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THE CITY OF MADRAS ; THROUGH THE SURF.

The city of Madras is located on the eastern side of the Peninsula of India, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, or Indian Ocean, 400 miles north of Cape Comorin, the southern point of India, and 900 miles south of Calcutta and 650 from Bombay, on the opposite side of the peninsula.

It was founded in 1639, when its site was granted by a native princenamed Chennappa to Mr. Francis Day, the Agent of the British East India Company, which was just then acquiring possessions on the Coromandel coast. The East India Company at once set to work to build a strong fort on that site, which they named Fort St. George. That fort is still standing, and may be seen on the left hand of our illustration. In the fort are still the Government Offices, where a Governor, sent out from England once in five years, with his Council, rules over 40,000,000 of people.

For a great commercial and political city of half a million inhabitants Madras is extremely unfortunate in its location. It is

built on a low, level plain right on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, or Indian Ocean, with no natural harbor and no navigable river into which sea craft can come.

The plain is so low that the most populous part of Black Town, the crowded native part of the city, is only six feet above the level of the sea at high water, and is in constant danger of being inundated by tidal waves.

In 1864 a tidal wave some nine feet high did sweep over the land at Masulipatam, 250 miles north of Madras and lying low as Madras does, and rolled inland for twenty miles, carrying everything before it. Thirty thousand human beings lost their lives in that one dread night. The next year, during the monsoon, smaller tidal waves began to appear at Madras. The city was seized with a panic, and thousands upon thousands of natives rushed inland to places of safety.

Lying so low, it cannot be properly drained and is subject to frequent visitations of cholera, which is, however, usually of a mild type. Only now and then at long intervals does a more virulent type of that dis-

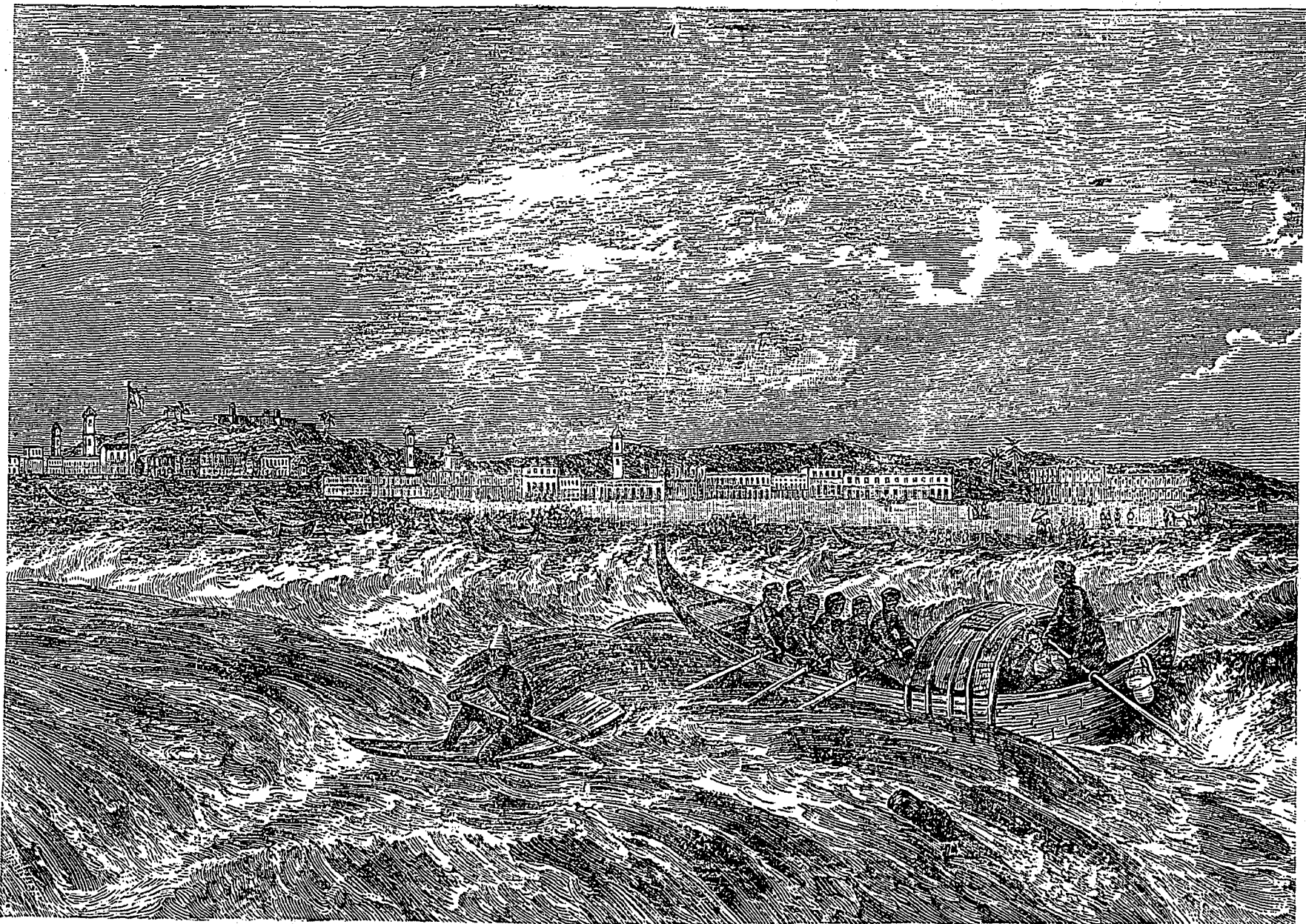
ease appear, and then thousands are soon swept away by it.

Being situated so low upon a plain and far within the tropics, the heat in Madras is very great. The only redeeming feature is its glorious sea-breeze, which usually in the hot season springs up before noon and blows until dark. This breeze is called "The Doctor," so invigorating and health-giving is it in the midst of this furnace heat.

An English traveller, after visiting India, in writing an account of his travels, said, "There are two seasons in Madras, three months of hot weather and nine months of very hot." And he was not far wrong. A few years ago, in January, the coldest or coolest month, the Madras daily papers remarked on the unusually cold weather, colder than ever witnessed before by the "oldest inhabitant." The thermometer had actually gone down to 60° ! By February it touches 90° and March 100°, and hotter in April and May, and the heat continues until October. The houses are built to guard against heat, not cold, and in all European houses the punka begins to swing

in February and swings till November. This is a large fan or board some twelve or fifteen feet long, or nearly as long as the room is wide, hung by ropes from the lofty ceilings, and, by means of a cord passing through the wall of the house, pulled on the outside by a relay of native coolies, by day in the sitting and dining rooms and by night in the bed-rooms. This is as necessary to the health of Europeans on the plains in India as a fire is in houses here in the winter.

Madras is a very straggling city. It reaches for nine miles along the sea and averages about three and a half miles wide. Out of about a half-million of population some 30,000 are Europeans and the mixed descendants of Europeans and natives, who, however, all dress in European costume and use the English language. Some 40,000 more are Mohammedans, descendants of the Mohammedan invaders of many centuries ago. They all speak the Hindustani language. The rest are mainly Tamil and Telugu speaking Hindoos, but with a mixture of smaller numbers from many lands using



LANDING THROUGH THE SURF AT MADRAS.—CATAMARAN AND MASULLA BOAT.

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M. P. P. P.