

KNOW MADURAI

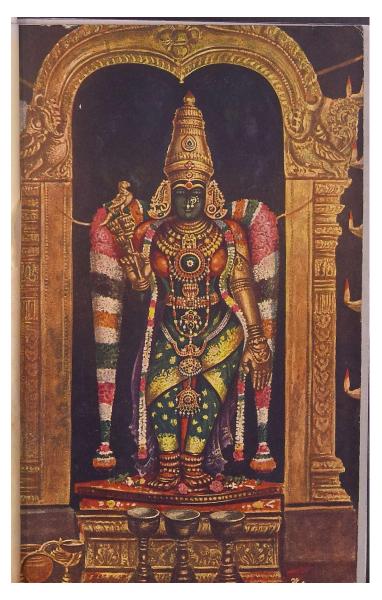


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1956

SRI MADURAI MEENAKSHI







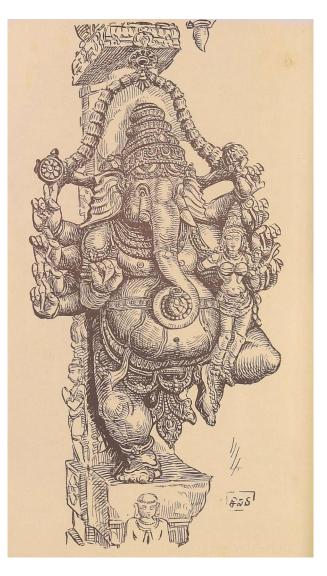


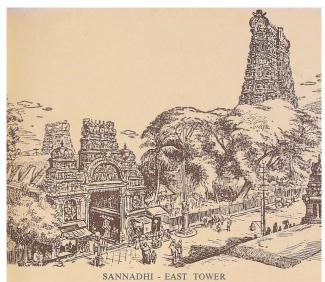
KNOW MADURAI

Madurai is the most famous and the most ancient home of Tamil culture. The first Tamil Academy was founded here by saintly scholars and pious kings and it is believed that the great god Siva participated in the labours of the Academy which set the standards of poetic excellence and literary criticism. Here Siva came to wed



the Pandyan princess Minakshi, the presiding deity of the great temple. The city and the river on which it stands are celebrated in song and story as the scene of the sport of Siva and the legends are as many and as gay as those that tell of Krishna in the other Mathura on the banks of the Yamuna. Madurai has been a great city from its very beginning more than 2500 years ago and has sheltered generations of artisans and craftsmen, merchants and traders, poets and scholars, saints and statesmen, all held together in the pursuit of worthy ends, honest wealth, true learning and personal and social peace. As the heart of Tamilnad Madurai has survived the vicissitudes of political fortune with charming serenity and undiminished vigour. It is a holy place for Hindus from all over India. It has always had and still has the greatest attraction for the foreign traveller who wants to know India. To the Tamil it is more than a holy place and a treasure-house of art and beauty; it is the spring which nourishes his being and sustains his spirit as any Tamil, man or child, has always known and said.





Courtesy: Ananda Vikatan

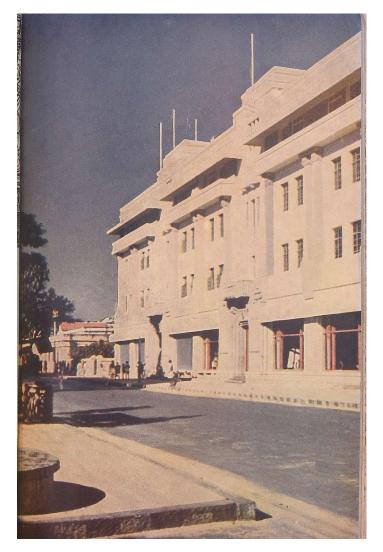
Like all old Tamil cities it is placed on a river and is surrounded by green fields and great trees. As you near the city by road, rail or air, the nine tall temple towers seem to stand out in silent welcome and benediction. Madurai means 'sweet place' and you will find the city charming and gracious. Sweet is the bliss that the gods in the temple bestow on the worshipper.



KILIKATTI MANDAPAM Courtesy: Ananda Vikatan

The city and its treasures of art and architecture afford at every turn a fresh delight to the visitor who can observe grandeurs of conception matched by triumphs of execution.

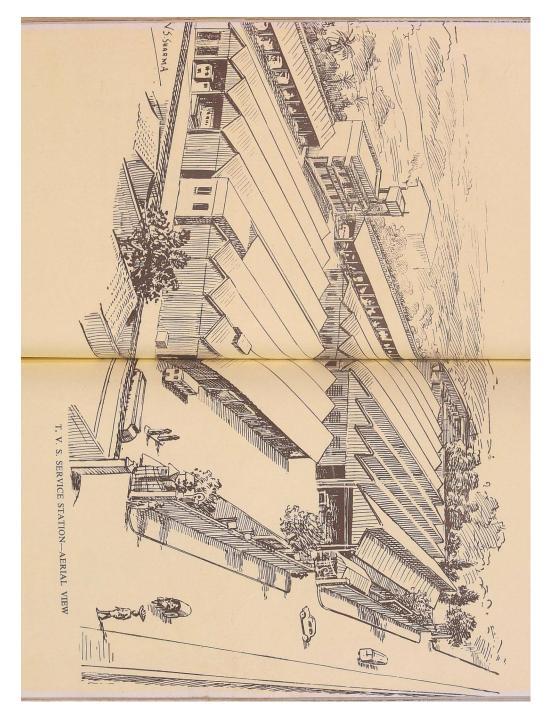
From the air Madurai appears to be shielded by two striking rock formations, the YANAI MALAI (elephant hill) and the NAGA

