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# BARODA IN THE

# "FORTIES



SADHANA PRESS, BARODA



# BARODA IN THE 'FORTIES



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His Highness Lt. Col. Maharaja Sir Pratapsinha Gaekwad  
Farzand-i-Khas Daulat-i-Englisbia, Samsher Bahadur, G.C.I.E., LL.D

## BARODA IN THE 'FORTIES

( 1939-1945 )

In the following paragraphs an attempt is made to enumerate some of the outstanding benefits which have accrued to the State during the regime of His Highness Lt. Col. Sir Pratapsinh Gaekwad covering the comparatively short period of six years, from 1939 to 1945. It is by no means exhaustive; and even then it has proved to be very difficult to be condensed within the necessarily limited scope of this short resume; so comprehensive has been the personal and active interest taken by H. H. the Maharaja in the welfare and progress of his people in all directions. The items mentioned are mostly only those initiated since the accession of His Highness.

### 1. Reforms:—

Among the landmarks that stand out in the pursuit of H. H. the Maharaja Saheb's "declared policy" of "close association of the people with the Government," may be mentioned: (1) Proclamation of the Government of Baroda Act and expansion of the Dhara Sabha (1940) establishing democratic reforms of a far-reaching nature; (2) expansion of the Executive Council by including in it two of the non-official members of the Dhara Sabha (—in this perhaps Baroda is unique among Indian States); (3) refusal to accept communal electorates; (4) extension of franchise, etc.



This is on all fours with His Highness' declaration viz. "the new constitution is based on the complete identity of interests between the Ruler and the ruled and among all sections of the population." On another occasion he stated: "There is no difference of classes or interests in our State. My wish can only be for the peace, prosperity, happiness and identity of interests of all my people."

### GREATER BARODA

An event of considerable significance that took place during these years is the 'Merger' under which about 300 talukas and thanas have been attached to Baroda. In his message to the people and thakores of these areas on 22nd July 1943, H. H. the Maharaja Saheb said:—

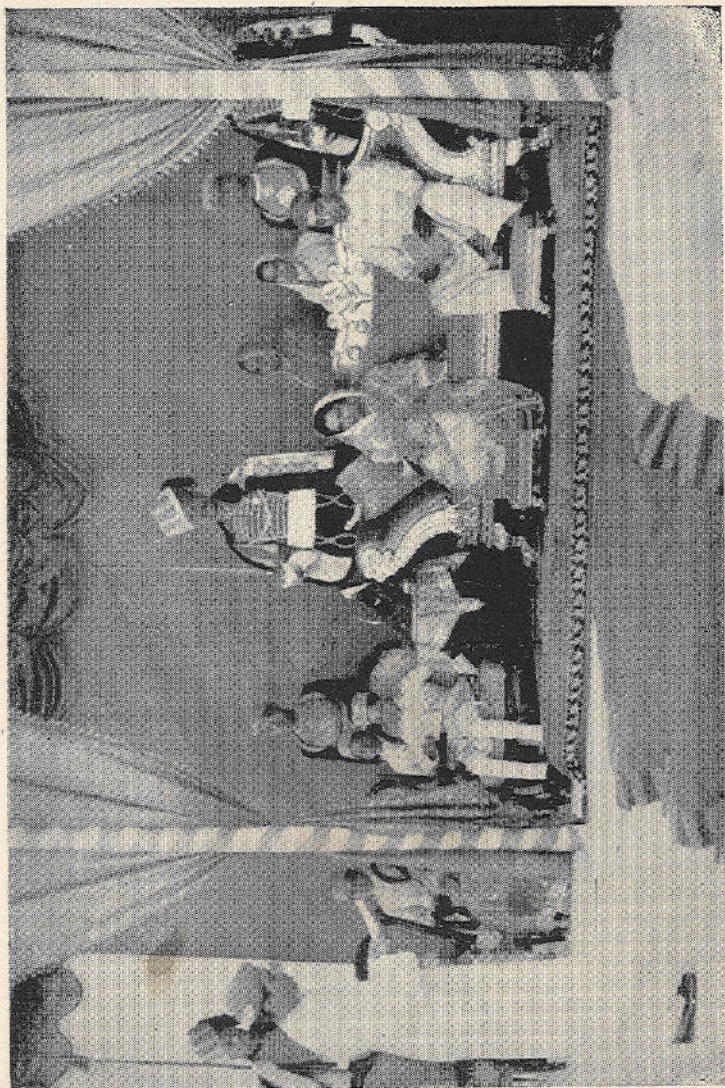
"I therefore announce that out of the income of the Trust a sum of Rs. 50,000 will be earmarked every year for promoting the objects of the Trust in the attached areas. I am also constituting to day a Trust which will yield an income of Rs. 50,000 a year to supplement this annual grant of Rs. 50,000 from the Shri Sayaji Rao Diamond Jubilee Trust and for the same objects."

"I am also setting apart a sum of Rs. 10,000 every year for grants for the education of the sons etc. of the Chiefs and Talukdars."



H. H. the Maharaja and members of his Executive Council—March 1945





His Highness the Maharaja Sahab and Her Highness Maharani Shantadevi Sahab at the Coronation Gymkhana. Her Highness the Maharani Sahab being requested to declare it open.

All beneficent laws of Baroda are being applied to these areas.

