

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Financial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 175

Press
Mis.

Dated 23. 3. 1957

20-21

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Chamber of Commerce.
Madras 5th March 1857.

To
The Chief Secretary to Government
Fort St. George

Sir,
I have the honor by desire of the
Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt
of your letter dated 20th ultimo, N^o 44. Financial
Department, communicating portions of one
from the Accountant General to Government
on the subject of his drafts on the Provincial
Treasuries and requesting the Chamber to
propose any course whereby that Officer might
be duly furnished with such periodical infor-
-mation as to the probable demands of the
Mercantile Community for cash in the
Local Treasuries, as would enable him to
meet them without unduly locking up the
Public Funds and occasioning financial in-
-convenience to Government

2 The Chamber are happy to find the
attention

attention of Government has been directed to the above important subject, and particularly at the recognition of the soundness of the argument advanced by the Chamber in their letter to the Accountant General dated 24th August 1854, that it would appear to be certainly the interest of Government that the whole available revenue of the country should be remitted to the Presidency by Bills in place of specie, not merely in so far as it would be a saving in a financial point of view, but more especially in that it must inevitably promote the circulation of money in the mofussil and thus add to the wealth of the country and its commercial capabilities, or as it is more forcibly expressed in your letter under reply, that every thing which tends to subserve the requirements of the Trader and agriculturist to promote the extension of cultivation and general improvement of the country, must have a direct effect in increasing the public revenue.

3 The Chamber have given the subject their fullest consideration on this as on previous occasions

occasions of its discussion with the Accountant General, and they are most desirous of affording that Officer every assistance in overcoming the difficulties set forth in the extracts from his letter to Government with which they have been favored, but it is scarcely possible for the merchants individually, or the Chamber as a body, to furnish the Accountant General with such information as will enable him half yearly, in December and June, to form an estimate of the probable amount of Bills that will be required on each Treasury and in each month, during the following six months, for as pointed out in the Chamber's letter of 24th August 1854, already referred to, the requirements for Bills are in a great measure regulated by the course of Trade, and therefore the merchants cannot tell at what particular period their wants may arise, dependent as the same frequently are on contingencies not within their immediate cognizance or controul.

4 The Majority of the Firms at Madras enter into Produce operations in their capacity as

Para 3

as agents, as well as on their own account, and of course the extent of such operations cannot with any degree of accuracy be calculated in advance but is in a great degree dependent upon the state of the European Markets, and it is not to be expected that individual Firms can communicate the extent of their intended purchases to the Chamber, or to the Accountant General, as such disclosures might be means of defeating their plans by bringing a greater number of competitors into the same field with themselves, the surest guide for the Accountant General to follow in estimating the probable demands on the Provincial Treasuries is the extent and value of the crops of principal staples in the particular Districts adjacent thereto. This was pointed out to that officer in the Chamber's letter of 24th August 1854 in the following terms.

"It may generally be considered as a safe guide by which to form some idea of the probable demands upon a Provincial Treasury that

average of
Harvest &c
made

Para 4

it

31
it would be at least on a scale equal to the value of the exportable productions of that District, allowing for what may be consumed in immediately adjoining districts, and whenever there may happen to be a large stock in the hands of the Ryots or Produce Brokers of articles intended for transmission to a distance, it may be generally assumed that sooner or later the same will be bought & paid for by Bills on the Provincial Treasury.

5 To the several Collectors, therefore rather than to the Merchants or the Chamber, should the Accountant General look for the periodical information he requires, at the same time, the Chamber will always be ready to afford that Officer assistance by giving their opinion on any matter of detail, upon which he wishes for more precise information. With regard to the time at which funds will be required for the purchase of Produce in the several Districts a more exact calculation may be made, as the harvest seasons are well known. The Sinnerilly and Coimbatore Cotton crops begin

inconvenience lately in operations in Salem
and Malabar.

7. In conclusion the Chamber
would further solicit the abolition of fees on
these Bills which are a tax upon Trade, as
whilst the amount so raised can be of no im-
portable moment to Government, into whose
coffers the Chamber believe they now fall,
as the present Accountant General is
paid a consolidated salary.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most Obedt Servt

Wm Hamilton Craik

Chairman

Case 24 March/57 No 20621

Financial Department

No. 107.

From The Chairman of the
Chamber of Commerce.
Dated 5th March 1857.

For Orders.

This letter should be referred to the
Act. Genl. for his remarks.

Most of the suggestions are practical
& good.

But it appears some doubt as to
how far the non-specification of
particular cases for bills on districts
measures is work.

Is not Genl. Board before the Committee?

7th Dec 1856
The Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce

To the Act. Genl.
Financial 1857

7th Dec 1856
The Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce

From the Chairman of
the Chamber of Commerce.

Dated 5th March 1857

For Orders 1857

No. 107

Copy to the Act. Genl.
Financial 1857

20

211 March
217

Submits the contents of the
Chamber on the subject referred
to them, so to the Chamber of Commerce
of the Mercantile Community
for such on the Financial Department

For Orders

a joint claim?

Do the fees go to the Ant Fund
or to the Treasury? What is their
annual amount?

H. G.

The Railway is in fact a
Govt work and the Chamber
might as well ask all Pub-
lic works to be treated as they
propose. The line fees are
not charged for miles in Cal-
cutta. The practice there
and at Bombay might be
ascertained. The amount
paid to the Railway

13/3/57

H. G.

There will always be some difficulty
in ascertaining how much money
is available for bills in the local
treasuries. But whenever remittances
are to be made either to the Post for
from one distt to another, the
amt shd be advertised and bills granted
if applied for.

A plan shd be able to tell pretty
nearly how much is req^d for local
disturbance on out of establishments
military charges & public works in
every month & providing something
for contingencies. The balance available
might be reported to the Govt for advertisement
sent in the Govt Gaz. H. G.

Financial Department

No. 175

Extract from the Minis. of Cons.

Under date 23rd March 1857.

Read letter from the
Chairman of the Chamber
of Commerce.

Here enter 5th March 1857. 12.117

271 Order thereon, 1857, 23 March

The Government resolve
to refer the foregoing letter to
the Accountant General and
to desire him to submit his
opinion on the several sug-
gestions offered by the Cham-
ber of Commerce, and also
to report on the requests
made in the concluding
para. for the abolition of
the Fee charged for Bills
granted on the local Treas-
uries, stating at the same
time the amount annually
realized from them for the
last

last five years, and whether
they are levied at Calcutta
and Bombay. which last
fact the Accountant Ge-
neral may ascertain by
Electric Telegraph if not
already in possession of
the information.

H. J. M.
Chief Secretary

To,
The Accountant General
with letter from the
Chamber of Commerce } Despt. 24th Recd. 25. at 11 o'c 4
Recd. at 2 o'c } LHM
Encls: retained in this office 1st S. A. S.

Encls.

Entered in the Book of the
31st March 1857
Of the 1st to 2nd of 1857
1202 of 1857 Decree 33044

20-21

Vol 24 to Dec 24 March.
Manual 1857 Sep 18 1857

o No 1935

Abstract of Minutes of 1857

31st March 1857

J. No 1364

Refer to the 1st of
"Council Minutes" for
his opinion and report
a letter from the Chairman
of Commerce containing
suggestions for the grade
of bills on the local
treasury -