

CHAPTER FIVE

MATURING OF THE BARODA STATE

UNDER SAYAJIRAO GAEKWAD III

This chapter covers the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III (1875-1939) and traces how the Baroda State attained maturity during his reign through provision of public welfare and its ambivalent relationship with the British Government to finally emerge among the most progressive of the princely states of India.

The Training of a Maharaja

The birth of Sayajirao, the son of Kashirao and Umabai, took place on 11 March, 1863. He was five years younger than his elder brother, Anandrao, and two years older than his younger brother, Sampatrao. The young Sayajirao was brought from a small village called Kavhana in distant Khandesh which had “some 100-150 houses in typical village style of the area with two temples, a rivulet and a huge banyan tree in the centre of the village chowk”.¹ The village had few attractions or diversions and open-air games and simple food, milk, butter and ghee provided nourishment to the children and kept them healthy. In fact, when the Prince of Wales saw him a few years later Sayajirao Gaekwad III looked younger than his age. To Sir Richard Meade he appeared “a quiet self-possessed boy with a thoughtful expression of face and an extremely amiable disposition—a healthy boy though not very robust, a small delicately framed lad with a bright pleasant face, as he blazed with jewels from top to bottom”.² Sayajirao Gaekwad III enjoyed swimming and playing games like *atya-patya*, *khokho*, marbles and *gilli-danda* as a young boy. When Sayajirao visited Kavhana fifty years later in 1926, the only things he could recollect were the temple of Mahadeva and the rivulet.³

When Sayajirao was brought to Baroda from Kavhana he was an illiterate boy who had never been to school but only seen it. Since Sayajirao Gaekwad III was to be invested with full

¹ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 22-23.

² Ibid., p. 23.

³ Ibid.

ruling powers of a prince at the age of eighteen, therefore, a scheme of planned instruction and training for a period of six years was prepared by the Resident and the Diwan. It was decided to teach him four languages, English, Gujarati, Marathi and Urdu, from the alphabet onwards, each having a different script and English being absolutely distinct from the three Indian languages; and in addition to these he was to be taught history, geography and elementary mathematics. He was then to be familiarized with the canons of good administration, the 'do's' and 'don'ts' for an Indian prince and acquainted with the law of the land. This was, indeed, a taxing task and oblivious of what would be the ultimate result of all this training, he began his onerous job seriously. F.A.H. Elliot, an I.C.S. officer, whose services were taken on loan and who was later to write *The Rulers of Baroda* shouldered the responsibility of conducting this educational program. "At the outset to the tutor", writes V.K. Chavda, "the royal pupil appeared apparently and actually dull but later on not quick but persevering".⁴ Elliot had the right perception of Sayajirao Gaekwad III's excellent quality of perseverance, which was helpful in carrying him through the vicissitudes of life.⁵ "For Sayaji Rao it was an absolute beginning", writes V.K. Chavda, "and looking to his background and seeing the foreground that lay ahead of him, Sayaji Rao III was evidently marked out for human experiment of the highest interest".⁶

The British Government had taken the decision that when Sayajirao Gaekwad III would complete eighteen years he would be invested with full ruling powers in the last week of December, 1881. So Sayajirao Gaekwad III was delivered a course of lectures by competent State officials including the Diwan on different aspects of State administration from March to December, 1881. The lectures commenced with a piece of advice from P.S. Melville, who had replaced Sir Richard Meade as the Agent to the Governor General and who had keenly observed the young prince when he was going through his studies. "In the presence of Elliot in the Residency", writes V.K. Chavda, "Melville enjoined loyalty to the Maharani, affection to his sister Tarabai with occasional gifts to her, kindness to other members of the family, a dignified reserve towards servants and abstention from arbitrary interference in the matters of State".⁷ Melville specially warned Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III to protect himself against the intrigues of dishonest persons in Baroda who in order to fulfill their selfish motives would seek to obtain from him such promises that may ultimately land him in unexpected troubles.

⁴ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 24.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

He was also cautioned by Melville to accept *nazaranas* or gifts only on such public occasions such as the Dussera Durbar and not during routine administration. He was advised against intervention in the regular course of justice. This advice carries a special significance as it had been a baneful habit of native princes and Sayajirao Gaekwad III followed this advice in a meticulous manner.⁸

Among the other lectures that were delivered “Sar Suba Kazi Shahabuddin spoke on land revenue; Anna Bhivrao Tamhane on accounts; Justice Gadgil and Thanawala on law; Pestonji Jahangirji Talyarkhan on survey, settlement and military matters and Vinayak Rao Kirtane on police and jails”.⁹ These lectures were beyond doubt of high standard, but it is doubtful as to what extent the young Maharaja benefitted from them.¹⁰

‘Minor Hints’ delivered by the Diwan, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao were the best of the series. There was a publication of these lectures for private circulation later on and it was ordered that all State officials were to go through them. “These lectures”, writes V.K. Chavda “contained the most valuable advice on numerous points on all sorts of matters connected with government, varying from the elementary almost the trivial to the very subtle, which a modern prince would neglect only at his peril”.¹¹ These talks of the Diwan were based on the famous saying *Raja Kalasya Karnam* and the style of these talks was so simple in so far as it was suitable for a young boy of eighteen years and therefore *Minor Hints* is fascinating to read. Sayajirao Gaekwad III was advised by Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao to treat his assignment as a trust and to use his power to better the lives of his people. Enumerating good administrative principles, the Diwan talked about the nature of a native prince’s relationship with his bureaucracy and with the British Government and the Resident, and also about the possible outcomes of being negligent of the ‘advice’ offered by the paramount power. The Diwan pointed out to the young prince that the fate of Malharrao Gaekwad epitomized the outcome of being negligent of the advice offered by the paramount power. Sayajirao Gaekwad III was also told to be conscious of the fact that he did not spend more than 10 per cent of the State’s revenue on the *Khangi* department. Finally, the future Maharaja was fully acquainted with his constitutional position and the need to restrain himself “in his future dealings on this account”.¹² Clarity of the importance of all these words of advice became

⁸ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 27.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 28.

¹² Ibid.

evident to the Maharaja only during the course of his reign but he did notice that the advice given to him by Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao was sincere. This intensive acculturation, however, did make him aware of his deficiencies and a determination to correct them.¹³

Sayajirao Gaekwad III was now gradually adjusting to his new life. He gave pleasure to his guardians in different ways. “Melville thought he was”, writes V.K. Chavda, “rapidly developing into a strong wiry young man... most industrious... addicted to manly sports and exercises. Elliot could not find any fault with him and felt a better and more affectionate pupil could not be found”.¹⁴ And his marriage was now the constant worry of his mother but before him she had to marry Princess Tarabai. Thus began a search for a groom and a bride and photographs and horoscopes of the eligibles began to pour in. Then a screening process started and finally a selection parade took place at Poona which did not yield any result. Ultimately, the Diwan, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao searched and spotted agreeable spouses. The engagement of Tarabai took place with Raghunath Sardesai of Sawantwadi and Sayajirao Gaekwad III with Laxmibai, the daughter of Haibat Rao Mohite of Tanjore who was related to the ruling family of the place. First the marriage of Tarabai took place on 21 December, 1879 and a fortnight later on 6 January, 1880, the wedding of Sayajirao Gaekwad III took place. There was a month of rejoicings and during this period the foundations of his future residence, the Laxmi Vilas Palace were laid and work on it commenced on 12 January, 1880 and the palace was completed ten years later in 1890. Since there was a linkage of the Makarpura Palace with the name of Khanderao Gaekwad and the association of the Nazar Bagh Palace with Malharrao Gaekwad, the new palace was linked with and named after Sayajirao Gaekwad III's wife, Laxmibai, although her name was later on changed to Chimnabai.¹⁵

Minor Hints: Lectures Delivered to H.H. the Maharaja Gaekwar, Sayaji Rao III

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao begins his lectures *Minor Hints* by telling Sayajirao Gaekwad III that he will surely receive a number of applications to subscribe and contribute towards various objectives and institutions. One applicant will request him to purchase a number of copies of a book that he is ready to send for publication. Another will seek help for the

¹³ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

construction of a temple, or a ghat, or a dharamshala. A third will ask the Maharaja earnestly to donate some money for horse racing. Thus owing to his liberal attitude the Maharaja will be asked earnestly to donate favorably for schools, hospitals, theatrical performances, horse-shows, fine arts, new industries and diverse other purposes.¹⁶

The Maharaja obviously cannot comply with all such applications and has to exercise his discretion and to judge each case based on its merits for which Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao suggests the following guidelines.¹⁷

He tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III to remember that the money that goes into the treasury of the State comes from the taxes which the people of Baroda pay and therefore cannot be squandered away in an arbitrary or capricious manner. Money should be granted mainly for objects by which the people of Baroda will benefit in a direct or indirect manner.¹⁸

The Maharaja should exercise his discretionary powers and give preference to contributions which are destined to be spent within the confines of the territories of the Baroda State over those “which are to be spent outside those territories”.¹⁹

Moreover the Maharaja should give preference to contributions which are beneficial to the poor over those which are beneficial to the rich and also give preference to those measures which bring relief from over those which give pleasure.²⁰

The Maharaja should contribute moderately so that others are also induced and feel the necessity also to contribute. In other words, the Maharaja should not contribute in such a large manner that others are induced to say “From Baroda alone much of the required funds have come. We need not therefore give anything ourselves”.²¹

The Maharaja should be guided by the utility of the object while giving donations and should not be driven by the mere spirit of ostentatious display or competition or the importunate requests made by the applicant.²²

¹⁶ Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao (1881), *Minor Hints: Lectures Delivered to H.H. the Maharaja Gaekwar, Sayaji Rao III*, p. 1.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises Sayajirao Gaekwad III that it would be better for him to donate in a final or conclusive manner especially so as to end hesitation or uncertainty or at adequate interregna, “than to commit the State to continuous monthly subscriptions from which it would be difficult to withdraw when necessary or desirable, owing to altered circumstances.”²³

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao cites few examples to elucidate the preceding principles:²⁴

Baroda should not make contributions towards horse racing at Bangalore or Bombay—in short at any place lying outside the territories of the Baroda State. Even within Baroda money on horse racing must be spent moderately and occasionally since people of the State are not much interested in the sport.²⁵

- a) Baroda should not make contributions towards fine arts in Europe or America. However, it should not show apathy towards the fine arts of India.²⁶
- b) Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises the Maharaja that it is better to make contributions towards constructing a bathing *ghat* on some river lying within the territories of the Baroda State than to contribute towards the construction of one on the Godavari, or the Krishna, or the Kaveri.²⁷

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises the Maharaja to avoid being familiar with menial servants and keep them at a respectful distance and limited to their respective duties.²⁸

There must be an official to check them and exercise control and supervision over them and make sure that their behavior is proper; and such official should be entrusted with sufficient powers “over these servants, so as to be able to influence them by means of hope and fear”.²⁹

The menial servants should not overhear the conversations of the Maharaja and report them abroad. Unless the officers of the Maharaja exercise vigilance over them they have a general tendency to sell news of this type.³⁰

²³ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 3.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises the Maharaja that there is an infestation of intriguers in all palaces. The Maharaja should be vigilant enough so as to avoid falling into their traps. As soon as the Maharaja is invested with full ruling powers—and even before—these intriguers will attempt to use their deceptive schemes. Therefore, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao gives a few hints to Sayajirao Gaekwad III so that he is able to recognize intriguers.³¹

The motives of intriguers are generally characterized by extreme selfishness and there is deficiency of good principles in them. There is an excessive fondness in them of making surreptitious representations. They represent matters in a hyperbolical manner. They tend to falsely color circumstances and strive to please the monarch by incessantly flattering him and behaving in an obsequious manner with him. These are the qualities that distinguish intriguers which the Maharaja should keep in mind and by closely observing them he will be able to discover intriguers. Once the Maharaja has discovered intriguers by employing such means he should stop listening to them and distance himself from them. In short, it is in the Maharaja's interest to have the least possible interaction with them.³²

Again, it should be assumed that a person who has practiced intrigues in the past will practice them in the present also unless it can be supposed clearly that the person has completely reformed his personality. Thus, the Maharaja should distance himself from intriguers of past times and keep them aloof.³³

Again, if the Maharaja is given assurance by those whom he considers as his genuine well-wishers and trustworthy advisers that so and so is an intriguer he should believe them and distance himself from him and keep that person aloof. At any rate, the Maharaja should conduct a special scrutiny of the man. If the Maharaja acts on the preceding hints he will be able to free himself of numerous intriguers though not all of them.³⁴

It appeared to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao that the young Sayajirao Gaekwad III was unable to sufficiently comprehend what he had said so far. For a clear comprehension he juxtaposes the qualities of an intriguer with those of a real well-wisher in a tabular form.³⁵ The table where the qualities marking an intriguer are presented in juxtaposition to those marking a real well-wisher is given in *Annexure III*.

³¹ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 11.

³² Ibid., p. 12.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao then moves on to teach Sayajirao Gaekwad III the fundamental principles of good governance. He begins by stating that all his well-wishers including him have an anxiety that the Maharaja “should become one of the best Ruling Princes of India”,³⁶ that Sayajirao Gaekwad III should become a model ruler, “an example to future Princes and a source of pride to the native community”.³⁷ The great British Government also ardently wished for Sayajirao Gaekwad III to become a model ruler since it possessed the right to have expectations of good government in Native States. Large bodies of the people who are the subjects of this important princely state of Baroda also have an earnest desire that Sayajirao Gaekwad III should become one of the greatest ruling princes of India. In other words, it is a universal wish.³⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that he feels that it is certainly the wish of the Maharaja himself also. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao further tells the young Sayajirao Gaekwad III that God has presented him with an excellent opportunity for doing what is good for the public and for the achievement of high honor and distinction for him. The Diwan tells the Maharaja that he has full faith that it will be recorded in the future History of Baroda that Sayajirao Gaekwad III made use of that opportunity in the best possible manner.³⁹

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that a native prince cannot fulfill his dream of becoming a model ruler by a mere desire to become one. He has to work for it and take pains to reach that goal. And the Diwan feels that it is not impossible for an intelligent and earnest prince like Sayajirao Gaekwad III to accomplish that task.⁴⁰

The Diwan goes on to actually state a series of fundamental principles which would enable Sayajirao Gaekwad III to govern his State well and become a model ruler.⁴¹

He begins by stating the objections of the old school which said “why should the present Gaekwar learn and follow those principles? The preceding Gaekwars did not do so, and yet they managed to govern this State. The present Gaekwar may do just as they did”.⁴²

³⁶ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 93.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 94.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the foregoing Gaekwads can scarcely be classified as the best ruling princes. Their mode of governance was based on the antiquated Oriental Despotism. They did not care much about making people happy, and, even if they did care to some extent, they were unaware of the best means for the promotion of that happiness. Sometimes they committed great mistakes and occasionally got implicated in serious problems and some of them had a narrow escape from dethronement. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao cites as an example before Sayajirao Gaekwad III the sad fate that befell Malharrao Gaekwad. The preceding Gaekwads could have avoided all this had they learnt and followed the principles of good governance. However, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the fortune of the former Gaekwads was not as good as his so the opportunity did not present itself before them for learning those principles. Moreover, the Diwan tells the Maharaja that “this is not all”⁴³; now there is a great change in the times and circumstances. In former times people did not pay much heed to bad governance in Baroda since back then it was “an out-of-the-way place”.⁴⁴ But now Baroda is rapidly connected via railroad with Bombay and other important centers in both northern and southern India. There is a wide and quick circulation of everything that occurs within the territories of the Baroda State.⁴⁵

Again, as a result of the railroad connection outsiders enter the territories of the Baroda State more frequently and on a larger scale. Therefore misgovernment within the territories of the State would have a more profound effect on these outsiders than in the past and would become an issue of much louder uproar.⁴⁶

Again, in former times nearly all Native States were more or less badly governed; and even the territories of the British were backward. But now throughout India good progress is taking place, though to a different extent in each area. As a result of that if the Baroda State does not make fair advancements, the fact would be clearly visible and would lead to dissatisfaction.⁴⁷

And lastly, the Diwan warns the Maharaja that the paramount power in India, that is, the British Government has now become increasingly sensitive to bad government in Native States than in former times. The British Government feels it is their responsibility for

⁴³ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 95.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 95-96.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

precluding a Native Prince from gross maladministration of his State. Effectually, the British Government has this to say to each Native Prince:⁴⁸ “Formerly if you grossly maladministered your territories, a nativial remedy came into operation, namely, your subjects rose in rebellion and put an end to the tyranny. The fear of such a contingency acted as a check upon misgovernment. But now we do not and we should not permit the violent remedy of rebellion on the part of your people. We have undertaken to put down any such rebellion by employing our military force whenever necessary. We have thus deprived the people of the power of correcting tyranny. But tyranny must be corrected. Who is to correct it? We, the paramount power in India, have undertaken this duty on behalf of the people. When, therefore, the people complain of gross misgovernment in a Native State, we, the British Government, will enquire into the matter, and set it right. If found necessary we, the British Government, will even depose the misgoverning Prince and place another on the *gaddi* of the State”.⁴⁹

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that each and every Native Prince must take into account “the fact that such is the reasoning of the great paramount power which completely holds India from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas”.⁵⁰ The Diwan again gives the example of the deposition of Malharrao Gaekwad as a recent illustration of such reasoning and he tells the Maharaja that history has more examples to illustrate the fact.⁵¹

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now proceeds to lie before Sayajirao Gaekwad III some of those great fundamental principles which are necessary for good governance. The most basic and fundamental principle of good government according to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao “is that it is the first duty of the ruler to promote the happiness of his people”.⁵²

The Diwan tells the Maharaja that this principle is prescribed by the Hindu *Dharmashastras*, is strongly approved by the British Government and his own people and is strongly recommended by his best friends and well-wishers including F.A.H. Elliot and the Diwan himself. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that many princes readily accept this grand principle when it is expressed theoretically but never put it into practice in the actual administrative work. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that he

⁴⁸ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 96-97.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 97.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 97-98.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 98.

⁵² Ibid., p. 99.

and other well-wishers of the Maharaja are optimistic that he will not turn out to be one such prince.⁵³

The Diwan then goes on to tell the Maharaja how to spend the public revenue. He says that there may, however, be certain private expenses which are not related to the happiness of the people but which the Maharaja still wants to incur as they are meant for his personal gratification. He may indulge in such expenditure provided it is appropriated from a fair portion of the public revenues meant for his private expenses i.e. for the Khangi department.⁵⁴

No Maharaja who has respect for the principle just alluded to will feel free to spend the public revenues the way he pleases. The Maharaja should treat his kingdom as a public trust and not a private estate. He must constantly bear in mind that the public revenues are assigned to him because he is obliged to spend them for the good of the public.⁵⁵

Owing to this obligation, however, the Maharaja need not deprive himself of the freedom to spend the way he wants provided it is within certain limits.⁵⁶

Thus it is quite possible that the private interests of the Maharaja can be reconciled with the grand principle under reference and the Maharaja can make both himself and his people happy at the same time.⁵⁷

What the Maharaja should always avoid doing is to personally gratify himself at the expense of the happiness of his people.⁵⁸

The Diwan then proceeds to offer a few observations of the grand principle he had alluded to “namely that it is the first duty of the ruler to promote the happiness of his people”.⁵⁹

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the meaning of the words “his people”⁶⁰ is all the people who are subjects of the Baroda State belonging to different classes and different creeds and as far as possible pragmatically the Maharaja should show the same amount of favor and consideration to people belonging to all classes and creeds and treat all

⁵³ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 100.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 103.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 103-104.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 104.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 105.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

his subjects on the basis of the principle of equality and not be partial towards a particular class or creed.⁶¹

Consequently, the Diwan states that persons who possess the requisite qualifications and are eligible for public service should be employed proportionately from all classes and creeds of the subject population and the Maharaja should not employ Deccanis only, or Gujaratis only, or Muhammadans only, or Parsis only. This would be wrong according to the Diwan.⁶²

Another advice which the Diwan gives to the Maharaja is that there should be an equitable distribution of taxes among all sections of the people and unequal taxes should be avoided.⁶³

The next advice the Diwan gives to the Maharaja is that there should be equality before the law in the Baroda State and equal justice should be dispensed to all irrespective of class and creed and the Maharaja should not be partial towards friends, favorites, dependents etc.⁶⁴

Then Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao proceeds to tell Sayajirao Gaekwad III what the *sardars* and the *darakh-dars* think about the state policy. He tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the *sardars* and the *darakh-dars* have told him (though he is not sure to what extent they are serious about it) that they consider the State to be the private estate of the Maharaja and themselves; that they are entitled to collect the largest share of the public revenues in order to secure the happiness of the Maharaja and of themselves. They are not bothered about the happiness of the people. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that he would not call this a ridiculously wrong theory though it is in opposition to what he has said up till now and the Diwan can say without a shadow of doubt that the *sardars* and the *darakh-dars* will give the Maharaja the same advice. But the Diwan is sure that the Maharaja will pay no heed to their foolish advice. And he has full faith that with the progress of intelligence such ideas will be rapidly and completely driven out from all heads in Baroda.⁶⁵

The *sardars* and the *darakh-dars* deserve the right to be protected and the Maharaja ought to be considerate towards them because they form an important part of the subject population. But their happiness should not be secured at public cost.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 105.

⁶² Ibid., p. 106.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 107.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao then proceeds to tell Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the happiness of the people is of two types. The first type is the one which a person can secure for himself or herself by his or her own exertions or labor. The second category of happiness has to be provided by the State and if the State fails in its duty to provide the second type of happiness the people will not be able to enjoy the first type of happiness and there will be misery all around.⁶⁷

The Diwan then proceeds to outline the main particulars of that great duty.