## 2. Industries:—

Extension of the policy of industrial expansion by offer of concessions etc. has resulted in establishment of numerous pioneer industries on large scale, and development of those already existing. Details would cover considerable space; the progress is phenomenal and unprecedented. All this is due to the fostering care, appreciative encouragement and bold initiative of H. H. the Maharaja Sahab's industrial policy.

Besides this can be mentioned the encouragement and fillip given to cottage industries, handicrafts and industrial institutions, and facilities for training villagers and artisans free of charge, in all sorts of handicrafts; provision of large sums annually for encouragement to cottage industries and small scale enterprises by gifts, loans and concessions; development of heavy chemical industries, for instance, establishment of the Tata Chemicals Ltd. at Mithapur; establishment of the Cottage Industries Institute with a permanent Sales Depot; establishment of tax-free zones at railway stations; provision of scholarships totalling several thousands annually for agricultural training; initiation of a fish oil scheme and schemes for establishing colonies and settlements for fisher folk on the State coastline centres; provision of very successful machinery for arbitration in labour disputes; expansion of



banking business in the State; facilities for vocational training of women; a college of Commerce and Economics and chain of cooperative savings societies for mill workers etc.; facilities at Port Okha, encouragement to new industries like paper and pencil manufacture, rubber ceramics and glass manufacture etc.

### POST-WAR INDUSTRIES

In furtherance of the creation of a separate ministry for post-war planning, His Highness the Maharaja Saheb has constituted a Board of Industrial Advice for general industrial development as well as for post-war planning. It was decided to invite certain outstanding industrialists in British India to serve on this Board and the undermentioned gentlemen agreed to work on this Board :

1. Sir Homi Mehta, Chairman; 2. Sir Sultan Chinoy; 3. Dr. Matthai; 4. Mr. Tulsidas Kilachand; 5. Mr. M. C. Ghia; 6 Sir Shri Ram.

The Post-war Development Member is an ex-officio Member of this Board with the Chief Secretary to the Government as the Convener.

The main object of the Board is to frame general and post-war development plans on systematic lines.

The first meeting of the Board of Industrial advice met in Baroda in January 1945 during the Birthday week of H. H. The Maharaja Saheb. In his message to it His Highness observed: "Social and economic development of my people actuated me to



His Highness the Maharaja Saheb at the Unveiling Ceremony of the bust of Pandit Bhagavanlal Indrajai at Bombay.





His Highness the Maharaja Saheb at the Baroda Session of the Indian Science Congress.

constitute this Board and I have every confidence that with your help schemes of far reaching economic importance will soon be introduced." The Message then referred to the importance His Highness the Maharaja Saheb attached to post-war reconstruction and drew attention of the members of the Board to the special aspects of the post-war schemes which have an all-India bearing. His Highness then indicated the financial implications of a post-war Baroda plan and its possible difficulties. He invited members of the Board to interest themselves in further industrial development of the State.

### 3. Education :—

Baroda has been wellknown for over a generation for its bold and, at the time, revolutionary education policy. It is the only administrative unit in India with free and compulsory primary education in operation for nearly 40 years. Recently physical training has also been made compulsory in all educational institutions. Women's education has been another feather in Baroda's cap. The percentage of general literacy is about 23% which is easily the highest in India with the only exceptions of Cochin and Travancore. Then again, there is the famous literacy movement of Baroda which by itself is a remarkable achievement. It is being further implemented under the present regime.

In furtherance of its famous free and compulsory education system, the Government have now revised



the grades of primary teachers who are the pivot of educational structure, at an additional annual cost of Rs. 2,89,700 and have brought them almost up to the model of the grades suggested in the famous Sargent Report.

A number of new institutions have been opened, viz. The Pratapsinha College of Commerce and Economics, and the Secondary Teachers' Training College. Medical and Engineering Colleges are to be opened shortly. A Technical Institute to be established at Patan has been sanctioned. A number of scholarships for studies in medicine, in agriculture and in animal husbandry have been instituted. Special scholarships for children of the "backward classes" and of the Assamdars have also been sanctioned. Shree Sayajirao Chair for the study of Indian Culture and Civilisation has been established in the Benares University and Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan put in charge of it. A broadcasting station has been established and equipped for service.

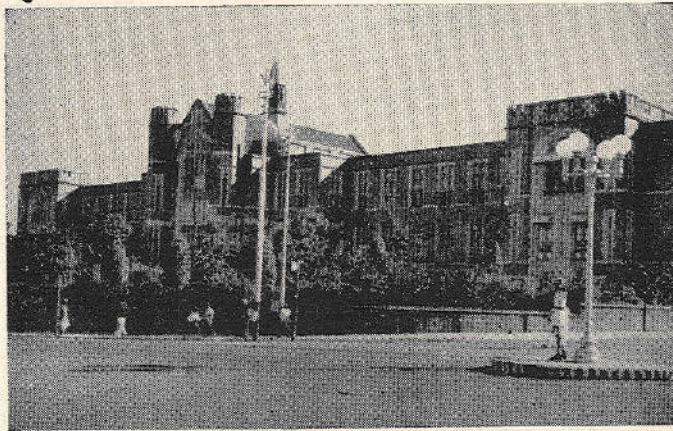
In 1940-41, the Government introduced a system of fixed salaries for the primary school teachers to eliminate disturbance in the departmental budget from year to year and minimise the amount of correspondence. But during the short period that this system was in operation, a number of other difficulties were experienced in the working of this system. Hence the fixed salary scheme has now been abandoned and the time



SIR B. L. MITTER

Appointed the Dewan of Baroda State on 1st April 1945.





