

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

No. 605.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation, 23d February 1857.

Read the following letters.

From the Acting Secretary Marine Board.
Submits with reference to Extract Minutes of Consultation No. 2948 of 11th November 1856 Board's observations on the Building of Steamers.
Recommends Government to advise the Government of India to apply at once to the Honorable Court to enter into contract with the Builder of the Madras Steamer "Coromandel" now on her way out from England to build 3 additional Steamers on her lines.
Requests to obtain the authority of Government to have ready for delivery an order of Government to Captain Campbell on arrival to send in the report on the "Coromandel."

Here enter 2d December 1856, No. 3022.

From the Secretary to the Government of India.
Stating that a third vessel need not be entirely assigned to the Madras Government, and that it is intended that the Steamer of the description recommended by the Officiating Superintendent of Marine, for which an application is to be made to the Court, shall be stationed at Calcutta—being, however always ready to proceed to Madras in case of need.

Here enter 10th December 1856, No. 1590.

Extract Mins. of Cons. Marine Department.
Passing orders for obtaining a full description of the "Coromandel" relative to her construction &c. and other points that should be attended to in the building, purchase, or equipment of Steam vessels generally for the transport service in the Indian Seas.

Here enter 11th December 1856, No. 376.

Extract Mins. of Cons. Marine Department.
Communicating a letter from the Commander of the "Coromandel," reporting the arrival of that vessel, with His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief & Staff, and sick details &c. on board, & intimating the repairs & improvements to the ship effected at Moulmein.

Here enter 3d February 1857, No. 54.

No. 316.

From

The Secretary Marine Board,

To

The Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George.

Sir,

With reference to their letter of the 2d ultimo and the order of Government thereon, I have the honor by desire of the Marine Board to submit the accompanying report from their Secretary on the capabilities of the H. C. Steamer "Coromandel" and on the points in which he thinks she is deficient.

2. The suggestions Mr. Franklin makes are, however, all on minor points of detail; and many may if considered advisable be acted upon with respect to the "Coromandel" but they fear that the Government will find, as the vessel is a component part of the Indian Navy, that no alterations can be made in her without a reference to Bombay; and they submit this of itself as shewing strongly the inconvenience of having a vessel nominally under their control, but with whose internal arrangements they have no power to interfere. The Officer Commanding is of course amenable to the general instructions he receives from the Madras Government as to the

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movements of his vessel, but no power is vested in any authority here to check his accounts, his expenditure of stores or provisions, or in fact to exercise any control except as regards the service on which he is to be employed: and even in that matter it is doubtful whether he would not be bound to obey any orders received from the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Navy, however at variance with previous instructions from this Government.

3. The Board trust they may be pardoned for bringing this subject again to notice but they feel strongly that the "*Coromandel*" is not as much at the disposition of this Government as she and the others required should be, nor has this Government the power of controlling her expenses or her internal economy as they should have in a vessel said to be exclusively appropriated to their service. No vessel ever did better service or was worked at less cost than the "*Hugh Lindsay*" while under this Government, but it was only because she was entirely under the control of immediate authority that so happy a result was accomplished.

From Burmah.	
7th Regiment.....	1000
18th ".....	1000
36th ".....	1000
To Burmah.	
6th Regiment.....	1000
13th ".....	1000
12th ".....	1000
14th ".....	1000
15th ".....	1000
37th ".....	1000
39th ".....	1000
44th ".....	1000
2nd Co. Artillery..	250
Commissariat followers.....	2000
Bullocks.....	2000
Sheep.....	1000
H. M.'s Lancers to Bombay.....	400

4. The Board now desire me to bring to the notice of Government that a very extensive movement of Troops, stores &c. has to be effected during the present season if possible. The marginal note will shew approximate numbers, and to accomplish this the only Government vessels available are the "*Coromandel*" and "*Zenobia*," the latter a War Frigate with heavy Armament and a Crew of 250 Europeans all told, entirely occupying the space which ought to be reserved for Troops.