The first and foremost objective of the State in the path towards the accomplishment of its goal of providing happiness to the subject population is the establishment and maintenance of an efficient police force for the country in general. The objective of maintaining an efficient police force is to inhibit the occurrence of crimes, to trace the criminals and take punitive action against them.⁶⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises Sayajirao Gaekwad III to follow as a rule and not induct *sardars* and *silahdars* into the police force. They should be left alone as their induction into the police force would lead to the impairment of its discipline and efficiency and bring trouble for the government since it would not be able to satisfactorily perform its fundamental duty of protecting the life, person and property of the people by maintaining a sufficient and efficient police force.⁶⁹

The Hindu *Dharmashastras* emphasize this primary duty of kings in a repetitive and strongest manner. According to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao a ruler who fails to perform this great duty does not deserve to sit on the throne or be called a king.⁷⁰

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao then proceeds to explain the twofold functions of the police. Firstly, it inhibits the occurrence of crimes. Secondly, if people still commit crimes notwithstanding inhibitive measures, the primary duty of the police is to trace the criminals and take punitive action against them.⁷¹

Both these functions of the police require use of physical force. The use of force is required by the police to surmount the force with which the criminals oppose it. There can be no

⁶⁷ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 112.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 115-116.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 123-124.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 124.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 125.

expectations that criminals will silently follow the orders or surrender themselves without offering any resistance. The police should have the strength to surmount the ordinary resistance encountered by it. It can be evinced, then, that the police is a representative of⁷² “the ordinary physical force of the ruler”.⁷³ A ruler who does not have a police “is like a man without muscular power”.⁷⁴ The police are essential for the ruler to compel the subject population to obey his orders.⁷⁵

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that he has already said that the police are a representative of “the ordinary physical or muscular power of the ruler—that is of the State”.⁷⁶ But the maintenance of an efficient police force is not adequate for the State to meet all uncertain occurrences of the future. Under extraordinary circumstances many offenders unite and resist the authority of the State to such an extent that the police do not possess the strength to suppress such resistance by force.⁷⁷

In such circumstances in order to enforce the authority of the government and to force the resisting populace into submission there is a necessity of maintaining an efficient military force which is a “physical force far superior to that of the ordinary police”.⁷⁸

If the police are a representative of “the ordinary muscular power of the Sarkar”,⁷⁹ the police and the military combine to form “the whole muscular power of the Sarkar”.⁸⁰ If “this whole muscular power”⁸¹ is maintained in good shape then the government will be able to make sure that the people obey its orders which it executes for the good of the public.⁸²

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the next important component for protecting the life, person and property of the people apart from the police and the military “is proper machinery for the administration of justice”.⁸³ What he means above is courts—“such as that of the magistrate, that of the munsif, that of the Zilla judge, and that of the Varisht Judge—a series of courts with graduated powers, for administering civil and criminal

⁷² Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 125-126.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-128.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

justice, the duty of these courts being to decide justly all the numerous disputes which constantly arise among the people themselves”.⁸⁴

In the Baroda State Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao had set up a special court for lawsuits against *sardars*. The purpose behind designing this special court was the conciliation of the feelings and sentiments of this class of people who did not want to be subject to the ordinary courts. The Diwan advises the Maharaja that the maintenance of this special and distinct court of justice is essential so long as these feelings and sentiments are prevalent. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises Sayajirao Gaekwad III to always remember the grand principle and never allow the *sardars* for a moment to think that they are above the law. The Diwan advises the Maharaja to respect the peculiar feelings of dignity of the *sardars* and do anything and everything for their gratification that is reasonable but it must be in accordance with the grand principle and they must be subjected to public justice like other subjects of the Baroda State.⁸⁵

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises Sayajirao Gaekwad III to apply the laws framed by the British Government in the administration of justice in the Baroda State. He also advises him to respect local customs in the administration of justice.⁸⁶

Moreover, he strongly recommends the Maharaja to adopt the Indian Penal Code and also the Criminal Procedure Code.⁸⁷

He also tells the Maharaja that the law should not interfere with the religion of any community.⁸⁸

While advising Sayajirao Gaekwad III on the duties of kings Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao turns the attention of the Maharaja to the advice given by the famous European author, Vathel, who lived in the eighteenth century and was an eminent teacher of mankind in general and of princes in particular. The Diwan quotes the following passage from one of his works:⁸⁹

“A good Prince, a wise conductor of society, ought to have his mind impressed with this great truth that the Sovereign power is solely entrusted to him for the safety of the State and the

⁸⁴ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 131.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 142.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 158-159.

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 160-161.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 164.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 170.

happiness of all the people; that he is not permitted to consider himself as the principal object in the administration of affairs, to seek his own satisfaction, or his private advantage, but that he ought to direct all his views, all his steps, to the greatest advantage of the State and people who have submitted to him”.⁹⁰

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now turns his attention to the next important duty of government i.e. maintenance of public health. While the Diwan states that the health of an individual is largely dependent on his food habits, clothing, exercise, medical treatment etc. and each individual who has a desire to remain healthy should himself take care of his own health there are certain matters concerning public health which is the responsibility of the government to take care of.⁹¹

The first and foremost responsibility of the government regarding public health is the maintenance of good sanitation. The second is the provision of a sufficient and pure water supply. The third is providing airy places for recreation.⁹²

The next responsibility is making adequate arrangements for the vaccination of the people and consequently precluding the dreadful attacks of smallpox.⁹³

Another responsibility of the government towards the maintenance of public health is the establishment of hospitals and dispensaries at various centers of population “where sick persons may easily obtain medical advice, medical treatment, and the requisite medicines themselves”.⁹⁴

However, the Diwan advises the Maharaja that the State should not interfere with individual liberty in its anxiety to promote public health.⁹⁵

Without interfering with individual liberty the Government can still give useful advice. For example, Government in the Medical Department may issue a notification to the people that these are the precautions which must be taken to ward off attacks of cholera—that, when there is an actual occurrence of an attack, this is the remedy for good treatment—that these

⁹⁰ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 170-171.

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 182-183.

⁹² Ibid., pp. 183-184.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 184.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 187-188.

are the precautions which must be followed so that the disease does not spread further—and so forth.⁹⁶

Whenever there is an outbreak of general diseases like cholera, fever, smallpox etc. “the Government should take special preventive and curative measures”.⁹⁷ For example, there should be a deployment of additional medical personnel in the concerned locality. There should be sufficient availability of medicines to the concerned people. The Medical Department will make a proposal of the necessary measures which must receive prompt sanction.⁹⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now dwells on the next important duty of the government which is to ensure an adequate and abundant supply of food for the people. On this duty of the government he makes an observation that the supply of food to a large extent depends on how much exertion an individual puts in to earn his livelihood.⁹⁹

I now proceed to lay down the chief conditions which according to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao must be observed “to promote the acquisition of livelihood by the people—to promote the production of wealth in the country”.¹⁰⁰ The following are the chief conditions to be observed:—

- a) “Security of life, person, liberty and property should be maintained.
- b) The people should be allowed to enjoy wealth freely.
- c) Land being the chief source of wealth, the Sarkari tax on land should be moderate.
- d) The tenure of land should be secured.
- e) The improvements made in land at the cost of the labor and capital of the *ryots* should not be taxed by the Sarkar—at least for a long time.
- f) The Ryotwari System of land administration is the best; the farming system—that of employing *ijaradars* as formerly—is very pernicious.
- g) The *Bhag-batai* system is bad for a large Native State like Baroda.
- h) A regular survey and reassessment of lands should be made.
- i) There should be no arbitrary taxes like the *gaddi nazarana*.

⁹⁶ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 188-189.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 189.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 191.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 203.

- j) There should be no grants to priests, etc., of the privilege of levying imposts on plows, etc.
- k) Produce should not be charged with export duties. At least such duties should be very moderate.
- l) All foodgrains required for the sustenance of our people should be free from duties altogether.
- m) All facilities should be afforded for the better plowing, better manuring, better weeding, etc., of the land.
- n) Wells and other means of irrigation should be encouraged.
- o) Roads and railways should be made to reduce the cost of carriage.
- p) The *ryots* of the country should be enabled to get wasteland for cultivation on easy terms and on good tenure.
- q) Manufactures should be encouraged.
- r) The manufactures of the country should not be taxed. If taxed, the tax should be very moderate indeed.
- s) The raw materials required for those manufactures should not be taxed.
- t) Machinery, coal, etc., required for the manufactures should not be taxed.
- u) The Sarkar should not undertake the work or trade which belongs to private individuals. In a few exceptional cases, however, where individuals would not come forward unless the Sarkar takes the initiative, the Sarkar might for a time do this”.¹⁰¹

Next, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao gives his observations on the Public Works Department which plays an important role in the welfare of the people by constructing and repairing all important public works like palaces, jails, schools, hospitals, dispensaries, military buildings, roads and so forth. He advises the Maharaja to make a professional engineer the head of this department.¹⁰²

He then proceeds to lay down before the Maharaja “some general principles which deserve to be kept in view in connection with this important department”.¹⁰³

- a) “This important department always requires a professionally trained and qualified head as, indeed, every important department requires. Men like Ghulam Ali of the old *Imarat Karkhana* would never do hereafter.

¹⁰¹ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 203-205.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 206.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 207.

- b) There should be a good account and audit establishment in connection with the Public Works Department to duly register and check every rupee of the expenditure. This Department should be readily supplied with the requisite funds. Failure in this respect would keep the Department more or less idle, which would be bad economy.
- c) Where a large, costly, and conspicuous building has to be erected, especially at the Capital, employ the best architect available to make proper designs and plans for the same. This is of the highest importance. Without such precaution, lakhs of rupees would be wasted—perhaps worse than wasted—because crude and clumsy edifices would be raised as monuments of the sad want of judgment of those who raised them.
- d) Do not blindly adopt European styles for such buildings. European styles are best for Europe. We, in India, should follow the best styles which are suited to India, and which have been for ages adopted in India. In this respect, the course we have already taken in the instances of the new Palace, the new College and the new Jamnabai Dispensary is the only proper one, and ought to serve as an example for the future.
- e) As a rule, no public work should be begun without a plan and estimate previously prepared and submitted and sanctioned by the Sarkar. Whatever public work is undertaken let it be done in the best manner. The work should be sound and durable and should reflect credit on the period in the eyes of future generations. No trouble and expense should be spared to secure this great object.
- f) Get works executed by contract as far as may be possible. The contract system has many advantages over the departmental system.
- g) As far as may be possible, make our public works conducive to the livelihood of our laborers and artisans. Employ them in preference to outsiders. Employ local material in preference to foreign material.
- h) Do not grudge the cost of necessary repairs to buildings, roads, bridges, etc., etc. If the Maharaja does not add to the public works, he should at least properly preserve what he has inherited from the past. Public works out of order, owing to want of repairs from time to time, always reflect disgrace on the Sarkar.
- i) Where the annual cost of repair is not likely to vary much, give permanent or standing sanctions for the repairs so that time and trouble may be saved and the necessary repairs may be executed in due season. For instance, such sanction may be given for the repair of the road from the City to the Camp and of the road from the City to Makarpura.

- j) In repairing large and costly buildings, which have been built upon proper designs or after appropriate styles or in making any additions or alterations to such buildings, be careful not to act arbitrarily, be careful not to violate the original design or style. This is a mistake constantly committed in Native States”.¹⁰⁴

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao declares that up till now he had been talking about how the Government can promote the physical happiness of the people. Now he tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III how to promote the intellectual and moral progress of the people through education.¹⁰⁵

In India at least according to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, the State should take the initiative in spreading education among the people otherwise the public on its own will do almost nothing to promote the cause.¹⁰⁶

The Diwan then proceeds to lay down before the Maharaja “some general principles which have to be followed in the Educational Department of the State”.¹⁰⁷

- a) “Higher Education through the medium of the English language should be placed within the reach of those who are disposed to acquire the same. Those who have acquired higher education through the medium of the English language will probably be the most enlightened members of the community. They will probably be the most effectual promoters of progress: they will probably be the foremost to correct the gross errors of ignorance and superstition. Indeed, my belief—my strong conviction—is that any Indian community in the present age would be stagnant without some such elements as just mentioned.
- b) The highest and best English School should be at the Capital of the State, as it is, I hope, it will, before long, become one of the regular Colleges of India. We are providing it with a building which will do honor to Baroda.
- c) English literature, science and philosophy are best taught by Englishmen. Therefore our Central Schools at the Capital should always have English gentlemen as professors. The temptation to appoint Natives for patriotic or economical motives should be firmly resisted. Natives, however, may answer well as Assistants to the English professors, especially in Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

¹⁰⁴ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 207-210.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 215.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 216.

- d) It is not enough to have one Central School at the Capital as described above. Several feeders to the same should be established both at the Capital and in the districts in the shape of Anglo-Vernacular schools. The number we already have must be gradually increased.
- e) The scheme of studies in all the above mentioned schools should be the same as in corresponding British schools. The reason is this. If our scheme of studies were different our youths would not be able to pass the Bombay University examinations; our youths would not be able to get employment outside our territories. But it is highly desirable that we should so educate our youths as to enable them to find employment whether in our own territories or in the much larger field of British India.
- f) Though the scheme of studies is to be the same as in British India, I would urge our professors to pay greater attention to the object of making our youth orderly and useful citizens. Cramming should be discouraged. The valuable faculty of thought and judgment should be better developed.
- g) The education given should be mental in regard to religion; that is to say, no special religious instruction should be given.
- h) I would, however, strongly recommend that general and universal morality be taught in all our schools by means of a small and well-chosen tract. Similarly, let that morality be taught which the State enforces by pains and penalties—that morality which is embodied in the Penal Code. It seems to me quite essential that our youth should be taught early what motives, intentions, and acts are wrong and which of these are punishable by the State. Such teaching will not occupy more than a short time, but it will save many a youth from committing acts which are morally wrong or acts which are criminally punishable.
- i) The great mass of the people must be educated through the vernacular schools established at all centers of population including the Capital.
- j) The schools in the towns may well be entirely State schools. Those in the villages may be grant-in-aid schools. A judicious system of grants-in-aid will enable the State, at a comparatively small expense, to extensively control the education of the people.
- k) The vernacular schools above mentioned include schools for girls wherever there is a demand for these.
- l) There may be one central vernacular school at the Capital to impart higher education. We already have one here known as the Vernacular College of Science. It has been tried as an experiment on the strong recommendation of such men as Rai Bahadur

Vinayak Rao, Rai Bahadur Janardhan Gadgil, Dr. Bhalchandra and others. The experiment has, I am glad to say, proved a good success in several important respects. Further experience may suggest some modifications in its details, and may perhaps enable us to reduce its cost.

- m) A special school for Eurasian children we already have at the Capital, and this must be kept up, of course.
- n) There are a few Sanskrit schools also; and in a Native State these are popular. Sanskrit learning must not be allowed to perish from neglect. But too many must not be tempted to become devotees to make a living by its means. I would prefer that Sanskrit schools should be in connection with and at the cost of well-endowed Hindu temples.
- o) At first at least, the school fees should be fixed low, so that education may be availed of to the largest extent. As education comes to be more valued—as the demand for it increases—the scale of fees may be raised gradually”.¹⁰⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now moves onto state what constitutes the government. The representative of the power of the State is the Maharaja who is the ruler, and the Huzur Cutchery is the machinery which that power keeps in motion. The two together form the Government of the country whose responsibility is the promotion of public welfare.¹⁰⁹

The Huzur Cutchery should therefore possess intellectual and moral strength. This is the most important stipulation by which the Maharaja can successfully administer the State. The more that Cutchery possesses intellectual and moral strength, the more creditable and comfortable the Maharaja will feel, “and the more will it command the respect of the people”.¹¹⁰

Since the Diwan is the head of the Huzur Cutchery, he has to be, as close as possible to the ideal of a Diwan. The Maharaja should be confident of his capability and honesty and he should command the respect of the British Government. He should be a person who is experienced in administrative work. Better if he has gained this experience, partly at least, in the administration of a Native State. It is best if he has acquired administrative experience while serving the Baroda State itself.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 216-220.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 243.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 243-244.

Next, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao lectures the Maharaja on the importance of public service. He says that the public service forms an organization having a wide scope “which is felt in every part of the country and which comes in contact with the people in all their relations with the government of the country”.¹¹² All efforts should be made for making every component of this organization sound and the government should strive to devise plans for the continuance of this soundness.¹¹³

Since the heads of various departments are all decent men, they should be granted liberal powers to make appointments, promotions etc. and should also possess powers to fine, suspend, dismiss etc. In the absence of such powers there would be a lack of discipline and efficiency. The fundamental nature of an organization which is efficient is the grouping together of juniors under senior officers who possess the means to influence the hopes of junior officers.¹¹⁴

The Diwan advises the Maharaja that the right principles enshrined in the circular order sent in 1875 by the present administration should guide the heads of departments in the exercise of their powers and they should not exercise them in an arbitrary manner.¹¹⁵

The Diwan says that the ruler should supervise and control the public service and make sure that the principles enshrined in the circular order are adhered to. The end result of all this will be that the public service will not only be maintained on a sound footing but it will also lead to an improvement in its efficiency.¹¹⁶

The head of the department is the one who can analyze in the correct manner which particular candidate has the required qualifications for any particular post under him and is best acquainted with the fact that which junior officer under him has earned promotion etc. Therefore, according to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, the opinion of the head of the department in matters of patronage carries much weight.¹¹⁷

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao advises Sayajirao Gaekwad III that *nazaranas* and bribes for appointments and promotions in the public service are a poison to Government and the Maharaja himself should never indulge in such practices nor allow his subordinate officers to

¹¹² Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 280.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 281.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

do so. There should be an expulsion of any officer who indulges in such practices from the service whether private or public and unsparing criminal prosecution should be initiated against him.¹¹⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the relations of his State with the British Government should be carefully studied because “they involve many momentous, difficult and delicate matters of which the Maharaja should have an accurate and complete knowledge”.¹¹⁹ The safety, honor, strength and happiness of the Maharaja are dependent on this knowledge to a very large extent. In other words, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao wants Sayajirao Gaekwad III to be fully acquainted with his constitutional status.¹²⁰

The first and foremost fact, according to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, is that India is governed by the paramount authority of the British Government from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas and from Calcutta to Peshawar. This huge area over which Great Britain exercises imperial sway include both the territories of British India and those of the Native States and it is the British Government which has undertaken the responsibility of maintaining peace over this vast tract.¹²¹

It is the irresistible power of the British Government which is responsible for the fulfillment of this great function. The British Government possesses the power to defeat and subdue completely any resistance whether single or combined in whichever part of India it might occur. The irresistibility of the British Government’s this power is all the more so because it is a derivative of “a combination of physical with intellectual and moral power”.¹²² This happy combination is the reason why the power and durability of the British Empire in India exceeds that of any empire which rose before it.¹²³

Therefore it is imperative for every Native Prince to reconcile with the British Government whose power is so irresistible. It must be unmistakably understood that any Native Prince who provokes the British Government against him is the foolhardiest person.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 283.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 285.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 285-286.

¹²² Ibid., p. 286.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

Pacification of the British Government is not an arduous task owing to its character and qualities.¹²⁵

The noble quality of the British Government is that it exercises great restraint in the abuse of its irresistible power and refrains from indulging in anything unreasonable, unjust or immoral. If it ever unconsciously commits any unreasonable, unjust or immoral action one only needs to prove it to the Government that it is such an action and it will immediately withdraw from such action. It is this quality which provides protection to the Native States “from becoming the victims of the lawless exercise of that power”.¹²⁶ The hope of living a secure, honorable, happy and long life of the Native States is a derivative of this quality of the British Government.¹²⁷

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now spells out to Sayajirao Gaekwad III the contrast between the position and the situation of the Native States in the colonial and pre-colonial periods. He tells the Maharaja that during the Mughal and even the Maratha period of Indian history there was an absence of any sense of security for a Native Prince. An uncertain, conflict-ridden, confusing and anarchical situation was prevalent throughout India. The Diwan gives the example of how prior to the British intervention the Gaekwad State of Baroda was made to suffer immensely at the hands of the Peshwa at Poona. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells the Maharaja that there is abundant evidence in history that the general populace suffered even more than the princes.¹²⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao then turns his attention to the Proclamation of 1858 made by Queen Victoria. He tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that in accordance with the Proclamation the British Government will not take territory from any Native State. Though a ruler may be deposed, the State will be preserved. Where lineal descendants fail the British Government will not annex the kingdom but bestow it on the nearest or one of the nearest relatives who is surviving. The British Government has also given recognition to the right of the Native Princes to adopt sons. In accordance with the Queen’s Proclamation territories can be exchanged by mutual consent. Aggression by the Native States on the British dominions is not allowed. Her Majesty will not allow one Native State to encroach on the dominions or rights of others. The continuance of the Native States is the desire of the British. These were

¹²⁵ Rao, *Minor Hints*, p. 286.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 287.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 290.

some of the salient features of the Queen's Proclamation highlighted by the Diwan to the Maharaja.¹²⁹

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao quotes a very important paragraph of Her Majesty's Proclamation for Sayajirao Gaekwad III. It runs as follows:—"We shall respect the rights, dignity and honor of the Native Princes as our own. And we desire that they as well as our own subjects should enjoy that prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government".¹³⁰ These are assurances of justice, generosity and nobility originating from the highest authority of the British Government which lead to a great fortification of its relations with the Native Princes and their States.¹³¹

Thus, in accordance with Her Majesty's Proclamation, the rights and honor of the Native Princes are to be respected provided the rights claimed are reasonable.¹³²

From the words, "We shall respect the rights, etc. of the Native Princes as our own",¹³³ the inference should not be drawn that Her Majesty places the Princes on an equal footing with herself. The very essence of the matter is that the existence of such equality is impossible. It is an undeniable fact that in manifold ways the British Government is superior to that of the Native Princes and is far more powerful and influential than them. No Native Prince can remain ignorant of this fact.¹³⁴

The other salient features of Her Majesty's Proclamation are that the rulers should promote internal peace and good government. The British Government will maintain all treaties with the Native Princes who in return should do the same thing. Peaceful industry and works of public utility should be promoted by the Native Princes and they should govern for the benefit of all.¹³⁵

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now proceeds to tell Sayajirao Gaekwad III the other principles on the basis of which the relations of the Native States with the British Government are regulated.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 291-293.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 294.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid., pp. 294-295.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 296.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., pp. 296-298.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 299.

The first and foremost principle which governs the relations of the British Government with the Native States is that it is the duty of the British Government to protect the Native State against the violence of another. Correspondence between two States should be through the medium of their respective Residents and not direct. The Native State should refer any dispute with another Native State to the British Government. The Native State should not provoke aggression from foreign powers such as Russia, France, Germany, and the United States of America etc. The Native Prince should not provoke his subjects by misgovernment. Lastly, good government depends on the personal character of the ruler and the British will interfere to prevent misrule and it is useless to resist interference.¹³⁷

Next, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao states the conditions under which the British Government may interfere with the internal administration of Native States.

- a) "In the relations of the Native State with other Native States.
- b) In the relations of the Native State with Foreign Powers.
- c) In the internal administration of the Native State to prevent or correct such gross misrule as might provoke popular rising requiring for its suppression the use of the British subsidiary force.
- d) In the internal administration of the Native State, in the manner and to the extent specially provided in the treaties and engagements with the Native State".¹³⁸

Then, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao states the rights of the British Government. He tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that no European or American should be employed by the Baroda State without the prior consent of the British. Moreover, the British will assist the State with British forces, whenever necessary. However, there is an express stipulation in the treaties that there shall be no deployment of the British Subsidiary Force on trifling occasions so the State should have its own army which should be strong enough to suppress minor uprisings.¹³⁹

It may be recalled that during the early times of its relationship with the Baroda State the British Government had granted its guarantees for the protection of the rights and privileges of several individuals in the State. These guarantees soon turned out to be a fruitful source of corruption in this State and caused irritation to its rulers and even presented difficulties in the path of the British Government itself. When it fully realized this fact, the British Government

¹³⁷ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 299-304.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 305.