A section of the Secretariat buildings.



H. H. the Maharaja welcoming H. E. Sir Roger Lumley  
at the Baroda railway station.

scale increment system has been re-introduced.

Under the new scheme, all the primary teachers who at present number nearly seven thousands will be put in four different grades, maximum of the first grade being Rs. 75 and that of the last grade Rs. 40.

The new scheme forms the first step towards educational reconstruction in the post-war period.

#### 4. Legislation :—

Of course the high light in this section must be the reconstruction of the State legislative machinery on a democratic basis, and the substantial increase in responsiveness of the Executive to the popular angle as represented in the Dhara Sabha. The legislature can take legitimate pride in the fact that all its recommendations have been sanctioned by the Huzur. The pride of place in this sphere must therefore go to the Government of Baroda Act 1940.

The Acts and other legislative enactments put through during the brief period under consideration run up to quite a large total, even if the Defence of India Act and the Rules thereunder as well as the enactments in respect of war effort and relief to soldiers and their families are not taken into account. Honourable mention must be made of the amended Income tax Act, the Cotton Control Act, the Waqf Act, the Crop Pests and Diseases Act, the abolition of the Act relating to forcibly taking possession of a wife, the



Excess Profits Tax Ordinance with its unique features, the amendments of the Hindu Code, the Muslim Divorce Act, the Dabhel Simlak Madressa Act which has no important bearing on Muslim theological education, the Act for prevention of cruelty to animals etc.

##### 5. Medical and Health :—

Here are some of the high-spots in this sphere of the administration :

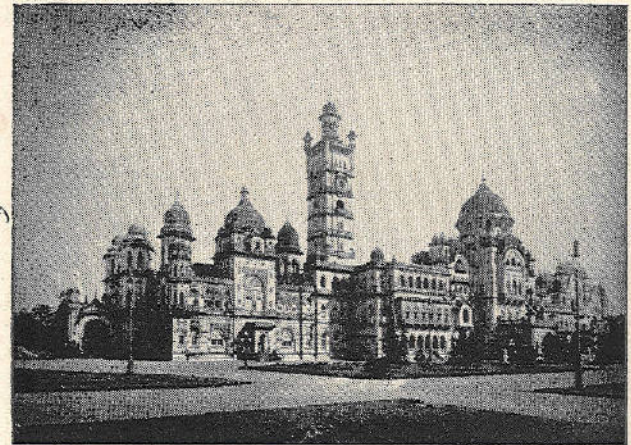
Development of the T. B. Clinic and sanatorium scheme costing several lakhs, the foundation of the building of which was laid by Lady Linlithgow. The institution has already started functioning and is a unique one of its kind in Gujarat.

The scheme of establishing a Medical College in Baroda city is in progress.

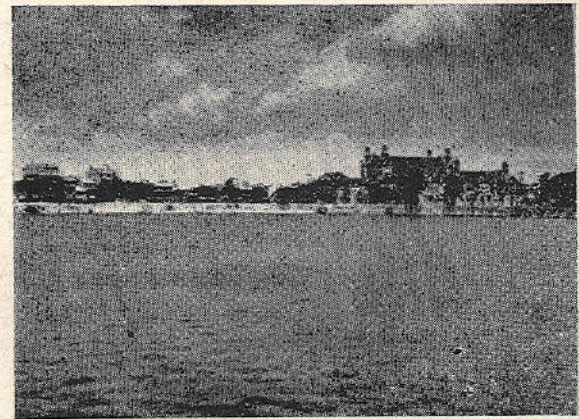
Establishment and expansion of Shree Maharani Shanta Devi Trust, the bare enumeration of whose beneficent activities in the interest of women and children would be too lengthy for this brief summary.

Provision of medical facilities in rural areas.

Establishment of the health centre at the Kosamba Rural Reconstruction Centre in 1939 which has been rendering yeoman's service in villages in the matter of health and hygiene propaganda.

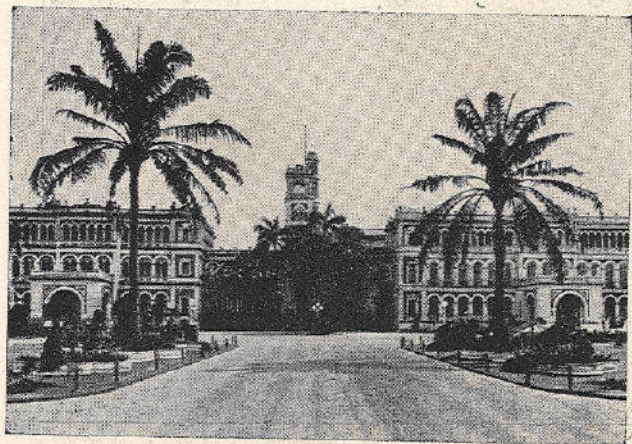


Laxmi Vilas Palace.

