

Government of Madras.

HOME DEPARTMENT

(EDUCATION)

G.O. No. 1205, 17th November 1916

NOTES
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INDEXED

Dyeing Expert

Recording the report of the Dyeing Expert for the quarter ending the 30th September 1916.

BACK PAPERS

G.O.	No.	Department	Date	G.O.	No.	Department	Date

FURTHER PAPERS

G.O.	No.	Department	Date	G.O.	No.	Department	Date

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 Order

Government of Madras.

HOME DEPARTMENT

(EDUCATION)

G.O. No. 1205, 17th November 1916

N.P.

ORIGINAL.

Dyeing Expert

Recording the report of the Dyeing Expert for the quarter ending the 30th September 1916.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

HOME DEPARTMENT

(Education)

Read—the following paper :—

Letter—from F. MARSDEN, Esq., PH.D., M.Sc., Dyeing Expert to the Government of Madras.

To—the Secretary to Government, Home (Education) Department (through the Director of Industries).

Dated—Madras, the 6th November 1916.

No.—G. Cur. 51.

I have the honour to submit as Dyeing Expert my report for the quarter ending September 1916.

2. Early in the period the dye cargo of the S.S. *Barenfels* about which we had been negotiating for a year was finally disposed of by auction, but the desire I had to purchase on behalf of dyers could not be fulfilled as the competition was so keen and the prices obtained were so high that, had I purchased on behalf of Government, it could only have been at rates which I could not have realised from the small dyers and the transaction would have resulted in a direct loss to Government.

3. From the numerous applications I received it is clear that, had we purchased dyes for distribution, we should have been overwhelmed with appeals to supply the dyes at pre-war rates, and unless we could have been assured of regular imports sufficient to meet the most pressing needs, the temptation to re-sell the dyes obtained at concession rates instead of using them for dyeing would have been irresistible.

4. I have reported that the dyeing industry of this Presidency could be kept going with a few standard dyes if these could be obtained in sufficient quantity, and I have written to various dye manufacturers to interest them in the market here. The demand for munitions has been the chief cause of their inability to supply, but as regards British Dyes, Limited, their agents report that the decision to give shareholders the first claim holds good and that non-shareholders cannot expect to be considered. The futility of expecting Indian dyers (living practically from hand to mouth) to take up shares was commented upon at the time and it was my personal feeling that the Government grant made to the company might have entitled the Home Government to some control over the distribution of products and have enabled them to stipulate that some proportion of such dyes as the company manufactured and were suitable for use here should be regularly shipped to India and distributed under Government control. There were sufficient employees of the agencies which were closed down, seeking employment, to ensure that a staff capable of handling the dyes could readily have been obtained. The advantage of such a course should have been obvious as the company's products (which are very little known in these markets) would have been taken up with avidity and would have become widely known and thus be in a better position to meet competition after the war.

5. The agents who have been acting for British dye manufacturing firms do not appear to me to have specialised sufficiently in this branch and were hopelessly outclassed by the German agencies with their trained men and complete organisation which covered the country.

6. I do not suppose the home firms are even yet in a position to meet the home demand, but, from our point of view, although we could raise no objection to the normal demands being met, there is some soreness among Indian dyers that, although they cannot get the dyewares to carry on their trade, dyed yarns are being imported and sold in markets which before the war were supplied by Indian dyers only. It is certainly better that weavers should obtain dyed materials to carry on their trade rather than they should have to stop work, but it does not appear to me fair that

home suppliers should have the advantage of a restriction upon exports of dyestuffs and use this to widen the range of dyed materials exported, getting a footing in markets which in the past (and under normal conditions) would have remained the province of the Indian dyer. It is especially in alizarin that the want is most felt here, for the import into India represented a very large proportion of the world's production, and although the British Alizarin company (which is the only firm now manufacturing and from which we could obtain supplies) held but a small proportion of the trade, they had agents here, and it was hoped that, under the circumstances, increased supplies might be obtained from them. The hope has remained unfulfilled and the license scheme of the Board of Trade has apparently been of little assistance to us here. To get orders fulfilled it appears necessary to have agents on the spot and old established regular dealers here seem to be in a worse position for obtaining supplies than the large number of commission agents and firms of dealers which, from the advertisements in the trade papers, appear to have sprung into being in England within the last two years.

7. Of course the fact that very little dyestuff is now available has altered the scope of my work, and when the conditions have settled down and the market is again being supplied it will be necessary for me to acquaint myself by direct correspondence with the manufacturing firms upon the value and properties of the products which they place upon the market. So far they are not able to give me much information and we will have to wait until conditions are approaching the normal and they are able to decide what they will be able to do.