5. The employment of a vessel of the class of the "*Zenobia*" as a transport is a positive waste of money, for of course her expenses are much heavier than would be necessary for a Troop ship of the same size, and moreover the Crew, to keep up which this extra expense is incurred, becomes an incumbrance to the exclusion of the Troops she is engaged to carry. Her Majesty's Government make a clear distinction between Men-of-War and Troop ships, and the Board solicit that this Government will press on the Honorable Court of Directors the advantage of not using the one for the service which a cheaper worked vessel will be better able to perform.

6. I am now once more to urge upon Government the pressing necessity of a speedy increase of Steamers for the service of this Presidency. The work in hand now is quite sufficient to shew how inadequate are the means at their command, and although it may be argued that these calls will decrease, experience has shewn that during the last ten years, they have been annually augmenting, and the Board see no prospect either in our relations with Burmah, with China or with Persia, to lead them to expect any diminution in the transport requirements of the Presidency.

7. They would therefore recommend that the Honorable Court of Directors should be addressed with a strong requisition for two or three additional Steamers about the size and description of the "*Coromandel*"—that one should be built, and as the want of others is so much felt, that they should be purchased and despatched with the least practicable delay.

MADRAS,
MARINE BD. OFFICE,
27th January 1857.

I have &c.

(Signed) J. J. FRANKLIN,
Secretary.

From

John J. Franklin, Esq.,

To

The President and Members of the Marine Board,

GENTLEMEN—1. I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of copy of a letter from the Marine Board to Government dated 2d December 1856, requesting that a report on the capabilities of the Steamer "*Coromandel*" might be furnished by Captain Campbell and myself, and to

the quantity of canvas she has. The square main-sail might be dispensed with, but a square main top-sail and top-gallant sail are much required, and she could bear much heavier spars. The only objection to carrying a main top-sail in the "*Coromandel*" is, that it would be very close to the mouth of the funnel; that this does not appear to be insuperable. In another Steamer the funnel might be placed at a greater distance from the main mast, or it might be placed abaft it, as in the "*England*" and "*Tynemouth*" Messrs. Lindsay's Steamers on the line to India via the Cape.

11. *Decks*.—Are of teak which is well adapted from their being strong and durable; but the wood used is of very inferior quality, and so splintered in many places that several parts will soon require repair. It is however but right, at the same time, to state that in consequence of the very extensive demand for teak by the British Government before and during the time the "*Coromandel*" was under construction, I believe great difficulty was experienced in procuring this wood at all.

12. *Gunwale*.—Is entirely open from the deck, the timber heads being merely connected together by a fore and aft piece forming the rail which is about three feet from the water ways. To prevent accident from falling over board a light rope netting is triced up round the Ship. The inconvenience of this is that whenever water is on deck it flows freely over the sides along the whole length of the vessel; and entering the ports keeps the Cabins and lower deck wet. The wash of the sea from outside also wets the upper deck much sooner from there being nothing above the deck to prevent its entrance. The remedy is a bulwark of a light wood up, or nearly up to the rail.

13. *Scuppers*.—More are required: at present the lower deck has only 2: six are required, but they should be made with screw plugs, so as effectually to exclude water entering from outside. The upper deck has 2, which number should be increased to 8 at least.

14. These might with advantage be from 6 to 9 inches higher from the water line—in fact as high under the converging board as practicable. Their present position is more suitable for the appearance of the vessel; but if raised, they could be kept open much longer, which in a Troop Ship, is a point of very great importance.

15. They also require eaves, or battens over them to lead water off clear of the upper Sill, for it is now difficult to prevent the water from entering the ports when opened.

16. The mode of securing them might also be improved. Instead of the bar with two Screw-hooks and nuts with which they are now fitted, they should secure with a single Screw-hook to work through an iron socket fitted into the lower Sill.

17. *Cooking places*.—Are built of iron. They heat too much and will be almost unbearable in the hot weather unless cased in parts with wood and fire bricks. They ought to be of wood with a lining of tin.

