

MESSAGE FROM H. E. THE VICEROY



THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI.

31st October 1936.

It gives me great pleasure warmly to congratulate the Madras Chamber of Commerce on the occasion of their Centenary Celebrations. The Chamber has a long and honourable record of public service, and the many-sided character of its activities is well known. I note with satisfaction its recognition that with the change of constitutional conditions and with the development of the trade and industry of South India, the part which it has to play in the future is more important even than in the past, and I feel confident that the high traditions which it has built up during the century of its existence will be maintained in the years to come.

Linlithgow



His Excellency the Most Honourable Victor Alexander John Hope, Marquess of Linlithgow, P.C., Kt., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., O.B.E., D.L., T.D., Viceroy and Governor-General of India.



H. E. Lord Erskine, G.C.I.E., Governor of Madras.



MADRAS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
CENTENARY HANDBOOK
1836—1936

Issued in the year of the accession
of His Majesty, King Edward VIII.

Containing facts about Madras as an Industrial and Commercial Centre and one of India's great ports: the History of the Madras Chamber of Commerce: the activities of its members in commerce and public affairs: a list of members of the Chamber, an index of the commodities they supply and the agencies they hold: trade announcements and other matters of interest to all business men.



Sims,
September 1st, 1936.

Dear Sir,

I would like, on behalf of the Board of Trade, to extend most cordial congratulations to the members of the Madras Chamber of Commerce on the attainment by the Institution of a century of valuable public work in Southern India.

Founded during the regime of the Honourable East India Company, the Madras Chamber of Commerce has staunchly upheld the highest traditions of British Trade throughout a century of unparalleled economic expansion and development. The remarkable commercial, industrial and agricultural development of the Presidency is attributable to a marked degree to the courage, foresight and imaginative energy of three generations of members. While regulating their business activities on sound lines they have not only advanced their own interests but have contributed in generous measure to the welfare and prosperity of the peoples of Southern India.

Chambers of Commerce in India occupy a position of exceptional influence and importance in the spheres of municipal and political life. The activities and experience of the Chamber's representatives on the Madras Port Trust, the Corporation, the Legislative Council and the Central Legislature have contributed very materially to the usefulness of those Institutions.

We are living in a difficult period of transition and reconstruction but on all sides one sees evidence that the British merchants of to-day are worthily upholding the high traditions of public service which have been laid down in the past and are closely co-operating with their Indian friends in the regeneration of a more prosperous, happy and progressive India.

I am, Dear Sir,
Yours very truly,

Thomas D. Ainsworth

The Chairman,
The Madras Chamber of Commerce,
M a d r a s.

TMA/C.



Sir Thomas Ainscough, H.M.'s Senior Trade Commissioner in India and Ceylon. His message to the Chamber appears on the opposite page.

Officers of the Chamber, 1936



Mr. F. Birley, M.L.C.,
Chairman.



Mr. A. S. Todd, Vice-Chairman.

Members of the Committee, 1936



Sir William Wright, O.B.E., V.D.



Mr. H. N. Colam.



Mr. W. M. Browning.

Members of the Committee, 1936



Mr. D. M. Reid, M.C.



Mr. J. Nuttall.



Mr. G. Gompertz, J.P., Secretary.

FOREWORD

THE following pages show that The Madras Chamber of Commerce—whose Centenary this Handbook celebrates—serves no mean city. But the Chamber's interests are not confined to the City; they extend throughout the whole of South India, including the Presidency and the Indian States.

The population of the Presidency, which in 1931 was 47,193,602, is to-day estimated at nearly 49,000,000; that of the City is 689,000. The population of the South Indian States of Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Cochin, Pudukottah, Sandur and Banganapalle is approximately 25,000,000, making about 82,000,000 in the area served by the Chamber and its affiliated associations.

Madras is a city of wide spaces, busy thoroughfares, thriving industries, and flourishing businesses. Many of the Merchant houses, whose names are recorded in this book, have been established well over a century—some date back to the earliest days of the East India Company. To those to whom the name recalls Kipling's unjust description of "A withered beldame brooding on her ancient fame", Madras to-day, with its busy harbour and crowded marts, comes as a complete surprise.

The total value of the general imports to the Presidency of Madras in the year 1934-35—the latest for which particulars are available—was Rs. 17,35,12,513, nearly one-eighth of the total imports for all India. The total volume of Indian merchandise exported from the Presidency was Rs. 25,09,04,809, considerably more than one-seventh of the total exports of Indian merchandise from the whole of India.

The total trade of the Port of Madras for the year ending March 31, 1936, was Rs. 29,02,17,000, representing 39% of the total trade of the Presidency for that year. 697 vessels entered the Port during the year, the total net tonnage being 2,441,739.

There were 1,560 factories in the Presidency on December 31, 1935, employing 162,745 operatives, 22,577 of these were employed in the 124 factories in the city of Madras. In addition to those in registered factories, each employing over 20 operatives, there are innumerable small industrial establishments in the city where thousands more find work.

Cotton spinning and weaving mills in the city employ over 11,100 hands.

The Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway workshops at Perambore employ over 5,100 operatives.

These figures show that industrially as well as commercially Madras possesses considerable importance. It is a growing city, and those connected with its commerce

and industry are robustly optimistic about its future. The development of the Government's great hydro-electric schemes and the plans for an electric grid covering the Presidency are certain to increase its prosperity. Indeed some foresee a great industrial development in South India.

The Madras Chamber of Commerce shares their optimism, and in the following pages justifies it by the story of past achievement and a description of present activities. The Chamber is proud of the record of the century, whose close it now celebrates, and believes that the years to come will not be less fruitful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Part of the information contained in this Handbook has been extracted from "Abstract of Proceedings of the Madras Chamber of Commerce, 1836 to 1886" compiled by Sir Charles Lawson, who was Secretary to the Chamber for 30 years and who retired in 1892, and from subsequent yearly reports.

Acknowledgement must also be made to "The Asylum Press Almanack and Directory" for certain information regarding the early history of Madras, to certain members who have assisted with information relating to the history and activities of their Firms, and to the staff of the Chamber for their willing help.

A. A. HAYLES,
COMPILER.

Illustrated

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