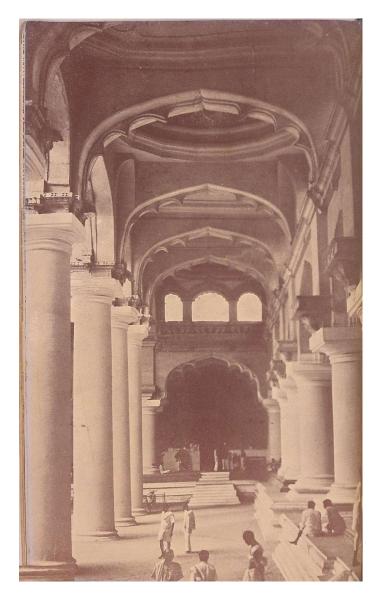




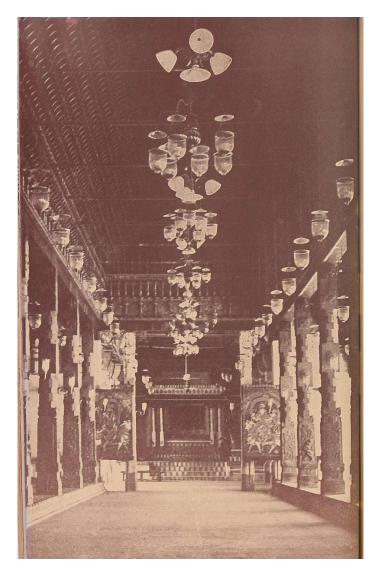
MALAI (snake hill). The Yanai Malai is a mass of perfectly naked solid rock about two miles long, a quarter of a mile wide and about 250 feet high; and it runs from northeast to south-west nearly parallel to the Melur road. It is made of grey and pale pink-banded micaceous granite gneiss; the sides are almost sheer and the top rounded and at its south-western end it terminates in a bold bluff. Looked at from Madurai it does resemble an elephant lying down. No wonder the Yanai Malai has always been a great landmark.

The traditional story of the founding of Madurai says that the King of the gods, Indra, doing penance in the jungle, found a lingam and ordered the artificer of the gods to build a temple for it. And when Indra wanted to offer worship, the temple tank was miraculously filled with golden lilies. Thus the temple and the Potramarai tank within the temple precincts are accounted for. And round the temple grew the town. The earliest historical account found in Tamil attributes the foundation of the

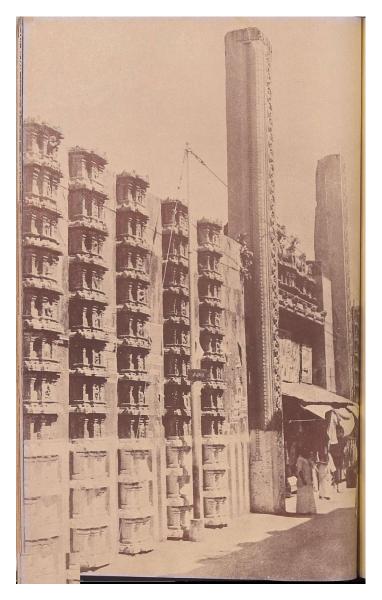




temple and town to a Pandya king named Kulasekara. When he wished to name the town Siva appeared and drops of sweet nectar from his locks fell on the town. which thereafter came to be known as "the sweet city". Historians believe Kulasekara must have flourished in about the sixth century before Christ. The temple and the towers that now stand in Madurai were however rebuilt about five hundred years ago and the Hall of a Thousand Pillars is only four hundred years old. But the southern districts of Tamilnad had been ruled from the beginning by the Pandya dynasty, one of the three ancient lines of kings of South India. In the third century B. C., Megasthanes knew a Pandya and Pliny in the first century A. D. mentions the Pandyan people, the Pandyan king and "the emporium of MODOURA". In the early centuries of the Christian era there were commercial and diplomatic relations between the Pandyan Kingdom and the Roman Empire. Ptolemy (140 A. D.) mentions "MODOURA, the kingdom of the PAN-DION".



