GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper :—

From J. H. TAYLOR, Esq., Lieut., R.N.R., Port Officer, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 7th September 1886, No. 8628.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the order of Government, dated 23rd August 1886, No. 467, Marine, which in paragraph 3 requires me to state what amount may safely be contributed from Port Funds to Harbour Trust.

2. In G.O., Marine, dated 6th June 1885, No. 233, the sum of Rs. 25,000 was ordered by Government to be transferred from Port Funds to the credit of Harbour Funds, and it was mentioned that a similar sum of Rs. 25,000 might probably be advanced from the same source on 1st April 1886. I beg respectfully to suggest that this conditional promise may be prudently carried out, but that in future all contributions from Port Fund should be considered with reference to the wants of the trust on the one side, and political or local exigencies on the other.

3. The trust has no present want of, or opportunity of, using money. It finds itself unexpectedly in possession of a very large sum, with large annual increases.

4. Owing to the condition of the harbour, it will be impossible to entertain schemes for improvement such as low level jetties, or quays, or any of the conveniences to trade that may be hoped for, if the work is anything like a success for the next two years, or perhaps three years, during which a few petty improvements and repairs will alone demand pecuniary attention, so that no useful object can be served by simply swelling idle hoards.

5. At the last meeting of the Port Trust on Thursday, 2nd September 1886, it was decided to invest five lakhs of rupees, which would still leave enough in hand for all current expenses. The trust seem to consider that all the expense connected with Mr. Thorowgood's large establishment is to be deemed a portion of the construction, and be defrayed from money borrowed from the Secretary of State.

6. On the other hand there are many reasons why Government should have at hand a considerable amount of money to meet contingencies. It is rumoured that one of the ships building now for the Government of India is intended for Madras to meet a much desired need common to all the Madras ports. No doubt the Supreme Government will expect a liberal subscription towards this vessel, which will be an expensive one in cost, upkeep and equipment. It has been urged that the Madras Government should have complete control over this vessel, and this independence will have to be paid for.

7. Then, in the second place, there cannot but arise in the minds of all those who peer into the future serious misgivings about the continuance of peace, and reflections as to the best method of providing coast defence. Such a vessel as Madras has indented for, if thoroughly armed with powerful machine-guns, and fitted with torpedos, cradles, &c., would be a cruiser sufficient to protect the coast ports from privateering, which is the most probable form of attack that an enemy would attempt. Large ships and ironclads, whether French or Russian, could not keep so far from their coal base, or waste their strength on our small ports. The ports will necessarily

be expected to meet the principal charges connected with their defence, and Government should, I respectfully recommend, retain the fund in its own hands available for any emergency. There are other items, new lighthouse, boats, and small charges, which will absorb a considerable sum.

ORDER—dated 2nd October 1886, No. 548, Marine.

The Port Officer's recommendation is accepted. The Chairman, Harbour Trust Board, will accordingly take credit for a contribution of Rs. 25,000 from Port Funds.

(True Extract.)

E. F. WEBSTER,
Chief Secretary.

To the Port Officer, Madras.
" Chairman, Harbour Trust Board.
" Accountant-General.
" Public Works Department.

Exd. T. O'Connor.

No 2750 W dy 18th Octr/86

Recorded.

(Sd) J.O.H.

Govt. of {1886} Madras.

MARINE.

Issued

Recd. *Encl.*

G.O., 2nd October 1886, No. 548.

No 2750 W dy 18th Octr/86

OCTOBER.

Port Funds.

Accepting the Port Officer's recommendation in connection with grants from —, and instructing the Harbour Trust Board to take credit for a contribution of Rs. 25,000 from that source.

Exr. P.W. Acks.

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With order