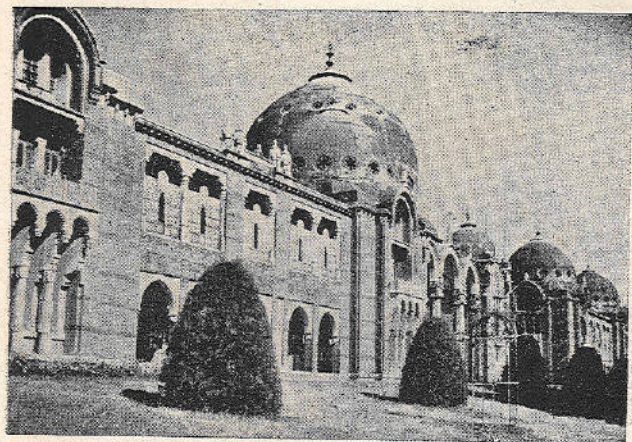


Nyayamandir as seen from across the Sursagar.

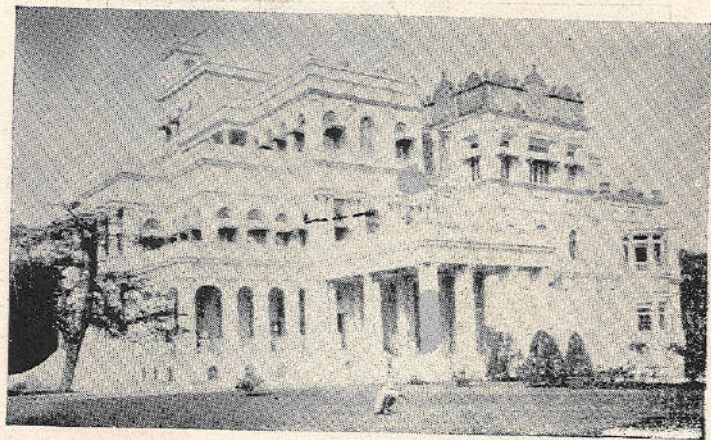




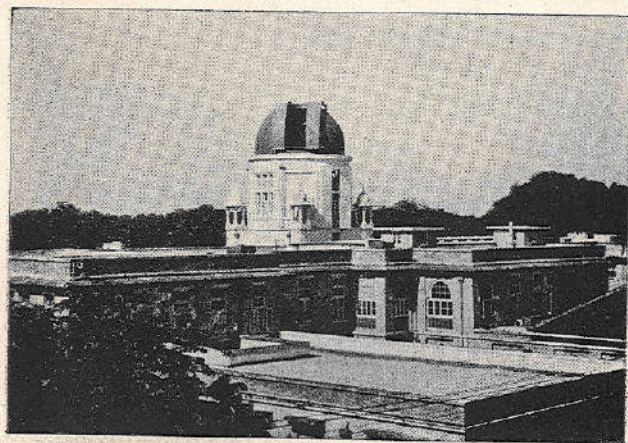
The Makarpura Palace.



The College, Baroda.

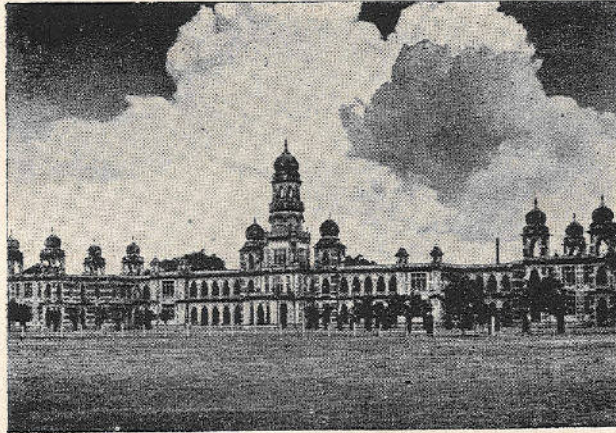


The Nazar Bag Palace.



The Sayaji Science Institute with the dome of the astronomical observatory.





The Kalabhavan-Technical Institute.



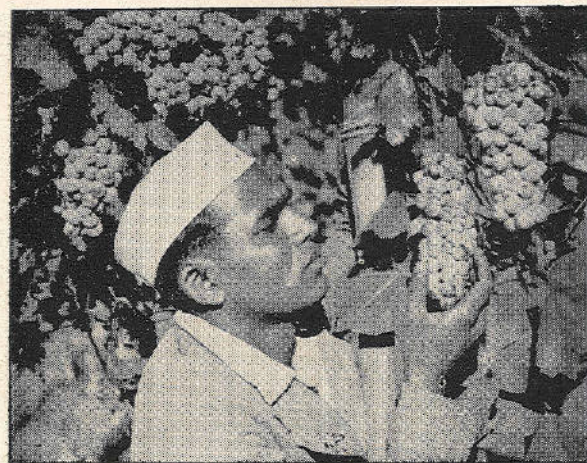
Section of the MSS. Library of the Oriental Institute.

