

Railway Transportation Technology in Colonial Madras City; (1895 – 1947)

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ABSTRACT

Transport is the one of the essential thing to determine the country development .Anattempt has been made to analyze and investigate the transportation development of colonial Madras. Especially railway transportation. On the whole, Madras having an excellent record of the development of transport when compare with other cities in India. Colonialism was the representative of the modern trade development in the west relocated in the east. This paper covers the special emphasis on the related aspects of the transport in the colonial Madras and also deduces some conclusions and suggestions on certain issues of the matter deals with the earlier studies in this area.This study reveals that Madrascityhas witnessed a model for the evaluation of transport and communication.

Keywords

Railway, Transportation Technology, Colonialism and Madras

1. Introduction

The East India merchants understanding the importance raised the question of the introduction of railways into India which discussed at the first meeting of the Court of Proprietors and other shareholders in the East Indian Railway Company¹. At a general meeting of shareholders of the East Indian Railway Company later, "anonymous scribbling," was denounced by a windy partisan of the Directors, in a most boisterous and ludicrous manner and the Chairman said it was "un-English and dirty work" and yet the Chairman and his colleagues condescend to shelter themselves behind an "anonymous scribbler. "Certainly "un-English dirty work" in calumniating a great and powerful corporation, after flattery and cajolery hadfailed.

The design of introducing the railway system into the East Indian Empire, first originated with Mr. MacDonald Stephenson, when the plain truth is, that the design of introducing the railway system into India was entertained in all the three presidencies. In East India Company, the exertions of the board were directed to the object of obtaining interest to the shareholders, in the interval between the commencement and opening of the first line of railway undertaken. They came to the unanimous conclusion that the interests of the undertaking would be best consulted by the appointment of a committee of

gentlemen, independent of local interest or connection and who should be entirely and wholly subject to the control of the Board in London. In pursuance of the policy, Directors decided on appointing two gentlemen of talent and experience, to act conjointly with Mr. Stephenson, as the representatives of this Board in India and after much inquiry, Mr. Adams and Mr. Beeston were selected for this object.

Susan J. Lewandowski, mentioned lot of things regarding Madras city, in his article. And he discussed on the routes of the town noted that city was found in the mid-seventeenth century, was the earliest colonial port city established by the British in India.² Like the other port cities of Asia which were the creation of European powers, Madras functioned primarily as a base for overseas trade. As the British shifted from their role as traders to rulers of the Indian Subcontinent, they added a new dimension to the cities they created - a municipal apparatus to monitor urban growth, to regulate the use of land and to insure that certain areas, especially those where they resided would receive adequate urban facilities.

The late nineteenth century was an important period in the history of India's colonial port cities: it was during this time that Madras, Bombay and Calcutta began to take on a visibly urban form. After 1858, when the British Government assumed full administrative control over its colony from the East India Trading Company, municipal institutions in the three capital of presidencies were granted effective powers of taxation and for the first time were able systematically to provide urban facilities such as hospitals, burial and burning grounds, markets, housing and transport. This was a time when the city assumed a larger role as a distribution center for goods and services throughout the South; when innumerable buildings were erected to give the city a new urban image and when plans were made for constructing a harbor and for laying railway lines to link Madras with its hinterland and the other major cities of India. This was not, however, a period of large scale industrial growth and although a few tanneries, railway workshops, cotton mills and other small enterprises were begun in the late nineteenth century, they did not radically alter the economic basis of the city, which was trade.

In fact, the economically dynamic for the growth of Madras was the development of the administrative and service sectors. By 1900, about one-fourth of the city's total population was supported by those employed in government, professional and personal service occupations. Jobs also appeared in construction, road and rail transport and the food processing industries. The growing attraction of Madras as the colonial capital of the South was clearly reflected in changes in the overall size of the city. Anthony Webster, in his article, discussed in detail various aspects of noted that And he discussed on the routes of the town noted, The East India Company Charter Act of 1813, which ended the East India Company's monopoly of trade with India, has been viewed by historians as a significant event in the emergence of British commitment to free trade.³ The

reasoning behind the government decision to end monopoly in 1813 was the wider question of the efficiency of the E.I.C. It sought to examine government motives in implementing a strategy of its own to combat economic difficulties at home. India was seen primarily as a source of raw materials, rather than as a potential market for British exports. New evidence from ministerial correspondence at the Board of Trade and careful examination of parliamentary papers reveals the essential features of this strategy and provided insight into the failure of the E.I.C in London. Government ministers were motivated by a cogent economic strategy of their own. This strategy was designed to combat inflation and secure essential supplies of cheap raw materials, thus helping to maintain social stability.

