

Preliminary.

The idea of starting a Chamber of Commerce for this province was first taken up early in 1925, but nothing definite was done.

The matter took a definite shape when the Board of Industries of this province passed a resolution on 1st of May, 1925 and appointed the following gentlemen as a Sub-Committee to sound public opinion and find out ways and means.

The following gentlemen formed this Sub-Committee :—

- (1) Mr. M. S. Dass, Cuttack.
- (2) Rai Bahadur R. K. Jalan, Patna.
- (3) Rai Bahadur Bansidhar Dhandhanian.
- (4) Mr. B. F. Madan, Jamshedpore.
- (5) Babu Radha Krishna, Mozaffurpur.
- (6) Mr. R. C. Pandit, Patna.

Finding sufficient support and encouragement, it was decided to formally constitute the Behar and Orissa Chamber of Commerce.

The Memorandum and Articles of Association were drawn up, and the Local Government were approached to sanction the registration of the Chamber under the Indian Co.'s Act of 1913, without the word "Limited." This was received on the 19th January, 1926.

The Chamber is obliged to the Government for showing this consideration.

A provisional Committee was formed to organise the Chamber. Babu Ram Chandra Pandit was appointed as the Provisional Secretary and was entrusted with the task of drawing up the constitution of the Chamber and look after its registration. This was finally effected on 23rd of March, 1926.

The Committee feel it incumbent upon them to add a few words about the ideas, which the promoters of this institution

had before them in organising this Chamber. The need of organisation had been keenly felt by the industrial and the mercantile Community of Bihar and Orissa. The Committee can do no better than to quote from the circular, which the promoters of the association had issued to the public.

"An organisation, which could speak with authority on the varied problems, affecting the commercial and industrial developments and expansion of our province, is urgently called for and would be of great benefit to those engaged in these lines. Every trade and industry is organising itself, and the merchants and manufacturers here should not lag behind. Questions of labour, transportation, taxation, mining and other such matters affect us vitally, and there should be a central organisation able to voice our views before proper authorities. As yet there is no organisation."

No better opportunity could have been found than one in which this Chamber was brought into existence. The whole of our country was agitating the question which vitally affected its interest. The Royal Currency Commission for India was being formed to enquire, discuss and report on the problem of Indian Currency and Exchange. Besides, several other measures were being adopted by the Government, both central and provincial, which seriously affected the interests of the trading community.

There were altogether 4 meetings held during the course of the year.

The meeting of 9th September, 1926 marked the formal inauguration of the Committee. New members were admitted to the Chamber. The account of income and expenditure up to 8th September, 1926 submitted by the provisional Secretary was approved and passed. It was decided to form a separate fund called the Admission Fee Fund with the money received as admission fees which was not to be touched for ordinary purpose. After the election of the office-bearers it was decided to entrust Babu R. C. Pandit to draw up by-laws of the Chamber and to submit it to the Executive Committee for approval.

Messrs. B. A. Collins, I.C.S., C.I.E. and D. C. Gupta, the Director of Industries were elected as Honorary members of the Chamber.

Another meeting of the Executive Committee was held on 13th December, 1926. New members were elected for the Chamber. Among other things the Committee decided the following:—

It was decided to approach the Government for representation of the Chamber on various public and semi-public bodies. The question of having affiliated associations was dropped but associations allowed to become members.