#### 6. Agriculture and co-operation :—

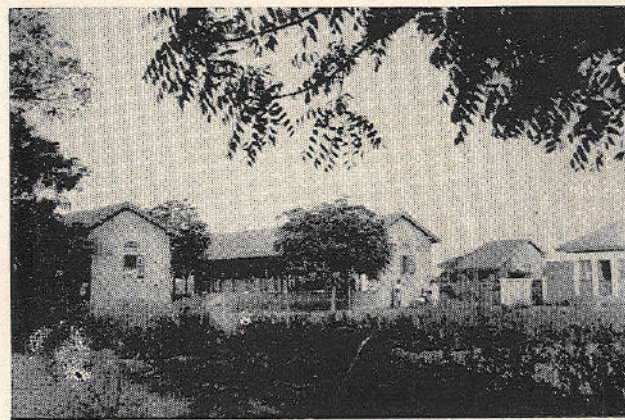
In this section only bare mention can be made of : (1) establishment of numerous co-operative institutions; (2) numerous functions of much rural significance such as jubilees of institutions, prize distributions, co-operative conferences, etc. held all over the State year after year; (3) the cattle improvement and breeding schemes, and research in drugs for cattle disease; (4) the fast expanding schemes for Rabari colonies and settlements in Mehsana district including training in animal husbandry and ancillary occupations; (5) livestock exhibitions, local and district; (6) the Vijapur tubewell scheme which has already made substantial progress; (7) the great Sabarmati, Zankhari, Manekpur, She-trunji, Mithakhadi, Umra and other irrigation schemes, the estimated and actual expenditure on which runs into several lakhs, and some of which are already coming to fruition; (8) sanction of Rs. 2,50,000 for digging new canals and Rs. 40,000 for repairing old ones in Baroda and Navsari districts; (9) Rs. 2 lakhs provided for digging reservoirs in Mehsana district; (10) gift of Rs. 10,15,300 for Amreli waterworks; (11) the gift of Rs. 4,50,000 for wells, tanks, roads etc. announced on the 35th birthday, 9-1-43, for Baroda, Amreli and Okha, and a similar gift of Rs. 2,75,000 for Mehsana and Navsari; (12) establishment of horticultural centres, training classes and fruit products industry, and of eri-silk industry and classes;



(13) establishment of an Agricultural Training Institute at Jagudan and of numerous training classes in all branches of rural uplift work; (14) arrangements made to send Baroda boys to Agriculture and Veterinary colleges outside the State; (15) reorganisation of the Baroda Agricultural Institute; (16) establishment and expansion of one more rural reconstruction centre with its numerous ramifications; (17) tobacco improvement schemes; (18) Harij dry farming drive; (19) the agricultural produce sales centre at Surat; (20) the Bodeli market; (21) the ghee and egg grading centres; (22) the numerous exhibitions, rural rallies, health weeks and exhibitions, farmers' days etc; (23) wool improvement scheme; (24) the Gandevi Sugar-cane cultivation expansion scheme; (25) the anti-locust campaign of the department of Agriculture; (26) schemes for supply of cheap and pure seeds to cultivators; (27) the paddy improvement schemes; (28) tree-planting and reforestation drives; (29) Rs. 1 lakh placed with the Navsari Land Mortgage Bank for liquidating debts of Raniparaj people; (30) mechanised agriculture drive; (31) improvement and expansion schemes for B9 cotton, sugar cane, bajra and cereals, grass etc.; (32) schemes for prevention of soil erosion and for soil preservation; (33) "Sayaji Gram Vikas Mala" series of publications of rural interest conducted by the Oriental Institute; (34) the monthly rural magazine "Prakashan Patrika" run by the Information Office; (35) scheme to manufacture

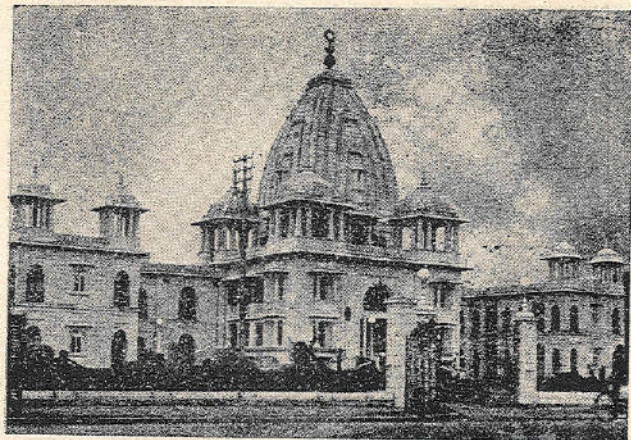


A crop of grapes at a Government Farm.

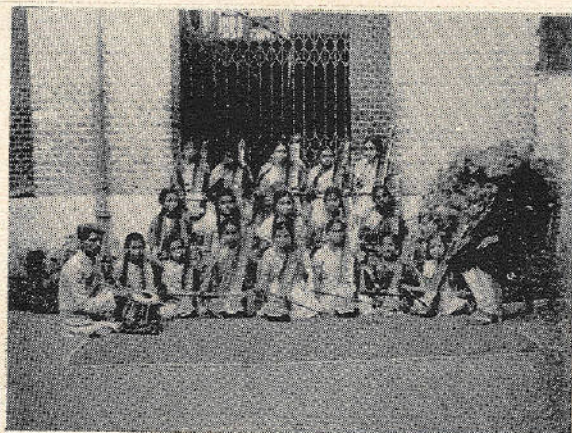


Some of the buildings of the Ayurvedic College, Patan.





The Kirti Mandir or Temple of Fame.



A class in the College of Indian Music.

effective manure from town waste, etc.

#### 7. Relief to Agriculture :—

During this period, the remissions in land revenue totalled over Rs. 11 lakhs, and the suspensions exceeded Rs. 68 lakhs. Permanent reduction in land revenue assessments amounting to Rs. 23,65,000 was effected by Huzur Order dated 29-2-39. The tagavi loans came to nearly Rs. 21 lakhs; Rs. 1,92,080 were given for flood and fire relief. The suspensions in tagavi and debts came to nearly twelve lakhs, and those in local cess and compulsory education fines to nearly Rs. 60,000 each; many thousands worth of hay was imported and supplied cheap to cultivators in distress, and schemes were devised to get bajri, groundnut and paddy seeds from the U. P. and Madras for State cultivators. Similarly arrangements were made to supply sugarcane seeds, manure, pineapples etc. to growers in the Navsari district.