This was perhaps the greatest period of the ancient history of Madurai and its secular prosperity is finely portrayed in the old Tamil classics, Manimekhalai and Silappadikaram. The last of the ancient Pandyan kings was Nan-Maran. From the second century to the end of the sixth century the glory of Madurai was eclipsed and her annals became shadowy. But the city revived after the seventh century and there was another golden age in the thirteenth century when the fame of the city was chronicled by Persian and Chinese travellers and by that great Italian globe-trotter Marco Polo. Pandvan splendour was once more extinguished by the invasion of Malik Kafur early in the fourteenth century and the blight that descended on the land lasted for half a century. There were Pandyan rulers once again and the last of them built, between 1450 and 1550, the temple and the towers that we see to-day. The Nayaka dynasty founded by Viswanatha in 1559 ruled Madurai for almost two hundred years, and the city flourished greatly under the fostering care of a succession of able

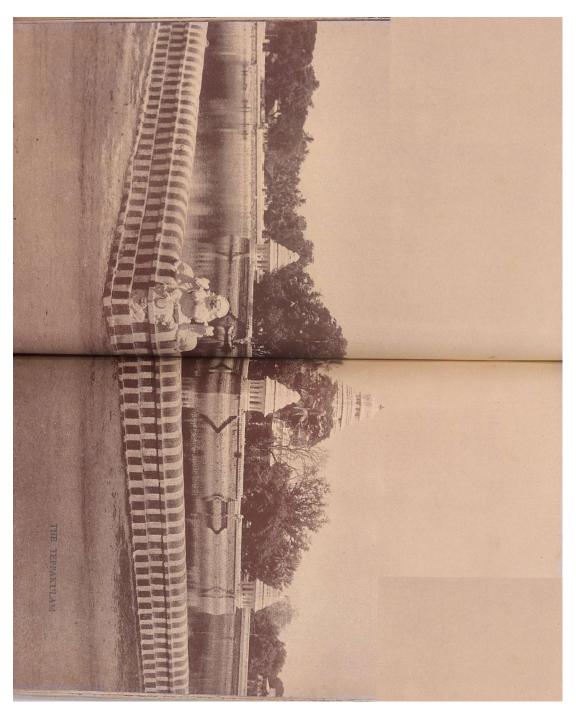


The Nayaks were great builders and they erected fortifications, built dams and aqueducts. The best known and most powerful among the Nayaks was Tirumala Nayakkan (1623-59) whose great energy and fine taste are reflected in the show places of modern Madurai, the Teppakulam, the Pudu-Mantapam, the Raya Gopuram and Tamkam. Tirumala's own palace covered a very wide area and European writers of the time compared it to the ancient monuments of Thebes. It was pulled down by his grandson Chockanatha (1662-82); but there survives to-day an open court-yard (252'x 151') round which runs a roofed arcade of great beauty, supported by tall stone pillars (40' high) connected by foliated brick arches of much elegance. The fourth side of the court is 105' wide and is roofed with great domes 16 feet wide and 72 feet high. preservation and maintenance of this monument is due to Lord Napier, who was Governor of Madras in 1868.

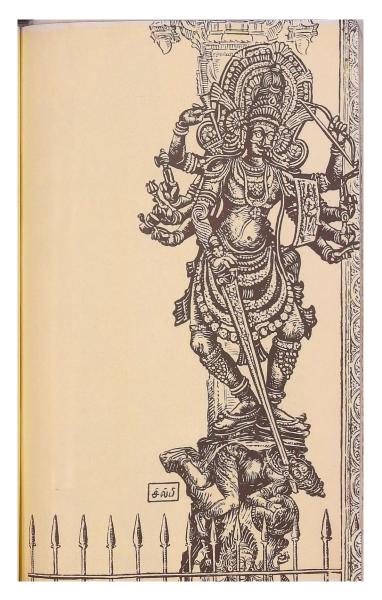
The rule of Nayaks ended in 1736 when Muslims and Marathas were rivals for the



power which the English had already begun to acquire in South India. The English East India Company's soldiers failed to capture the fortress of Madurai by assault, but Captain Calluid bought it for Rs. 1,70,000/. Madurai and Tinnevelly were farmed out by the Company for an annual rent of five lakhs of rupees to one Muhammad Yusuf, whose tomb is the famous Khan Sahib Pallivasal on the Dindigal Road. The system of farming out the revenues of the territory to local rent-collectors was stopped in 1790 and the first English collector was Alexander McLeod. The title of the East India Company to Madurai was confirmed in 1801 at the end of the third Mysore War when the Nawab of Arcot handed over in perpetuity all his territories to the Company. From the beginning of the nineteenth century began direct British rule in Madurai District and the new rulers lost no time in establishing improved communications, the most vital need of a centralised administration governing the most extensive area ever to be brought under a single government in India. John

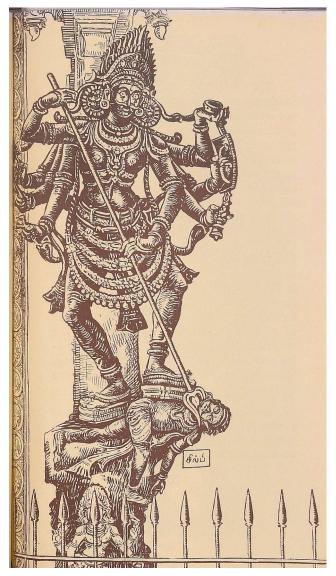


Blackburne who was Collector from 1834 to 1842 laid and improved 500 miles of road and built bridges at a cost of over two lakhs of rupees. The Madras Government passed a Local Funds Act in 1871 and authorised the levy of a cess to maintain the roads. The Railway came to Madurai in 1875 and was extended to Pamban in 1902. The causeway over the Vaigai was built in 1885 and the bridge was completed in 1889 at a cost of Rs. 2,75,687/-. A Zilla Court was set up in Ramnad in 1805 and District Munsiffs were appointed in 1816. A regular Police force was constituted in 1859 and a jail was constructed in 1869. The Collectors took much interest in the development of civic amenities; the first water-supply scheme was the widening of the Pallavarayan Channel from the Vaigai, and this was done in 1851, 1859 and 1864. In 1884 wells were sunk in the bed of the Vaigai and a scheme to tap the underflow of the Vaigai was planned in 1892 and finished in 1894 and this was the first regular water supply scheme undertaken in the Madras State. By the end of the nineteenth century