¹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 323-324.

adopted the policy of disposing of such guarantees at opportune moments. Consequently, at present only very few of these guarantees are remaining. The Baroda State should pay due respect to the guarantees that still remain with scrupulosity.¹⁴⁰

The choice of the Prime Minister of the Gaekwad was sanctioned by the British Government in the past. But during the reign of Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad the British Government withdrew this stipulation believing that the Gaekwad will be careful in his judgment in such an important matter. The Gaekwad thus possesses the right of appointing his own Prime Minister without the previous approbation of the British Government. The British Government believes in the preservation of this valuable right.¹⁴¹

Next, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells Sayajirao Gaekwad III that the British Government will offer its advice to the Maharaja on different occasions. But the advice of the Viceroy should be distinguished from that of the subordinate British Authorities. The legal difference between the two is that the Maharaja in accordance with the treaty obligation is bound to listen to the advice given by the Viceroy-in-Council or of the Government of India. The Gaekwad will not be charged with violation of treaty if he refuses to accept the advice of any Political Officer, or Collector, or any other subordinate local British Authority since he is not bound to accept the advice of every grade of British Authority but that of the Viceroy.¹⁴²

The Government of India may offer such advice directly through its communication channels or through the medium of the British Resident. The advice offered will be for the good of the State and no advice opposed to the interests of the State would be given.¹⁴³

In the next lecture Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao explains to Sayajirao Gaekwad III that it is extremely important that the relations between the Maharaja and the Resident are friendly and pleasant. To achieve this objective there is a need for attention and effort on each side.¹⁴⁴

The Maharaja ought to exercise carefulness in showing the Resident “every due or customary mark of respect”¹⁴⁵ and in order to accomplish these recognized precedents must be strictly followed.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 326-327.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 327-328.

¹⁴² Ibid., pp. 334-336.

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 336-337.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 342.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

When the Resident visits the Maharaja, according to custom, the Maharaja receives him at the head of the staircase. Strict adherence to this protocol must be maintained and there should be no change in it. Again, it is customary for the Maharaja to give the Resident the right side. Again, betel leaf and betel-nut are served on certain occasions in accordance with fixed norms.¹⁴⁷

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao gives an example to explain to Sayajirao Gaekwad III how minutely attentive the Maharaja is required to be in order to maintain the established protocol. When the Resident is accompanying the Maharaja during the grand Dussera Procession as per the established protocol the Maharaja must ensure that the elephant on which the Resident is riding “on this occasion is of about the same height as that which His Highness rides; that the animal is made to walk fully abreast of His Highness’ elephant, that the *howdah* decorations, etc. of the animal are according to custom”.¹⁴⁸ A protocol has been established for this which must be strictly adhered to.¹⁴⁹

If the Maharaja shows all the customary marks of respect as per the established protocol to the British Resident there will be a cordial and constant reciprocation by him. He will also in accordance with the established protocol show all the customary marks of respect due to the Maharaja in recognition of his position as the sovereign of the country.¹⁵⁰

The Maharaja should give no presents to the Resident except those established by custom like flowers and fruits, and other such things of slight value. There is a strict prohibition on British officers to receive valuable presents; and they avoid the secret evasion of this prohibition with scrupulosity.¹⁵¹

If there is a requirement of any information or papers from the Residency, then send a direct application to the Resident himself and never try to secure anything in a clandestine manner.¹⁵²

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao now enumerates before Sayajirao Gaekwad III the Resident’s ideal of duty. He tells the Maharaja that the character and quality of the British Government is reflected in a Native State through the medium of the British Resident. All the general and

¹⁴⁷ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 342-343.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 343.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 344.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 345.

¹⁵² Ibid.

other assurances of justice given by Her Majesty, all the beneficence and magnanimity of which the Viceroy is a persona will have little pragmatic value to the Native State if they are not effectual in the behavior of the local British Representative. The British Resident is therefore an embodiment of the attributes of the British Government itself like disinterestedness, justice, moderation, generosity and friendly spirit. The Resident should be reliable enough for protecting the State against the aggression of neighboring Political Agents and other British officers.¹⁵³

In the concluding advice to Sayajirao Gaekwad III, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao tells him that in modern times the position of a Maharaja is not one where he can relax at his ease and enjoy unlimitedly. Moreover, he does not possess the freedom to spend the public money the way he likes; there exists a constitutional check on his power and his will is not the law.¹⁵⁴ According to Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao in modern times “a fierce light beats on the throne”¹⁵⁵ which discloses every shortcoming of the ruler to the public and which increased his responsibilities to a considerable extent.¹⁵⁶

The Maharaja owes responsibility in diverse directions regarding all his actions. He owes responsibility to God, to his own conscience, to established principles, to the people, to the British Government and to the enlightened public opinion in general.¹⁵⁷

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao ends his lectures by expressing the belief that Sayajirao Gaekwad III will adhere faithfully to good principles and maintain a high ideal of duty.¹⁵⁸

Accession to Power

Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III was invested with full ruling powers on 28 December, 1881 in a durbar tent on the grounds of the Nazar Bagh Palace. The Viceroy of India, unable to attend the ceremony himself sent Sir James Fergusson, Governor of Bombay, as his representative, who on behalf of the Viceroy, awarded the robes of State to the Maharaja, and placing him on the *gaddi* in his speech declared him “a ruler in his own right”.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵³ Rao, *Minor Hints*, pp. 349-350.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 355-356.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 356.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 356-357.

¹⁵⁹ Philip W. Sergeant (1928), *The Ruler of Baroda: An Account of the Life and Work of the Maharaja Gaekwar*, p. 50.

Everyone, Sir James Fergusson proclaimed, promised the Maharaja a life full of happiness and prosperity, but how long that happiness would last was immensely dependent on how much he appreciated the terms and conditions of its usage. Gone were the days when sovereigns regarded their territories and populations as tools for the attainment of their personal glory and pleasure. The existence of thrones and dynasties in the modern world is to meet higher ends. Of course, a Maharaja would be rewarded if he faithfully discharged his duty; but to achieve that object he must give up the aim of self-gratification and human praise and if, however, the Prince was successful in keeping his own desires subordinate to the welfare of his people, then he would succeed in winning their affection as well as the favor of the British Government.¹⁶⁰

Sayajirao Gaekwad III gave a suitable reply in English in which he recalled Sir Richard Meade, P.S. Melville and Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao and acknowledged their efforts and paid them tributes for their efforts in reforming and modernizing the Baroda State. He gave a promise that his future policy would be guided by the twin objectives of the utmost loyalty to the Empress of India, Queen Victoria, and an endeavor to look after the welfare of his people.¹⁶¹

“Speeches on occasions like this”, writes Philip W. Sergeant, “will always seem, when read in the cold light of later days, a trifle inflated”.¹⁶² But one must admit that the words of Sir James Fergusson regarding the behavior which was essential for a Maharaja in order to secure the rewards by faithfully discharging his duty turned out to be an unconscious prophecy because they immensely inspired Sayajirao Gaekwad III to whom they were addressed.¹⁶³

There were certain innovations made during the investiture of Sayajirao Gaekwad III with full ruling powers in the administration of the Baroda State the primary innovation being the constitution of the Consultative Council which consisted of the Diwan and the heads of four principal departments to which an addition was made for the attainment of certain purposes of the Judge of the Varisht (or High) Court. With the objective of the enactment of laws and rules that affect the life, liberty, or prosperity of the people there was an appointment of five extra members from among the Sardars and the general public. Although the function of the

¹⁶⁰ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 50-51.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

Consultative Council was purely advisory, nevertheless, it was an interesting provision since it contained the elementary principle of the future constitution of the Baroda State. The Consultative Council soon developed into the Executive Council, which was not advisory any longer but, contrarily, possessed “wide powers of independent action”¹⁶⁴ to which the judges were given invitation to attend as were the heads of various departments when matters concerning them were put before the Council. The enlarged Legislative Consultative Council developed into a separate institution known as the Dhara Sabha, which had still wider representation, but it remained advisory in nature. Although the Government of Baroda or the Maharaja were not bound by the resolutions passed by the Dhara Sabha, but, nonetheless, its opinion carried weight since the composition of this body was of elected members.¹⁶⁵

The immense difficulty which Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III encountered after his investiture with full ruling powers was that he still lacked friends and companions. This was a much more serious problem now than during his boyhood days because he badly needed somebody who would offer him sympathetic advice. F.A.H. Elliot retired from the service of the Baroda State on 1 January, 1882 when his job as tutor to the Maharaja came to an end though he lived in Baroda for one more month for the completion of “the volume on the State for the official *Gazetteer* of the Bombay Presidency”.¹⁶⁶ The Maharaja was reluctant to separate from his former tutor and thus obtained his further services on loan from Bombay and made him in charge of the very important Survey and Settlement Department.¹⁶⁷

The Marathi *Life* of the Maharaja clearly states that it was popularly believed that Elliot exercised complete control over the mind and opinions of Sayajirao Gaekwad III that some people were suspicious that he would soon become a *nastik* (unbeliever)! Such envy was, perhaps, unavoidable when a British official becomes influential in an Indian State but it can be said without a shadow of doubt that it made the task of the Maharaja more difficult.¹⁶⁸

District Tours

One of the earliest acts of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III after assuming full control was to pay a visit to his entire kingdom, a part of his education which had till now been neglected because the period of his minority had been curtailed. What is remarkable is that his first

¹⁶⁴ Stanley Rice (1931), *Life of Sayaji Rao III: Maharaja of Baroda*, Vol. I, p. 47.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

¹⁶⁶ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

district tour began with a journey to the Prant of Kadi in November 1882.¹⁶⁹ In the meantime there was a growing rivalry between Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao and Sayajirao Gaekwad III's tutor, F.A.H. Elliot which led to the premature retirement of the former in 1882,¹⁷⁰ and Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao's successor was Qazi Shahabuddin.¹⁷¹

With the accomplishment of a change of Diwan and the installment of a more docile Minister in office, Sayajirao Gaekwad III started his journey. It took him two months to tour the largest of the four Prants of which his kingdom was composed. He took the pain of visiting every town and every considerable village of Kadi in order to acquaint him with every possible detail that was of concern regarding it.¹⁷²

Subsequently he visited Navsari in 1883-84, Baroda in 1884-85 and Amreli in 1886-87.¹⁷³

He was passionate about first-hand information. He had a wish of keeping himself directly in touch with his people and took a pride in being accessible to all. He believed in the theory that a Maharaja should always be open about receiving complaints and criticism. Regarding public expression of grievances, he said that proper channels were provided by him during his reign for their redressal. But he also wanted to avoid too much of the "middleman" system, which would have led his people to believe that their Maharaja was inaccessible, and contemporaneously make the middleman feel that he was very important in the State. He did not want any wall to be constructed between the ruler and the ruled.¹⁷⁴

At the outset of his reign he had to also deal with the suite of honor. At the beginning of his rule he realized that all the *mankaris*—relatives and other courtiers—personally served him. It was not easy to break this custom. In 1900, however, he decided to do without the *mankaris*, and as a substitute for them hired a limited number of *aides-de-camp* for performing their duties. Four years later there was a reduction in the number of *aides-de-camp* to three, who worked in rotational shifts and under clear and distinct regulations in the

¹⁶⁹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 66.

¹⁷⁰ David Hardiman (1978), 'Baroda: The Structure of a 'Progressive' State', in Robin Jeffrey, ed., *People, Princes and Paramount Power: Society and Politics in the Indian Princely States*, p. 114.

¹⁷¹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 66.

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 69-70.

drafting of which he personally supervised. He demanded a high standard of efficiency from these officers.¹⁷⁵

In between his first tours of Kadi and Navsari, Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III was invited by the Viceroy, Lord Ripon to visit him in Calcutta. Therefore, in February 1883, he went across India and arrived in Calcutta on the 18th, and exchanged calls with the Viceroy next day. During his stay in Calcutta he utilized the opportune moment to acquaint himself “with the principal objects of interest in the great city, which he was now seeing for the first time”.¹⁷⁶

On his return journey Sayajirao Gaekwad III visited Banaras, Allahabad, and Agra, and stayed for four days at Gwalior and developed an intimate friendship with the Maharaja of the State and greatly valued his advice on the government of a kingdom. The Maharaja of Gwalior expired in July 1886. However, the bonding between these two important Maratha States did not break. In 1912 the Maharaja had an anxiety to build closer ties by marrying his daughter, Indira Raje, with the then Maharaja of Gwalior, the son of his old friend; but the princess was unwilling, and instead married the Prince of Cooch Bihar.¹⁷⁷

Early Reforms

Although the Diwan and the officers of the State were doing much splendid work, “it must not be supposed that the Maharaja left all the unobtrusive business of the State to the Dewan while he himself made spectacular tours in the Provinces”.¹⁷⁸ Contrarily he took the ultimate decision on all the important reforms, whether they were his inspiration or the suggestion of his ministers. There was an improvement in the business disposal machinery; there was creation of a Registration Department; the Maharaja began a fresh drive for the sinking of wells because he was well aware of the importance of this measure; the Maharaja carried out surveys of roads and even though the State could not afford metaled roads since they were very expensive, nonetheless, he at least built fair-weather roads, or ‘improved cart tracks properly drained’; there was an introduction of a new system of excise; and the Maharaja made an attempt to industrialize the Baroda State by founding the Baroda Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills. In course of time most of these enterprises bore fruit but the Maharaja

¹⁷⁵ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 71.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 71-72.

¹⁷⁸ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 56.

was unsuccessful in leading his subjects into the path of massive industrialization. Baroda was in fact not a place suitable for industrialization: its economy was largely based on agriculture and surrounded on all sides by British India and in close propinquity to business centers like Bombay and Ahmedabad, it faced severe competition. This commendable enthusiasm faced many disappointments and many failures. The efforts of talented individuals made some enterprises successful; but the spirit of industrialization on the whole was wanting in the Baroda State, and the methods by which a nation safeguards and fosters its own industries was not applicable to Baroda owing to its peculiar conditions.¹⁷⁹

The Baroda State Administration Report of 1883-84 states that ‘Lectures on General Morality and Good Conduct’ were delivered once a week to inmates of the prison. This shows that the administration of Sayajirao Gaekwad III was indeed an enlightened administration.¹⁸⁰

That the Baroda administration was anxious for spreading education was evincible in the opening of the Sardar School at Baroda and the School for the Raniparaj (or Kaliparaj) people at Songarh. By the way these were two extreme groups in society. The Maharaja felt the requirement of a school at Songarh in one of his early trips to that region. In these trips the Maharaja noticed the backwardness of these people in almost all walks of life and the only universal remedy for improving the plight of these people that struck the Maharaja was that of spreading education among them. He, therefore, promptly ordered in 1882-83 that a school and hostel be built at Songarh and the campus was named Dhanka Vasti Grih. The sardars represented another section of society which had its own type of social aloofness that precluded them from getting access to education. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao had taken a step towards providing education to the sardars by opening the Sardar School. During the reign of Malharrao Gaekwad in 1871 there existed in Baroda only one high school and four primary schools, two of them were Marathi medium and two of them Gujarati medium and there existed one English School at Petlad. In 1875 the establishment of the Education Department took place and its reorganization for better working with planned progress took place in 1884-85. In 1886 the State instituted a Training School for Teachers and a School of Indian Music was also started.¹⁸¹

But the most remarkable achievement of the early years of the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III and the one which provided the greatest feeling of satisfaction and joy to the Maharaja “was

¹⁷⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, pp. 56-57.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 57.

¹⁸¹ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 49.

the turning of the first sod of the Baroda Waterworks".¹⁸² The idea had germinated in the mind of Khanderao Gaekwad and though manifold suggestions were made, none of them proved pragmatic. The time elapsed in investigating the problem and before anything could be decided upon the Maharaja expired. His successor could not find sufficient time during his short reign for devoting himself towards solving the problem because of his preoccupation with the charges of bad governance and worse which were leveled against him. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, like Khanderao Gaekwad, tried to solve the problem by importing engineers from outside the State, but it remained unresolved.¹⁸³

But in 1884 Sayajirao Gaekwad III, who was still in the process of paying detailed visits to his territories, toured the Baroda Prant several times. The idea of investigating along new lines germinated in the mind of the Maharaja when he visited Savli, which lies some few miles to the east of Baroda and an irrigation tank or reservoir in its neighborhood. Here he engaged the services of an expert Indian engineer who ultimately solved the problem of providing water to the city of Baroda by drafting a proposal of a scheme which the Maharaja adopted and came to be known as the Sayaji Sarovar, now famous as Aajwa Lake. This large reservoir located thirteen miles east of Baroda is a modern scientific waterworks which now is the source of water supply to the city of Baroda.¹⁸⁴

The Maharaja was in a state of exultancy that this vexed problem had at last been solved; Baroda had since time immemorial been craving for good water supply, and finally apparently she would be provided with one. Providing water to a great city is not a small achievement; and one must give credit to Sayajirao Gaekwad III for accomplishing this task in the late nineteenth century and therefore the British Government also congratulated the Maharaja for the success of the scheme the purpose of which was the welfare of the people. So it was Lady Watson, wife of the Agent to the Governor General, who "actually turned the first sod"¹⁸⁵ of the waterworks.¹⁸⁶

Towards the end of 1886 when the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, visited Baroda, the Maharaja invited him to inaugurate the Countess of Dufferin Hospital which is more familiarly known as the State General Hospital.¹⁸⁷ The late Major C. Mant designed this beautiful hospital

¹⁸² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 58.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 58-59.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 59.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 60.

building whose construction costed Rs. 3.50 lakhs and was another noteworthy achievement of Sayajirao Gaekwad III.¹⁸⁸ This hospital soon became “one of the best of its kind in Western, if not in all, India”.¹⁸⁹

The years between 1881 and 1886 were years of political apprenticeship of Sayajirao Gaekwad III where he acquired acquaintance with the functioning of the State machinery and obtained knowledge of his rights and duties which soon made him his own master. During these years of his reign there was consolidation by the Maharaja not only of what had already been achieved but he also expanded along contemplated lines. There was an emphasis by the ruler on system, principle and standard. Possibly, as Sayajirao Gaekwad III hinted, the changes he brought about in the administration of the State were not always found agreeable by those who had administered the State in the past and those who were administering it along with him in the present; yet these changes were not brought about in haste or in an arbitrary manner “but only after the conviction that comes from personal contact and personal inquiry”.¹⁹⁰

In his speech at the inauguration of the Countess of Dufferin Hospital, the Maharaja modestly referred to the accomplishments of his reign—the provision of water supply to the capital, the construction of the Laxmi Vilas Palace, the building of the Baroda College, the Public Park, the Government Offices, many schools and dispensaries etc. He had reminded his audience that in the Prants, too, there was progress in the building of public infrastructure, the most notable among them being the construction of the railroad in Kadi—“one only, let us hope, of many railway-branches in the future”.¹⁹¹

There were other measures of progress undertaken by the State to which Sayajirao Gaekwad III might have made an allusion if he did not have the desire to limit himself to the actual accomplishments, which were more or less completed. In 1885 he gave an important order with regard to the land settlement of his State. Regarding land settlement, he assigned F.A.H. Elliot the task of tackling the question of *Barkhali* lands which were an evil legacy left by the past Gaekwads and these lands were nearly or wholly tax-free lands. These lands were recklessly granted by erstwhile Gaekwads for religious purposes or rewarded to persons who may have rendered real or imaginary services. These alienated lands were held by not only

¹⁸⁸ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 48.

¹⁸⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 60.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁹¹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 80.

Gaekwads but several officials too whose entitlement to them was ambiguous. Maharaja Anandrao Gaekwad and Sayajirao Gaekwad II had strived to stop the further grant of such lands. Khanderao Gaekwad went a step further and made a demand for quit-rent from lands which were genuinely alienated while at the same time he refused to give recognition to recent sales or mortgages of *Barkhali* lands. Fresh grants of *Barkhali* lands were made by Malharrao Gaekwad in order to express his pious gratitude after he recovered from illness. This created a situation wherein in the beginning of 1875 nearly one-tenth of the villages in the Baroda State were under *Barkhali* tenure and thus free from taxation. The task of finding a remedy to this situation and of rectifying it fell on the shoulders of Elliot. He accomplished the task expeditiously when in 1889 there was an introduction of legislation on the subject.¹⁹²

Elliot thus became the pioneer in the Baroda State who organized the Survey and Settlement Department along scientific lines and laid the foundation for future improvements by adopting the well-tried Ryotwari System.¹⁹³

From the peasant's point of view such a reform was beneficial. In the new land revenue settlement there was "security of tenure and definition of rights where formerly there had been confusion".¹⁹⁴ The new settlement abolished payment in kind, decreased the current land revenue and placed taxes equitably in accordance with the nature of the soil. The tenant was thus placed in a much better position because he could now cultivate the land without stress since the Government had fixed his dues and also agreed to respect his rights.¹⁹⁵

Domestic Life—Europe and Further Reforms

Sayajirao Gaekwad III was leading a happy life with his first wife Chimnabai I. She gave birth to two daughters in July 1881 and June 1882 but both of them died as infants. On 3 August, 1883 she gave birth to a son and heir who was named Fatesingrao.¹⁹⁶

On 7 May, 1885 Chimnabai I expired. Sayajirao Gaekwad III who had a deep attachment for her was so dejected by her death that he began to suffer from insomnia thereafter and his doctors advised him to go to Europe for a change which he did. "For long he remembered Chimnabai", writes V.K. Chavda, "the mild, charitable and amiable woman, the devoted

¹⁹² Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁹³ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 45.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

mother and the loving wife who left a deep void in his life”.¹⁹⁷ The central hall of the *Nyay Mandir* is adorned by her statue, and a clock tower keeps her name and memory alive even today.¹⁹⁸

As the Maharaja entered a state of pensive sadness and days passed melancholically, Jamnabai was filled with anxiety and made a suggestion to him to marry again to which he agreed albeit with reluctance. The quest for a suitable bride began and eventually Gajrabai, a 14-year old princess belonging to the small State of Dewas in central India was selected and the wedding took place on 28 May, 1885 and she was known as Chimnabai II.¹⁹⁹

The high-born Maratha clans of those times considered that education for girls was for the common people and somehow adversely reflected on the lineage. Sayajirao Gaekwad III did not agree with this view and decided to educate his new wife and devised a scheme for her studies and appointed two women teachers who had the responsibility of teaching her both Marathi and English.²⁰⁰

The program was similar to what was drawn up by F.A.H. Elliot and Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao for Sayajirao Gaekwad III, because according to his biographer Apte, poor Chimnabai was finding it very difficult to keep pace with her studies and even her teachers were finding it difficult to teach her; therefore Sayajirao Gaekwad III terminated the services of the two teachers after a year or so later.²⁰¹

But this does not mean that Sayajirao Gaekwad III had dropped the program of educating his wife. It continued in some way or another for many years until Chimnabai became a completely well-educated and skilled lady who was more than capable of maintaining her position in any society. Being both beautiful and self-assured she adopted a domineering attitude whenever she wanted and unlike Sayajirao Gaekwad III’s first wife, she was never satisfied in playing second fiddle to her husband.²⁰²

“For himself”, writes Fatesinghrao P. Gaekwad, “Sayajirao’s vigorous programme of self-improvement had worked wonders”.²⁰³ In his letter to his Diwan, Qazi Shahabuddin, sent just

¹⁹⁷ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 75.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Fatesinghrao P. Gaekwad (1989), *Sayajirao of Baroda: The Prince and the Man*, pp. 106-107.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 107.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

after his second marriage he laments impatiently with regard to the immense lack of education among the most influential Indian princes and expresses grief that they are prone to making significant concessions to the British in return for “empty-titles”.²⁰⁴

The conclusion of the above statement is that Sayajirao Gaekwad III was too shrewd a monarch to be lured by such schemes. A random sampling of the Maharaja’s letters of the year 1886, when he was twenty-three years old and had reigned for four years only display his remarkable maturity in comprehending how the minds of the officials of the Raj worked, and disclose his own modesty and reticence with regard to the kind of attitude he should adopt when dealing with them. The other things that one can decipher from his letters is that he had a motivation for initiating reforms, he could deal tactfully with elderly employees without hurting their feelings and he was gifted enough to deal with embarrassing situations.²⁰⁵

Once Sayajirao Gaekwad III was in Umreth when a new AGG, Colonel Berkley, had arrived in Baroda and, in a friendly gesture, Sayajirao Gaekwad III invited him for a stay “if you can find it possible and agreeable to yourself”.²⁰⁶

Berkley was certainly not the kind of official who could have responded to such an informal invitation gracefully because that would have violated the rigid protocol that demanded the formal exchange of visits on an AGG’s arrival. Not only did he not find it pleasing to go to Umreth but when he found out that Sayajirao Gaekwad III was likely to return to Baroda by 27 May in order to be present at the ceremonies associated with his accession day, he made what was tantamount to a formal protest to the Diwan that the Maharaja had planned his return in such a way because he had a deliberate intention of avoiding participation in the functions arranged by the Residency for celebrating the birthday of Queen Victoria which was on 24 May.²⁰⁷

In the days of the British Raj the birthdays of the British monarch were important occasions and if an official or a prince failed to attend one it was tantamount to disloyalty to the British Empire or even worse. When Sayajirao Gaekwad III heard about the Resident’s formal protest he reassured him that he did not intend to remain absent for the birthday of Queen

²⁰⁴ Gaekwad, *Sayajirao of Baroda*, p. 107.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 109.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 109-110.