The administrations of Liverpool after 1815 displayed strong concern about economic affairs, regarding the security of food and raw material supplies as imperative in the national interest. This outlook emerged in the last years of the war and one consequence was that India, for so long regarded as a burden providing only luxuries for the elite, began to be seen as a provider of raw materials in time of crisis. The large volume of evidence presented to the government on the value of India as a supplier of raw materials was far more convincing than the few testimonies which depicted India as a potential market for manufacture.

According to Christopher Baker throughout the colonial period, the government played a substantial role in structuring India's foreign trade and in molding the economy of the great port cities and their immediate hinterlands.⁴ The essay deals with the Madras Presidency had fewer big businessmen than in the other major areas of India and less powerful and coherent as a class. Much of the material was drawn from the Tamil districts, but it was necessary to shuffle uneasily between these localities, the provincial government and the imperial umbrella in Delhi. The focus was fixed mainly on food and cloth, the two main items of internal consumption and the systems of production and trade which they involved. The rail and road developed and they also complained that the zamindars were even worse than government at providing the irrigation, transport and other forms of infrastructure for agricultural growth. In some parts the zamindars actively tried to prevent the spread of commercial agriculture in their estates because it tended to create over-mighty subjects among the tenant.

Similarly, M. Atchi Reddy also noted that, though British colonial policy towards India accorded greater priority to railway construction than to irrigation work, English private capital did experiment with the latter on a limited scale.⁵ A study of the decline of the Madras Irrigation Canal Company - a private irrigation venture, whose collapse signaled the end of privatization of major irrigation projects in British India, was analyzed. Paul Appasamy and Jan Lundqvist's study on Madras water systems had thrown some light on the drainage and sewage.⁶

2. Methodology

The present study adopts the grouping of facts in chronological order by using of heuristics of primary, secondary and tertiary kinds of information. Accordingly, the natures of events are narrated in logical order. Analysis and interpretation with traditional historical method is the mode of research exposition.

Objectives

1. To analyze the growth and development of Railway transportation technology in Madras presidency.
2. To bring out how was the Transfer of transport technology in Madras.

3. Analysis and Interpretation

The Colonial Government had introduced rail transport projects with grand purpose in Madras city. The Colonial Government transport policy was mainly to extract the maximum revenue⁷. Rail roads were the most important means of inland transport and continue to be backbone of the transport system, carrying most of the traffic in heavy goods like coal, food grains, ores, and the passenger traffic over medium distances.⁸ The idea of laying rail roads in India was first conceived in Madras Presidency in the early thirties of the nineteenth century when a scheme was chalked to lay 150 miles of flat paralalled rails along river Cauvery from Kaveripatnam to Karur for the playing of animal driven carts. Another railway line was contemplated between Madras and Bangalore in 1832. But none of schemes fructified.⁹

The first concrete proposals (1845) for constructing rail transport in India debated in Madras, when British Companies the East Indian and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Companies respectively to construct lines from Calcutta to the north east and from Bombay to the East and North.¹⁰ In Madras there were no natural water communications and the only competition was that of pack-cattle and bullock – carts. Railway transport was superior to these methods and the Government itself, urged to establish Railways in India.¹¹

3.1 Early proposals for Rail Lines in Madras

In the year 1600, Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to the London East India company (E.I.C), under the title “The Governor and company of merchants of London Trading into the East Indies.” During the next two hundred years, seven subsequent charters were granted the company became known as “the Honourable East India Company” and a patchwork government based on the presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras was established. The merchants of London transformed themselves into the greatest rulers of the world controlling the destiny of one fifth of the humanity.

The credit for the first proposals of rail line of the Indian Sub-Continent goes to a small railway line near the Chintadripet Bridge in the Madras Presidency in 1836. The Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into the state of affairs of the E.I.C and the trade between Great Britain, the East Indies and China submitted a report (dated 27th January 1832) to Both houses of British parliament containing financial and technical details of constructing rail-roads and canals in Madras Presidency. The Committee suggested the following points to be considered in the construction of canals and laying of railroads.

1. The expense of constructing such works.
2. The returns, which they would make.
3. The difficulties that might be expected considering the present state of the affairs in that country.