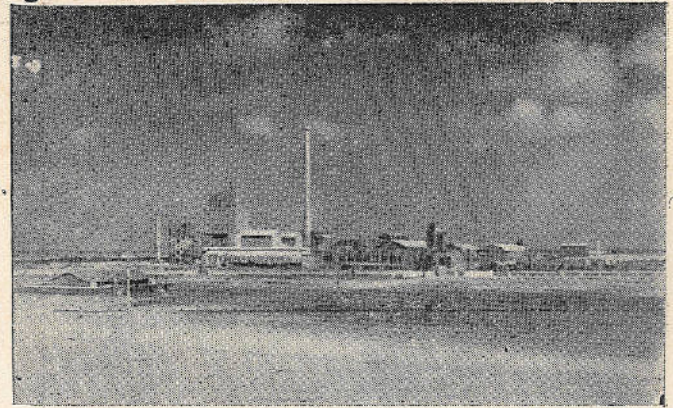
#### 8. Miscellaneous :—

This section presents a perplexingly large field for selection. The first item that catches the eye is the district tours of His Highness during which he came into close touch with his people for the first time as their Ruler. The largesse announced by him in course of these tours and on his birthdays totals nearly thirty lakhs donated for water works at Amreli and for schemes to provide cheap, and in necessitous cases, free and cheap grain and cloth all over the State. As

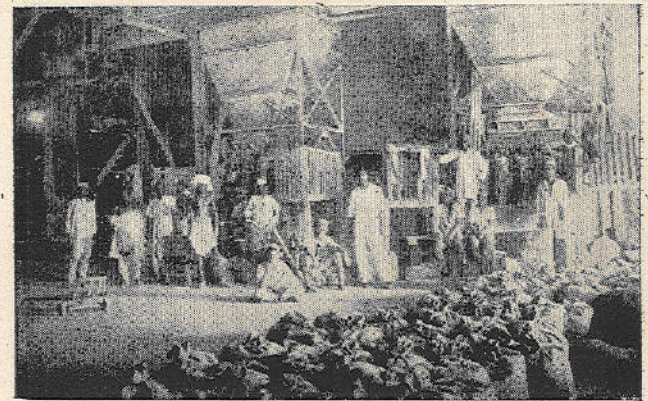


an act of clemency and goodwill collective and individual fines to the tune of thousands imposed in connection with acts of political sabotage were subsequently remitted, cases were withdrawn and the "August 18th" detenus let off. H. H. the Maharaja Saheb reacted in many and generous ways to the distress caused to middle and lower sections of the people by the present inflated cost of living, the most noteworthy of the steps taken by him to grant relief being the gift of nearly ten and a half lakhs of rupees for opening cheap grain shops, free relief etc. throughout the State. As recently as in September 1944 H. H. the Maharaja's Government has sanctioned Rs. 50,000 for help to agriculturists affected by excessive rains and floods in the Navsari district.

The State is being covered by a network of village and feeder roads, and the scheme has been very much accelerated by the personal interest which His Highness takes in rural needs. Further extension of the automatic telephone system and trunk connections is knitting his territories into a yet closer unit. The Tapti has been bridged at Kholwad at a cost of several lakhs. Many scores of substantial scholarships have been established to encourage and assist poor students in various branches of 'liberal' and technical education, including arts and crafts, in all their stages. This particularly benefits the so-called backward sections of the people. A Chair for study and propagation of Indian culture and history at the Benares

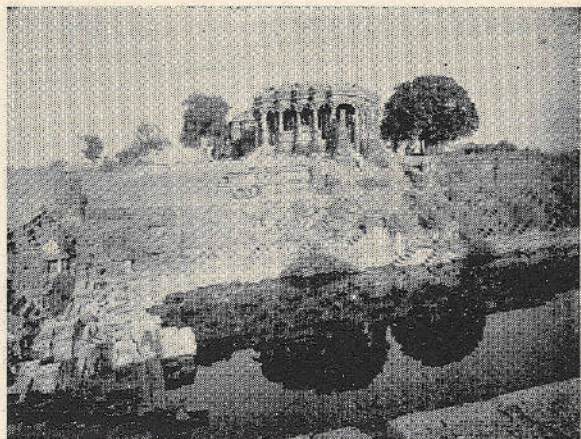


The Tata Chemicals, Port Okha.

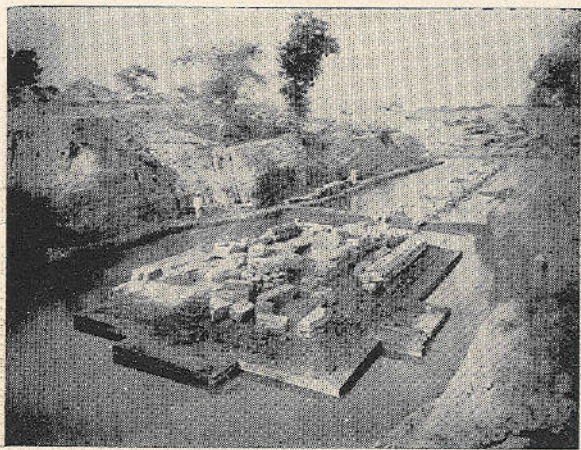


Dwarka Cement Works—a view.