Victoria and terminated prematurely his stay at Umreth by three days because “it did not take much to bruise official egos”.²⁰⁸

Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao had taught the Maharaja that whenever the Residency made a vigorous protest it was wise for the native prince to give in. And Sayajirao Gaekwad III gave in perhaps not willingly, but as one can decipher from his letter to his Diwan, more since it was his duty towards the British Raj; at this stage of his career he did not possess the pugnacity that was characteristic of his relations with the Raj in later years.²⁰⁹

And indeed if Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao would have visited Baroda at this time he would have emphatically approved of a number of things. All the reforms initiated by him and those avoided by him, all the public works planned by him to be executed and those not thought of by him, had either been completed or were exemplarily dispatched.²¹⁰

The organization of its police force by the Baroda State was based on the British Indian pattern, the policemen were clad in businesslike uniforms and given instructions about their duties and responsibilities; the Baroda State also organized a separate Criminal Investigation Department. There was also reorganization by the Baroda State of its army which now received training under British instructors. “Of the 3,000 soldiers rendered jobless by the disbandment of the Baroda contingent”, writes Fatesinghrao P. Gaekwad, “about half were absorbed in the State’s regular army; a few in the police, and those who could not be absorbed were given pensions or gratuities”.²¹¹

A separate department of public sanitation was organized which hitherto had been totally neglected. There was an expansion of medical facilities during the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III with the State providing dispensaries in the smaller towns and hospitals having plentiful supply of equipment and sufficient staff in the bigger towns.²¹²

One particular reform undertaken by the Baroda State which Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao would not have favored and found it too radical was the separation of the executive from the judiciary. Till now, the revenue officials of the Baroda State, like revenue officials of British India, enjoyed the powers of a magistrate and thus performed dual functions of judges as well as prosecutors of the people. This particular abnormality in the system had survived from

²⁰⁸ Gaekwad, *Sayajirao of Baroda*, p. 110.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid., p. 111.

ancient times into the colonial period when various functions were performed by one government official. Even though it was an outdated practice the British found it useful in their provinces in order to deal with political agitators whom they could give summary punishment without undergoing the necessary judicial proceedings. Based on the theory that “what was good for British India was good for the Indian states”,²¹³ this anomaly was prevalent in virtually all princely states. Baroda became the first state which abolished it.²¹⁴

One cannot assess the real scope of this reform today except by comparing it with the time it took for its introduction in other parts of India where the commencement of the process did not take place till sixty years later. One can very well understand that the British did not have any anxiety of weakening their administrators. But even the members of the Indian National Congress who had virulently criticized the British for providing their officials with these quite supra-legal powers, were in no hurry for their abolition once they found out that these powers could be useful for them in order to deal with their enemies. It was not until the nineteen-fifties that rising public criticism impelled some of the Indian provinces to introduce legislation for separating the judiciary from the executive branch of the government.²¹⁵

“Oddly enough”, writes Fatesinghrao P. Gaekwad, “the quite feudal privileges granted by earlier Gaekwads to certain favoured families had become a field for British interference”.²¹⁶ This was because during Malharrao Gaekwad’s reign, the Residents had given clandestine encouragement to these families that they should bring their real or imagined complaints against the Maharaja to them, and the habit continued indefinitely into Sayajirao Gaekwad III’s reign. From the day he acquired full ruling powers, Sayajirao Gaekwad III had given clear cut instructions to all his subjects “that the Residency was not some kind of a court of appeals over his administration”.²¹⁷ However, it took the Maharaja years to break the habit of some of his subjects to run to the Residency every time they felt they had been treated unjustly by the Baroda Government.²¹⁸

The second marriage failed to cure the Maharaja’s insomnia.²¹⁹ The Maharaja spent three weeks in Ceylon staying at the Hotel Mount Lavinia there. From Colombo he proceeded to

²¹³ Gaekwad, *Sayajirao of Baroda*, p. 111.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 111-112.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 113.

²¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 113-114.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 114.

²¹⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 72.

Mahabaleshwar in the quest for curing his insomnia. However he was unsuccessful because he wrote from Mahabaleshwar to his brother Sampatrao in England on 11 April, 1887 that he was still suffering from weight loss and insomnia and had decided to completely rest for six months.²²⁰ He eventually consulted Dr. Sir William Moore in Bombay who diagnosed the illness as neurasthenia and recommended a trip to Europe.²²¹

At that time it was a revolutionary idea because the social customs of the orthodox Hindus prohibited the crossing of the *Kala Pani* or the black waters of the oceans. The fact that he had sent his brother Sampatrao as a student to England was itself a shock for Hindu traditionalists. And a Hindu Maharaja crossing the ocean proved to be still greater shock.²²²

He now assigned the responsibility of running the day-to-day administration of his State to his Diwan, Laxman Jagannatha Vaidya (who was the successor of Qazi Shahabuddin) and sailed from Bombay on 31 May, 1887. Accompanying him were the Maharani, a private physician, Prince Fatesingrao and a suite of some 50 people. His first trip was unique in the sense that on his later trips he was accompanied by not more than 6 persons. But as yet he was unable to do without all the ceremonies and rituals which he was expected to perform as a Maharaja. He was fully aware of the fact that he could not shatter old customs in one blow.²²³

If one reads his later brief travel diary (May 1900) one gets a sense of how emotional some of his subjects and relatives had become on the eve of his first European trip. In Baroda people were reluctant to let him travel at all.²²⁴ His travel diary reveals that the people who were present at his departure were filled with “expressions of deep sorrow and tears in their eyes”.²²⁵ Moreover, his adopted mother and aunts were deeply anguished and in tears and looked forward to the voyage Sayajirao Gaekwad III was undertaking with great apprehension. This was owing to “the unknown country which he was visiting, the strange food and water, the different ways of society”.²²⁶ They begged him, however, to only keep his health in mind, and not to bother about the affairs of the State until he was fine again.²²⁷

²²⁰ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 82-83.

²²¹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 73.

²²² Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 83.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid., pp. 83-84.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 84.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

The life on board the ship was also problematic because to make arrangements for 'purdah' women was a big headache. Subsequently, in Europe, especially in Continental Europe, hotel managers flatly refused to give them rooms on any terms and hence the royal suite had to incur heavy expenses in hiring private houses whose owners in turn fleeced them in various ways.²²⁸ Moreover, Indian cooking and the resultant smell of onions and garlic "offended the susceptibilities of the house owners".²²⁹

The royal suite went via Italy, France, Switzerland and eventually reached England. Sayajirao Gaekwad III met Queen Victoria at Windsor on 2 December, 1887 and was decorated with the title of Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India (G.C.S.I).²³⁰

He then visited Europe again in quick succession in 1888, 1891 and 1893. On the fifth trip in 1893 while on the one hand the Maharaja had health concerns, on the other hand the Government of India was showing signs of nervousness on the frequency of his often long absences from his State. A disagreeable environment was gradually being created.²³¹ Being ignorant of what was happening behind his back, Sayajirao Gaekwad III wrote an enthusiastic letter to Lord Lansdowne, where he vividly described the benefit and enjoyment he had derived from the trip. He gave a detailed description of the impressive "scenery in the country, the pictures and other works of art in the towns, the theatres, cafes and other distractions of Continental life".²³² It was precisely these very attractions which induced an Indian prince to visit Europe that the Government of India wished to take precautions against. This uneasiness was behind the curbs that the British Government put on the European tours of Indian princes. This resulted in estrangement of relations between the British Government and the Baroda State. The uneasiness of the British Government over the overseas excursions of Sayajirao Gaekwad III could be seen in Lord Lansdowne's reply.²³³

These European tours of the Maharaja in turn had a cumulative effect on his mind; "each like the other with differences of experience and differences of suggestion".²³⁴ These tours brought the Maharaja in incessant touch with other races, different religions and several civilizations which freed his mind from bigotry and orthodoxy. A curious occasion reveals

²²⁸ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, pp. 75-76.

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 76.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 84.

²³¹ Ibid., p. 86.

²³² Ibid., p. 87.

²³³ Ibid., p. 86.

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 87.

what was stirring his soul. It so happened that his nephew when he was a schoolboy at Rugby in England wrote an astonishing letter to him asking his immediate approval to convert to Christianity. In his reply the Maharaja wrote to his nephew—"that every good influence should be brought to bear in the interests of truthfulness, straightforwardness, and all the manly virtues; but this is not to be coloured by any tinge of religious sentiment of a denominational character".²³⁵ To him the most important religion was "the love of one's country".²³⁶

Impressions of Europe

The West had exercised a tremendous influence on him and there was an anxiety in him for the introduction of some of its institutions and methods in his own State. At the level of a householder there was an urge in him to furnish his new palace, the Laxmi Vilas Palace, with the latest amenities of Europe.²³⁷

There are letters from Sayajirao Gaekwad III giving instructions to his Chief Engineer for the installation of elevators in his palace and also "electric bells for summoning the servants".²³⁸ Then again there are letters which contain a detailed description of a method of road construction he had observed in Europe, and suggest trying it out in Baroda. He wants submission of proposals for the provision of both gas and electricity for his capital and for the extension of the railway line of the state. "He orders that Cassell's dictionary of Cookery should be translated into Marathi", writes Fatesinghrao P. Gaekwad, "presumably for the use of palace cooks, but also orders that a number of English classics should be similarly translated for the use of his subjects".²³⁹

But the greatest impact of his tours of Europe was that he began to attack the caste system. His European tours brought the Maharaja under the influence of latitudinarianism. In replying to an address to the Arya Samaj at Lahore in 1904 he said:

²³⁵ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, pp. 87-88.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 88.

²³⁷ Gaekwad, *Sayajirao of Baroda*, p. 121.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

“Religions may differ in minor points but their ultimate essence and basis is the same. The cardinal principles in all religions are similar: religions differ chiefly in their details. We are all children of the same Almighty Father and inhabitants of the same globe”.²⁴⁰

He also denounced the caste system.

“No institution has wrought so much mischief and done such incalculable harm to our country as this unfortunate irrational system of caste. There should be no such rights attaching to mere birth as associated with it by the caste system. Equality of opportunities must be enjoyed by all classes of people. Social status should not be determined simply by the inseparable accident of birth; lower and poorer classes—lower and poorer not in the religious and the moral scale, but in that of material well-being—should not be debarred from their rights as human beings. It is shameful and disgraceful that the lower castes have fallen largely on account of the selfishness of our ancestors”.²⁴¹

By declaring a war on the caste system the Maharaja showed his sympathy for the weaker and deprived sections of Indian society. His attack on caste prejudices also encouraged more Hindus to travel abroad without fear of its terrifying consequences and bring back the knowledge acquired there for the benefit of their own country.

The Maharani and the Children

“On her return from Europe”, writes V.K. Chavda, “Chimnabai gave birth to a son on May 12, 1888. He was called Jayasinh Rao. Thereafter, within the next five years, she gave birth to three more children. Shivaji Rao was born on July 31, 1890; Indira Raje, the Maharaja’s only daughter, was born on March 1, 1892; and the youngest Dhairyashil Rao, was born on August 31, 1893”.²⁴² While he was filled with joy on the additions to the family, in the subsequent five years he was saddened by the loss of his adopted mother and sister. The death of Tarabai occurred on 14 June, 1897 while Jamnabai expired soon after on 29 November, 1898. The Maharaja was greatly indebted to Jamnabai and for the character of which he had high regard and respect as well as love. Thus both the female companions with whom he had spent the domestic life of his boyhood days were taken away from him.²⁴³

The death of three of Sayajirao Gaekwad III’s sons occurred during his lifetime; his daughter married against her parents’ wishes and her husband expired during the lifetime of Sayajirao

²⁴⁰ Sayaji Rao Gaekwar (1928), *Speeches & Addresses of His Highness Sayaji Rao III, Maharaja of Baroda: 1877-1927*, p. 131.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 132.

²⁴² Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 80.

²⁴³ Ibid.

Gaekwad III. The Maharaja married Prince Fatesingrao to a princess named Padmavati of Phaltan in the Satara district on 4 February, 1904 but the couple separated after four years of married life. Soon the death of Fatesingrao took place due to neuritis and a widow, two daughters and an infant son were left behind by him. This infant son, owing to a series of deaths in the family, became the heir-apparent. Sayajirao Gaekwad III's personal physician and friend Dr. Batukram Mehta died in 1903 and his place was taken by his doctor-son Sumant Mehta.²⁴⁴

Plague, the Revolt of Pilwai and Famine

The epidemic of plague in 1896-97, the Revolt of Pilwai in 1897-98, the worst famine of 1899, known in Gujarat as *Chhappanio*, and the lean year of 1900 were a severe test not only for the ability of the State administration to deal with crisis situations but also the ruler's endurance and strength of character.²⁴⁵

Plague had already taken Bombay city within its grip in 1896, where its manifestation had astonished the authorities and they were unable to deal with it. Since plague is a contagious disease, suitable actions were taken for segregation of affected persons which worsened the situation because it made people suspicious and consequently led to trouble. These troubles prevented the Government from taking inoculative measures which resulted in the spread of the epidemic to the territories of the neighboring Baroda State and even reaching its capital. What made things difficult even for the Baroda State was the spread of rumors and fantastic stories based on hearsay. Unlike Bombay, Baroda State was lucky enough since there was no arousal of religious susceptibilities here; nevertheless the State Government had looking at the experience of Bombay taken the necessary steps in order to inhibit this from happening. In spite of these measures the epidemic caused widespread death of people and lived in their memories for a long time.²⁴⁶

Soon after the plague epidemic subsided the Revolt of Pilwai occurred in north Gujarat. Here the new revenue settlements were challenged after the failure of remonstrances, petitions and appeals. With a well-armed populace ready to take on the State Army, the situation was reminiscent of a medieval battle scene and eventually the military was called in to crush the Revolt. The Maharaja was advised by the Resident to pacify the people and he followed the

²⁴⁴ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 92.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

²⁴⁶ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, pp. 137-142.

Resident's advice to a large extent though the Revolt led to the eventual annexation of the territory. For those living in medieval times it was an opportune lesson, but the crushing of the Revolt of Pilwai proved a costly affair for the Maharaja since it incurred an expenditure of two lakhs of rupees for the State exchequer.²⁴⁷

Then a natural calamity visited the Baroda State. In people's memory the famine of 1899 was the most flagrant in its severity. The extent of its severity was so widespread that even if the machinery of the State had put at stake all its possible resources it would have been unable to preclude the heavy toll of life taken by the famine. Relief works and test works acted as an ameliorator of human suffering only to a limited extent. The worst hit Prant of the Baroda State was Kadi. The famine code devised by the Government of India was adopted and implemented in the State by the Famine Commissioner Jamshedji Ardeskar Dalal. However, administrative lapses proved to be a major roadblock in its application. In 1900 the Baroda State undertook one of its major relief projects when it constructed a dam on the river Orsang near Jojwa for the irrigation of some 14,000 acres of land. The Maharaja toured the Prants of Amreli, Baroda and Navsari and he witnessed the extent of damage the famine had done. In the end the State administration did its best to inhibit large scale deaths of humans and cattle. The famine cost the State exchequer 47 lakhs of rupees and the Maharaja donated Rs. 3.50 lakhs from his own pocket.²⁴⁸

In 1900 after the famine was over the Maharaja addressed his people on the inauguration of the Orsang Irrigation Waterworks. He declared that the Government was prepared to play its part:

“But whatever encouragement and help the Government may give, it can do nothing unless there is self-help from the people. Education by instruction and example is the great begetter of self-help. But it is the misfortune of India that its educated sons choose to be as helpless and unenterprising as the ignorant....They must begin to work out new careers for themselves in a spirit of manliness and self-reliance. Then only can any sensible improvement take place. When education, enterprise and self-help, backed by the assistance and encouragement of States and Governments, unite, then will begin an era which will speedily make such lamentable experiences as the present year's a thing antiquated and impossible”.²⁴⁹

The Bapat Case

²⁴⁷ Stanley Rice (1931), *Life of Sayaji Rao III: Maharaja of Baroda*, Vol. II, pp. 28-29.

²⁴⁸ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, pp. 142-154.

²⁴⁹ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 47.

In 1893, during his fifth trip, he had to hand over the reins of his government including all his powers to the Council. The Diwan, Manibhai Jashbhai, proved to be a gentle and conciliatory man for the self-willed and obstinate Resident, Colonel Biddulph, who had a deep-seated aversion for Elliot. In this year there was an agitation in the vernacular papers with regard to an episode known as the 'Bapat Case'. In this episode the press supported the Diwan as a good man and the Maharaja was believed to be in bad company and obstructing justice. The tumultuous situation was created so it is said by the enemies of Elliot who had found an opportune moment to defame him. Elliot had an employee in his Survey and Settlement Department named Vasudeva Sadashiva Bapat, who was considered his right-hand man. In 1894, the Diwan received a letter from the Resident in which the latter wrote that he had received complaints charging Bapat with corruption. As the charge was given publicity by the *Ahmedabad Times*, it became imperative that for the preservation of the fair name of Baroda the Maharaja would expect the Council to take action. It seems this letter led to a sensation in the Council and as a result there began a long correspondence between the Resident, the Council and the Maharaja. This correspondence resulted in a Commission of Inquiry being ordered. A good deal of publicity and public attention was acquired by the proceedings of the Commission because famous lawyers like Bhaishankar Nanabhai for the State and Bal Gangadhar Tilak for Bapat fought their battle in the Commission proceedings. Throughout the proceedings, the Maharaja was not at all happy in the manner in which the Council had taken action on being ordered to do so by the Resident. Before the occurrence of this incident Sayajirao Gaekwad III wrote a letter to Qazi Shahabuddin stating that his officers were far more scared of this Residency now than he had ever seen in the past. In the case of Bapat to a certain extent there was miscarriage of justice as certain papers he had asked for were not provided to him, nor was he permitted to have a legal counsel of his choice. On Sayajirao Gaekwad III's return, the case was thoroughly dealt with and Bapat was acquitted even though the Commission's report was not in his favor. However, 'for reasons of State policy' he was relieved of his duties and was granted a small pension in favorable recognition of his services to the State. The Residency was appalled at the reversion of verdict. The way the Diwan had handled the situation at the cost of his sovereign's image had made the Maharaja unhappy with him and therefore he advised him to resign. Elliot was transferred by the colonial government in 1896. Thus all the three principal actors of the drama were purged from the Baroda State. However, the Bapat Case had done enormous damage to the

reputation of the Baroda State. The case had thrown the State machinery into confusion and enfeebled the central authority.²⁵⁰ According to Stanley Rice the Bapat Case was “a trial of strength between the Marathi and Gujarati parties in the State”.²⁵¹ One cannot deny Stanley Rice’s opinion as this type of narrow communalism, howsoever ugly, existed in the State and again showed its manifestation in January 1939 when a tumult between the two communities took place. The Bapat Case could have been the manifestation of hostility between two Englishmen, Biddulph and Elliot and owing to the proximity of Sayajirao Gaekwad III with the latter between the Resident and the Maharaja also.

The Bapat Case made Sayajirao Gaekwad III a victim of terrible loneliness. He was extremely terrified and repugnant to take any part in the government. As he put it, he even doubted himself and felt perplexed and did not know what he should do. He felt the Residency had treated him like a drum to play upon and whatever best he intended to do for the State was frustrated.²⁵² At the same time to avoid hurting the susceptibilities of the colonial administration any further and to lead them to treat him embarrassingly he did not visit Europe till 1900. In that year the doctors advised Chimnabai to undergo a major operation for which Sayajirao Gaekwad III had to take her to Europe. It was rather unfortunate that a still bigger shock, humiliation and confrontation were in store for him in this trip.²⁵³

The Curzon Circular; and the 1903 Durbar

Both Sayajirao Gaekwad III and Chimnabai left for Europe in May 1900. Three months later appeared what is known as the ‘Curzon Circular’ dated August 1900. The Curzon Circular stated that the Indian princes needed to obtain prior permission of the Government of India before going abroad. The new Viceroy, Lord Curzon, had earlier raised the issue in a speech he delivered at Gwalior, but it did not draw any attention. In his speech Lord Curzon said:²⁵⁴

“The Native Chief has become by our policy an integral factor in the Imperial organization of India.... I claim him as my colleague and partner. He cannot remain *vis-à-vis* the Empire a loyal subject of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress and *vis-à-vis* his own people a frivolous and irresponsible despot. He must justify and not abuse the authority committed to him; he must be the servant as well as the

²⁵⁰ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 82-84.