8. The question of the value of natural dyes has been re-opened by the publication of a note by the Director of Industries, United Provinces, upon dyes indigenous to India. To the casual reader the views expressed therein are diametrically opposed to my own and writers in the press have drawn attention to this divergence. The real difference between the Chemist in the Department of Industries at Cawnpore and myself is in the appreciation of the value of the dyes. We have both recommended their use, but whereas I have pointed out (1) that their sphere of usefulness is very restricted owing to the expense of dyeing them, (2) that the dullness of shade is a drawback in this market and in reply to enquiries from dyers have only dealt with the dyes which I knew would meet their requirements, the United Provinces Chemist claims a general usefulness for them and predicts a future in which they will hold their own against the synthetic product.

9. If the conditions are as he reports, now is the time for the value of the natural dyes to be proved, and though I still maintain my opinion that the industry which has developed by the use of synthetic dyes cannot be sustained by the natural dyes which vary so widely in properties and methods of application, developments in the United Provinces will be watched with great interest.

10. During the quarter I have dealt with enquiries regarding the dyeing of lac, indigo and henna, and the question of dyes suitable for coir and palmyra fibre. The firms engaged in coir dyeing had used synthetic dyes only, which were easy of application and drew readily on the fibre. The manipulation was simpler than is possible with vegetable dyes and the market shades also cannot be reproduced exactly with the latter.

11. Immediately after the *Barenfels* auction in Madras a Madura merchant advertised in that town that he proposed to auction certain stocks of alizarin and aniline dyes. The auction was held but the purchasers of the alizarin casks returned them immediately and started a civil suit against the vendor on the ground that the dyes were not as specified. The police took charge of the casks, and in the presence of the Sub-Magistrate I took samples, and analysed these with the permission of the Chemical Examiner to Government in his laboratory. The analysis showed that old dye casks had been taken and a mixture of earth, water and a little alizarin had been filled in and that the mixture was absolutely valueless for dyeing purposes. I have not received up to the present any information as to the progress of the case.

12. Work upon the construction of the buildings for the Madura Technical Institute is progressing well, and it is hoped to have the erection work connected with the mechanical and weaving sections completed early in the coming year.

13. In connection with the paper mills at Punalur we took the first opportunity available of having the boilers tested by a competent authority and the report upon their condition left us no option but to discontinue their use. The proprietors have arranged to instal another boiler and will themselves take up the manufacture.

14. Upon the departure of Mr. Tressler on military duty, the Special Officer in the Department of Industries directed me to control the pencil factory, and besides this I have assisted in the general work of the department.

Order—No. 1205, Home (Education), dated 17th November 1916.

Recorded.

(True Extract)

P. RAJAGOPALA ACHARIYAR,
Secretary to Government.

To the Special Officer, Department of Industries.

Copy to the Government of India, Department of Commerce and Industry (with C.L.),
Editors' Table.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT

NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. No. 1205, HOME (EDUCATION),
DATED THE 17TH NOVEMBER 1916.

[SUBJECT.—*Report of the Dyeing Expert for the quarter ending the 30th September 1916.*]

From the Dyeing Expert, dated the 6th November 1916, No. 51.

A draft order recording the report is submitted. It is for orders whether, as usual, it may be printed and placed on Editors' Table.

S.K.—11-11-16.

N.K.—13-11-16.

E. A. HARVEY—14-11-16.

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P[ENTLAND]—16-11-16.

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In approval of
8th

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No. 1205, HOME (EDUCATION), 17TH NOVEMBER 1916

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(EDUCATION)

G.O. No. 1205, 17th November 1916

Dyeing Expert

Recording the report of the Dyeing Expert for the quarter ending the 30th September 1916.

20
29
29

13. In connection with the paper mills at Bangalore we took the first opportunity of having the papers tested by a competent authority and the report upon that was that there is no objection to the use of the paper for the manufacture of paper. It is noted that the Special Officer in charge of the Department of Industries directed me to control the paper and to ensure that the paper is of the quality required for the manufacture of paper.

G.O. No. 1205, Home (Education), dated 17th November 1916.

(The Editor)

P. RAJAGOPALA ACHARIYAR,
Secretary to Government.

G.O. No. 1205, Home (Education), dated 17th November 1916.

Dyeing Report

Enclosed is the report of the Dyeing Report for the quarter ending the 30th September 1916.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.
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DEPARTMENT.

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(b) For rules regarding printing of notes, see rule 315 of the office Manual.

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(c) Signature copies of letters to the Secretary of State or to the Government of India should be printed on hand-made paper.

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Dyeing Expert

Recording the report of the Dyeing Expert for the quarter ending the 30th September 1916.

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