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Gobt. of (1881) Madras.
MARINE.

To *5-2e.*
THE MASTER ATTENDANT,
Madras,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated April, 29th.

Issued

Recd. *11 May.* Encl.

G.O., 29th April 1881, No. 210.

APRIL.

Dynamite.—Papers on the subject of the restrictions imposed on the importation and carriage of dynamite, recorded.

B *1206 W. 13-5-87*
Recorded
Cy *Ch. J. M.*

No 616-87

From T. E. MARSHALL, Esq., Deputy Master Attendant in charge Administrative Department, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 1st April 1881, No. 3044 [Current No. 223].

With reference to official memorandum from your office, No. 493, dated 12th instant, I have the honor to report that Messrs. Gordon, Woodroffe and Co. were requested to explain the passage in their letter regarding the restrictions placed on dynamite, showing what difference is made in the treatment of consignments of dynamite and other explosives. A copy of their reply is herewith forwarded. I may add that no restrictions are imposed on dynamite in the Sea Customs Department nor are there any in this.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Messrs. GORDON, WOODROFFE AND Co., to the Master Attendant, Madras, dated Madras, 23rd March 1881.

We have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your No. 2495, without date, which we find from our books has reference to our letter of the 19th January last.

2. It would in our opinion display considerable presumption on our part to explain, in detail, for the information of Government, the restrictions which attend the landing, storing, carriage, and sale of dynamite, as Government must themselves be far better acquainted with them than we are.

3. In the letter above referred to we merely stated what had come under our notice in the course of business, and should any of our remarks therein be inaccurate, we shall be glad to be corrected.

4. We had lately occasion to make inquiries on behalf of the Cotton Powder Company, whose Agents we are, as to the rules which would apply to the import of their "tonite," it being in contemplation to send out supplies here for use in mining and similar operations. This composition is used to a considerable extent at home, notably by the Trinity House, and little difficulty is experienced, we understand, in the transit and storage of it, dynamite, and similar explosives there. In fact, we believe we are correct in affirming that, on the other side, the rules which attach to gunpowder also apply to tonite, if not to all explosives of this class. But when the Company found that a large outlay was necessary here in order to store such explosives in a separate magazine, that rail transit could only be effected in very small quantities, and that some of the Railway Companies refused to carry dynamite and similar goods at all, they were discouraged, and the project is mean time in abeyance. Had the rules obtaining at home, which are generally supposed to be a sufficient guard against destruction to life and property, been all that had to be conformed to here, it is possible the enterprise would have been carried through.

5. Allow us to add that a copy of your Circular No. 300, with its annexures, was forwarded to our London Firm for circulation among our ship-owning constituents.

ORDER THEREON, 29th April 1881, No. 210.

Recorded.

(True Extract.)

C. E. Marshall
Chief Secretary

To the Master Attendant, Madras.
 „ Public Works Department.

Exd. T. O'Connor.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

29th April 1881, No. 210.

Dynamite.

Read the following papers:—

From J. H. TAYLOR, Esq., Lieut., R.N.R., Master Attendant, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated 3rd March 1881, No. 2001 [Current No. 146].

Administrative Department.

With reference to G.O., No. 630, dated 20th December last, I have the honor to report that I issued a circular to the Shipping Agents and to the Chamber of Commerce, Madras, requesting them to bring the fact of the non-explosive nature of dynamite prominently to the notice of owners of vessels and Insurance Companies in view to the removal of the popular prejudice on the subject, so that the present embargo on the carriage of the same might be withdrawn.

2. I received replies from Messrs. Gordon, Woodroffe and Co. and the Chamber, and as no more have come to hand up to this date, probably because the views of the Shipping Agents, who are Members of the Chamber, are represented in its letter, I delay no longer in submitting them to Government in view to such orders being passed thereon as may be deemed necessary.

3. Messrs. Gordon, Woodroffe and Co. point out that a modification of the many restrictions placed by Government on the article should be made, in order to induce carriers to fall in with the views of Government as to its comparative harmlessness; and the Chamber is of opinion that, while dynamite by itself is not dangerous, the detonators are, under certain conditions, highly so, and it believes that if the two are kept separate until required for use, the danger of the carriage of either is small.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Messrs. GORDON, WOODROFFE AND CO., to the Master Attendant, Madras, dated Madras, 19th January 1881.

We shall have much pleasure in bringing the contents of your Circular No. 300, annexing Proceedings of the Madras Government in connection with the carriage and non-explosive nature of dynamite, apart from detonators, to the notice of shipowners with whom we are connected.

2. Allow us, however, to point out that Government themselves can furnish an example of their estimate of the safety of the compound, superior to anything that can be written, by even partially removing the many restrictions to which the article is subject on account of its explosive nature from the time it arrives in these roads until passed into the hands of consumers. Until they do so it can hardly be expected that carriers either by sea or land will be quite at one with them in their opinion of its comparative harmlessness.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From C. SIMPSON, Esq., Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, to the Master Attendant, Madras, dated Madras, 14th February 1881.

I am desired by the Chamber to thank you for communicating your circular, under date the 17th ultimo, relative to the carriage of dynamite, and to say that it has been laid before the Members of the Chamber.

2. The Chamber entertain no doubt that dynamite by itself is not dangerous, but that the detonators are, under certain conditions, highly so. They believe that if the two are kept apart until required for use, the danger of the carriage of either is small.