²⁵¹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 165.

²⁵² Ibid., pp. 167-168.

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 179.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 180.

master of his people.... His figure should not merely be known on the polo ground or on the race course or in the European hotel. These may be his relaxations and I do not say that they are not legitimate relaxations; but his real work, his princely duty, lies among his people”.²⁵⁵

The Circular was certainly, not particularly directed against Sayajirao Gaekwad III or against any individual. However, as he was on his sixth trip and was actually in London at the time it was issued, it seemed to apply particularly in his case.²⁵⁶ Thereafter, the premier newspaper of the Empire *The Times* of London openly mentioned his name in its issue of 25 August, 1900 where it published the gist of the Circular received from its Shimla correspondent. “He had added that”, writes V.K. Chavda, “the letter should have a good effect on chiefs such as the Gaekwar of Baroda and the Maharaja of Kapurthala, who had acquired the habit of constantly visiting Europe and leaving their States in charge of their Dewans”.²⁵⁷ Two days later, in an editorial of the same paper there was an endorsement of these views.²⁵⁸

A further cause of perturbation was given by the refusal of Lord Curzon to attend a State reception when he was passing through Baroda early in August. The Viceroy demanded the Maharaja in person should receive him in the following November; however, on health grounds the royal couple was precluded from coming back to India in November.²⁵⁹

On examining Lord Curzon’s letter four points emerge:

- 1) Repeated absences from India would be regarded as a dereliction of duty.
- 2) The criterion was not private convenience but personal and public advantage.
- 3) Early renewals of such sanction were to be deprecated; such journeys should be far apart.
- 4) The effects of foreign travel upon character and habits were to be watched.²⁶⁰

Although the Maharaja found the clauses of the letter or familiarly known as a circular to be distasteful, it must be said to be fair, that the circular was justified. The British Government protected the position of Indian Native State rulers from internal as well as external threats and they were assured of adequate financial assets to lead an opulent lifestyle which came many a times at the cost of judicious administration of their States. With two or three

²⁵⁵ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 180.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 181.

²⁵⁷ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 85.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 85-86.

²⁵⁹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 105-106.

²⁶⁰ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 182.

exceptions most of the Indian Native State rulers had failed to live up to the requisite standard of an enlightened ruler. Although the administration of the Baroda State was sound, nevertheless, its ruler was an 'absentee ruler'.²⁶¹

The Maharaja felt that the position and dignity of an Indian prince was seriously compromised by the circular.²⁶² "We are all supposed to be Chiefs", he exclaimed, "but we are treated as worse than paid servants".²⁶³ Sayajirao Gaekwad III felt extremely dejected by the Curzon Circular and wrote letters to two of his friends and well-wishers expressing his feelings and they in turn replied by frankly giving their opinions. Dadabhai Naoroji counseled that such steps would lead to an elimination of all excuse for intervention which was inevitable in a State like Baroda instead of fighting it. Behramji Malbari's views were more forthright. He replied that he doubted the wisdom of Sayajirao Gaekwad III who was making himself sad with an incessant tussle with the British Government.²⁶⁴ He even showed Sayajirao Gaekwad III how much reasonable or otherwise his argument was when he said "this last trip to England was a mistake, his staying over there after inviting the Viceroy was a worse mistake.... There may be enemies in the camp; but the Maharaja is his own worst enemy".²⁶⁵

The Diwan was discreet enough to silently accept the circular because he knew nothing fruitful would transpire by opposing it. But Sayajirao Gaekwad III was adamant and the State made a formal protest. However, the Government of India refused to amend the circular and the Diwan's prudence came to be true. Nevertheless, time proved to be a great healer. In 1909, the successor of Lord Curzon, Lord Minto, in order to reestablish friendly relations with the Native States in the wake of the Morley-Minto Reforms made desirable amendments to the circular and it was altogether withdrawn in 1920.²⁶⁶

It was also felt in British circles that the Maharaja had been repeatedly referring to his health for years now and though it was just and fair, it began to seem deceitful to those Britishers who saw him return to Baroda seemingly well enough to administer his State. These British officials had seen him living in India and even at Baroda for years and therefore for obvious

²⁶¹ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 86-87.

²⁶² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 183.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 183-184.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 184.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 185.

reasons asked whether living in Europe was the only panacea and they further saw that he was not still that sick that he would be unable to bear the climate of India.²⁶⁷

The way the Imperial Durbar of 1 January, 1903 was arranged for the celebration of the coronation of King Edward VII caused heartburn to Sayajirao Gaekwad III and also to the other Native Princes of India. The Government of India dispatched a letter to him through the medium of the Acting Resident at Baroda, Captain Carnegie, asking for his observations. He gave his observations but they failed to satisfy Captain Carnegie who felt that they would be unacceptable. The Maharaja, therefore, asked his secretary, Manubhai Mehta, who soon became one of the best Diwans of Baroda, to write and transmit his viewpoint to his own administration.²⁶⁸

The main problem was that the Government of India had a desire that the Princes should participate in an elephant procession at the Durbar. Sayajirao Gaekwad III raised objections to this, but later remonstrated that he was reluctant to join the procession which was interpreted as being disrespectful to the King-Emperor.²⁶⁹ “His Highness”, wrote his secretary, “is ready to withdraw his refusal, and would join the procession as if he were not asked about it at all; but it seems to him very hard that he should pretend to do willingly, spontaneously, as if it were of his own accord, what is only forced upon him under the threat of insult.... As regards the plea that His Highness is now in the good grace of the Government of India or of Anglo-Indian society, His Highness is aware that argument will always be brought forward when his hands are to be forced and he is to be coerced into a certain line of action”.²⁷⁰

He dispatched another letter, which he signed himself, to his Diwan, R.V. Damnaskar. “It is more than needless”, he protested, “to bring in the person of H.M. the Emperor into this question, as it would be a folly, to say the least, to entertain the notion of any disrespect towards him. It is most inconvenient that such official matters should be so mixed up with questions of one’s feelings towards high personages.... I may suggest that I am more in favour of the ceremonies observed when Lord Lytton arrived at Delhi at the time of the

²⁶⁷ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. I, p. 186.

²⁶⁸ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 109.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 109-110.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 110.

Imperial Durbar of 1877 than the present procedure, which, it seems to me, is lacking in respect towards the Native Princes". (Letter of August 27th, 1902).²⁷¹

We think it is correct that some attention be devoted to this dispute, since it is an illustration of one of the Maharaja's evident characteristic—that he insisted on maintaining the rights and dignity of the Native Princes, and opposed innovations designed to diminish these. Obviously this kind of an attitude is not in any way incompatible with absolute fidelity to the Paramount Power. It is rather unfortunate, however, that during the regime of Lord Curzon there was an inclination to misconstrue the attitude; and there was an administration of a number of pinpricks, which were not calculated as such but which unavoidably led to some reaction. One of these was an authoritative decision which forbade the servants and followers of the Gaekwad from using their regular scarlet livery at Delhi. If Sayajirao Gaekwad III would have tactfully handled the issue without a shadow of doubt the creation of indignant feelings against a ruling for discarding the livery of the State on this ceremonial occasion could have been certainly avoided.²⁷²

The conception of the great Durbar of 1903 was genuinely patriotic. Being a national pageant, held in glorification of the King-Emperor, and meant for unifying India with the Empire in a sort of "thanksgiving service"²⁷³ it was also meant for rivaling and indeed surpassing the Durbar of Lord Lytton held in 1877, where there was a proclamation of Queen Victoria as the Empress of India. However, the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, who had a peculiar personality managed to take center stage, and there were many in India at that time who with malicious intentions felt that it was being held to glorify, not King Edward VII, but Lord Curzon. Despite underground rumblings, the great Assembly, burying its private exasperations, splendidly demonstrated its fidelity to the Throne. However the Maharaja, conscious of his own dignified position, and willing to pay homage to the Sovereign at all times, did not intend to pay homage to Lord Curzon. The Nizam of Hyderabad came near the stage, bowed, and preceded on his way.²⁷⁴ The Nizam was followed by Sayajirao Gaekwad III who had a feeling that the occasion demanded "something more than mere formality".²⁷⁵ According to the official chronicle of the Durbar, "he asked the Viceroy to convey to His

²⁷¹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 110-111.

²⁷² Ibid., p. 111.

²⁷³ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 111.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 111-112.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 112.

Majesty the King-Emperor his hearty and loyal congratulations on his Coronation, and his good wishes for the New Year”.²⁷⁶

Sayajirao Gaekwad III once again clashed with Lord Curzon in April 1904, the issue this time being the Imperial Service troops and the changes that the Viceroy had in his mind with regard to it and about which he had written to the Indian princes. The Maharaja sent a suitable reply by enclosing a long and well-reasoned memorandum, in drafting which he had without a shadow of doubt sought the advice of experts, although the ideas were his own. The Maharaja pointed out that the Imperial Service in India originated as “a spontaneous and individual offer by various Princes in 1889, as a result of the Russian scare four years earlier, he said that now it was asked that the Indian ruling chiefs should acknowledge the obligation to assist the British Government with money or troops in defending, not the Indian dominions of the Crown only, but all foreign interests of the Empire”.²⁷⁷

“The creation of the new obligation proposed”, writes Philip W. Sergeant, “would seem to demand the concession of a corresponding privilege, a recognised voice in the councils of the Empire. The privilege is the natural corollary of any general military federation, and would alone justify the creation of new burdens”.²⁷⁸

The formation of a Conference of Princes for the consideration of the matter was suggested which was welcomed and when this idea blossomed into the scheme for the “Council of Princes” the Maharaja supported it with consistency.²⁷⁹

The Silver Jubilee

Sayajirao Gaekwad III completed the silver jubilee of his rule in 1906. It was during his seventh European trip in 1905-06 that the Secretary of State for India, Lord Morley, rebuked him for his long absence from India. This again reminded him in a crude way that the British Government was not happy with his European tours. He traveled to the USA from England and in November 1906 he returned to Baroda. The Maharaja celebrated his silver jubilee from 5 March to 10 March 1907. The celebrations included many other things, but the torchlight procession proved very popular. In front of the public park, an equestrian statue of the Maharaja was placed, and the Maharaja threw open to the people of Baroda, a new public

²⁷⁶ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 112.

²⁷⁷ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 113-114.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 114.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

park in the heart of the city called Jubilee Bagh. It was in 1907 only that the Baroda throne was shifted from the old Sarkar Wada to the Laxmi Vilas Palace, whilst the family deity of the Gaekwads was shifted from the same place and reinstated at Indumati Mahal.²⁸⁰

In 1909 the Viceroy, Lord Minto, was received by the Maharaja and the atmosphere in Baroda was filled with mirth.²⁸¹

Sedition and the Delhi Durbar

There was a rise in revolutionary and terrorist activities in India between the years 1907 and 1911 and the Government of India had to adopt certain severe measures in order to curb them. The Government sought the cooperation of the Indian princely states in order to accomplish this task. In this connection Lord Minto wrote a letter to Sayajirao Gaekwad III on 6 August, 1908 in which he made certain observations that it was beyond doubt that seditious elements were making an attempt to consolidate their position in princely states, wherefrom they had the intention of creating trouble for the Government of India and there was an urgent need to curb such activities.²⁸² Lord Minto therefore sent an invitation to the Maharaja for “a full, frank, and friendly discussion between us at this juncture on the question how best to keep sedition out of Native States”.²⁸³ The British bureaucracy severely criticized Sayajirao Gaekwad III’s reply to the letter written by Lord Minto. The tone of the Maharaja was that whilst he fully agreed with the Viceroy that there was a need for joint action because both the Governments had a common interest there, nevertheless, he was unaware of sedition in other States. He made it clear to the Government of India that he had failed in his efforts to extract information on sedition in other States.²⁸⁴ “It is obviously the duty of every Government”, he wrote to Lord Minto, “to stamp out the forces which make for anarchy and sedition”.²⁸⁵

The newspapers immediately flashed the news to the Baroda Government’s astonishment. The Calcutta correspondent of *The Times* on 27 January, 1910 observed that all the chiefs with one prominent exception gave unqualified assurance to the Viceroy in reply to his letter in question. The exception was the Gaekwad of Baroda who, it was reported, disclaimed

²⁸⁰ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 92-93.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 93.

²⁸² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 1-3.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 3.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

knowledge of the extent to which seditious activities had spread in the princely states and gave only a qualified assurance of his readiness to respond to any reasonable call for assistance against seditious activities.²⁸⁶

“Sir Valentine Chirol, commenting on the replies of the Princes, says:²⁸⁷

With the exception of the Gaekwar, whose reply, without striking any note of substantial dissent, is marked by a certain coolness that has won for him the applause of the Nationalist Press, they responded heartily to the Viceroy’s request for suggestions as to the most effective measures to cope with the evil”.²⁸⁸

He was obviously referring to the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta which felicitated the Maharaja for his straightforward and courageous stand. In consequence people in the British bureaucratic circles in India came to the conclusion that the Maharaja clandestinely sympathized with the extreme nationalists.²⁸⁹

This was without a shadow of doubt true. The *Amrit Bazar Patrika* had indeed used the opportune moment for praising Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III for what was its assumption of his attitude towards the request of the Government. As will be seen, this was not the only case in which the Maharaja’s thoughts were mischievously misinterpreted which caused injury to him. When he discussed the issue many years later, in 1926, he remonstrated, with plain frankness that he had never during his lifetime attempted to exercise influence over the Press. He somewhat ‘ruefully remarked that what he suffered from at the “sedition” period was an excessive popularity in India, due to his reforming zeal’.²⁹⁰ The native papers, inclusive of those with whose opinions he had never sympathized, wrote about their viewpoint of his character in an extolling manner. People in the British bureaucracy may have talked—maybe not in 1910, but at some time during the period now under consideration—that it was possible that if India ever became a Republic, he would be its first President. Although he disregarded such talk; but it may he opined have in some way influenced the Anglo-Indian officialdom during that period. A Native Prince must not gain too much popularity, “even when he does not court popularity”.²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 127.

²⁸⁷ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 4.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

²⁸⁹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 127-128.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 128.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

Sayajirao Gaekwad III had initiated an inquiry to find out if any seditious activities were occurring in his State and the inquiry disclosed that with the exception of the Swadeshi movement, propaganda for cow protection and experiment in national education, there was nothing serious taking place in the State. We now turn our attention to the last mentioned activity.²⁹²

In 1907, in the town of Chandod, situated on the banks of the river Narmada, in the vicinity of the Shiva temple of Ganganath, an institution known as the Shri Ganganath Bharatiya Sarva Vidyalaya had come into existence. The person who was running this institution was Keshav Rao Deshpande. He was a close friend of Aurobindo Ghosh, who was once a private secretary of Sayajirao Gaekwad III, a professor at the Baroda College; also an eminent revolutionary of the time and who eventually became a yogi of universal reputation. Deshpande was a well-known barrister who held a government post in the higher echelons of the Baroda State. The teaching staff of the Ganganath School comprised of men like Mamasahab Phadke, Kaka Kalelkar, Vithal Joshi and Waman Datar who were once involved in the Nasik Conspiracy Case. As it would appear the Baroda Residency was justifiably suspicious that this institution was giving shelter to 'seditious' tradition. Therefore, when the Resident began suspiciously eyeing the institution, the proprietors shut it down in 1911 lest it would cause embarrassment to the Baroda State.²⁹³

On his visit to Ahmedabad in 1909 a bomb was thrown at Lord Minto's carriage. The British Government was suspicious at that time that Baroda provided a safe haven to many revolutionaries. The Baroda Residency had found by chance a pamphlet in Gujarati titled *Vanaspati ni Davao* or 'Medicine from Herbs and Plants'. The author of the book was Narasimhabhai Ishwarbhai Patel, an employee of the Baroda Government, who had under this misleading title, actually written a book that taught people the process of making bombs and also ran a printing press along with his companions. He had also translated Aurobindo Ghosh's Bengali work called *Mukti Kon Pathe* or *Which Way Freedom* into Gujarati. When these facts were brought to the notice of the State Government, which on the face of it appeared to be ignorant about this, it ultimately led to an inquiry to be initiated. During the course of the inquiry, a raid was conducted by a Bombay Government official in Navsari and he seized some 500 copies of this pamphlet from a well. The Baroda State could not preclude this illegal action of the Bombay authorities but when the State protested the Bombay

²⁹² Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 110.

²⁹³ Ibid., pp. 110-111.

Government relented and apologized. Nonetheless, for the satisfaction of the Resident, the administration of the Baroda State was forced to banish Narasimhabhai who subsequently went to Africa and on his return to India began to teach German at the Shantiniketan of Rabindranath Tagore. The Shikshak Press of Mehsana was also shut by the State where the printing of this book was supposed to have taken place.²⁹⁴

In this period there was yet another case involving two Marathas, namely, Anand Rao and Madhava Rao who were running an unauthorized press called *Yugantar* in the Gaekwadi town of Billimora in South Gujarat. When this came to the notice of the State it took immediate action and the two persons were arrested and convicted. However, a good deal of public attention was attracted by this case.²⁹⁵

Apart from these high and low placed people in the State, the Residency came to entertain suspicion against the Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III himself, although they had no evidence to prove their charge. The Resident was even suspicious of Khase Rao Jadhav, who was a close friend of the Maharaja and once upon a time a tutor to his children and now occupied a civil post in the higher echelons of the State. This ‘witch-hunting’ by the Residency at Baroda made Sayajirao Gaekwad III unhappy. He felt that too much importance was being given to events with which the State was dealing “with in the ordinary course of business”.²⁹⁶ To him this amounted to mud-slinging. “The attitude of the Residency was something like, as he observed”, writes V.K. Chavda, “give a dog a bad name and hang it”.²⁹⁷

Whatever may have been the truth, in this barrage of accusations and counter-accusations on both sides, the Resident’s voice emerged predominant. He pressurized the Maharaja to dismiss both Keshav Rao Deshpande and Khase Rao Jadhav from the service of the Baroda State. In order to avoid any possible embarrassment to the Maharaja Deshpande tendered his resignation, but he was given ten thousand rupees as gratuity by the Maharaja whilst there was a demotion of Jadhav in the State service from the position of Prant Suba of Mehsana to the post of Commissioner of Survey and Settlement. These events saddened Sayajirao Gaekwad III. Possibly more than the humiliation suffered by his friends and State servants, it was the incessant intervention of the Resident that he hated the most. To add insult to injury Sayajirao Gaekwad III in order to pacify the Residency issued a notification much against his

²⁹⁴ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 111-112.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 112.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

wish that he would earnestly deal with any act of sedition in the State. It was his misfortune that at this stage in his life he had a Resident like Cobb, who loved active indulgence in 'witch-hunting'. "From his correspondence of the time with the Residency, it appears that more than his love for nationalistic sentiment", writes V.K. Chavda, "it was the fear of the 'unknown' that might follow from the other side that worried Sayaji Rao the most".²⁹⁸ Even the fact that he had at this time an Englishman C.N. Seddon as his Diwan could not mitigate his position. Seddon too could not fully satisfy the Resident, who made a blunt remark that the State was hostile to the British Government and that about one-third to one-fourth of its population had an inclination towards sedition. The Diwan too was taken aback by this grossly exaggerated remark. Although Seddon did not rebut the allegation made by the Resident fully he nevertheless briefly replied to him that he did not wish to argue with him. The Diwan knew that the State was amending the loopholes in its Press Act. It could also be possible that the English Diwan partly agreed with the Resident! In 1912, Sayajirao Gaekwad III wrote a letter to Lord Lamington complaining that the Council had not apprised him of any other case with the exception of Narasimhabhai Patel who had been banished.²⁹⁹

In whatever way the Maharaja may have explained his position he had unjustifiably or otherwise made the British Government suspicious that he was disloyal to the British Empire during the period of sedition and Resident Cobb looked at Baroda, its ruler and its administration with hostility. The British officials labeled Sayajirao Gaekwad III as 'the patron of sedition' and his State as a safe haven for revolutionaries.³⁰⁰

In 1910 he traveled to Japan, America and Europe. Although the royal couple's stay in the United States was on the whole enjoyable they experienced repugnant memories at the hands of certain hostile sections of the people and the press.³⁰¹

On 22 June, 1911, the Maharaja was in attendance during the ceremony of the coronation of King George V in Westminster Abbey. A month later King George V received him at Buckingham Palace; subsequently he went to Inverness from London, while the Maharani left for Germany. In October, when the royal couple reunited once again, the book which Chimnabai had co-authored with S.N. Mitra, *The Position of Women in Indian Life*, was published and favorably received. With the attainment of the objectives of this short trip to

²⁹⁸ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 113.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 113-114.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 114.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 93.

