

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Marine DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. *264*

Press
Mis.

Dated *8 - 7*

18*57*

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Fort Saint George, Marine Consultation, 14th July 1857.

No. 8. From W. ROBINSON, Esq., Acting Collector of Malabar; to E. MALTBY, Esq., Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Calicut, 25th June 1857, No. 85.

SIR,

In forwarding the accompanying Copy of Resolutions adopted at a public Meeting of the Mercantile Community of Cochin, protesting against a letter which appeared in the Spectator Newspaper, dated 11th Instant, signed Chris. Biden, I must express a conviction and hope that the letter in question will really have little weight with the Mercantile world, as against the established prosperity and facts connected with the trade of Cochin; and the growing importance of, and confidence in that roadstead and harbour. However I consider that the Mercantile Community of Cochin has very wisely exerted itself to disabuse the public mind of any erroneous impression this letter might have tended to create. The sweeping condemnation of the West Coast will harm likewise the prospects of the Madras Railway Company.

I have had the honor of submitting recently some information on the subject of the Port of Cochin, which unquestionably after Madras is the first harbour of the Presidency, and it is one of daily increasing consideration. The short digest given in the margin shews that during the 9 months last passed, 20,000 Tons of valuable Articles of Commerce were shipped at Cochin at an invoice value of nearly half a million sterling, any official interference with a trade of this description is of course out of the question.

Digest of Export Trade of Cochin from August 1856 till 6th June 1857.

Description of Goods.	Shipping Tons of.	No. of Tons.	Invoice Value F. O. B.
Cocoanut Oil,.....	210 Impl. Gals.	9,945	31,17,580
Bales,.....	50 Cubic feet.	2,379	5,00,960
Coiryarn, { Loose,.....	10 Cwts.	820	3,35,040
Bags,.....	18 Cwts.		
Coffee, { Cases,.....	16 Cwts.	830	1,50,100
Black Pepper,.....	14 Cwts.		
Cotton, Fish Oil, Co- coanuts, &c. }		5,693	2,92,708
	Tons...	19,667	Rs. 43,96,388

But I believe that Captain Biden is greatly in error as to the dangers of this Coast even at the seasons he has named, and that Commercial Shipping is really exposed to far less danger, at almost any Port on this Coast, at the seasons of the change of the Monsoons, than in the roadstead of Madras and elsewhere on the East Coast. I am satisfied that Ton for Ton it would be found that a larger sacrifice occurs there, than ever has occurred in the West Coast. Comparatively few gales indeed occur through which Ships fairly found in anchor gear cannot ride even at the opening of the South West Monsoon.

The fact taken as basis for Captain Biden's letter, viz., the loss of the "Aphrogeneia" was a wholly exceptional case. The South West Monsoon burst this year, as will occasionally occur even on this Coast, with unusually severe weather during 48 hours. The rains set in was 3 weeks earlier than usual, the fall of rain fairly indicates the peculiarly exceptional character of the case.

Ten years average for May.....Inches 11.
" in May 1857, " 32.

* Compare this with the frequent occurrence which has strewed the East Coast with wrecks at these periods.

But such a commencement has not been known for many many years and will only recur at some* such long interval. To base on such an occurrence arguments and assertions of the nature found in Captain Biden's letter can scarcely be sound.

Bad and exceptional as was the gale of the 20th May at Cochin, other Shipping at Cochin and on the Coast weathered it. The Meeting, I observe, has passed an opinion as to the reasons, why the "Aphrogeneia" could not do so.

- In orders -

Spectator

Captain Bider's letter in the newspaper
was not written by him in his official
character - nor can just be considered
to sanction the opinions expressed
therein. - Shall the Memorialists
be told this, and also informed
that the Local Prep is open to them
for a refutation of Captain Bider's opi-
nions. - Do govt further with
it to be reported to them that for
the purpose of giving publicity
to the subject, ^{including the collector's letter} the papers will be
sent to the Marine Board & the
Chamber be laid on the Editor's
table. - They have been already sent
by the meeting to the different Chambers
of Commerce. The

Yes
H

808
Marine Department 47

No 264

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation
Dated 8th July 1857.

Read the following
letter from the Acting
Collector of Malabar.

(Here enter 25th June 1857 No 239)

With the foregoing
letter, the Acting Col-
lector of Malabar for-
wards copy of resolutions
adopted at a Public
Meeting of the Mer-
cantile Community at
Cochin, protesting a-
gainst a letter which
appeared in the Spectator
Newspaper, dated 11th

Ultimo

Ultimo, Signed Chemo.
Biden, stating that
ships and vessels should
be strictly prohibited
from touching or
trading at any port
between Bombay and
Cape Comorin, at the
breaking up of one
monsoon, and the set-
ting in of another,
as involving imminent
peril to life and property.

2. ~~The~~ Captain Biden's
letter ^{above} alluded to in
~~the foregoing para.~~
was not written by
him in his official
character, the Govt.
cannot ^{therefore} be considered
to sanction the opinions
expressed

5-
in it - It is
expressed ~~therein~~
also to be observed that
the Local Press which
has circulation to the letter is
open to the mercantile
community of Cochin
for a reputation of
Captain Biden's asser-
tions.

3. The Right Honorable
the Governor in Coun-
cil ^{however} resolved that
for the purpose of giving
publicity to the sub-
ject the papers inclu-
ding the A.G. Collector's letter
shall be sent to the
Marine Board,
and likewise laid
on the Editor's table

Sub. Coll. of Malabar
Marine Board
with ^{copy of} papers

Dispd 15th 1884
The

A. P. M. Regier

8-9

Adm to com: 14 July
Marine 1837 10 p.m.

Mac 2/14

Adm to com: 14 July

8/18 July 1837

264
7th July

cb July
1837