Famous ruins of the Sun Temple, Modhera.



Excavating the historic lake Sahasraling at Patan.

Hindu University has been donated by H. H. the Maharaja Saheb and placed in charge of Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan. His Highness also donated to the Gujarat Arts Society Rs. 5000 (five thousand) and has become its first Patron. His Highness also created a fund for compassionate allowance to the tune of Rs. 5 lakhs for maintenance of the members of the families of the deceased Government servants.

To the several orders passed by H. H. the Maharaja Saheb to increase the efficiency of the services in the State is now added one more viz., the revision of the grades of all the Government servants up to the grade of mahalkaris (included) at an annual cost of about Rs. 4.35 lakhs.

The proposals originated as a result of the desire expressed by H. H. the Maharaja Saheb at the time of His Highness' inspection of the Accountant General's office, when a request for the improvement of the existing grades was made to him.

The main feature of the present revised grades is that uniformity of grades of servants in all the departments throughout the State has been adopted as a principle. This generous gesture also aims at giving substantial relief in hardships created by the recent rise in the cost of living. The third notable feature is that it enables the lowest clerk to rise to levels which were beyond him so far.



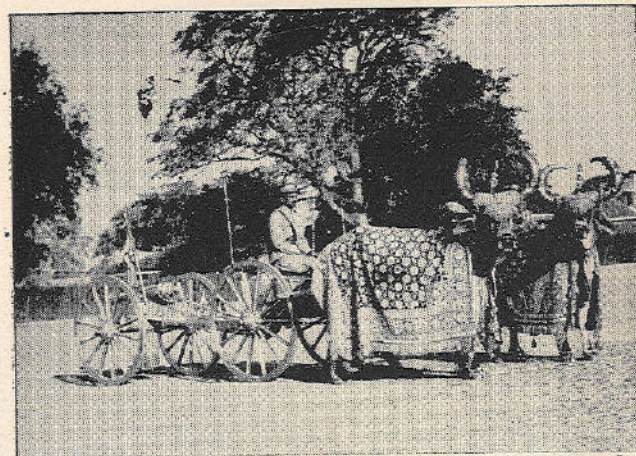
The cancellation of the Gomti taxes at Dwarka and re-instatement of the annual grant to Shrinathji have earned the gratitude of hundreds of thousands of religiously minded people up-and-down the country. The monumental—in both senses—activities of the Archaeological department owe their inspiration to H. H. the Maharaja Saheb. All-India and State conferences, congresses and exhibitions covering the whole diapason of culture, that have come to Baroda during this period have numbered legion. Bounteous grants and patronage to Arts and *belles lettres*, to athletics and sports, to tennis and cricket carnivals and to relief funds are a few more of the notable events that have occurred in this very eventful period. His Highness himself is well up in sports such as polo, cricket, tennis etc. and he is a great patron of the “King of Sports.”

### WAR EFFORT

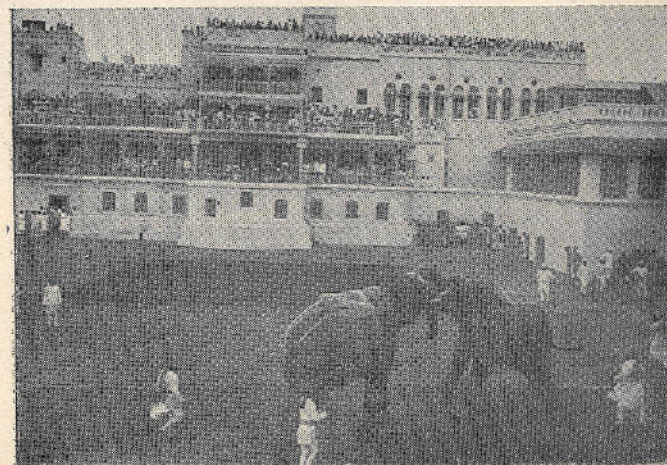
Ever since the outbreak of the war, Baroda has been “doing its bit” in the struggle of the democracies against the dark forces of Nazism.

Immediately on declaration of the war, H. H. the Maharaja Saheb placed all his resources at the disposal of His Majesty the King Emperor for helping successful prosecution of the war.