orderly administration had been firmly established and the land revenue system was modified to establish direct relation between the small proprietor (ryot) and the Government represented by the Collector and a heirarchy of revenue officials ending with the KARNAM (accountant) of the village.

Madurai was made a Municipality in 1866 and in 1884 there were seven elected councillors out of a total of sixteen, the other nine being nominated. In 1885 the strength of the council was increased to 24 of which 18 were elected councillors. It took a long time for the councillors to learn to work as a team and in the first half century of municipal self-government there were frequent failures of the mechanism. But from about 1910 the institution stuck roots and to-day the municipality has a fine record of civic achievement. The wellpaved roads, the abundant supply of filtered water and the excellent drainage system testify to the zeal and competence of the Council and its executive officials

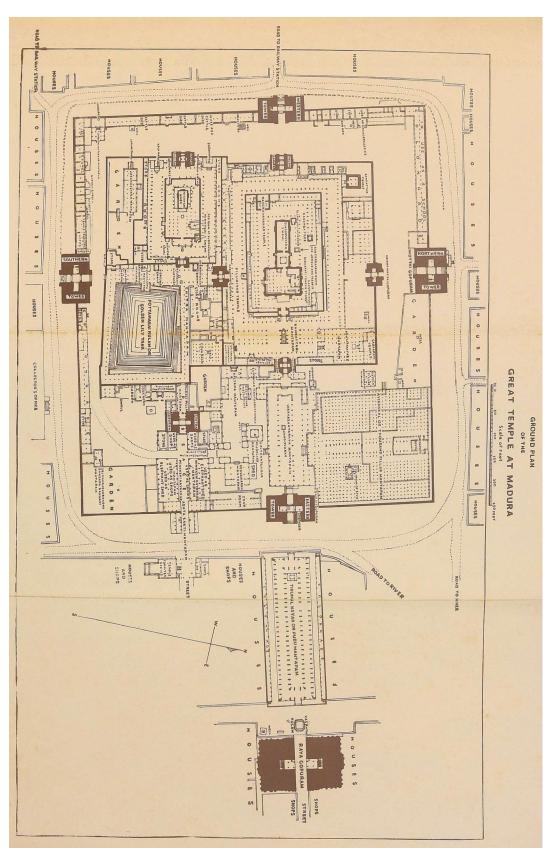


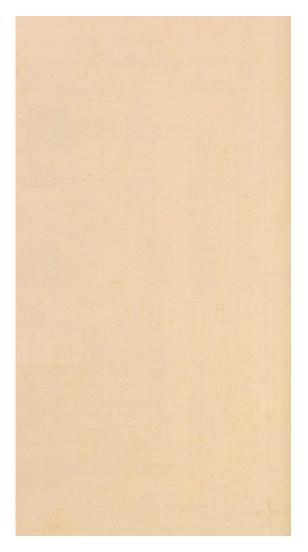
The briefest account of modern Madurai will still be incomplete if it did not mention the labours of foreign religious missionaries who were fascinated by the city and chose it as the centre of their activities. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the Italian Jesuit, De Nobile, settled in Madurai, learnt Tamil and adopted the costume and the manner of life of native ascetics. Later came the Madura Mission, the headquarters of Roman Catholic missionary work in South India. The Protestant American Mission founded in 1832 began a College at Tirumangalam in 1842, moved it to Pasumalai in 1845, and then to Madurai. The development of the Kodaikanal Hills, now increasingly popular as a summer resort, was begun by the American Mission in 1838. Besides providing liberally for the education of the young, these missions exerted a beneficial influence on the progress of the city.

Madurai has increased in wealth and population during the last fifty years. The staple industry long established here is cotton and silk weaving which to-day is the



predominant industry and sustains more than half the population. Spinning mills in the vicinity support a handloom industry which in size and quality is unrivalled in India. Other ancient crafts such as those of the sculptor, the ornamental potter, the gold and silversmith are still practised with the old skill and careful attention to quality. The enlargement of the town, the growth of new centres of learning and industry in the suburbs and the incessant increase in the resident and transitory population have created problems of housing and transport which have been met here more successfully than in cities of comparable size in India. The Municipality which cares for the city and the District Board which looks after 4912 square miles of surrounding territory have put up 1890 miles of paved roads on which 678 buses and 1650 cars ply day and night carrying people from home to work, from work to play, carrying sight-seers, curious travellers, pilgrims, and picnic parties. Literally the centre of the city is the temple of the Fish-eyed Goddess, for





the city has been built and the life of the community revolves round it. It is also the spot which draws the visitor and the pilgrim.