Europe, the Maharaja and the Maharani came back to India and reached Baroda on 10 November. Three weeks later King George V and Queen Mary arrived in Bombay “on their way to the Coronation Durbar in Delhi”.³⁰²

Their Majesties reached Delhi on 5 December, and after they had left the railway station, made their way to the “Chiefs’ Reception Pavilion” where they met in turn with the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Gaekwad of Baroda, as well as other Native Princes in accordance with “their due order of precedence”.³⁰³ A week later the great Durbar took place in the same amphitheater in which those of 1877 and 1903 were held. Here, after reading the speech of the King-Emperor, the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, came near the Throne, bowed, and came back to his seat. He was followed by the Commander-in-Chief and the members of the Executive Council of the Governor General; and they were followed by³⁰⁴ “the representatives of Hyderabad (“distinguished, as usual”, says *The Times of India*, “by the Spartan simplicity of his attire”), Baroda, Mysore, Kashmir, etc., right through the list of Princes, territorial chiefs, and others”.³⁰⁵

The first reports of the Durbar do not point out that anything at all had gone wrong at the ceremony; nor was Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III conscious on the actual day that he was guilty of offending the British monarchy. He went to the Durbar when he was mentally disturbed to a great extent because he had received displeasing news which was wholly of a private nature that very morning, and agitated as he was, though he remembered to wear all his medals, he failed to clothe himself with the sash of the Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India (G.C.S.I). He was wearing a white costume which he was accustomed to wearing during all his own State Durbars. This, it may be said by way of comment, was scarcely attributable to the “Spartan simplicity” of the attire of the Nizam.³⁰⁶

When his turn came the Maharaja approached the Throne unenviably. He had not attended the rehearsal for the ceremony, but one of his brothers went in his stead to take notes for him. He failed in his observation of the protocol which the Nizam of Hyderabad had followed before him, and he was next in line of the Princes to make their obeisance. Therefore when he advanced toward the throne he bowed once. As will be seen, he said that he had followed what the Resident at Baroda had instructed him to do, who also, he reckoned, might have

³⁰² Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 130.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 130-131.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 131.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

attracted his attention to the fact that he had omitted to put on his sash while he was driving with him to the Durbar.³⁰⁷ After having made his obeisance, “he backed from the Throne”.³⁰⁸ Unaware of where to exit from, “he did not retire far enough before, looking for someone of whom to ask the way out, he appeared to wheel round and turn his back on the King and Queen”.³⁰⁹ He then moved with undue haste “from the presence”.³¹⁰

He did not hear anything about the mistake which he had committed on 12 December. He was called to the Government House subsequent to the completion of the ceremony, but was informed that Lord Sydenham was absent from his house; but this failed to enlighten him. The next day, Gopal Krishna Gokhale visited him, whether officially instigated or not he was not aware and informed him that his behavior at the Durbar had created a sensation and that he was expected to apologize. Therefore, he wrote a letter to Lord Hardinge in the following terms:³¹¹

“DEAR LORD HARINGE,

I hear the manner in which I paid homage to His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor has been the subject of unfavourable comment. I take the earliest opportunity of writing to you to explain what actually occurred, and to assure you that the very last thing I intended, or could ever intend, was to do anything that could displease His Imperial Majesty, or lead him or anyone to doubt the reality of my loyalty and allegiance to his throne and person. To the British Government the Baroda State owes everything, and to that Government my State and I myself personally will always be truly grateful and loyal. When approaching and returning from the dais at the Durbar, I am said to have failed to observe that exact etiquette prescribed. If this was the case, it was due entirely to nervousness and confusion in the presence of their Majesties, and before that vast assembly. Only one chief, the Nizam, had made obeisance before me, and I had not had the opportunity of noticing others, and, in fact, in the confusion of the moment, I had hardly been able to note the details of what the Nizam did. After bowing, I receded a few steps and turned round to ask which way I was to go. I was under the impression that I actually descended by the proper passage, but I am told that I did not. Having turned to ask the way, I became confused, and continued to walk round. For this mistake I can only say how sincerely sorry I am....”³¹²

³⁰⁷ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 131-132.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 132.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid., pp. 132-133.

The receipt of this letter by the Viceroy took place on 14 December and on the 16th it was in the public domain. Again as usual *The Times* flashed the news with biting comments. Following the example of *The Times* other national dailies in England also began a regular calumnious campaign against the Maharaja. To those who never knew him before, he now became notorious as the Indian Maharaja who had humiliated the British monarchy. Several newspapers gave a grossly exaggerated and nonsensical account of the activities of Sayajirao Gaekwad III since 1905. One of them said “It was alleged that many Indian extremists came from Baroda, or found employment in the State, and even in the Gaekwar’s household; that the Extremist Press studiously exempted him from their scurrilous attacks on loyal Indian Princes; and that neither His Highness nor the Maharani, an accomplished but an *exalt’ee* lady when travelling in Europe in 1910, shrank from contact with such people as Krishna Verma and Madame Cama, open promoters in Paris of an assassination campaign in India”.³¹³ It further added: “There has been traced to a printing press in Baroda, patronised by officials, an extensive circulation of seditious literature; and the assistance rendered by the State authorities to the British police enquiry had been extremely lukewarm”.³¹⁴

The news spread to France also where a Paris daily, the *Temps* accused the Gaekwad that he had never hidden his hostility to British rule.³¹⁵

The British Press, on the other hand, was hopeful that the humiliation that Sayajirao Gaekwad III had brought upon himself by his indiscreet conduct would effectively warn him to end his hostility to British rule.³¹⁶

On 21 December the Maharaja, through the medium of his secretary, sent a telegraph to *The Times* that some of the statements contained in the article were grossly exaggerated and some completely false. “That His Highness acted in any way contrary to Indian custom or etiquette at Westminster Abbey is untrue. There was no room for such behaviour, since he was present as a spectator only, nor have these allegations ever been heard before. His Highness did not meet Krishna Verma in 1910, and has not seen him for many years, and not since the latter left England. The press to which seditious literature has been traced was an entirely private concern, not connected in any way with the State. All possible assistance was promptly given to the British authorities by the Baroda Council in the investigations made. The case having

³¹³ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 133-134.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 134.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

broken down in court from lack of legal evidence, the Maharaja has already confiscated the press and banished the writer. The statements regarding the employment of extremists in the Baroda State and household, and regarding assistance given to anti-British campaigners, are unfair and misleading, and based upon gross perversion of facts”.³¹⁷

Shyamji Krishna Verma, the editor of *The Indian Sociologist* in Paris wrote a letter in *The Times* on 27 December. He indicated that Lord Northbrook had introduced him to the Maharaja towards the end of 1884, and the two had met in India and elsewhere; but ever since he migrated from England to Paris in 1907, neither did he meet him nor hold any correspondence with him. Moreover, in September 1911, there was a strong denouncement by him of the Maharaja in his paper for presiding at a luncheon held in London when the honor of Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India (K.C.S.I) was conferred on Sir K.G. Gupta during the Coronation of King George V.³¹⁸

On 1 January, 1912, fresh impetus was given to the maligning campaign when pictures of the Delhi Durbar were published by some illustrated papers in London. Keir Hardie, Member of Parliament, brought the maligning campaign to India in an article written by him in *The Pioneer*. The effects of the praise which Keir Hardie showered on the Maharaja did more injustice than all the attacks of which the one with the greatest scurrility was published in *The World* on 9 January. It was indicative of journalism at its lowest depths.³¹⁹

Subsequently there was a subsidence of active newspaper controversy over the incident at the Delhi Durbar. On 8 October Viscount Vincent Hardinge, brother of the Viceroy, while giving a lecture in London on the Delhi Durbar alluded to the incident and made the observation that if all that was being said about the Maharaja was true then Sayajirao Gaekwad III must be given the honor of being one of the most courageous men of his time.³²⁰ And definitely, a native prince who openly fought his battle with the powerful British in utter disregard of the repercussions was indeed a brave man. But this was a fallacy. In spite of his disagreements with the paramount power, his own conception of prestige and position and his grievances, Sayajirao Gaekwad III was not foolhardy man to put his State at stake like this. He was well aware of the might of the British Empire and the way in which it could harm him. He was

³¹⁷ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 134-135.

³¹⁸ Ibid., p. 135.

³¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 135-136.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 136.

also well aware how far he could stretch controversies and when he should resign to his fate. Although he was an idealist, he was a pragmatic man at the same time.³²¹

There was a subsidence of passion soon after; with the passage of time the Durbar incident should be given its suitable place as a trivial incident, exaggerated “out of all proportion by the feeling of the moment”.³²² It was indeed painful for the Maharaja that a suspicion arose of him being disrespectful to the sovereign, and with the British Press presenting a distorted version of the events of the Delhi Durbar left behind poignant memories. Owing to the ironical aspect of history there arose a necessity of devoting pages to an incident which otherwise could have been nonchalantly dismissed in a few words, because one of the conspicuous facts by which the less informed sections of the English public knew the Maharaja was the incident of the Delhi Durbar.³²³

Internal Reforms

There was an improvement in the business disposal machinery. In the routine administration the system of ‘Tippan’ or precis took the place of loose papers, files and red tape. This system became an object of ridicule because sometimes it was used in an unintelligent manner and indiscreetly. But it had its obvious advantages since it led to devolution of authority in the administration. This became necessary because there was a time when even a paltry sum of 50 paise required the sanction of the Maharaja. In order to enable the working of these system weekly reports of the orders given by the heads of various departments were asked by him. The impossibility of dealing with all types of applications on his own led the Maharaja to appoint a Private Secretary to help him. There was an appointment of Law Committees for the systematization and codification of different laws. There was a separation of the Accounts and Audit Department from the Revenue Department from 1884-85 onwards. To many the Maharaja appeared a bit too passionate for rules and regulations. The rules and regulations were framed so meticulously that they left little room for discretion and as a result the State officers lost initiative and became hesitant to take responsibility. In his later life the Maharaja spoke disparagingly about how at many levels rules were being followed slavishly. But irreparable damage had been done earlier and could not be fully rectified.³²⁴

³²¹ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 116-117.

³²² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 21.

³²³ Ibid., pp. 21-22.

³²⁴ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 45-46.

More Reforms

“Education is the basis of all reforms and is the only way of salvation from our present condition”³²⁵

This is what the Maharaja spoke at Aligarh in 1901 and took consistent action upon that maxim.

He preached education as the effective panacea for India repeatedly. He was horrified at the ignorance: ‘Educationally our people are little better than beasts’.³²⁶ Superstitiousness, unthriftiness, the huge infant mortality, poverty, filth—these were among the harmful effects induced by ignorance, and were retarding the country from morally and materially advancing. Education would make life higher and purer, it would improve agriculture, it would increase the wealth, and so social welfare would be increased in the aggregate.³²⁷

The Maharaja anxiously thought about the problem for long. There was clarity about one thing to him. A voluntary scheme would not result in the education of the masses. Only a scheme of compulsory education would lead to the attainment of the ideal of educating the masses. The *Baroda Gazetteer* claims that, ‘long before the rest of India had done more than think of the free and compulsory education of the people as something desirable but hardly attainable, His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda had introduced it into his dominions, and he has since witnessed its successful development in the face of extraordinary difficulties’.³²⁸ It would be correct to say that Baroda was a trailblazer in the sphere of Compulsory Education. The Government of India remained a mere spectator and only sympathized with the experiment.³²⁹

Since it was an experiment and an experiment which had no precedent or means of comparing with British India or with any other princely states it was introduced with caution. Therefore, it was only after holding consultations with his counselors and seeking the advice of his officers, and taking into consideration all the implications and risks involved in this great reform, that he took the decision for its introduction in Amreli Prant in Kathiawar.³³⁰

³²⁵ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 69.

³²⁶ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 62.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Ibid., pp. 62-63.

³²⁹ Ibid., p. 63.

³³⁰ Ibid.

This modest commencement cost the State exchequer an estimated Rs. 32,000. Nobody knew what would be the exact outcome if the scheme struck root and flourished. According to the Maharaja, if education was made compulsory in the entire State, it might cost the State exchequer somewhere between 12 lakhs to 15 lakhs.³³¹

Thus the Maharaja launched the great scheme. By 1906 the experiment proved successful and the scheme now covered the entire State.³³²

When the Maharaja spoke at Lahore in 1903, three years prior to the scheme being made compulsory all over the State, he made an announcement of at least partial success:

“I began with the most backward districts, where people might be supposed not to understand the advantages of education. The experiment might have failed. But it has not failed. On the contrary the most sanguine expectations are being realized, and that notwithstanding the fact that a severe famine has broken out in the State. We have also to count with the purdah system. In spite of these and other disadvantages the experiment has been an almost unqualified success”.

The scheme no doubt went through many ups and downs but soon suitable amendments were brought in and this experiential development another institution known as Kalabhawan or House of Arts was born in 1890 and in due course began imparting instruction in the applied arts. In the branch of technical education, its early syllabus had such subjects as drawing, carpentry, dyeing, bleaching and calico-printing and mechanical engineering. Then were added ceramics, sculpture, architecture, civil engineering, fine arts, textiles and other branches of chemistry and technology. The institute began to flourish under its competent director Prof. T.K. Gajjar known for his imaginativeness. This illustrious man, who retired in July, 1896, is remembered for his pioneering effort in opening other workshops, devoted to the art of textile weaving in other parts of the State as well and for starting a training center for preparation of instructors who could then impart training to others in the art of textile weaving. Since then there has been an expansion in the activities of the Kalabhawan on such a scale which its founders could not have imagined.³³³

After the success of the Kalabhawan, the Maharaja opened the Baroda Museum in 1894, a notion which he formulated during one of his European trips. It had specimens from India as well as Europe in its first collection and it also had one of the finest picture galleries in India.

³³¹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 63.

³³² Ibid., p. 64.

³³³ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 50-51.

In contemporary times it had one of the finest picture collections, many of which were original, from the West which drew visitors from the world over. An Englishman named Chisholm designed the buildings of both the Kalabhawan and the Baroda Museum.³³⁴

By 1892, the length of the railways was 118 miles and they connected a number of centers of the State with the Gaekwad capital of Baroda. The Maharaja had now begun to use the beautiful Laxmi Vilas Palace. Its elegant furnishing and decoration was done by Pestonji Dorabji Khandalawala, the Maharaja's Khangi Karbhari and also his great and trustworthy friend. There was a broadening of the roads of the city of Baroda and lying out of parks and gardens. New buildings added by Chisholm include the High School and the College. Further embellishment of the city by Chisholm took place along the bank of the city's lake *Sur Sagar* where he built other red brick structures housing the Law Courts, which was originally planned to be a market, and is popularly known as the *Nyay Mandir* in Baroda and also added other buildings along the lake which today house the Music College and the Female Training Centre.³³⁵

The resume of the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III would remain incomplete without alluding to the great Library Movement, the establishment of the Oriental Institute and the beginning of the Boy Scout Movement. There would have been a serious delay in the implementation of the whole scheme of free and compulsory primary education with provisions for higher education if the State did not provide sufficient library facilities. Here again the Baroda State was a pioneer. The Library Department was established in 1910 though the Maharaja was thinking of it for quite some time. It is said that this idea germinated in the Maharaja's mind on his visit to the United States in 1907-08. The idea blossomed when he gave an invitation to Dr. W.A. Borden, an American expert, to become the Director of State Libraries in 1913 and also gave invitation to the Father of the Library Movement in the State, Motibhai Amin, to assist him. The Maharaja gave in donation his Palace Library which was to become the nucleus of what is today known as the Central Library in Baroda. There was later on enrichment in this Library's collection when the Maharaja's brother Sampatrao generously donated his rich private collection. There was an addition of a good juvenile section to it by the Department and it also began a circulating library scheme as well. Borden lived in Baroda State for three years and it was during his tenure that there was an introduction of a system of

³³⁴ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 51.

³³⁵ Ibid., pp. 51-52.

free aided libraries and reading-rooms throughout the State.³³⁶ “All these institutions were open to all”, writes V.K. Chavda, “young and old, rich and poor, irrespective of caste, creed or sex”.³³⁷ Here an agency was also started in order to impart visual instruction to the illiterate masses. By 1927 the Central Library possessed more than 10, 00,000 volumes.³³⁸

As a further milestone in preserving rare books in Sanskrit and other Indian classical languages and helping scholars to work in Baroda the internationally reputed Oriental Institute was founded in the city. At the Oriental Institute there was a preparation and editing of authoritative texts for publication. It was founded in 1915 when the rare collections of Sanskrit works of the Vitthal Mandir were acquired. Hundreds of works of Sampatrao and later acquisitions were added to these collections. In the initial years it was a section of the Central Library. However, in 1927 it was separated and named Prachya Vidya Mandir or Oriental Institute. In 1943 the library of the Oriental Institute was in possession of 14,000 manuscripts and 12,000 printed works. Unpublished and rare Sanskrit, Prakrit and Ardhamagadhi works were brought out by the Institute as part of the Gaekwad’s Oriental Series. In a series known as *Shri Sayaji Sahitya Mala* and *Shri Sayaji Bal Gyan Mala* its Translation Section also published very useful books with original texts printed in it. Towards the end of his life Sayajirao Gaekwad III succeeded in getting published the Foreign Vocabulary of the Quran meticulously prepared by Prof. Arthur Jeffrey.³³⁹

Later Reforms and Tours of Europe

When the great famine of 1899-1900 was over, the Maharaja, as has been mentioned before, went to Europe with two objectives in mind; firstly, to support the Maharani during a serious operation, and secondly to admit his sons to school at Oxford.³⁴⁰

After the completion of these two tasks he went to Germany. At Wiesbaden he visited the Zander Institute for Swedish physical exercises, and immediately thought of Baroda. “It may be too expensive to carry the whole to India, which would cost 2,000 pound sterling. But I have asked Dr. Batukram to give me an estimate of some of the instruments that may be useful in India”.³⁴¹ Although he purchased the instruments and set them up in a hospital he

³³⁶ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 64-65.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 65.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 65-66.

³⁴⁰ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 104.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

could not build the Zander institute since it proved to be an expensive proposition for the Baroda State. Sailing down the river Rhine the royal couple arrived at Cologne, and by mid-October they were in Paris. In Paris most of his time was spent in making a study of the Exhibition, and discovered that it was indeed ‘very hard work’; he held a discussion of the Exhibition with President Loubet, whom he discovered to be ‘sensible and straightforward’.³⁴² The Maharaja gave his impressions of the Exhibition in his speech to a great audience in Ahmedabad in 1902:

“Two years ago I stood looking at the wonders of that great Exhibition in Paris which summed up in so striking a manner the progress of a century in civilization, industry, and commerce. If I were asked what struck me most in that noble and artistic effort of a great nation, I should answer: the magnificent proportions and excellent management of the undertaking, so vast in conception and admirable in execution: the efficiency of the orderly and illuminating arrangements, and careful accuracy of detail; and after that, the extraordinary ingenuity displayed in the educational section in methods and appliances: and not only the ingenuity but the thoroughness of these methods, especially in the exhibits of Germany and America. But besides these two special exhibits that which struck me most profoundly was the enormous difference between India and Europe today. Those vast halls crowded with shining steel work, the fruits of the combined industry and genius of a dozen nations; the amazing richness of texture and delicacy of design in the products of those machines; the vigorous life and aspiration which glowed in the Art, as well as the clear precision of the knowledge reflected in the Science: all this impressed me more than I can say”.³⁴³

He wrote letters to the Diwan concerning vernacular schools, the Female Training School, the disposal of cases by the judiciary and the enactment of the Widow Remarriage Act.³⁴⁴

In 1905 there was organization of the Department of Commerce and Industries. The Maharaja regarded the revival of industries as one of the biggest hopes for the future of India—a revival of industries whose basis was general education. This was absolutely true. Nor was he under the false impression that the agency of the State could lead to the creation of an industry, as the Maharaja of Gwalior was under, which led to frustrating effects on his State. The Maharaja started with a zealous spirit, but soon prudently realized that factories run by

³⁴² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 104-105.

³⁴³ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 83-84.

³⁴⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 107.

the State are a mistake and did not feel ashamed in confessing his failure.³⁴⁵ In the same speech at Ahmedabad in 1902 he gave his frank opinion:

“My experience teaches me that it is very difficult for Government to provide industries for its people in the absence of a real business spirit amongst the people themselves. It is very difficult for so impersonal an entity as Government to get capable managers or to supervise its enterprises properly. I have tried various measures in my own State, but I am sorry to say that the results are disappointing. A sugar mill, a cotton mill, and an ice factory were tried, but were not a success. A State fund for the advance of capital, and other assistance to manufacturers, also failed. I found that the managers were not sufficiently interested in the scheme, and not impartial in the working of it. I am convinced, however, that the fault lay not with the industries themselves, but in the fact that they were State enterprises”.³⁴⁶

But his State alone was not all that the Maharaja was thinking of. The sphere of his personal activities might have been Baroda, but it formed “only a small part of his great ideal”³⁴⁷ of the unity of the nation and its prosperity. He was never weary of preaching that the basis of the progress of the nation must be sound economics, and that a study of sound economics could only be made in the West, which had specially studied economic problems,³⁴⁸ “and had reduced them to a scientific system”.³⁴⁹ He ardently cried out to the people of India to learn from the West. He asked the people of India to cut themselves off from all those superstitious cults as well as from all those outdated and obsolete customs which were an impediment in their economic advancement. He also advised the people of the country not to be under the delusion that India is without comparison the best country in the world, but to make efforts to achieve that goal, so that she receives acknowledgment from the world.³⁵⁰ In the same speech at Ahmedabad in 1902 he went onto say:

“India”, he said, “needs a great national movement in which each man will work for the nation and not for himself, or for his caste, a movement carried out on common sense lines. It does not mean that we are to adopt a brand new system from Europe, but it does mean that we must borrow a little common sense in our solutions of the problems of life. We must resolutely see what we need, and if we find a plain and satisfactory solution, adopt it whether we have traditional authority for it or not.... We have our “ancien regime” of custom and prejudice to overcome: let us meet them by a new

³⁴⁵ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 115.

³⁴⁶ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 108-109.

³⁴⁷ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 116.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 116-117.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 117.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—a Liberty of action, an Equality of opportunity, and the Fraternity of a great national ideal. Then you may hope to see India a nation again, with a national art, and a national literature, and a flourishing commerce, and then, but not till then, may you demand a national government”.³⁵¹

In 1897 the exchange rate of the currency of the Baroda State known as Babashahi had dropped significantly therefore in the beginning of the twentieth century it had run into all sorts of problems.³⁵² So the Baroda State seriously considered adopting British Indian silver which after much debate, discussions, and deliberation, “was adopted in 1900-01 for a period of fifty years, even at the cost of the State losing a great deal on account thereof”.³⁵³

The opening of the Bank of Baroda by the Maharaja took place on 9 July, 1908. He reverted back to his old theme that there was a requirement of industry based on science, and elucidated to his people the objective behind the foundation of the Bank. The State—the Government—was in no need of it, though it was very likely to serve a useful purpose for it.³⁵⁴ In his address delivered on the occasion of the opening of the Bank he said:

“The primary object is to satisfy a demand which the people themselves have made upon us from time to time for such a financial institution of their own. Government has therefore left the management of the Bank to a private corporation, withholding its hand from any official interference with the operations”.³⁵⁵

Some months later the Diwan, Kersaspji Dadachanji, a Parsi as his name suggests, retired from his post after ably and faithfully serving the State for five years. His successor was Romesh Chandra Dutt, who had previously been in the service of the State for two years—a notable Bengali who held the distinction of becoming the first Indian who rose to the post of Divisional Commissioner in his native province of Bengal, and had since become renowned “both by his condensed verse renderings of the great Indian epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*”³⁵⁶, and by being an energetic advocate of the Permanent Settlement devised by Lord Cornwallis in 1793. But he was not destined to fulfill the bright hopes which were roused by his appointment. After his arrival in Baroda in June, his sudden death occurred in

³⁵¹ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 115-116.

³⁵² Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 55.

³⁵³ Ibid., pp. 55-56.

³⁵⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 124.

³⁵⁵ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 222.

³⁵⁶ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 125.

