

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Marine DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	165	Press ~~Mis~~
Dated	2-5-	1859.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 30th April to 3rd May 1859.*

No. 8. Read the following letter from J. J. FRANKLIN, Esq., Superintendent of Marine; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department, Fort Saint George, dated 8th April 1859, No. 1466.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of Extract Minutes of Consultation of the 8th Ultimo, No. 81, in the Marine Department, communicated with the order in the Military Department of the 24th Idem, No. 1149, and to submit the following remarks relative to the 24th para. of the Despatch* which it covered from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, wherein it is recorded that the losses on board the Steamer "England" during the disastrous passage from Madras to Masulipatam in October 1857, were owing to the want of precaution on the part of the Marine Board in not appointing a competent person, during the absence from illness of the Master Attendant and his Assistant, to perform their duties.

2. In justice to the late Marine Board I have respectfully to solicit that the following para. of their letter, of the 24th November of that year, No. 4094, may be brought to the notice of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India.

"Para. 8. The Board in the 2nd para. of their letter of the 10th Instant, No. 3875, reported that there was no Executive Officer in the Marine Department during the week within which the "England" was despatched, and the Government may enquire why, as Mr. McKennie was sick, other arrangements were not made for the performance of his duties. The Master Attendant, although too unwell to attend Office, was still in charge, and no intimation of the Assistant's illness having been received, it was supposed, as little or no personal communication takes place between that Officer and the Board, that he was attending to his duties; and it was only on inquiring for him with reference to the condition the "England" was seen to be in when getting under weigh, that it was found he was absent."

3. I trust this will at once shew that the Marine Board were blameless in not causing some one to be appointed for the performance of the duties of the Master Attendant's Office, as they were not aware that both the incumbents were absent. No report thereof having been sent to them, orders on various matters were despatched to the Master Attendant and were as usual attended to through the activity of the Boat Overseer Veerasawmy Naik, and the discovery that there was no Executive Officer present in that Department was only made when I noticed the "England" leaving the Port in such trim that I sent for the Assistant Master Attendant to inquire how it was he had not attended better to her Stowage.

* Published in the Fort Saint George Gazette of the 30th October. 4. On the 29th October* the late Master Attendant obtained a months leave on sick Certificate. On the 31st the Assistant was called on to perform the duties and in reply sent in

sick Certificate on the 2nd November. On the same day the Government were addressed in the Marine Department and, after a representation of the difficulties experienced in carrying out the very onerous duties which then devolved on the Marine Department, from the absence of both Executive Officers, were solicited to appoint some one to act. The request was at once complied with, but as the Assistant wrote on the 2nd to say that he was able to resume his duties, it was not necessary then to make any appointment.

5. On the 28th of the same month the Assistant was again compelled by illness to absent himself during the disembarkation in a very heavy surf of a large body of European Troops, 800, in all, who had been detained some days on Board in consequence of the Surf being impassable. The Board then, bearing in mind the danger of delay at once took upon themselves to appoint an Officer to act, and reported to Government on the same day their having done so.

6. The above explanation will I hope be sufficient to prove that there was no want of attention or diligence on the part of the Marine Board in making such arrangements as were necessary, and were in their power, for the due performance of the Public Service. It was at a time when transports with Troops and Stores were daily arriving, fitting out and leaving, and the illness of the Master Attendant was felt as a great loss; but as soon as it was known that the Assistant was likewise absent from the same cause, prompt measures were taken to replace him temporarily by some one else.

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 30th April to 3rd May 1859.*

No. 9.

ORDER THEREON, 2nd May 1859, No. 165.

The Honorable the Governor in Council must observe upon the above explanation that what is stated in paras. 2 and 3, of the Superintendent's letter clearly proves that there was a great want of communication between the office of the late Marine Board and that of the Master Attendant.

2. It does not appear that this defect has yet been corrected, or that Government have any security that what happened in the case of the "England" may not at any time recur.

3. The Superintendent of Marine will be so good as to state what measures he would propose to adopt to prevent such a contingency.

4. One obvious step would be that the Master Attendant and his Deputy should be required respectively to report in writing to the Superintendent, on any occasion on which they might from sickness or other cause be compelled to absent themselves from their duty, though but for a single day.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. A. P. W. Begbie.

Marine Department.

N^o. 165

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation

Dated 2nd May 1859.

*Read the following letter from
The Superintendent of Marine*

Here enter 8th April 1859

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J.P.

To the Superintendent of Marine. Dated 5th

J. M. Maresca

Marine 1859 Department
No. of report 3 May 1859

No. 105

Pro. of Govt.
Extract Mins. Cons.

Dated 23 May 1859.