The temple buildings occupy an area of 830 feet by 730 feet. The central shrines are those of Meenakshi and of her spouse Sundareswara. On the massive outer walls stand the four gopurams or towers, the tallest of which is the South Gopuram which is 150 feet high. The visitor enters by the Ashta Sakthi Mantapam which is the eastern gate. Then passing through the Mudali Mantapam, one sees flanking monoliths carved with great spirit. From there can be seen the Potramarai tank which is surrounded by a pillared colonnade from where there is a fine view of the golden roofs of the two great inner shrines. The walls of the colonnade carry paintings which depict scenes from the sports of Siva. After ablutions in the tank the worshipper proceeds to a pavilion, the Yali Mantapam (named after gargoyle-like carved stone-pillars which support the roof). This is also called Kilikatti



GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL

Mantapam or Parrot Pavilion, because of votive offerings of parrots in cages which are hung from the ceiling. This pavilion leads to the Meenakshi shrine where the image of the presiding deity has inspired some of the most beautiful and moving poetry in Tamil. After worship at the shrine, we pass through a gate surmounted by the Nadukkattu or middle Gopuram. A mammoth image of Ganesa greets us on the way to the shrine of Sundareswara. Then there are the pavilions



DISTRICT BOARD OFFICE

where on festive occasions decorated images are installed and great congregations gather to worship, and to listen to sacred music or religious discourses. Round the flag-staff is the Kambattadi Mandapam which displays the "greatest triumph" of sculptural skill. The elaborate carvings here provide a feast for the eye and evoke wonder and admiration.

East of this pavilion is the Viravasantaraya Mantapam built early in the seven-

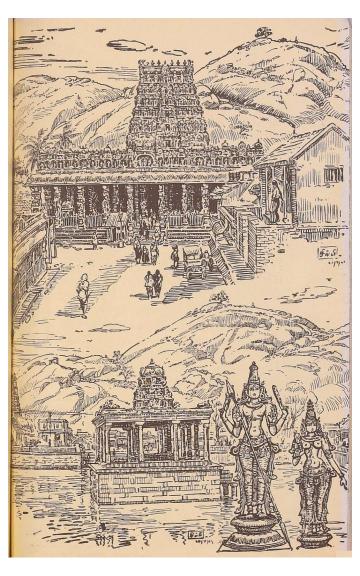
teenth century by Muthuvirappa. To the south is the Kalyana Mantapam renovated in recent times by the Nagarathars. The Thousand-pillared Mantapam lies to the north and Fergusson, the historian of Indian architecture, calls it "the wonder of the place", and says of the sculptures there that they "surpass those of any other hall I have seen". This hall dates from the middle of the sixteenth century. Thirumala Nayakkan's outstanding work in the temple is the Pudu (or new) Mantapam. This rectangular porch is 333 feet by 105 feet and has a roof of granite supported by four parallel rows of 124 sculptured stone pillars each 20' high and no one pillar duplicating the design of another. Coming out of the temple through the east gate we see it surmounted by the Raya Gopuram-a magnificient structure that was not comple-The lowest storey of this tower occupies more than twice the space covered by any other gopuram and the sculptured figures are deeper cut and richer in design. The door-posts are monoliths - 50 ft. high and 3 feet square—carved with exqui-



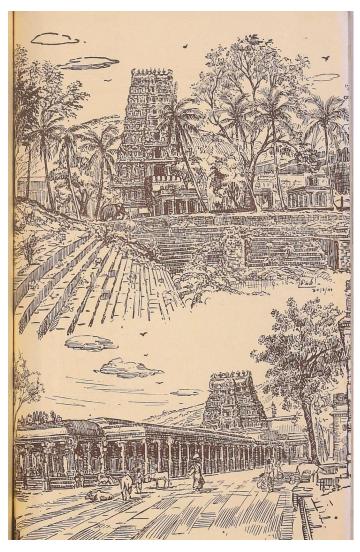
site scrolls of foliage. It is obvious that had all the storeys been built on the same scale and design there would then have been the most magnificient temple-tower of India.

After the Minakshi temple, the next biggest, and in its own right a very interesting, temple is the Perumal Temple in West Veli Street. Its outer walls bear several marks made by rounded shot. Though the central shrine designed on regal lines remains unfinished, the pierced granite windows, all of different delicate designs, which light the passage round the shrine are marvels of the stone-mason's art and provide for light and air in a most ingenious way.

At the south-east end of the city is the Teppakulam, an almost perfect square (1000 ft. north-south by 950 ft. east-west), and Thirumala Nayaka built the granite steps leading down and a small elegant shrine in the middle of the tank.

