



The Hon. Sir Pherozshah Mehta, K.C.I.E.
President Bombay Municipal Corporation.

Having gained his M.A. with honors, in 1864, Mr. Mehta moved to London, and passed out from Lincoln's Inn as the first Parsee barrister in London. He returned to his natal city in 1868, and, almost from the beginning, has taken a leading part in Bombay municipal matters, and has now, for the third time, become Chairman of the Corporation. He is generally acknowledged to be the leader of the Indian National Congress and of political progress in India.

The title of K.C.I.E. conferred on him in 1904 has been recognized by all classes and communities as by no means too great a reward for excellent public work, done with singleness of purpose and loftiness of aim. This year, as President of the Corporation, he will have the honor of heading the citizens of Bombay to receive the Prince and Princess of Wales on their first landing on the shores of India.

Outside of the Indian Government Service, there is no individual in India

who occupies so large a space in the public eye, or who more thoroughly deserves the position which he occupies—an eloquent and learned lawyer; a public-spirited citizen, unselfishly painstaking and self-denying; an enlightened force in the State as a leader of men; and although a candid critic of Government measures, yet one upon whose support as an ally the Government can count in measures of public utility.

Bombay City.

In the minds of thinking men there is a conviction, strengthening every year, that the preservation of her Indian Empire is essential to Great Britain's prosperity, and that, amongst the foreign dependencies of the British Crown, none are of greater and more increasing importance than that Empire of which its chief possession, whether regarded from a political or commercial point of view, is the Island of Bombay.

The growth of Bombay has been marvellous, almost beyond credibility. In 1634, the population, as reported by a contemporary writer, consisted of eleven Portuguese families, who, together with the natives, made up seventy musketeers, the only defence of the Island. At that time, and for at least thirty years after, the principal industries of Bombay were, besides fishing, the cultivation of coconut, Areca nut and rice.

In 1665, Bombay Island and harbor were handed over to the British, who, in 1667, were able to realise a rent of only £2,000. In this last year, the Island, once named "The Island of the Good Life," was a collection of pestiferous swamps and putrid fish-curing grounds, where three years was the average duration of European life. The population, in the middle of the eighteenth century, numbered 60,000,

(Continued on page 172.)