

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 17th to 23rd September 1859.*

No. 16. Read the following letter from H. NELSON, Esq., Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce; to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 21st September 1859.

I have the honor by desire of the Chamber of Commerce to annex copy of a letter to my address from Messrs. Lecot and Co., and with reference thereto, request most respectfully that the Honorable the Governor in Council will call for a return of the tenders made on the 19th instant for the conveyance of troops to England, of the Ship ordered to be surveyed for that service, and of the reasons of the Acting Superintendent of Marine for accepting that vessel, with any letters that he may have received from Agents of Ships on this subject.

It is necessary to explain that when a vessel is ordered to be surveyed, it is an intimation to all concerned that she is, if found suitable, to be engaged.

The Chamber desires it to be understood that it does not wish Government to bind itself in any case to take the lowest tender, the right to refuse such was, as usual, reserved in the present instance,—but it thinks such a right should be sparingly exercised, and only for very strong reasons. Were it otherwise, all confidence in the system of tendering would be lost.

It is of the utmost importance to Government that the arrangements for tendering vessels should be free from the slightest animadversion, and that the public should have a well grounded feeling that the most advantageous offer will be accepted.

In the interest of the Mercantile Community the Chamber ventures to request an enquiry into the subject of this complaint, feeling assured that His Excellency in Council will consider it worthy of investigation.

From Messrs. LECOT and Co.; to H. NELSON, Esq., Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, dated Madras, 20th September 1859.

We have the honor to bring to the notice of the Chamber the following circumstances under which our tender to Government of 2 Ships for conveying troops Home has been rejected. Although one of the conditions of the Circular inviting tenders is to the effect, that the Agent does not bind himself to take up the lowest tender, and that he will not assign any reason for rejecting one instead of another, the circumstances of our case are such that we feel we ought to lay them before the Chamber of Commerce so that they may, if they consider our remarks just, forward them for the consideration of Government.

With reference to the Circular of the Superintendent of Marine, dated 16th instant, inviting tenders for a Ship to convey 150 to 200 troops to England, we tendered yesterday the 19th instant, the "Sea Park" and the "Cressy" both Messieurs Duncan Dunbar and Son's Ships, first class Ships of 835 and 720 tons register, respectively. The "Sea Park" particularly is well known as a transport Ship. The figures of our tenders were £ 15-19-6 for the "Sea Park" and £ 16 for the "Cressy." The former Ship which has just arrived from England, besides having first rate between decks and accommodation for troops and the advantage of a good ventilation being scattered all over, has on board a quantity of new salt provisions, beer, &c., and a full stock of cuddy stores all of the first quality, she has brought out as stores, but such very short notice was given that the Captain had no time to state in the tender what he had on board or to draw a good plan of the Ship shewing all the advantages of her build, as the Circular was only presented to us after noon and tenders were to be opened at one P. M. We had scarcely any time to fill up the tender, and the Captain to draw a very imperfect sketch of the Ship, but as customary we said in the tender that we engaged ourselves, and the Captain on his behalf to comply with all the conditions of the contract. Both our tenders were rejected and the "Seringapatam" was taken at £ 16-2-6. She is a red letter Ship and is 23 years old. She was taken we understand because she has a European Doctor on board, but since we mentioned in the tender that the Captain would comply with all the conditions, we were of course prepared to get a Doctor as the Captain knew of one who had been with troops and Emigrants.

Such is the statement of our case which we request the Chamber will kindly submit to the Government if you think it necessary to do so.

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No. 17. MINUTE BY THE HONORABLE THE PRESIDENT, dated 22nd September 1859.
A copy of Messrs. Lecot and Co.'s letter should be sent to the Acting Superintendent of Marine, who should be called upon for an explanation, and if this should prove not to be satisfactory further inquiry may be made.

I entirely agree with the the Chamber of Commerce that the preservation of a character for fairness and exactness in the formation of contracts is of the greatest public importance.
(Signed) C. E. TREVELYAN.

No. 18. ORDER THEREON, 22nd September 1859, No. 475.
Resolved that Messrs. Lecot and Co.'s letter of the 20th instant be referred for the explanation of the Assistant Superintendent of Marine.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

A copy of
Messrs Lecot & Co's letter
should be sent to the acting
Superintendent of Marine who
should be called upon for an
explanation - & if this should
prove not to be satisfactory.
further inquiry may be made.
I entirely agree with the
Chamber of Commerce that the
preservation of a character for fairness
and exactness in the formation of
contracts is of the greatest public
importance
Wm. Trevelyan
22 Sept 59
If such a character is
not preserved, the value of the business

Pros of Govt 20 Sept
Marine. 1859. Sept 20

From the Chairman of the
Committee of Commerce
Madras

21st Sept 1859.

No 449.

Enclosed copy of a letter
from Messrs. Scott & Co. being
sent to notice the circum-
stances under which their
tender of 2 ships for
surveying troops have been
rejected by the Com-
dant of Marine, & requests
an enquiry into the subject
of the complaint.

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For order

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From the Chairman of the Committee of Commerce - 21 Sept 59
Minute by the Honble the President
No 445 - 22nd September 1859.

Sept 30 59

Resolved that Messrs. Scott & Co's letter
of the 20th inst. be referred for the explanation
of the best outfit of Marine

To the Asst. Superint. of Marine -
Sept 22nd 1859.

J. P.

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