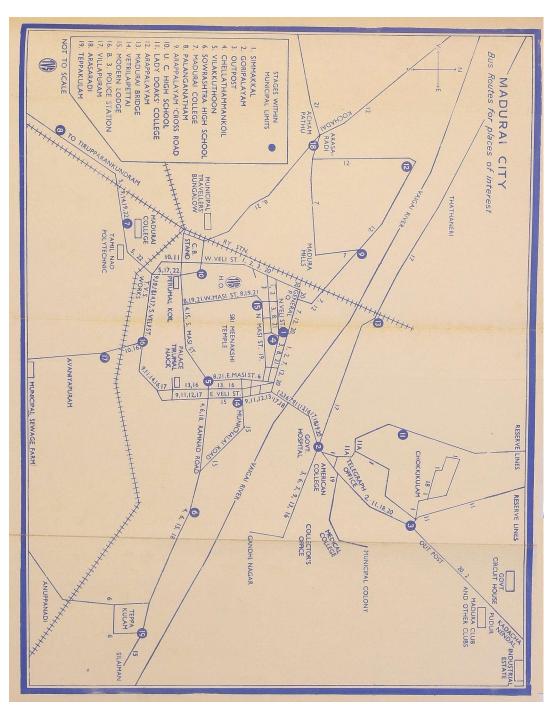


The visitor having gone round the city and seen its sights would naturally wish to know of places in the neighbourhood which are worth looking over. The place of interest, nearest Madurai, is Tiruparankundrum, a hillock four miles south-west of the city. On the hill is a rock-cut temple dedicated to Subrahmanya, the favourite god of the Tamils, whose shrines are always perched high on the hills of Tamilnad. The rock-cut temple is believed to be the precursor of the stone-built temple of South India. Out of live rock whole structures are hollowed out complete with pillars, ambulatories, platforms and inner shrines with decorative relief and carvings on all surfaces. Twelve miles north-west of Madurai is Alagar-koil or Tirumalirunjolai a village famous for its Vishnu temple consecrated to Alagar. It is a large temple covering nearly 300 acres and laid out as a fortress capable of withstanding powerful assault or prolonged siege. To the north-west, 43 miles from Madurai, lie the Kodaikkanal Hills and a ghat-road of 32 miles leads to Kodaikkanal



Town 7209 feet above the sea. The charms of this Hill station are enhanced by its famous lake.

The growing importance of Madurai as an industrial and educational centre accounts for a good many of the six thousand visitors that come to Madurai everyday. They observe and appreciate much during their sojourn and it is a pleasant surprise to them that they can go about the city, get into the city or out of it, on tours of business or pleasure with the least expense of time and money. ubiquitous omnibus turns up at every stop on time and there is no place which is not served by it. Clean, quiet, with plenty of room for the passenger, served by courteous conductors and driven by chauffeurs who know every inch of the road, the visitor to Madurai enjoys his busride, and adds it to the impressions he takes home of an ancient and lovely city.







MADURAI CITY

STATISTICS

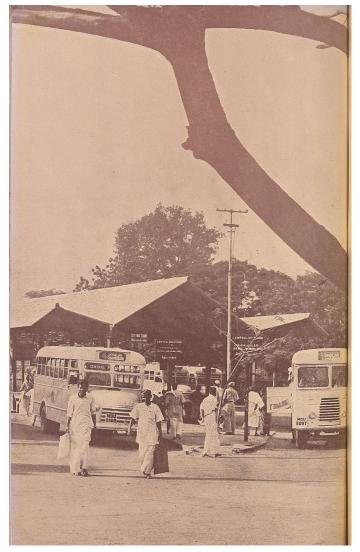
Mean Temperature	-	68.69
Maximum in May	-	100°
Annual Rainfall*	_	34"

*(50 per cent in October-December—North-East Monsoon).

Arca:	8.56 Sq. Miles		
Population:	1871 Census	_	51,987
	1881 ,,	_	73,807
	1891 ,,	_	87,248
	1931 ,,	-	186,000
	1941 ,,	_	267,000
	1951		400,000

The City's Roads: The total mileage of roads within the Municipal City is 112 miles. This length of Road is maintained and taken care of by the Municipality. The estimated cost of maintenance of these roads by the Municipality is Rs. 4,00,000 annually.

The Tamkam Park: Now this building is taken over by government to be preserved as a National Monument.



EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE CITY

- Colleges: There are five Colleges two of which are exclusively for girls.
- High Schools: The City has 16 (sixteen) High Schools of which four are exclusively for girls.
- Elementary & Primary Schools: Of this category there are over 100 schools run by the Municipality and private management with departmental aid. It could easily be said that there is a school in every street.
- Training Schools: There are three training schools for Secondary Grade Teachers. Of these two are exclusively for women.
- Technical Schools: There is a full fledged Technical Institute run by the Government covering Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Automobile Engineering. Carpentry and Smithy are also taught. This Institution is well equipped and may grow up as a College of Engineering.
- Multi-Purpose Technical Institute: The Government in their scheme for the expansion and development of Industry are shortly to establish a multi-purpose Technical Institute to train the required industrial personnel.

Medical College: The City has a Medical College, with a very progressive and well-equipped General Hospital.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR MODERN MADURAI

- A. D. 1606 Italian Jesuit, DeNobili, settled in Madurai.
 - 1757 Captain Calluid attacked Madurai and failed as the barking of a dog alerted the attacked (Please see "Madurai 1757" map for fortifications).
 - 1790 Madras Government took possession of the country by proclamation.
 - 1802 Ramnad Zilla Court (abolishing Collector's Judicial powers).
 - 1816 District Munsiffs appointed.
 - 1842 Hospital built by Public subscription on the initiative of Vere Levinge, Collector Rs. 67,000.