November in the same year. It dealt a severe blow to the State that a reputed and able man like him should be detracted from it before he could get time “to make his presence felt”.³⁵⁷

At a meeting on the occasion of the death of the Diwan, Romesh Chandra Dutt on 30 November, 1909, the Maharaja spoke:

“Such a man as Mr. Dutt has an influence on society of the deepest value. His strength of character and high sense of duty are incentives to others to follow the same ideals, with the result that the whole tone of the society of which he was a member is improved, uplifted. No one could come into contact with him without being struck by his intense unselfishness, his energetic application to his work at the expense of health itself. His tolerance of opinions antagonistic to his own, his hatred of bigotry and faction, his constant appeals on behalf of unity of action, his catholic sympathies, his moderation in the expression of his own ideas, his patience under criticism, all went to uplift society, to give it higher ideals, to broaden its views.... In him India has lost a great patriot and leader, and every Indian individually has lost a staunch and fearless supporter of his rights and claims, so far as they were based on justice”.³⁵⁸

Prior to this regrettable event Lord Minto had paid a visit to Baroda which has been alluded to previously. The time was approaching for the Maharaja to go away from Baroda, to start a series of tours of foreign lands which went on in an uninterrupted manner, except during the course of the First World War, ever since. This time, however, he visited the Orient and not the Occident, and during the spring of 1910 he landed at the harbor of Penang.³⁵⁹

In the beginning of January he began a tour of his dominions in Kathiawar, and subsequent to his return he presided over a conference of the Arya Samaj at Ranoli, which took place on 26 February, 1911. As a gesture of diplomacy and politics his wisdom was doubtful. The foundation of the Arya Samaj was laid by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, a Brahmin of Kathiawar, who failed to influence the people in his native Province of Bombay, but managed to obtain a lot of followers in the Punjab. The intention of Swami Dayanand Saraswati was to launch a purely religious movement whose designs included mounting an attack on such social issues as early marriages, the behavior towards widows, the growth and development of education, especially of women, and the adoption of a rational attitude towards the untouchables. As a religion it believed in iconoclasm and attacked idol worship. As a religious movement it was doing spectacular and impeccable work. But in the wake of the

³⁵⁷ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 125.

³⁵⁸ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 254-256.

³⁵⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 126-127.

great wave of sedition, which started in India in 1907, the British Government became suspicious of the Arya Samaj because many prominent Arya Samajists like Lala Lajpat Rai, Ajit Singh and Bhai Parmanand—Professor in the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College were involved in the freedom struggle as well as seditious activities.³⁶⁰

In sublime unconsciousness that his action had the possibility of being misconstrued there was an acceptance of the invitation by the Maharaja. Both in a preceptive as well as pragmatic manner the aims of the Arya Samaj matched perfectly with those which the Maharaja had been in pursuit of over the years.³⁶¹ Thus in his speech at Ranoli he said:

“I welcome”, he said, “the work of social enlightenment of the masses which the missionary zeal of the Arya Samaj has undertaken. I have observed with gratification that it has been energetic in its efforts towards the amelioration of the condition of the nation, the raising of the status of our country, and the banishment of ignorance and superstition through the spread of knowledge”.³⁶²

He classified the Arya Samaj as a religious brotherhood, and his speech was essentially confined to tracing how Hinduism had progressed and evolved over the centuries. Thus he continued:

“Human activity may roughly be divided into three kinds: (1) Religious, (2) Social, and (3) Political, all closely interdependent and indissolubly bound together. In seeking emancipation from the tyranny of social usages you have a chance of rising to a higher religion as well as a higher political plane.... The political well-being of a nation is built up to a large extent on its social and religious achievements. A society torn by internal jealousies between class and class, and where ignorance and prejudice have sway over reason, can have no hopeful political outlook. As long as you do not violate the laws of a country, your social and religious activities are sure to react on your general advancement. Good government is bound to follow in the train of united action and progressive enlightenment on the part of the people. If a Government is not sympathetic, especially where its officers are drawn from the subject class, the fault lies with the people themselves”.³⁶³

In 1904 the substantial probe which Sir Frederick Nicholson had conducted into the Cooperative Movement had become a Government of India Act, and Baroda, which usually followed the footsteps of British India, had begun to form Cooperative Societies in 1905. Suspicion arose among a conservative peasantry which refused to accept the new idea at the

³⁶⁰ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 136-137.

³⁶¹ Ibid., p. 138.

³⁶² Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 270.

³⁶³ Ibid., pp. 279-280.

beginning; they were still under the influence of the customs and manner of behaving of the moneylender who might exhibit cruelty and greed, but was nevertheless a familiar person in the village. Thus they had no trust in the Government. “The scented flowers they offered might”, writes Stanley Rice, “and probably would, end in the bitter fruit of taxation; the Greek gift might turn out to be a Trojan horse”.³⁶⁴ The Governments of both Baroda and India had experienced over the years that the peasantry would always reject any novelty. They nonetheless showed perseverance. The movement started to grow. In 1914 the subject became so immensely significant that the Maharaja personally inaugurated the first Cooperative Conference. He proclaimed the aims immediately—aims which he had followed throughout his reign with consistency.³⁶⁵ In his speech at the Conference he said:

“In rural life, the principles of cooperation are especially important and they should permeate all village activities, making of each centre a single economic unit. The trend of modern civilization is towards the aggregation of these units. If the whole village community acts as one in buying and selling, in production and consumption, its income and happiness will proportionately increase. They will be able to make a better stand against the inevitable vicissitudes of daily life; they will develop habits of forethought, which will help them to provide for the future; and they will be doing their part in the proportion of those reforms which my Government desires so greatly to foster”.³⁶⁶

As he comprehensively attacked what may be termed the nearly universal indebtedness of the people and for fear that his audience should be appalled by such a huge prospect, he allured the audience by his experience of Europe to serve as a reminder to the people that these difficulties were not insurmountable and the solution to the problems could be brought about:

“Those of you who have studied the history of the movement, for instance in Germany, Denmark, and Holland, must have been convinced that if we desire, as desire we surely must, to introduce the benefits of civilization amongst our people in rural areas, there is nothing more potent, more stimulating to that end than the Cooperative Society.... In the countries I have cited the principles of cooperation have worked miracles amongst the peasantry. Peace and plenty have replaced poverty and all its distressing accompaniments, and real and solid foundations have been laid for national prosperity.... and the problem which awaits our attention here in Baroda differs in no material way from that which the leaders of the movement in other countries found confronting them at the outset of their labours”.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 146.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 349-350.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 351.

Soon 236 societies came into existence in Baroda, which had a membership of 6,000. An amendment to the Act was brought about in 1912 which gave fresh impetus to the movement which was sustained. There was a formation of a Central Cooperative Institute in 1925, the year of the Golden Jubilee, and towards the end of 1927, 750 other societies came into existence, which had a membership of more than 25,000. All of them did not do good work and it can be told without a shadow of doubt that they were unable to surmount the stupendously high rural indebtedness that was prevalent in Baroda in particular and in India in general. But with every passing year there were improvements, and the Government of Baroda like the Government of India did steady and determined work and was hopeful that the goal which the Maharaja had set before himself would be achieved.³⁶⁸

The First World War

The royal couple started their eleventh European trip by visiting the Riviera and North Italy. The Maharaja made his way for curing his illness firstly at Evian and then, after staying for a short while in London, at Vichy, whilst the Maharani left for Carlsbad. Thus at the outbreak of the First World War the royal couple were separated. He reached Paris, and finally London, without facing any trouble, but she was not so lucky; for, though the Austrian authorities did not molest her, it was only after a tiresomely long journey that she was able to reach Havre on 3 September, 1914, on her way to London.³⁶⁹

They were received by King George V and Queen Mary of Britain during the course of September—the first meeting of the Maharaja with the British monarchy since the sad Delhi Durbar incident three years ago. There was a change in the time indeed. The Press no longer insinuated now of “the Gaekwar’s disloyalty”; and, rather curiously and ironically, that very journal which had attacked the Maharaja *ipso facto* hurting him the most appreciated in a prominent manner the gesture of Sayajirao Gaekwad III of offering his entire army as well as the resources of his State to the war effort. On his return to Baroda on 4 December, 1914, the Maharaja continued to provide conspicuous evidence of his fidelity to the Empire about which there was never a shadow of doubt. His gesture of offering all his troops met with only limited acceptance, three European officers and 157 troops of the State Army were permitted to join the British Army, whilst 200 sawars were dispatched to Mathura for helping in the training of remounts. With the inclusion of non-combatants and laborers, Baroda contributed

³⁶⁸ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 147-148.

³⁶⁹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 146.

a total of 1,500 men to the war effort. The nature of the First World War was such that it prevented the British Government from using more men than these. The people dwelling in the region of Gujarat, it ought to be remembered, were not a martial race.³⁷⁰

The figures of the donations in money were far more impressive. The Maharaja generously donated Rs. 5, 00,000 for aircrafts; Rs. 5, 00,000 to the War Gifts Fund; Rs. 15, 00,000 for Ford vans; Rs. 2, 10,000 to the Imperial Indian War Relief Fund; Rs. 30,000 to the Prince of Wales' Fund; Rs. 40,000 to the Red Cross; and furthermore, generally contributed Rs. 12,000 per month for the expenses of the war from January 1916 to June 1919, a total of Rs. 5, 04,000. Along with other things it subscribed, Baroda's contribution for these various purposes was in totality Rs. 33, 96,000; additionally it miscellaneously donated to institutions and relief funds in Europe and India to the tune of almost Rs. 76,000.³⁷¹

Moreover, Sayajirao Gaekwad III also materially contributed to the war effort by donating horses from the State Cavalry and tents for use as hospitals in France. Even his Jaymahal Palace of Bombay was given by him to the Government of India for the use of British soldiers going there for convalescence.³⁷²

Finally, the Maharaja alone purchased War Loan Bonds worth Rs. 1, 00, 00,000. The total worth of the bonds purchased by Baroda amounted to Rs. 1, 12, 24,000. Thus it can be said that Baroda responded with extreme generosity to the call of the Great War.³⁷³

The First World War precluded the Maharaja from making any more trips to Europe. The mental distraction of the war had drained the resources of Baroda, so it precluded the Maharaja from inaugurating any new schemes, and the administration was carried on in the usual serene manner. However the Maharaja was not satisfied. So he found an outlet and directed his active mind towards encouraging Sanskrit literature.³⁷⁴

In India, partly under the stimulation provided by the research of Europeans, there was a beginning of an awakening of interest in her own literature, "and it is to this revival that Sanskrit scholars owe many long-buried manuscripts".³⁷⁵ The Durbars of Mysore and Travancore were the pioneers in the field of the promotion of Sanskrit literature, with the

³⁷⁰ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 146-147.

³⁷¹ Ibid., p. 147.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 153.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 154.

Maharajas of Baroda and Kashmir closely following them. The way Mysore took pride in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya and Travancore took pride in the works which are generally believed to be those of Bhasha, in a similar manner; Baroda took pride in the *Tattvasangraha* of Sautaraksita and other later Buddhist works, supervised by its learned scholar, Dr. Bhattacharya. It would have been very uncharacteristic of the Maharaja who had an anxiety to see his State become progressive, the one who showed a willingness to profit by example, and had a devotion to the cause of education whatever be its form, if he had not taken advantage of the opportune moment for the promotion of the learning of the Sanskrit language in his State.³⁷⁶

The Maharaja delivered two addresses to the Sanskrit Conference, which he called to Baroda for a discussion of the lines on which the learning of the Sanskrit language could be revived and should make its way. He reproached the learned Pandits for showing indifference and lack of a methodological approach and obstructed by imitating the example of scholars of Europe:

“Western scholars have been at great pains to study Sanskrit literature critically and from a historical standpoint, and have brought into existence various societies, and with their assistance have continued these studies ceaselessly. Similarly, with a view to keep up the awakening thus generated, a congress of Orientalists is held every three years in Europe. The activities of these scholars have not been confined to Europe alone. In India itself they have with great labour revived the study of Sanskrit literature by establishing societies like the branches of the Royal Asiatic Society. But I do not think we Hindus—the people of this land which is the birthplace of the Sanskrit literature—have yet seriously taken up the study of that literature from the above standpoints. Our people may not have been unmindful of this kind of study, but I am constrained to say that they have not bestowed on it the labour which its importance demands”.³⁷⁷

According to Sayajirao Gaekwad III, the outlook of the Pandits was the same as the outlook of the Europeans towards literature prior to the Renaissance. Their time was wasted in discussing fruitless controversies that had a dead end. He expressed contempt and disdain for the methodology of the people of India, who possessed persons much more learned in the Sanskrit language than the scholars of Europe, but who showed apathy and rejection for all critical and historical methods, stuck to their own ideas and without intellectual perception

³⁷⁶ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 154-155.

³⁷⁷ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 385.

owing to superstition and were generally uneducated. He called them to account in the battle of literature:

“With a view to our giving the people of the whole world the benefit of this knowledge, it is necessary to bring about a revival and diffusion of Sanskrit learning.... Like the Western peoples, we must cultivate a comparative and critical faculty for studying the language, and the subjects to be learned through its medium. We must cull out whatever beautiful and acceptable things we find in our ancient lore as well as in Western culture and attempt a felicitous blending of the two features so as to give the lie to the saying—East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet”.³⁷⁸

Prior to going away from Baroda the Maharaja performed two inauguration ceremonies—of the waterworks and a hospital with beds at Patan, the second most populous city in the State. He had always dreamt of supplying the entire State with pure drinking water, and though he had not been able to achieve that, the project had certainly progressed significantly. During that period it was indeed difficult in India to find an area equal in size which had such a good system of water supply, and also electric light, which in the West was not a luxury any longer, but indeed a necessity. Even small places which could not claim to be called towns had their own system of water supply, and though there was more sparse distribution of electricity, it had reached places³⁷⁹ “which in British India would long have had to do without”.³⁸⁰

During the war years the Maharaja also visited Delhi for attending the Conference of Princes. As we have seen, he was from the start in favor of the notion of the Indian Princes playing a role in the Council of Empire. Characteristically this time he visited Delhi reluctantly, striving to obtain exemption for himself from attending the conference. He did not regard the agenda of the conference as significant and he did not like mere ceremonial attendance. In 1917, when E.S. Montagu visited India, Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III had provided for the details of a scheme whereby the Princes could usefully cooperate in the Government of India. This is elucidated in a letter to the Maharaja of Nabha:³⁸¹

“I think that the formation of a separate Council of the representatives of Princes, something after the model of the German Bundesrath, might meet the case.... I had suggested a somewhat similar idea to the Viceroy some years ago. I offer these suggestions with

³⁷⁸ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 394-396.

³⁷⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 156-157.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 157.

³⁸¹ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 150.

considerable hesitation, as I feel that this is a matter which lies more in the province of the scientific constitution-framer....³⁸²

“I have no doubt that if any matters which concern the Princes of India come into discussion the Government of India will consult the Princes before coming to any conclusion. There are, however, many questions of policy which it is essential for the Princes to open up on their own initiative.... It would be better for the Princes to restrict their attention to the following universally important matters:³⁸³

- 1) “The formation of a Council of States;
- 2) “The formation of a properly representative Court of Appeal in matters of dispute between the Government of India and Indian Princes....³⁸⁴

“The Princes should not lose sight of the fact that these reforms are only the means to an end. The end is the reduction, or even cessation, of interference in purely internal matters and the right to be consulted in matters which affect both the Native States and British India equally”.³⁸⁵

This letter (dated 7 November, 1917) is of much significance since it reflects the views of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III with regard to the position to which the “Native” States were legitimately entitled to within the framework of the Empire—views with which neither the Indian Nationalists nor to much lesser extent the notions of the old-fashioned Anglo-Indian society would have agreed with.³⁸⁶

One must not think, however, that the Maharaja, owing to the fact that the Conference of Princes was not given as much space or freedom to act which he regarded it ought to have been given was reluctant in recognizing the fact that it was performing some highly creditable functions. Two letters which he wrote to Lord Chelmsford, in January and in October, 1918, prove that this was a fallacy. In his first letter he noted that he was satisfied with the fact that the guiding principle behind the Government of India’s Resolution on Minority Administration in Native States was the advice given by the Princes in the conference of 1916. In a similar manner, in his second letter he expressed his pleasure that in the

³⁸² Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 150.

³⁸³ Ibid., pp. 150-151.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 151.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

memorandum on the rights of succession, etc. in Indian States the Government of India had been considerate towards the views expressed by the Princes during that conference.³⁸⁷

At the start of the year 1917 a note was dispatched by the Resident to Sayajirao Gaekwad III stating that the Maharaja of Baroda had been conferred with the title of Grand Commander of the Indian Empire (G.C.I.E.) in recognition of his contribution to the war effort.³⁸⁸

In March 1919 the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford paid a visit to Baroda in order to lay the foundation stone of the Railways Workshops, a remarkable enterprise indeed, for a State as big as Baroda.³⁸⁹ The Diwan elucidated how the railways rose and developed in the State, and the Maharaja gracefully alluded to the 'sympathetic and liberal attitude of the Government of India towards the railway enterprise in Indian States',³⁹⁰ and spoke at length on the necessity that was being felt in Baroda for possessing the means to repair the train coaches and locomotives.³⁹¹

It was at Gulmarga in Kashmir that news reached him that the Treaty of Versailles had been concluded on 28 June, 1919 to end the First World War, and he hurriedly sent his felicitations to the Viceroy in a manner which was now familiar to the British.³⁹²

Although the Maharaja had been the inspirational figure "and, one might almost say, the physician of his Government"³⁹³, although he was a deviser of manifold things, and a curer of manifold shortcomings, the very fact that he could spend a large part of his reign living abroad away from his State is testimony to the fact that his administration was efficient. Nobody, even if he is a person with superhuman abilities can accomplish the task of entirely reconstructing a State on his own. He has to control the machinery, guide the officers, model the departments, and make the humblest clerk feel that he, too, was lending his helping hand in making his State perfect. One is not belittling the achievements of the Maharaja, but enhancing them, that he had in his service men who possessed great ability, and who, if they cannot make pretensions to spectacularly great achievements, can at least be evidence of how the State steadily progressed under the guidance of the Maharaja during his reign of 63 years. The names of V.P. Madhava Rao, Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar, Romesh Chandra Dutt (who

³⁸⁷ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, p. 152.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 165-166.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 166.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid.

unfortunately died before the completion of the work of his life) and Sir Manubhai Mehta stand out among the famous Diwans of the Baroda State, who are remembered in Baroda even today for their immense contribution in the development of the State.³⁹⁴

To Europe

In this period the British Government gave back full control of Okhamandal (Dwarka and Bet) to the Baroda State on certain conditions. In order to express his gratitude cooperation was offered by Sayajirao Gaekwad III when in 1919 a clash between the Government of India and Afghanistan seemed imminent.³⁹⁵

As normalcy returned to Europe after the Great War, Sayajirao Gaekwad III, who was badly in need of the restful European climate, took a decision to go abroad. An additional factor behind this European tour was that Prince Jaisingrao was chronically ill too and was in urgent need of medical care. Thus the chronically ill Gaekwad family left India for Europe in September 1919. However, he was pursued by misfortune even there. Within two days he received news from Baroda that the death of Princess Padmavati had occurred due to an ulcer and within a short time Prince Shivajirao had died of pneumonia. The news of being bereaved of his daughter-in-law and son stunned the ailing Maharaja who was himself in preparation of entering the nursing home. Sayajirao Gaekwad III and Chimnabai were in immense need of each other's sympathy and the couple steadfastly faced this hour of intense grief by remaining patient and equanimous. "Made as he was", writes V.K. Chavda, "Sayaji Rao recovered soon from this family affliction and found time to finish a deal".³⁹⁶

The Gaekwad family required a permanent house in England since they visited the country annually and in 1919 the Maharaja purchased two houses—Russels Estate near Watford and Oldsworth in Surrey. The latter had historical associations because it once belonged to the famous English poet, Lord Tennyson. The Maharaja also made arrangements for the education of Prince Pratapsingrao in England in the course of this stay.³⁹⁷

The Prince of Wales, Edward, paid a visit to Baroda in November 1921 and he was received by the Maharaja with great warmth. It may be noted that receiving a visit from any member of the British royal family always made the Maharaja very happy since it made him feel

³⁹⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 166-167.

³⁹⁵ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 96-97.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 97.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

amidst his equals. Although when Viceroys or Governors visited Baroda, Sayajirao Gaekwad III welcomed them with suitable honor, however, unlike members of the British royal family, he never placed them among his equals.³⁹⁸

In March 1922 the marriage of Prince Dhairyashilrao and Vimla Raje took place and in April the Maharaja again sailed for Europe where bereavement awaited him. On 21 December the death of his son-in-law Jitendra Narayan, towards whom he had a long time ago developed a reconciliatory attitude occurred and the Maharaja returned from Europe to attend his last rites. In this tour he met the Fascist dictator of Italy, Benito Mussolini, and the remarkable development that Italy had achieved under his leadership greatly impressed Sayajirao Gaekwad III. He began to ponder over the advantages that accrued from totalitarianism against democracy. Later on, he also began to ponder over a constitutional proposal for the Baroda State based on the Italian model.³⁹⁹

Social Reform

No objective was closer to the heart of Sayajirao Gaekwad III than to socially and religiously reform his people. The philosophical inclination of his mind was already intolerant of the chicaneries of the priesthood and in addition to these he secured great advantages by traveling abroad and coming in touch with different kinds of civilizations. He dwelt upon the fact that the West was so prosperous and enlightened and compared it with the plight of his own people who lived in poverty and ignorance; this shook his patriotic pride which rose in revolt as a result of it when it occurred to him that the country which was once inhabited by such great heroes like Shivaji and Mahadji Sindhia stood so low in the estimation of the world. He never denied the fact that economic forces were at work, but when he faced the economic question he was not such a fool to make mutual or counter accusations, or to consider the Western nations blameworthy for events of history which were inevitable. The panacea, according to him, lay in the organization and encouragement of industries which might result in India at last emerging as a rival to its economic competitors of whose destruction (during the days of the British Raj) she could never hope to achieve.⁴⁰⁰

But economic possibilities were not the only factor which led to an awakening in the Maharaja of a desire for social reform. Ignorance was the biggest impediment in the progress

³⁹⁸ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 97-98.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 98.

⁴⁰⁰ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 193-194.

of India which ought to be rooted out completely if she was to be ranked among the more advanced civilizations of the world. The masses of India were mostly illiterate and superstitious and they remained persistently and stubbornly faithful to antiquated traditions and customs to a large extent because they knew nothing better, and those who ought to be guiding and teaching them did not possess that much amount of knowledge so as to offer them advice regarding the good and bad ways of life and to show them the path towards amending the ancient mannerisms of their forefathers through the medium of the light of modern research and modern progress. During that period India was living in the dead past which was not even worthy of being called a universal past but a past which was peculiarly created by her. The Maharaja did not champion the cause of revolution. He 'stood for a modern civilization against the deadening effects and the evils of medieval and ancient traditions and customs based upon erroneous conceptions of life and the world'.⁴⁰¹ Ignorance which was the greatest impediment in the progress of the people could only be surmounted by education. Yet the males in the Baroda State were partially and ineffectively educated, and people were totally negligent with regard to female education. Therefore how could such a nation which during that period was keeping one half of its population in darkness hope for any development to occur? How could the sons hope to prosper when their mothers who shaped their early life were themselves steeped in ignorance? And therefore the direction which the measures of social reform in the State took was to a large extent devoted towards emancipating women and to the restoration of that rational freedom to India which had been the heritage of her ancient past and which was only denied to her owing to the degeneracy of the customs of base-born men.⁴⁰²

But if it was a difficult task to curb the avarice of the priestly class, to fight their vested interests, and to wean the people away from prejudicial and superstitious beliefs, and formularies, by showcasing before them a religion based on rationality, an even more difficult task was the introduction of ordinary citizenship rights despite being confronted by popular opinion for those depressed classes which Gujarat during that period called Antayajas, and which the whole of India at that time used to call 'untouchables'.⁴⁰³

From the very early years of his reign the Maharaja started working for the amelioration of the depressed classes. There was an establishment of schools, for which, however, no Hindu

⁴⁰¹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 194.

