends to proceed to Queensland and Western Australia. He specialises strictly in mining machinery.

The Melbourne Consulate has furnished Mr Reutovsky with letters of recommendation (over 30), from both government bodies and private individuals. Furthermore, I have introduced him personally to the local leading figures in the field of gold extraction. [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-779, f. 99. In Russian.

76 Viacheslav Stepanovich Reutovsky: a special commissioner of the Tomsk Mining Board. In 1897, he was sent to South Africa and Australia to study new methods of geological surveying. He was in Australia from March to May 1898, and visited the goldfields of Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.

77. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
14 (2) March 1898
No. 914

[...] I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that the Governor of Victoria is travelling to England for six months' leave. Lord and Lady Brassey have chosen the Colombo-Suez route. They will halt in Western Australia to stay for a week at their fine property, 'Goblup Estate', which Lord Brassey has recently made over to his spouse.⁷⁷

It is widely believed that this departure is final, and that Lord Brassey does not intend to return. However, there is nothing to support this assumption. On the contrary, Lord Brassey gives every appearance of setting much store by his active life in Melbourne and his daily representative duties. His previous popularity, however, has not proved enduring. While the Australian people are unanimous in recognising the sterling qualities of Lady Brassey, and appreciating her courtesy and good grace, they forget the merits of their Governor, for quite trifling reasons.

It must be said that in general, in the press and among the different classes of society, a critical spirit with regard to the Governors has become quite widespread in Australia, and the public perception of the Queen's representatives has changed since the premiers returned from London: the memory of their excessive prominence at the jubilee celebrations appears to have inculcated in them some airs of independence,⁷⁸ hitherto unknown in the Governors' residences.

As a time may well be approaching when it will be extremely difficult to recruit men of good will among the British aristocracy to take up remote and thankless postings in Australia, we should perhaps hope that the Colonial Office in London will bend every effort to ensure that it does not prematurely lose a Governor like Lord Brassey. [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-779, ff 100–101. In French.

77 Goblup Estate: situated near Broomehill, north of Albany, WA. Sybil de Vere Capell Brassey was Lord Brassey's second wife.

78 Jubilee celebrations: see Documents 61 and 67.

78. Ungern-Sternberg to Staal, Russian Ambassador in London

Melbourne,
24 (12) March 1898
No. 930

[...] I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that the delegates selected by the various colonies to draft a constitution for the future Australian Federation have just completed their work.⁷⁹

It is now up to the voting public in each colony to declare their view. The voters, who in South Australia include women, will have to vote 'yes' or 'no', for or against the federation of their colony. It seems that the approval of three colonies out of seven is assured: Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. In Western Australia and New South Wales, opposition is still quite strong. Queensland and New Zealand have flatly refused to participate. It is thought that the first three will unite in any case, and then permit the others to join.

As soon as the result of the ballot is known, I shall take the liberty of sending Your Excellency a detailed report on the delegates' work. However, the product more closely resembles an outline or a framework than an organic draft law. It is extremely radical in its fundamental principles, and at the same time abounds in details of secondary importance at the expense of those of primary importance. Tariffs, public debt, railways and even the choice of the federal capital are all left to the future federal parliament. 'We must trust the future parliament': such was the watchword which led the delegates to brush aside difficult debates and subscribe to the vaguely worded preliminary accord. After the ballot, the said federal constitution will be considered by the parliament of the United Kingdom, then submitted to Her Majesty the Queen for approval. [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-779, ff 113–114. In French.

79 The third session of the National Australasian Constitutional Convention concluded its work in March 1898. It produced a draft constitution for the future federation of Australian colonies. In the referenda held in June 1898, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania voted for federation, but in New South Wales the proposal did not receive sufficient support. A further series of talks was needed before the supporters of federation finally obtained a majority in a second referendum in Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland in 1899.

79. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
26 (14) March 1898
No. 933

[...] On 25 December a brawl occurred at Port Adelaide, South Australia, between some sailors from the British ship *Natal Queen*.⁸⁰ Among them was a Finn named Johann Andersen, a Russian national, but it transpires that he took no part in the brawl. The British sailor Lee was killed by an unfortunate blow from one Josef Pedro. In court, Pedro admitted his guilt, but stated that he had attacked Lee because the latter had verbally abused Andersen. Not only Pedro was found guilty, but also Andersen. Both were sentenced to ten years' hard labour. I learned of the case only by chance from a brief press report, which I attach.⁸¹ In order to inform the office of the Finnish Governor-General, I contacted the Chief Secretary of South Australia and sought information from him about Andersen's character.⁸² On receiving a thoroughly unsatisfactory note, a copy of which I attach,⁸³ I renewed my request, appending a copy of my credentials, to be provided with the details I sought. The Chief Secretary then sent me a press cutting with a report of the court proceedings. From that report I came to the conclusion that Andersen was probably in no way culpable and that a terrible and incomprehensible misunderstanding had occurred. Since British law allows no appeal against a decision of the Assize Court, and annulment is possible only if new evidence is brought, and it is therefore impossible to reopen the case, I felt it my bounden duty to approach the Governor of South Australia and seek a pardon for Andersen, formulating my application as an appeal against the sentence. In view of the difficulty of English legal language and its special judicial references, I asked W. E. Johnson,⁸⁴ a local specialist in criminal law, to draft the application for

80 The barque *Natal Queen*, 1,230 tons, commanded by Captain James Davies, reached Port Adelaide from Hobart on 20 December 1897 with a cargo of saw timber. Johann Andersen, John Lee, Frederick Johansen, Patrick Kilmartin, John Anderson and Josef Pedro, a Portuguese sailor, were involved in a fight. For the court proceedings, see 'Supreme Court: Criminal Proceedings', *Adelaide Advertiser*, 24 February 1898, p. 3.

81 The press cutting is not present with the dispatch.

82 The Chief Secretary of South Australia in 1896–99 was James Vincent O'Loughlin.

83 The attachment is not reproduced here.

84 No further information has been found concerning W. E. Johnson.

me. When I receive the result, which will not be for over a month on account of the great distances in Australia, I will not fail to communicate it. The costs are insignificant, and I will put them down as unforeseen expenses, according to the Annex to Article 37, Paragraph 108 of the Consular Regulations. [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-890, ff 14–15. In Russian.

80. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
26 (14) March 1898
No. 934

[...] Further to my earlier dispatch of today (No. 933)⁸⁵ and in view of Paragraph 2 of the Consular Regulations, which states that the Embassy's permission must be sought for any action not foreseen in the Regulations, I beg to request approval for the steps previously reported which, on account of the urgency and the great distance to Australia, I felt it my duty to take to secure the release of the Russian national Johann Andersen from hard labour in South Australia.⁸⁶ [...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-890, f. 16. In Russian.

85 See Document 79.

86 In May 1898, the Russian Embassy in London responded to Ungern-Sternberg's request and granted him freedom of action in the Andersen case.

81. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Russian Embassy in London

Melbourne,
20 (8) April 1898
No. 968

[...] Further to my dispatches of 16/28 March (Nos 933 and 934),⁸⁷ I have the honour to report that the Governor of South Australia, guided by the opinion of the ministry responsible, has not seen fit to exercise his authority and release Andersen from hard labour. The reports forwarded to me by Governor Buxton have not persuaded me of Andersen's guilt; on the contrary, I have come to the unhappy view that an innocent Russian national is suffering in these distant parts.

In submitting the above for the consideration of the Imperial Embassy, I have the honour to attach the following:⁸⁸

- (1) My appeal of 29 March for Andersen's release (a copy);
- (2) The reply from the Governor's secretary;
- (3) The Premier's report on the case;
- (4) The Crown Prosecutor's report.⁸⁹

[...]