 POLICE FORCE constituted under Act XXIV of 1859.
 - 1871-72 Municipal Office built.
 - 1873 District and Sessions Court.
 - 1876-78 Great Famine.

1879-84 Land surveyed. Assessment per acre Rs. 2/-(to Rs. 8/8/0)wet.

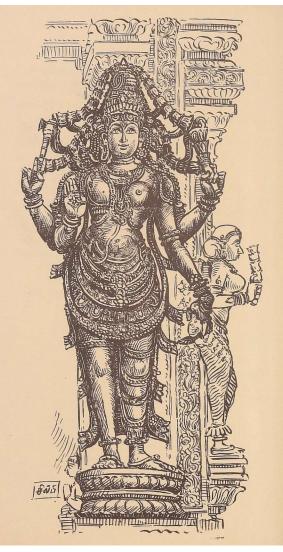
, Re. 0/4/0 (to Rs. 3/-) dry.

DRY WET
Acreage 2,53,794 10,050
Revenue Rs. 2,17,519 Rs. 31,770

("grant" value of Land in Kodaikanal and Nilgiris in those days: Rs. 5/4/0 per first kani(1.32 acres) and Rs. 2/8/0 for every additional kani).

1860-1885 Vere Levinge designed, planned and executed the Kodai Lake.

1899 - Kodai Solar Observatory set up.



Madurai Meenakshi Temple Accounts of 1906

	Rs.	29,637	4,535		21,547	5,381	3,805	64,905
Expenditure		Daily expenses (lighting, food for the deities, etc.)	Festivals	Establishment (priests, cooks, sweepers, etc., and revenue	officials for the care of the temple's land).	Repairs	Legal expenses	
Receipts	Rs.	15,773	45,904	16,862	3,385	208	7,245	89,677
		Tasdik allowance	Inam villages and land	Rent of shops and stalls in the temples	Rent of cocoanut topes etc.	Rent of land in and about Madurai and elsewhere	Offerings in the "Undial" boxes	

FIRST-s of MADURAI

- 6-9-1790 Collector Mr. Alexander McLeod. Rent Payer was Muttu Irulappa Pillai (till June 1791).
- 20-10-1805 Judge D. Cockburne.
- 1834-1842 To spend on roads JOHN BLACK-BURNE, Collector - Rs. 1,23,000 for 500 miles of road (This gentleman razed to the ground the 72 Bastions of Tirumala Nayak).
- 1838 American Mission Head Mrs. and Mr. TODD & Mr. HOISINGTON.
- 1838 House in Kodai (of the American Mission).
- March 1856 Government Zilla School (now Madurai College).
 - 1885 Head of Mission Hospital Miss ROTT, M.D.
 - 1-5-1894 Regular Water Supply in Madras State - by Mr. J. A. JONES. Sanitary Engineer, at a cost of Rs. 1,96,000.



RAILWAY STATION

RAILWAY DETAILS AS ON JANUARY 1956

The following are the timings of important trains going through Madurai to Madras and from Madras:—

To MADRAS side:		
10 MADITAS side.	Arr.	Dep.
Tuticorin Express	16.23 Hours	16.41 Hours
Trivandrum Express	18.33 ,,	18.50 ,,
Tironelveli Express	18.57 ,,	19.20 ,.
Coimbatore Express	20.45 ,,	21.05 ,,

From MADRAS side:

Arr. Dep.

Coimbatore Express 04.55 Hours 05.15 Hours

(To Dhanushkodi)

Tirunelveli Express 07.05 ,, 07.20 ,,

Trivandrum Express 07.30 ,. 07.50 ,,

Tuticorin Express 11.00 ,, 11.20 ,

Air-conditioned coach by Trivandrum Express:

Madurai to Madras - On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday

Madurai to Trivandrum - On Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday.

RAILWAY ENQUIRY PHONE No. 179.

Where to stay at Madurai:

- 1. Southern Railway Retiring Rooms.
- 2. Municipal Travellers' Bungalow.
- 3. Meenakshi Nilayam (Close to Railway Station).
- 4. English Club, Race Course, Madurai (Rights of admission reserved).

5. Circuit House, Race Course, Madurai (Government controlled).

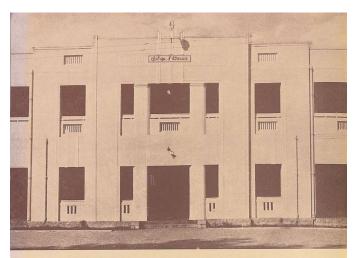
Five Boarding-Lodging Houses.

Where to eat:

- 1. Railway Station Restaurant in foreign style.
- 2. For non-vegetarians, there is a restaurant in Indian style.
- 3. For vegetarians there is a vegetarian restaurant on the platform.
- 4. For those staying in Municipal Travellers' Bungalow the butler in charge provides good food in both foreign and Indian style.
- 5. The English Club (on appointment).
- Most of the Indian Boarding and Lodging Houses in the City provide first class South and North Indian Vegetarian Meals.

Places of entertainment:

There are a dozen Cinema houses in the City.



REST HOUSE—CENTRAL BUS STAND

MADURAI DISTRICT

Area 3,115,718 acres

Forests 741,448 ,,

Cultivable area 263,593 ,,

Cultivated area 1,137,645 ,,

Periyar Dam
irrigated 135,000 ...