The Committee estimated the cost of a single line to be Rs. 8, 750 per mile in India compared to about \$ 5, 000 (Rs. 50, 000/-) a mile in England for a double line. Captain A. P. Cotton, an eminent Civil Engineer of Madras, after an inspection of localities near Madras City, expressed a confident opinion that by laying rails to the Red Hills and to the stone-quarries at the little mount. He recommended for surveying the lines and framing detailed estimates. His proposal was approved and orders were issued accordingly on 30th December 1837.¹²

3.2 Madras Railway Company

The Madras Railway Company (M. R. C.) was formed in London on 8th July 1845 with the general object of constructing railroads in Madras Presidency. The first General Meeting of the shareholders took place in February 1846. J. A. Arbuthnot, Chairman of the Board of Directors, solicited immediate approval of the project. Secretary to the Government of India sought of F. W. Simms, Director of the Railway Department on the proposal of M. R. C. In spite of Mr. Simms recommendation, Government of India did not favor the Madras Railway. Arbuthnot continued his efforts by reminders dated 19th January 1847 and 16th April 1847. His letters highlight the apathy of the court of Directors in taking decisions regarding the M. R. C's project.

Despite E. I. C's indifferent attitude towards the construction of a railroad in the Madras Presidency, the shareholders, promoters and people of Madras continued their interest and were determined to see that the project takes shape. Arbuthnot's letter of 7th May 1848 addressed to the secretary to the Court of Directors, E. I. C was re-produced. The Government of Madras, the mercantile, community and elite of the society took great initiative in building railways in the presidency of Madras. They held a meeting on 29th May 1849 followed by a meeting on 2nd June 1849 and resolved to pursue revival of M. R. C. The court of Directors declined to take up the request of M. R. C for pecuniary support and informed the provisional chairman of the defunct M. R. C accordingly.

Consequent on the rejection, the promoters of the M. R. C again pleaded for support on the grounds of political importance and commercial necessity of railroads in Madras Presidency. In their memorandum dated 20th February 1850, the promoters suggested to undertake the project in public interest. Two years of political lobbying with the Board of Control, E. I. C and Government of Madras resulted in E. I. C approval and guaranteed return of 4% on the capital. J.C. Melville, Secretary, the Court to Directors approved East India Company on 25th May 1852. Shortly thereafter a new company with the same title M. R. C was registered in London on 26th July 1852.¹³ The M. R. C laid the First line in the south in 1853 linking Arcot (the titular capital of the Nawab of Carnatic and today Wallajapet, near Ranipet), to the west, with Royapuram in North Madras. The line was extended East and South to the beach, just south of the harbour; the miles were opened for the trap line. The carriages for that historic journey were built by Simpons.¹⁴

3.3 The Royapuram Railway Station

Historically in latter-day, it was a village which is associated with the Railways and goods storage. The Royapuram station iron pillared and looking for the entire world like a Regency mansion was declared open by Governor Lord Harris on 28th June, 1856. His speech congratulated the M. R. C., manager Major Jenking and all who had worked on the Railway. Lord Harris said at the cost of \$ 5, 500 a mile, it was worth the investment and looked forward to equally expeditious completion of the additional 450 miles of track to the west coast. The Royapuram Railway Station, inaugurated on 1st July, 1856 with pomp and pageantry, was South India's First Railway Station and the country's third.¹⁵

The service was inaugurated with two trains, coaches made by Simpson & Co., the leading coach builders of the day. One train carried the Governor and 300 Europeans to "Amboor", where a magnificent "dinner" had been laid out for them. Another train, with the Indian invitees followed and traversed a shorter distance to Trivelloor.¹⁶ Built in the quasi-classical style, with splendid fluted ionic pillars, it was, to judge by pictures which appeared in British journals of the times, a palatial building, one of the handsomest in the south, and remained the main terminal station of Madras until 1907, when link was made with what is now Madras Central Station (M. C. S). The splendid Royapuram buildings were pulled down only in the nineteen eighties. The original Central Station, a smaller one with only four platforms was opened to the public in 1873 but work in George Harding's design went on improved till 1878. Improvements to the buildings were later made by Chisholm. The present striking building with its dominating clock tower was ready in 1900. It retained this splendor till 1907; when it gave way to the then newly constructed M.C.S which became the city's chief terminus.