⁴⁰² Ibid., pp. 194-195.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., p. 203.

teacher was willing to work—only Muslims and Arya Samajists offered themselves for the posts. There was also an establishment of Antyaj boarding schools, and ‘the written testimony of many visitors to them... goes to show that three or four years of refined surroundings and education so transform the boys and girls in appearance that they are not to be distinguished from children of higher caste’.⁴⁰⁴ Nor was he scared to himself practice what he ordered others to do. When he was on a tour of his State the poor people would gather in crowds around his car without being hindered, and he felt neither loathsome nor disgraceful when they did what others in the country were not allowed to do. He slammed his people in an outspoken manner for practicing caste discrimination which was a great impediment in the progress of the nation and he was successful in securing admission of untouchable boys in schools, though they sat separately in them, and that representatives of the Antayajas were elected to Municipal Councils, and even entered the Legislative Assembly of the State.⁴⁰⁵

The interest of the Maharaja in the question of untouchability became so evident that he was chosen to be the President of the All India Conference on ‘Untouchability’ organized in Bombay on 23 March, 1918.⁴⁰⁶ In his speech at the Conference he said:

“The first is the utter inhumanity of the institution. The spirit of civilized peoples rose so strongly against slavery during the nineteenth century that it was practically abolished throughout the world. And yet the state of untouchability, which in some of its aspects is worse than slavery, is permitted to survive without effective protest on the part of a majority of our people. Wherever slavery has existed there has been a certain amount of contact between master and slave. In Greece and Rome we know that trade was despised and industrial and commercial enterprises were given over to helots. The Romans used their slaves not only as personal servants but as agents, managers, bailiffs, bookkeepers, etc. so that the slaves had opportunity of rising to relatively high functions. But the Indian caste peoples have doomed the untouchables to a condition of servility and humiliation which is even more subtly cruel than the physical tortures practised by the slave-hunters in Africa, and the poignancy of which will increase with education.

“Their dwellings shall be outside the village and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys. Their dress shall be the garments of the dead, they shall eat their food from broken dishes. Their transactions shall be among themselves and their marriages with their equals. At night they shall not walk about in villages or towns.

⁴⁰⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 206.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 206-207.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 207.

“Such are some of the rules prescribed in the Laws of Manu. When the law of the land sanctions so harsh an ostracism and that in perpetuity, we are not surprised to find in practice that outcastes have been bought and sold as chattels and universally they are treated with less consideration than cattle”.⁴⁰⁷

This rather long quote best justifies the opinion of the Maharaja, and his firm belief on the question of untouchability. The Maharaja had fought gallantly and successfully against the more objectionable features of the caste system, but if he could ensure that his wishes were met he could have done much more than this. In his Inaugural Address at the Eighteenth National Social Conference held at Bombay on 30 December, 1904 he had said this on the caste system:

“It intensifies local dissensions and diverse interests and obscures great national ideals and interests which should be those of every caste and people and renders the country disunited and incapable of overcoming its defects or of availing itself of the advantages which it should gain from contact with the civilization of the West. It robs us of our humanity by insisting on the degradation of some of our fellowmen who are separated from us by no more than the accident of birth. It prevents the noble and charitable impulses which have done so much for the improvement and mutual benefit of European society”.⁴⁰⁸

It seemed to the Maharaja that the position of women in India was a ‘bad economy of social forces’. One could not regard the woman as a thing apart; without her society would become unevenly balanced, “a monster with one side developed and the other atrophied”.⁴⁰⁹ And the importance of society was phenomenal. The progress and the prosperity of the nation were ultimately dependent on the social system and all that it signified.⁴¹⁰ In the same speech which the Maharaja gave at the Eighteenth National Social Conference at Bombay on 30 December, 1904 he said the following words regarding the position of women in Indian society:

“By the denial of education to women we deprive ourselves of half the potential force of the nation, deny to our children the advantage of having cultured mothers, and by stunting the faculties of the mother affect injuriously the heredity of the race. We create moreover a gulf of mental division in the

⁴⁰⁷ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 449.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 159-160.

⁴⁰⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 213.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

home and put a powerful drag on progress by making the women a great conservative force that clings to everything old, however outworn or irrational".⁴¹¹

The special hobby of the Maharaja throughout his working life had been education. And special attention was given by him to female education so that the girls could be properly integrated into the social fabric of the country. But mere words are not enough, and he would have thought very unfavorable about himself if, possessing the power, there was not a translation by him of his words into action. At the outset of his reign there was an establishment of a Training College for Women Teachers in 1881, some four years prior to the foundation of a similar College for men. Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao took up the cause of female education; however, his beginning was very humble. In 1875 there existed only two schools in the whole of the Baroda State, one at the Capital and the second one at Petlad; by 1880 the number of schools rose to eight with a total of 504 students attending them. In 1927-28 there existed one High School for Girls with a total attendance of 438, and the figure for the number of girls attending Primary Schools was nearly 70,000.⁴¹²

Although these were noteworthy figures it was but natural that in comparison with the corresponding ones for boys they were not praiseworthy. However, the brilliant results were entirely because of the special interest of the Maharaja in female education; the policy of the Maharaja of Compulsory Education, to which I have referred elsewhere, was responsible to a large extent for the seemingly great rise in the attendance of girls in Primary Schools, and an overall change in the attitude of the public towards female education in the whole of India was bound to have its reactions on the Baroda State. But Compulsory Education was in itself a special feature of the reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III, and the Maharaja became engaged in the pursuit of the cause of the women long before the opinion of the public had begun to assert its influence.⁴¹³

There were still many impediments in the path of the progress of female education in India at that time which the Maharaja had to surmount. The huge difference between the number of boys and the number of girls attending the Secondary Schools and the College was an indication of the opinion of the public regarding the need for female education. In the sphere of English education, which in addition to its name often means a higher standard because, whatever may be the good qualities of the language, no boy or girl can be considered to have

⁴¹¹ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 164.

⁴¹² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 213-214.

⁴¹³ Ibid., p. 214.

received complete education without it; there were in 1928-29 nearly 16,000 boys and 513 girls attending the Government schools and Colleges: in the Baroda College there were 685 boys and 11 girls respectively. The general prejudice of the people, whether because of arguments already made, or the mere inertness of an antiquated tradition, or again to the feeling that education was not useful for women, had not as yet been surmounted. The small number of highly educated women, led by the Maharani, who was an equal, if not superior, supporter of the cause of women, than her husband, added luster to the society of Baroda; one can justify from their experience that there was no fear whatsoever of any departure from the Sita ideal, and it is indeed deplorable that more parents during that period did not profit from their example.⁴¹⁴

The progress of the education of females may have with time altered the attitude towards widows. The causes because of which the remarriage of widows was generally prohibited during that period are obscure.⁴¹⁵

The concept of the inviolability of marriage as a sacrament seemingly suggests that the more physical union was in comparison insignificant; at that time what really mattered was the union of soul to soul, and as the soul cannot be destroyed therefore the marriage could not be dissolved and was eternal. This theory—although it was just a theory—was responsible for extending the taboo to even virgin widows, the death of whose boy husbands had occurred before the physical possibility to consummate the marriage existed. This was because when the ritual of betrothal was publicly performed there was an automatic endowment of the union with its sacred character and where the concept of spiritual union existed the question of physical capacity never arose and therefore rendered the betrothal as binding as the consummated marriage. This prohibition was not extended to the man. He was the God whom his wife was supposed to worship through her body and her soul. Without him she could never hope to spiritually exist, and the way his body was physically structured contemplated that he could possess more than one wife. His existence was possible independent of her but she could not exist independent of him. With regard to chastity it was seldom strictly enforced upon the man as it was upon the woman.⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁴ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 214-215.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., p. 216.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 216-217.

In his speech at the Eighteenth National Social Conference held at Bombay on 30 December, 1904 the Maharaja had this to say with regard to the customs of polygamy, the prohibition of widow remarriage and the general treatment of widows in India:

“The existence side by side of customs like polygamy and the prohibition of widow remarriage similarly show a bad organization of society. The one keeps up an unduly low standard of morality among men, the other demands an impossibly high standard from women. To enforce this standard we suppress our feelings of humanity and affection, and inflict severities upon widows in order to keep their vitality low and make them less attractive, yet the impossibility remains and the laws of Nature we have ignored avenge themselves; for in spite of our harsh measures we fail to preserve even an ordinary standard of morality in this much ill-treated class”.⁴¹⁷

In the same speech the Maharaja said that the degeneration occurred much later:

“A change came when the disturbed times of ignorance and foreign invasion were disintegrating society. The ideal of wifely devotion and purity was exaggerated beyond all reason—and all customs were modified in this spirit. Sati, the entire prohibition of widow remarriage, early marriage, and the rest were established in our society, and in some parts of India the strictest Muslim type of *purdah* was adopted. Ignorance, increasing among men, became absolute among women”.⁴¹⁸

The same factors which led to the prohibition of widow remarriage seem to have led vaguely to the custom of child-marriage. If the argument of the Maharaja was correct that the establishment of this custom took place during the period when learning was decadent and foreign invasions were rampant, there may have been an additional fear among the people that there would be an easy violation of young girls, and they might have been hopeful that such a calamity was avertible by providing them with a natural protection. In any case this custom was absent during the time of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

The horrible effects of child-marriage have been vividly described by Miss Katherine Mayo, who wrote omnisciently about her short tour of India during which she intensively studied the custom in selected quarters. However, long before she wrote, the Maharaja had warned the people of India. Although he acknowledged the fact that these were evils, and indeed extremely serious evils in the social system of the Hindus, but ‘we cannot say that our whole society is evil’,⁴¹⁹ and there were meritorious things in Hindu society even if its shortcomings

⁴¹⁷ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, p. 164.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid. pp. 165-166.

⁴¹⁹ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 219.

were alarmingly and unpleasantly noticeable.⁴²⁰ During the course of the same speech which he delivered at the Eighteenth National Social Conference held in Bombay on 30 December, 1904 he added:

“It is also sometimes unwise to take European criticism too seriously, for Europeans do not always see correctly or make allowances for diversity of institutions and customs. Thus, they often speak as if our marriage ceremony implied immediate consummation as theirs does”.⁴²¹

In this speech he has justly criticized the European writers and their perception of Indian customs in a perfect manner. Many writers have indeed perceived India in an astonishingly superficial manner. It would be indeed extremely foolish even after residing in India for a long time to make statements that are expressed in a dogmatic manner, without making proper inquiries and cross-checking them. On a subject such as child-marriage the perceptions of a European writer were very much prone to be influenced by his own preferences, therefore on such issues it would be safer to have recourse to the opinions of a Hindu gentleman.

Gradually, however, even educated Hindus became aware of the fact that it was wrong to marry their children at an early age and the practice ought to be discouraged. The administration of the Baroda State passed the Widow Remarriage Act in 1901 which was based upon the same Act passed in British India in 1856. Another Act known as the ‘Infant Marriage Prevention Act’ was also passed by the Baroda Government in 1904 and it also became a law. Although the people took very little advantage of the former, the latter it was reported twenty years later was very effective in providing impetus to the movement of reform as a result of which the higher and better-educated classes automatically raised the age limit of marriage to an appreciable extent, which had an influence, though to a lesser extent, on other classes as well.⁴²²

A later attempt at reforming the Hindu social system was the Divorce Act. Divorce was pragmatically speaking unknown to Hindu Law, which regarded marriage as indissoluble in the same manner as the Roman Catholic Church. It was certain that the more conservative or old-fashioned elements of Hindu society would oppose this reform, but it was rather astonishing to see that the attitude of the people had changed and that the educated sections of

⁴²⁰ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 219.

⁴²¹ Gaekwar, *Speeches & Addresses*, pp. 156-157.

⁴²² Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 221.

Hindu society were in favor of this reform in general. The success of this reform was also a testimony to the influence which the Maharaja exercised on the people of Baroda.⁴²³

In these ways the Maharaja strived to align his people with modern thought, and the primary goal throughout his reign was the progress of the State and its people. It has been mentioned elsewhere how he opposed and resisted with determination the caste as well as the purdah system because he possessed the insight to judge that they were impediments in the progress of the nation. He viewed society as a unity. He did not discriminate between one caste and another because according to him every caste did the work which was allotted to it and made its contribution and had a role to play in the economic development of the State. It was not only the ruler and his officers, or the lawyers and the priests and the merchants alone, but the artists and musicians and writers all played a part in preserving the cultural heritage of the country. Similarly, the scavengers and the sweepers had a role to play in the material welfare of the people. It was in this spirit of the dignity of labor, as well as with a humane spirit that he strove to remove the disabilities of the depressed classes; and it was in the same spirit of promoting equal opportunities for all that he became a supporter of the cause of the emancipation of women because it was essential for the social progress of the State. He was nevertheless ideologically a Hindu; he had traveled across the length and breadth of Europe and America many times and had realized that there were weaknesses in Occidental Civilization too, and had seen the people of the Occident relentlessly boast about their progress which was actually no progress at all,⁴²⁴ “or at best only progress in a circle”.⁴²⁵ What he strove to do throughout his reign was to adapt his experience of Europe to his own country, and to place the social system of India on the basis of rationality.⁴²⁶

The Golden Jubilee

27 May, 1925 saw the completion of fifty years of rule of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III. When he ascended the throne a chaotic situation prevailed throughout the Baroda State; in 1925 she was among the most progressive princely states of India and a model for others to imitate. In 1875 the financial condition of the State was not sound; after the deposition of Malharrao Gaekwad the British had found huge sums of money concealed in the female apartments; the roads were not safe; and the nobility was unruly. The peasants on whom the

⁴²³ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 221-222.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., pp. 222-223.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 223.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

prosperity of the State was dependent “steered a precarious course between the Scylla of uncertainty of tenure, and the Charybdis of exaction and oppression”.⁴²⁷ There was an absence of proper roads and the non-existence of railways as a visible effect of State enterprise. The capital city of Baroda perhaps lived up to the standard of Indian towns during that period, but the public infrastructure was inadequate, with narrow streets and the absence of a proper system of water supply.⁴²⁸

Sayajirao Gaekwad III changed all this. He placed the finances of the State on a sound footing; there was an introduction of proper method in administrative work; there was a settlement of the land tax on a regular basis thus providing encouragement to the peasants. There was a construction of roads, and the building of railroads was especially given great impetus. The capital city of Baroda was given special attention. One of the earliest and greatest gifts of the Maharaja to the capital city was the provision of an assured system of water supply; there was a widening of roads to which the noble thoroughfares were a testament to. There was not only a fostering of education but the establishment of proper schools and the flourishing Baroda College. There was purification and systematization of the administration of justice and Baroda became one of the first States which established a High Court on the pattern of the British Government. The Maharaja also contributed in the field of medicine by establishing one of the best hospitals in India.⁴²⁹

Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III alone cannot be given the credit for all these achievements. The foundational structure was built by the Diwan, Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, who ran the administration of the State from 1875 to 1881 when the Maharaja was a minor. It was upon this foundational structure built by Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao that Sayajirao Gaekwad III erected the noble superstructure of a welfare state. But the Maharaja was not satisfied merely with making improvements upon the work done by Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao before him. Therefore there was construction of new buildings, creation of new departments and foundation of new institutions. There was introduction of Compulsory Education and the separation of the executive from the judiciary. Moreover, the Maharaja resolutely attacked the more obnoxious features of the caste system as a result of which men began to live together more harmoniously and interacted more freely; a more liberal position was offered

⁴²⁷ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, p. 224.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

to women in society which they accepted to some extent; and some amount of justice was done by making an effort to emancipate the depressed classes.⁴³⁰

This was the work which had been accomplished during the fifty years of the reign of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III and he could take pride in his achievements. However, there were failures too. The irrigation schemes launched by him were a justification of what Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao had forebodingly predicted that they would prove unprofitable. The scheme of compulsory education which the Maharaja had zealously launched had not proved to be overwhelmingly successful to the extent he would have wanted it to be. The efforts which the Maharaja made with vigor for the stimulation of commerce were only partially and sporadically successful. The Maharaja had been opposed too by his people on several occasions and he tried to live down, pacify, or surmount the resistance offered by them. But it is not humanly possible for a man to be successful in all his ventures but “the credit side of the Maharaja’s work far exceeds the debit”.⁴³¹ When we take into consideration the stupendously difficult task which he was assigned, one should not count his failures, but his successful ventures. He was a well-wisher of his subjects and they in turn by generously responding to his efforts were his well-wishers too.⁴³²

Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his accession in January 1926 with pomp and splendor. Lord Reading, the Viceroy, and his wife visited the Maharaja.⁴³³ Before departing for Delhi, the foundation stone of a new Science Institute on the grounds of the Baroda College was laid by Lord Reading. It had been the cherished dream of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III to lay the foundation of such an institute for many years; and on the occasion of the celebration of his Golden Jubilee he resolved to realize his dream rather than accomplishing an alternative scheme of erecting a modern building for the better lodging of the Central Library of Baroda. A large number of eminent personalities of Baroda as well as British guests gathered to witness the ceremony. Opening the proceedings with his speech, the Diwan, Sir Manubhai Mehta, spoke at length about the scope of the institute which was to be soon established, the proposal of adding a Faculty of Law to the curriculum of the College, and of realizing the ultimate dream of providing Baroda, or possibly the whole of Gujarat with a university. Then, Lord Reading, responding to the invitation of the

⁴³⁰ Rice, *Life of Sayaji Rao III*, Vol. II, pp. 224-225.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 225.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 99.

Maharaja, gracefully paid a tribute to Baroda's manifold intellectual activities and laid the foundation stone.⁴³⁴

Later Years of the Reign of Sayajirao Gaekwad III

At this advanced age another idea came to him. He began thinking about getting his heir-apparent Prince Pratapsingrao married "before it was too late for him"⁴³⁵ and he chose a daughter of the Chorpade family named Shantadevi and the marriage was solemnized on 4 January, 1929. Sayajirao Gaekwad III took great care to see that his grandson's wedding function went smoothly. However, soon he was afflicted with a serious attack of gout, which forced him to go to Europe again. After he had spent a few months in Europe in getting cured he came back to Baroda in January 1930 and received the Viceroy, Lord Irwin. During the viceroyalty of Lord Irwin there was great ferment in India's political scene owing to the Civil Disobedience Movement started by Mahatma Gandhi with his famous Dandi March. Sayajirao Gaekwad III, however, remained neutral during the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-32. In 1930 he was gladdened as he became a great-grandfather when Shantadevi gave birth to Prince Fatesingrao on 2 April.⁴³⁶

Sayajirao Gaekwad III visited the USA twice; for the first time in 1933 and for the second time in 1934. In 1933 he went to Chicago to preside over the World Conference of the fellowship of Faiths where spoke on 'Religion in a Changing World' and his address received great appreciation. In 1936 he went to London to preside over its deliberations for the second time and continue his discussion of the subject.⁴³⁷

In 1934 he was bereaved of the last of his Kavlana relations; his very dear brother Sampatrao and the irreparable loss that he felt was a grim reminder to him that his death was also imminent. However, before his death he was to achieve many more laurels. Sayajirao Gaekwad III became one of the few fortunate rulers to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of his rule in 1935 and replying to more than a hundred addresses he recollected with humility few of his achievements. In order to convey the Emperor's message of goodwill and to felicitate him, the Viceroy, Lord Willingdon along with Lady Willingdon paid a to visit to Baroda.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁴ Sergeant, *Ruler of Baroda*, pp. 182-183.

⁴³⁵ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 99.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., pp. 99-100.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., p. 100.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

He went to Europe again in 1936. He went to Berlin this time to enjoy the Olympic Games and also met Adolf Hitler, who gave an honorable reception to the Maharaja and thus Sayajirao Gaekwad III formed a commendable opinion of the German Fuehrer. In 1937 he visited London to attend the Imperial Conference. In the same year he was made the patron of the Cricket Club of India. He was also sent an invitation by the Chamber of Princes to become the Chancellor of the institution. However, the Maharaja in a polite manner refused the offer since he knew that his long absences from India would be a hindrance to its smooth functioning.⁴³⁹

In 1938 he visited Europe for the twenty-fourth and last time. In Baroda another son Ranjitsing was born to Shantadevi. But while the birth of Ranjitsing gave him joy, Dhairyashilrao's declining health was a source of worry for him. He did not get peace even abroad because Hitler was championing the cause of the Sudeten Germans which was leading to tensions in Europe and was gradually pushing the Continent and the world on the brink of another terrible cataclysmic world war. He therefore realized that it was insecure to live in Europe and this time he returned home swiftly reaching Bombay on 31 October, 1938.⁴⁴⁰

In the meantime, Sayajirao Gaekwad III was unhappy with what was occurring in the State. He perceived that he had given adequate power to his people without their demanding it by the introduction of local self-government. One can evince from his reply to various congratulatory addresses during the celebrations of his Golden Jubilee that he was extremely angry at the demand for democracy by his people. He said he would himself consider the demand at the right time; but for now he felt that his people were neither ready nor mature enough to demand and enjoy a democratic government. But this was only equivalent to postponing the issue. However, he did not live long enough to grant democracy, but in the last phase of his life he could foresee that the day when people would take a confrontational stance on this issue was not very distant.⁴⁴¹

In 1930-31 with the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement the Baroda State also saw agitations related to this national movement. There were occasions when elected members of the Dhara Sabha resigned and there was even an outbreak of a communal riot between Gujaratis and Maharashtrians when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel arrived in the State in January 1939. This condemnable incident blemished the good name that the State had

⁴³⁹ Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, pp. 100-101.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 101.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 118-119.

acquired until this time. However, when the outbreak of the riot occurred the Maharaja was in the last phase of his life and nearly in a coma and hence not in a position to feel saddened. Nonetheless, by his hard work and dedication Sayajirao Gaekwad III had made Baroda one of the most progressive and liberal Native State of India.⁴⁴² Maharaja Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad had a peaceful death on 6 February, 1939.⁴⁴³

⁴⁴² Chavda, *Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III*, p. 119.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.