Rivers: The Vaigai, with take-off through the Surili, the Varaha Nadhi:

The Palar

The Tirumanimuthar

The Kodavanar

The Kundar

The Ori

The Nanganchi

The Manjalar

The Nallathangai and

The Kamala.

Villages: 1,081; Population (1951 Census) 2.884 994.

Kodaikanal: (Forest of Creepers) - 6,882 to 7,209 feet above the sea level. Lake - 1863 formed like a "Star-fish" - three miles round

Thirupparankundrum Four miles South-West of Madurai (1,048 feet above sea level). The

granite of the hill is a handsome variety with pink and grey bandings and tradition has it, it was employed in the construction of the Madurai Temple.

Lowest of the mantapam (said to be built by Tirumala Nayakkan) is 116' by 94'.

On the very top of the hill is the tomb of the Fakir, Sikandar.

Alagarkovil: Twelve miles North-West of Madurai. Rectangular Fort 730 by 400 yards, faced with stone and crowned with battlements of dark red brick, is situated in a most picturesque spot. With the sculpture of Vishnu's incarnations: Karuppannasami and eighteen steps are famous here, as no one dare tell a lie or even harbour a liemany a civil suit is affirmed and decreed on this spot. Pachayappa Mudali (Madras Pachayappa College Founder) invested a lakh of pagodas for feeding pilgrims, from the interest thereon. Here is an uncommon circular apse lighted by windows of pierced stone all of different design. The processional image and another image (of solid gold) are perfections of beauty and divine serenity. Some of the temple

jewels are gifts by Rous Peter, Collector of Madurai. The Sayanagraham in the temple houses a rare and antique bedstead - a pedestal of black stone, inlaid with ivory figures, four stone pillers and ornamented with small detached shafts and ivory figures. The wooden dome is elaborately inlaid with the most intricate and minute designs in ivory.

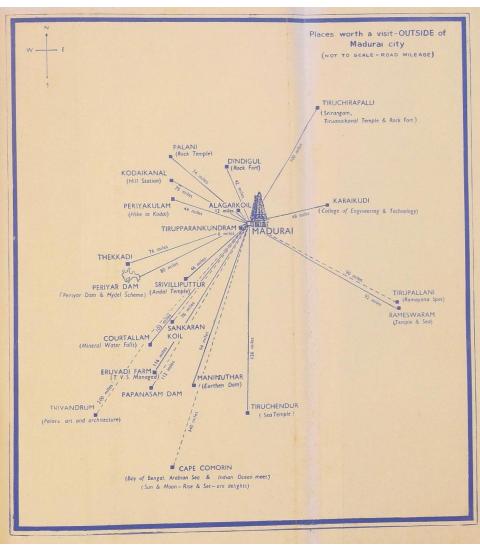


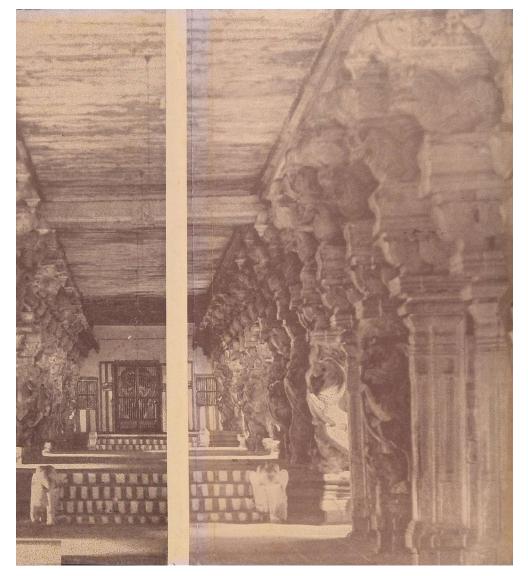


SOUTHERN ROADWAYS LTD., MADURAI

(Unit of T.V.S.) - (Buses)

	Depot	No. of routes	Mile
1.	Madurai City	23	106-7
2.	Madurai Mofussil	13	605-4
3.	Theni	5	223-2
4.	Cumbum	4	173-0
5.	Periyakulam	8	385-0
6.	Dindigul	10	496-3
7.	Tiruchi City	7	37-2
8.	Tiruchi Mofussil	5	225-7
9.	Pudukottai	13	664-6
10.	Tirunelveli	17	605-3
		Total 105	3,523-2





Number of buses - 293 Bus Miles per day - 39,571 Yearly Bus Miles - 14,252,734

Average per-Bus mile per day - \ \(\) 146 Mofussil \ \ \ \ \ \) 156 City

FARE:—Six pies per mile - (Five pies in certain routes).

(No bus is over four years of age).

Average seating capacity - 37.8 per bus.

LORRIES (40)

Number of Routes - 25

Lorry-miles per day - 7,250

(average per-lorry-mile - 220 per day)

FREIGHT RATE (PER-TON-MILE)

Re. 0-9-4 - Upto 50 miles
Re. 0-8-2 - ,, 100 ,,
Re. 0-7-0 - Over 100 ,,

(Twelve Single Family Pass per year on all routes plus two-third concession monthly city bus pass to any confirmed employee).