When the former Madras Government Railway company's contract having expired on the 31st December 1907 the lines owned by that company were purchased by the secretary of state for India, and on the 1st January 1908 the then existing Madras Railway, together with the metre gauge sections of the south Indian Railway from Katpadi to Gudur was made over working. The enlarged company was styled the Madras

and Southern Maharatha Railway Company (M & S. M. R. C.). Southern Maharatha Railway Company (S. M. R. C.) in 1907 was a state property managed. This state railway virtually was absorbed M. R. C on 1st January 1908 and it had got the upper hand. The reason is clear, at that point of time M. R. C was a guaranteed railway, the guaranteed rate of interest was 5%. The term of the contract was for ninety nine years from 1st April 1857. Government may within six months after the expiry of 25 or 50 years of the term, determine the contract by purchase of the shares of the company. The Government relinquished their right to determine the contract at the end of 25th year and took advantage of the opportunity at the end of 50th year in 1907.¹⁷

In the year 1907, Railway workers did not want the unfair working conditions lying down. Their protest against these injustices, unfair conditions of work, racism poor wages and miserable living conditions took different forms, sometimes individual and sometimes collective action. After the old Madras Railway had merged with the S. M. R, the first recorded strike was the Driver's strike in 1907. Another labor protest took place in 1910 or 1911, when the locomotive staff particularly at Jolarpet junction struck work. These protests were mainly against their working conditions. Again during May-June 1913, the traffic staff of the M & S. M. R struck work for about a fortnight. Lord Pentland, the Governor of Madras supported the Railway Company to suppress the movement. The Madras Government issued orders to collectors authorizing them to warn the village adjacent to the line which were affected by the strike, that they would be held responsible for the replaced by prisoners, sappers and signalers from the army, which compelled the workers to return to work and submit to the compression under the railway officials.

Immediately after the strike by the traffic staff in 1913, the railway authorities issued an order to the work men that they should sign a service agreement. After they said that orders regarding the signing of the agreements were issued in February 1913, with a view to regularize the services of permanent employees.¹⁸ The headquarters offices of the M&

S. M. R were originally situated at Royapuram, the old terminus of the Madras Railway. In the year 1911 a plan was prepared for the construction of new headquarters offices close to Central Station and the work of this building commenced in 1913. From then a right up until 1931 there appear to have little improvement in the Railway service.¹⁹ In 1931 the double line suburban Electric Train Service was opened alongside the original single track steam line between Tambaram and Madras Beach. This is a well patronized line equipped with fast, comfortable and state electric trains of the latest design and construction.²⁰ In 1908, the M & S. M. R. C was formed by the merger of several regional companies including the present

M. R. C founded in 1852, and the S. M. R. C operated from headquarters in Royapuram until it was removed in 1922, to the magnificent buildings in General Hospital Road that is now the headquarters of Southern Railway.²¹

The later half of the 19th century witnessed the introduction of a new system in railways viz. the use of electrical power system which marked the dawn of a new era. The metre gauge track between Madras Beach and Tambaram was laid in 1930 covering a distance of 29 Km and commissioned for suburban traffic. This line passes through St. Thomas Mount, Meenambakkam, and Pallavaram, Chrompet and Tambaram Station. The electric line on the broad gauge line has been laid between Madras Central and Jolarpet the last station being Chengalpattu.²² The fall in the handling “goods” was due to diminution in the transport of grains and pulses. For instance, the earnings obtained by M & S. M. R from the transport of oil seeds were Rs. 12, 1748, 000 in 1928- 29 But in 1931-32 the earnings stood at Rs. 8, 954, 000- a decline of 29.76 percent. During the year 1930-35 the M&S.M. R has mentioned total number of earnings and this details which could be in the following table.

Table - 1
The earning of Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway in
1929-1936

Name of Railway	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34	1934-35	1935-36
Madras and Southern Maharatta Railway	89.7 (100)	79.8 (89)	71.5 (80)	66.6 (74)	68.4 (76)	67.2 (75)	62.5 (73)

Source: K.A. Manikumar, *A Colonial Economy in the Great Depression Madras (1929-1936)*, (Chennai: Orient Longman Limited, 2003).