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-890, f. 24. In Russian.

⁸⁷ See Documents 79 and 80.

⁸⁸ Attachments not reproduced here.

⁸⁹ Ungern-Sternberg's energetic campaign for a review of Andersen's case eventually bore fruit. In March 1900, after two years, the British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury informed Staal, the Russian Ambassador in London, that the case had been reviewed and an amnesty granted to Andersen. His release is reported in the *Chronicle*, 31 March 1900.

82. Ungern-Sternberg to the Imperial Embassy in London⁹⁰

28 (16) June 1898
No. 997

I have the honour to report that today I concluded an agreement with the London firm Dalgety & Co. I attach a copy of the agreement, which is intended to protect and assist our captains in Australian and Pacific waters in matters concerning the law courts, the police, and especially freight.

The draft agreement was drawn up by me in St Petersburg recently, and submitted via the Department of Trade and Manufacturing of the Foreign Ministry to the Finance Minister,⁹¹ who in a report to the Foreign Ministry, dated 9 June (No. 1,360), acknowledged that the implementation of the plan was desirable. [...]

1 attachment

Copy

In London on 16/28 June 1898 the following agreement was concluded between the Imperial Russian Consul in Melbourne, Baron R. Ungern-Sternberg, acting in his capacity of Consul, and Mr David Robert Kemp, who, as Managing Director,⁹² represents Dalgety & Co. Ltd, of 52 Lombard Street, London.

- (1) Dalgety & Co. Ltd undertakes to act as agent for Russian and Finnish merchant vessels in all Australasian ports where it possesses or will possess a bureau and agency. The company will have the right to the title 'Russian Shipping Agency for Australasia'.
- (2) Recourse to the agency will be optional. The masters of Russian and Finnish merchant vessels will have the right, but no obligation, to resort, *ipso facto* and as clients, to the bureaux and agencies of Dalgety & Co. Ltd for all matters which a ship's master would usually refer to the company to which he is attached.

⁹⁰ This dispatch was written while Ungern-Sternberg was in London, where he was on leave. He had left Melbourne in April 1898. His dispatch is in Russian. The attachment, the text of the agreement, is in French.

⁹¹ The Russian Finance Minister in June 1898 was Sergei Witte.

⁹² David Robert Kemp was Manager and Colonial Superintendent of Dalgety & Co.

- (3) The services of the agency will be free of charge, exception being made, naturally, for the commission which the bureaux and agencies may charge in each particular case in which their assistance is sought, in conformity with their particular terms and on the same terms as their regular clients.
- (4) Disputes and differences which may arise, despite all expectations, will in each individual case be settled by an exchange of opinions between the Russian Consul in Melbourne and the Director or Manager of Dalgety & Co. Ltd in Melbourne.
- (5) The present agreement shall take effect as from today. The contracting parties shall take care to ensure that it receives, without delay, all the publicity deemed necessary by those whose interests it is intended to serve.
- (6) The present agreement may be revoked by either party. In case of termination, its effect shall cease twelve months after the relevant notification has been served.

[signed: Baron R. Ungern-Sternberg, Russian Consul; D. R. Kemp, for Dalgety & Co. Ltd.]

Note: Dalgety & Co. is a joint-stock company with capital of four million pounds and branches in the following Australian and Pacific ports: Geelong, Sydney, Newcastle, Adelaide, Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville, Perth, Fremantle, Albany, Christchurch, Dunedin and Napier.⁹³

AVPRI 184 (London Embassy) -520-779, ff 192–194. Introductory paragraphs in Russian. Attachment (a copy) in French. Previously unpublished.

93 This note, in French, is appended at the foot of the original document. On Dalgety & Co., see also Document 13.

This text is taken from *A New Rival State?: Australia in Tsarist Diplomatic Communications*, edited by Alexander Massov, Marina Pollard and Kevin Windle, published 2018 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.