The gifts of H. H. the Maharaja Saheb towards war funds are :—

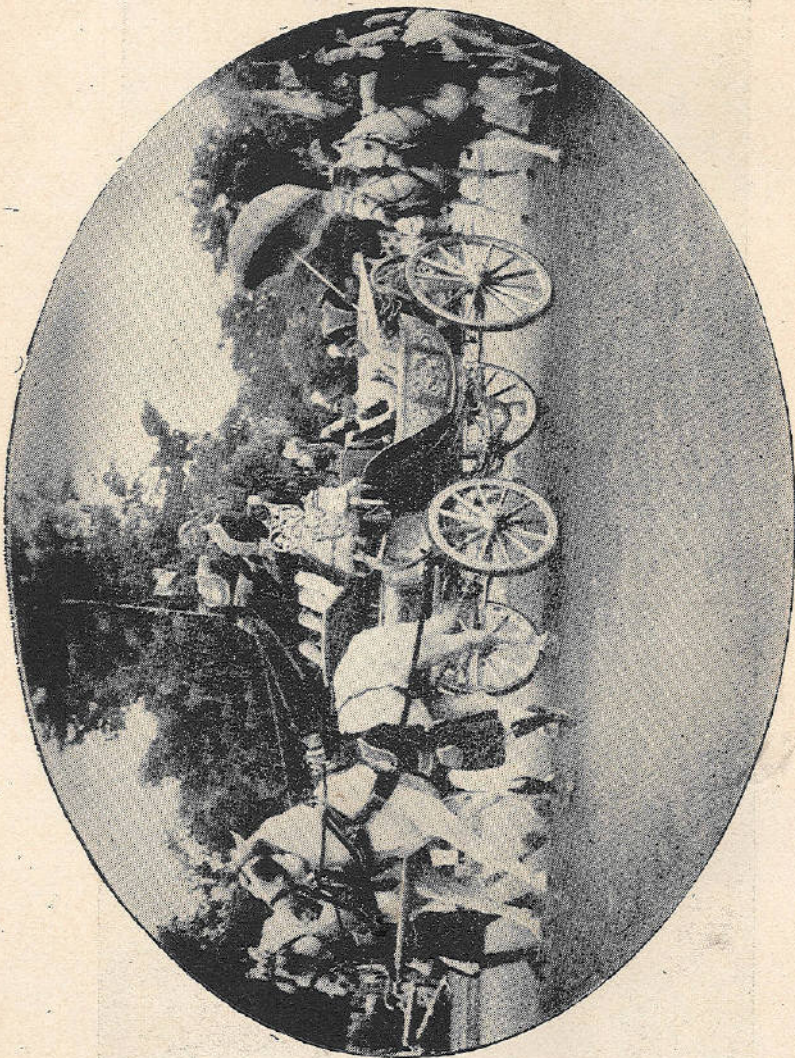


The Gold Gun.



A scene from the Aggad Arena Sports.





H. H. the Maharaja Saheb with Yuvaraj Fatsinh Gaekwad in a State drive.

1. £50,000 ( fifty thousand pounds ) to H. E. the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund for the purchase of a fighter plane presented to H. M. the King Emperor ( 1940 ).
2. Donation of £50,000 for a trawler for mine-sweeping and submarine detection.
3. £1,000 to Lord Mayor's fund, London.
4. £100 to H. E. the Viceroy's War Purposes fund for relief of distress in Greece.
5. Rs. 2000 to the Gujarat States Agency and Baroda cantonment for War Purposes Fund.
6. Rs. 10,000 to Lady Linlithgow's Silver Trinkets Fund from Her Highness the Maharani Saheb.
7. Rs. 20,755 towards H. E. the Governor of Bombay's War Gifts Fund.
8. Rs. 500 for the Gujarat States Agency Plane.
9. £50,000 towards H. E. the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund for a flight of fighter planes in addition to a similar donation made in November 1940 to enable a complete squadron to be formed ( 1941 ).
10. Rs. 10,000 towards the " China Day Fund. "
11. Rs. 6,666-10-8 ( £500 ) to the members of the Baroda Royal Air Forces Squadron for purchase of suitable Christmas and New Year Gifts ( 1942 ).
12. Rs. 20,000 to the Indian Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Association in



response to the appeal of Her Excellency Lady Linlithgow.

13. Rs. 80,000 to the Royal Air Force Welfare Fund.
14. Rs. 20,000 to the Indian Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Association.
15. Rs. 75,000 to the Indian Air Force Welfare Fund.
16. £500 to the members of the Baroda Royal Air Force Squadron for purchase of suitable Christmas and New Year Gifts (1943).
17. Rs. 105,000 to the Indian Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Association (1943).
18. £500 to the Members of the Baroda R. A. F. Squadron for purchase of Christmas and New year gifts (1944).
19. Rs. 1000 for dinner to the members of the R. A. F. at Baroda.

His Highness the Maharaja Saheb's investments in war bonds are:—

Rs. 25,00,000 in interest free Defence Bonds.

Rs. 1,76,18,400 in various types of Defence Loans.

Prominent citizens and firms of Baroda State have invested in all a sum of over Rs. 2,70,58,100 in different types of defence loans and Rs. 13,08,000 in 12 years' Certificates.

## POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

H. H. the Maharaja Saheb had under active consideration the desirability of creating a new ministry devoted to post-war development. He therefore created a special portfolio of post-war reconstruction work and placed it in charge of a member of the Executive Council. The order which makes this appointment emphasises the importance attached by H. H. the Maharaja Saheb to post-war development and further industrialisation of the State, and calls for formulation of concrete proposals on the subject.

The establishment of a Central Post-war Development Board is one of the most important items mentioned in the order. It is directed in the order that leaders of the public opinion in the State should be associated with this board. A five-year plan for the development of the State in every possible direction will be prepared.

The order also observes that no scheme of development will make any substantial progress unless it takes into account the development of rural areas. The order therefore lays down the need of a consistent policy in respect of post-war development plans.

The task of condensing into a short resume the vast material which is brought to light by a cursory glance at the six years' reign of H. H. the Maharaja Pratapsinh Gackwad calls for an ingenuity which



perhaps has not been available for this effort. It is, however, an attempt to present a composite picture of a panoramic plethora; or to put it differently, to enable the wood to be observed despite the large number of its trees. If this imperfect narrative can do that, more or less, the game will have been worth the candle, equally more or less.

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