It will be seen from the above statement that there was a record increase in earnings during the year. In Madras too, the prices of exports was more than the prices of imports. By 1932, the imports and exports of merchandise had become practically balanced.²³ In 1936, the Transport Advisory Council held was in Madras, and discussion to the problem is the competition between the railways and the road vehicles. The railways may be more efficient for the purpose but the Motor Vehicles competed on unfair terms with the railway. Due to the handicaps imposed on the latter, with a measure of success which has naturally caused considerable anxiety among Railway Administration. According to Lord Linlithgow, the road vehicles unfairly to compete with the railway and the system of pricing by the railway; certain goods were exceedingly heavy or occupied considerable space. These happened to be goods of general and fundamental utility, such as coal and iron, providing the very basis of the industrial system of the country.²⁴

In 1906, the M. R. C contract was given to other company. It requested the Government of India not to entrust the administration of the Madras Railway to other

railway companies, until the Local Government, the M. R. C and the leading citizens of Madras were all consulted. As other Railway Administrations were allowed to manage railways in this presidency, different rates have been fixed as regards transit charges for goods and there has been consequently a falling off in the trade of the ports in Madraspresidency.²⁵

Table - 2
Comparison of expenditure of Madras and Southern Mahratta
Railway for May in 1946-1947

Name of Traffics	1946	1947
Coaching Traffic	86,75,000	88,54,000
Goods Traffic	73,34,000	67,07,000
Miscellaneous	2,29,000	2,12,000
Total	1,62,38,000	1,57,73,000

Source: Madras Information 1947, Vol. I, July, 1947.

It will be seen from the above statement that there was a record increase in all traffic during the year. In the same year the passenger and goods traffic was also increased. During 1946-47, the numbers of passengers increased in compare the goods traffic. In 1946, the number of passengers (6, 321, and 000) was more compare to the number of passengers (6, 047, and 000) in 1947.²⁶ On 15th May 1947, the three additional passenger trains were introduced each way on the broad gauge between Madras and Jolarpet, Renigunta and Gooty and Walajah Road and Ranipet. The Railway was now running on both the broad gauge and metre gauge 95 per cent of its pre-war passenger service.

Table -3
Comparison of expenditure of Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway for
April in 1946-1947.

Name of Traffics	1946 (in Rs.)	1947 (in Rs.)
Coaching Traffic	77,32,000	83,36,000
Goods Miscellaneous	67,77,000	65,29,000
Total	1,47,67,000	1,51,09,000

Source: Madras Information 1947, Vol. I, July, 1947.

From the table it could be understood there is increase in the coach traffic. During 1946-47 the numbers of coach traffic compare the goods miscellaneous. In 1946, it is visible that the number of coach traffic increase, when compare to 1947 rather than goods miscellaneous.²⁷

3.4 Tramway

The tram car had been introduced in Madras around 80 years ago during the period when people thought bullock carts and horse-driven carts as the best means of transport. It

was in 1844 that the trams introduced in Madras. The first trams introduced were horse-driven since people found it convenient, the tram facility was decided to be taken to a higher level.²⁸ In Great Britain, horse-trams were first used for carrying passengers in the 1860s, while this tram service was used in the streets. Separate rail-roads also came into use. While the railways were still developing, Steam Locomotives were introduced in the Tramways by about 1882 and remained in the use in some sections in Britain till 1905. In Parrys, stream haulage of trams on the streets continued until 1913. In the United States, van Dapoel and Sprague developed the electric trolley car during 1884 and 1887, Americas's first electric "street railway" was opened on 10th August, 1885 in Baltimore.

A tramcar consists of a body and a chassis or track. There are two motors, one at each end and each of which drives one pair of wheels through reduction gear. Tramcars were usually arranged to run either way or controlled by a link apparatus that was provided on both platforms.²⁹ In Madras, sanction to construct the first tram line was issued by the Government in their order dated 6th April, 1892 to Messrs. Hutchinson Co.Ltd, London. Hutchinson's promoted the first Tramway Company in Madras with a nominal capital of £100,000. It was not until 1895 that the first Tramway section was completed and opened for the use of the public. A. J. Yorke, a Director of Parry & Co., brought his car out from England and used it to drive daily from Ben's Gardens, Adyar to Parry's Corner.³⁰ It was 7th May 1895; the first tram ran on the roads of Madras and was the first in India too.