18. *Pumps*.—Are very good and plentiful, but should be fitted to carry the water over the shipsides, instead of as now discharging it on deck—Nozzels are required for this purpose.

19. *The sky lights*.—Are convenient for a Troop ship being flat roofed, but to afford air below the glasses have been made to open with sliding frames: the consequence is that water lodges in the grooves in which they play, and these soon filling overflow into the Cabin below. If the glass frames were made to take in and out, they might be made to fit tighter.

20. The panes of glass also in some of the sky lights are unnecessarily large, rendering it a difficult matter to re-place them out here.

21. *Hawse pipe*.—Much inconvenience was felt from these leaking and rendering the lower deck and foremost store rooms wet. They are constructed in two parts and are not tight where the parts join.

22. *Lower Tank*.—This is a tank which is fitted into the bottom of the vessel for the ostensible purpose of holding fresh water if wanted, or salt water as ballast—Being a component part of the vessel it is impossible to keep it sufficiently tight to preserve drinking water. It is however of advantage as affording additional strength to the flooring and forming a water tight compartment, which would preserve the vessel in case of fracture in her bottom immediately under the tank itself. In the "*Coromandel*" this space, equal to 70 tons of water, was lost as fresh water could not be stowed in it and no ballast was required; but if smaller tank, of 1 to 2 tons, or more, were filled into the long tank, there is no reason why they should not be as tight as those in which water for consumption on board ship is now ordinarily kept.

23. *Ventilation*.—Of the Troop deck is good, but of the Cabins indifferent. The principle is right. At the upper, as well as at the lower part of the Cabin bulk head, is a space left open

1. As an appendix to my report of the 5th January instant, I beg further to state as I understand Captain Campbell's report has not yet been submitted, that the "*Coromandel*" is capable of conveying about 550 Europeans or 650 Native Troops across the bay—and perhaps about 100 more for a short coasting voyage.

2. Her lower deck is as well ventilated as could be desired, and is sufficiently lofty for a Troop ship. The beams, being of iron, project but a few inches below the under part of the upper deck.

3. I have noticed in my report that she is particularly stiff. This leads me to believe that it might be found advantageous to raise the upper and lower decks, each from 12 to 18 inches in any other vessel built for the transport of our troops. This would give greater capacity of hold, but of course it would at the same time increase the tonnage of the vessel.

4. Since writing the former paper, I have inquired whether any inconvenience is experienced in the "*Zenobia*" from the funnel being close to the mainmast as she carries a square main-topsail, and find that it is not objectionable when the funnel is short.

(True Copy.)

25th January 1857.

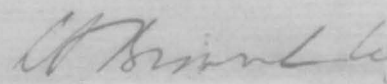
(Signed) J. J. FRANKLIN.

Ordered that the Marine Board's letter of the 27th January be communicated to the Marine Department in which Mr. Franklin's suggestions in regard to alterations and improvements in the "*Coromandel*" will be considered.

2. Ordered that the following letter be despatched.

To the Secy. to the Govt. of India Home Dept. | Here enter 23d February 1857, No. 606.

(True Extract and Copies.)


Secretary to Government.

To the Marine Board.

„ Marine Department. *Recd 27th 7/57*

Exd. J. E. Cashart.

C. 16th Dec 1856 - 1857
6th Feb 1857 - 15th 16th

the 6th of 1st of 1857
Para 20 @ 22

17th Dec 1857
Marine 1857

Extract from: 1857
Military Department: 1857

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Communications between
the Marine Corps for con-
sideration of 1857. The
suggestion in regard to
the situation of the
in the Marine Corps

1857

object to any measures
taken by this Govt in
respect to the minor
internal arrangements of
the Vessel to add to her
efficiency as a Transport
Ship.~

2. Before, however,
ordering the alterations sug-
gested by Mr. Franklin to
be executed, the Govt would
wish to be furnished with
an Estimate of the probable
cost and time that they
will occupy.~

(50) J. P.
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Copy to Marine Board. Dispd. 11th

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c 5 March
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