It is important to be noted that even in big developed cities like London also did not have electric trams, when we had used it. But people were afraid of using electric trams initially. Hence, free services were given till people left their fear and services trams without any difficulty. Once people regularly started using trams announcements at the starts were made in three language English, Telugu and Tamil to attract people. The free tram service came to an end from 7th May 1895. The initial fare was Rs. 6 for one mile of travel. The driver and conductor wore uniforms and ticket-checker was appointed for the random check of tickets of people travelling.³¹

In 1900, the original company was obliged to sell the undertaking as their capital proved inadequate. The tram car system was purchased by the Electric Construction Co. Ltd, in England, and operated the in Madras for a period of four years, under the name the Madras Electric Tramways (M. E. T.). We are looking at a period well after 1903 when Tram Car No: MC 1, the car Sir Francis Spring brought out with him made its first appearance on Madras roads, in 1904, Addison's imported the first cars for sale.³² In the same year the M. E. T was operating a fleet of 50 Motor buses from then on the financially sound companies started operating buses which were very much over crowded especially during the peak hours in the morning and evening made it difficult to reduce the number of accidents.³³

In the year 1905, with two letters read to the president of the Corporation of Madras submitted a report of a special Committee appointed to consider supply of electricity to

the city of Madras. The Committee recommended the acceptance of the tender of with the certain modification's including of the maximum periods optional purchase provided sec 7 (1) of the Indian Electricity Act III 1903, which they proposed to reduce from 42 years and 10 years respectively to 21 years and 7 years. Messrs Crompton now submitted a revised form of license for proposed modifications as he included in the license and accepted that the periods of optional purchase are entered at the maximum provided in that Act.³⁴ In 1905, 1911 and 1919, extensions were made to the tramway system in Madras with the sanction of the Local Government and the company has now about 11 miles of double track and about 5 ½ miles of single track over which its tram cars operate. Broadway the narrow street was one such bottleneck another was in Chintadripet, while other such spots existed in Triplicane, Mylapore and Purasawalkam.³⁵

In the year 1907, during the monsoon were the tram cars leaked at the windows and caused inconvenience to passengers.³⁶ In 1925, the Madras Tram Company ran twelve motor buses increased. The Madras public and the corporation thought over the consequences extension. It is obvious that the Tramway Company is an English company, when it need additional capital, it obtained the same only from England and not from India. What would become of the Indian capitalists who were plying buses now, if the Tramway Company was going to play its own buses and if even in this petty matter English was allowed to compete with Indian capital, it is needless to remark that the profits would go to others.³⁷ In 1925-27, the Tramway Company operated a fleet of fifty motor buses and was the first to open up the sub-urban bus routes around the city on which buses then regularly ran. This service was abandoned in 1928 as owing to the low fares charged at this period the scheme was not a financial success.

Table- 4
The details of tram cars, distances and passengers
between 1925-1935

Year	Run of cars	Distances	Passengers
1925-26	88	2,096,942	15,510,007
1926-27	89	2,009,447	10,084,266
1927-28	78	2,466,720	19,568,936
1929-30	82	2,489,557	19,458,930
1931-32	84	2,671,203	22,536,976
1932-33	85	2,866,310	28,394,646
1934-35	88	2,944,716	28,723,012

Source: Report on Administration in Madras Presidency, 1925-1935.

From the table it could be understood there is steep increase in the number of tram cars. During the year 1925- 1935, the M.E.T had provided information on total number of tram car, operated distance and passengers. It is found that during 1925-26 about 88 cars were introduced in the consequent year (1926-27). They added one were car to serve the passengers that is about 89 cars carried the people. In 1927-28, the no of cars were reduced to 78 and in 1929 about 4 cars were added to the existing cars. During 1931-34, only it 84, and cars added. The slow paced growth was might perhaps be attributed to the lack of financial assistance provided by the government of Madras to M. E. T. The distance covered by the cars during 1925-26 was about 2,096,942 serving about 15,510, 007 passengers. In the following year (1926-27), there was slight decrease in the distance covered as well as the passenger served through the no of cars used was 89. In the next financial year, the no of cars used was 89, the distance covered and passengers benefit was slight increase then 1929-30

During 1931-32 and 1932-33 there was an exponential increase in both the distance covered and passengers using the cars.³⁸

In 1944, the communist controlled Electric Tramway Supply of the Madras city and corporation workers union had been agitating for the redressed of certain “grievances.” The Government had however after enquiry declined to interfere in the matter as the workers did not appear to have any real grievance. On the other hand, in the city, M. E. T workers union used voting to decide the question of the communist control of the organization, congress sympathizers refused to participate in the voting with the result that less than 50 percent of the members of the union voted and the communists secured a vote of confidence by 875 votes to 14.³⁹

The next year railway workers continued the General Council of the all India Railway-Men’s Federation met in Madras on the 1st and 2nd of October under the presidency of Mr. V. V. Giri and S. Guruswami. They finally adopted a unanimous resolution suggesting ways and means of avoiding the proposed retrenchment of the Railway Staff and threatening that the federation would be forced to resort to direct action in case their demands were not conceded. The dispute between the management and employees of the Madras Tramways was now been practically settled.⁴⁰

In the year 1950, the Madras Tramway service routes were:

1. Between Mylapore and Parry’s Corner and Royapuram.
2. Between Triplicane and Washermanpet via China Bazar.
3. Between Purasaiwalkam and Parry’s corner via elephant Gate junction.
4. Between purasawalkam and central station via Elephant Gate and through wall taxroad.
5. Between Egmore and Parry’s Corner and Royapuram.
6. Between Parry’s Corner and Mount Road via Chintadripet.

The Mylapore tramline turned into Cutchery road and terminus was located before the church, the tramline going around it for the return journey. Parry's Corner and Customs were busy terminals. Tram cars ran rounding up near the Light Court Wall in Parry's Corner. In Washermanpet, the terminus was a little beyond the railway level crossing. In Triplicane the tramline went into Barber's Bridge. The Purasawalkm terminus was opposite Tana Street on the High road. At central the terminus was outside the eastern gate on wall tax road. The tramline to Egmore went along Poonamallee high road and turning towards Egmore station at Randall's road junction, came to a stop east of the station near the northern booking office of the suburban electric railway. The Chintadripet line went along Poonamallee road up till Ripon Building and turned into Chintadripet at the railway level crossing Chintadripet the line terminated opposite gairtytalkies.⁴¹

The Madras Electric Tramway limited discontinued the working of the tramways in the city of Madras on and from the 12th April 1953. The circumstances in which the company discontinued the service and the circumstances in which government were constrained to terminate the powers of the company under section 19 of the Indian Tramways Act (I. T. A) 1886, are fully described on the government press note 158, dated 8th October 1953, issued on the subject. The Tramway Company without any reference to the government chose to discontinue the service on the ground that the company was working at a loss of nearly Rs 40, 000 a month for the past two years. So as the last resort and order to help the workers to receive their provident fund Government had to cancel the license of the Tramway Company.⁴²

4. Conclusion

The tram car had been introduced in Chennai around 80 years ago during the period when people thought bullock carts and horse-driven carts as the best means of transport. It was in 1844 that the trams introduced in Chennai. The first trams introduced were horse-driven. Then people found it was more convenient, and then they decided to take tram facility to a higher level. Madras was sanctioned to construct the first tram line by the Government in their order dated April 6, 1892 to Messers, Hutchinson Co.Ltd and London. Hutchinson's has got approved as the first Tramway Company in Madras with a nominal capital of £100,000. A.J.Yorke, a Director of Parry & Co, brought his car out from England and used it to drive daily from „Ben's" Gardens, Adyar to Parry's Corner. It was May 7 1895; and that is the first tram run over the roads of the Madras and also the first tram in India too. It is important to be noted that even in big developed cities like London also didn't have these electric trams, when we had used it. But people were afraid of using electric trams initially. Hence, free services were given till the people left their fear. Once people regularly started using trams, they announced in 3 language- English, Telugu and Tamil that use of trams would be charged from May 7th. The initial cost was Rs. 6 for one rule of travel. The driver and conductor wore uniforms and ticket- checker

was appointed for the random check of tickets of people travelling. During 1925-1936 the number of tram cars, distance and passengers were increased. In 1931-32, and 1934, 84, 85 and 88 number of cars ran all around Madras city. These steeply decreased in the number of cars used during a certain period might perhaps be attributed to the lack of financial assistance provided by the government of Madras to Madras Electric Tramway. In the year of 12th April 1953, the Madras Electric Tramway discontinued their work on the tramways in the city of Madras on due to Indian Tramway Act, 1886.

Another important mode of transport in Madras was water transport on rivers and canals. They were cheaper than road and rail transport. Water transport serves only a limited area but it has international trade. It has to be used quite substantially. During 1600s, Madras had inland waterways in terms of Buckingham canal, Coovum River, Adyar River and Koratalaiyar is also used perhaps of fishing. It is also used for local transport.

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