

CHAPTER 24

Administration of Baroda during the minority of the  
Ruler.

In April, 1875 Sir Richard Meade was appointed Governor General's Agent and Special Commissioner for Baroda and Sir T. Madhav Rao, K.C.S.I., who had successively held the post of Minister of Travancore and Indore and who was a man of great administrative experience, was appointed Dewan of Baroda State. Lord Northbrook sketched out to Sir R. Meade the broad lines of the policy to be carried out (as regards the administration of the Baroda State after the adoption of Sayaji Rao by Jamnabai on 20th May) in a letter of the 22nd May 1875, as under

Broad lines sketched out on 22nd May 1875.

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"The exact position and duties of Sir Madhav Rao will also have to be determined. He will, I presume, be much in the same position as Sir Salar Jung at Hyderabad, with the difference which follows our Treaty Engagements with Baroda, giving the British Government, greater power to interfere, if necessary, with internal affairs than we may have by our Treaties with the Nizam.

"Would it be well to establish a consultative Council composed of the principal Sirdars? Any thing which would associate them in the Government and give them an interest in the new order of things would appear to be of advantage.

"Some unpopularity must necessarily follow from the sweeping out of the old corrupted and debauched hangers of the late regime, but it seems desirable to make as few changes at first as possible, consistently with the carrying out of the necessary reforms.

"As regards the interference of the Resident with the Minister you will probably agree with me that it should be confined to indicating the nature of the reforms to be made which indeed, pretty completely described in the Report of the first Commission over which you presided. But there is one of some consequence which was advisedly postponed. I allude to the arrangements connected with the contingent and the Military strength of the Baroda State.

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"Military reductions are ticklist measures in most countries, and would, of course, have to be carried out in Baroda with deliberation and with a due regard for its vested interest.

"There are other questions such as the transit duties, the arrangement for the united police action where British and Baroda territories are intermingled, in prevention of opium smuggling etc. which will have to be arranged as sometime goes on.

"The first thing will be to establish the popularity of the New Government and to show that we are carrying for the real interest of the people, if Sir Madhav Rao is the man I take him for, he ought to be able to put the conduct of the British Government in such a light as will ~~ex~~ long remove the ~~unfaeu~~ unfavourable impression, which from whatever course it has been derived, has been circulated through the Press in Western India and partially elsewhere.

(Vide "General Sir Richard Meade and the Feudatory States of Central and Southern India." by T.H. Thornton Pp.228 and 229).

The actual arrangements made in pursuance of these instructions is seen ~~from~~ <sup>in</sup> Paragraphs 22 of Sir Madhav Rao's report on the Administration

----- Administration of Baroda for the year 1875-76 P. 20.

"22. The Dewan is the responsible head of the Administration. The Ministers at the heads of the departments are responsible to the Dewan and perform all ordinary work in the exercise of their own discretion, the limits of which are more or less defined or understood. Matters of doubt, difficulty, delicacy or importance are submitted to the Dewan for his orders. The Dewan not unfrequently calls the heads of the Departments together in view to discuss matters of importance. In matters likely to be interesting to the Sardars, Darakdars, Savkars and Mahajans, their opinions are ascertained, and as far as possible their feelings consulted."

As regards the interference of the Government of India in the Administration, and the position of Her Late Highness Maharani Jambabai during the minority, the following extracts from a note on the procedure relating to the Government of the State during the minority may be usefully quoted:-

"2.                               X                               X                               X

The former (i.e. the guardianship of His Highness' person) in all domestic matters, will remain wholly under the control and charge of Her Highness the Maharani Jemnabai, whilst such arrangements as are necessary in connection with the chief, in respect of public affairs and His Highness' education, tuition and general training for the duties that will hereafter devolve on him will be watched over by the Agent to the Governor General in consultation with the Maharani and the Minister.

"3. Her Highness Maharani Jamnabai as the mother of the

Maharaja will be regarded as the head of the Gaekwad family during the minority and will be consulted on all matters affecting its members - and Her Highness will be treated with the respect and honour due to her high position.

"The Dewan will wait on Her Highness once in a fortnight, and oftener if necessary and will keep her informed of the State of the Treasury and the progress of the administration in general. Important measures affecting the welfare of the people of Baroda will be brought to Her Highness' notice in view to obtaining the benefit of her opinion thereon.

"It is confidently hoped that Her Highness will give her full normal support to all useful reforms and measures that may, on due consideration, be decided on as necessary for the welfare of the State and people of Baroda.

"4. The palace department and the affairs pertaining to it will be under Her Highness' control and orders.

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"12. The Dewan will previously consult the Agent to the Governor & General in all matters of great public importance - such as those noted below, and will keep him duly informed of the measures and progress and the conduct of the State of affairs generally.

- (1) When a new land settlement or modifications of existing land settlement are contemplated.
- (2) When a new tax is proposed involving additional burden on the people.
- (3) When any public work estimated to cost more than Rs. 10,000 has to be sanctioned.
- (4) When any unusual expenditure of more than Rs. 10,000/- is

proposed.

(6) When it is desired to employ British official in the Baroda service.

(7) When it is proposed to dismiss a British Official so employed.

(8) When confirmation of Capital sentence is required etc. etc.  
etc.

"Any advice which the Agent to the Governor General may from time to time judge fit to offer on these subjects will receive the utmost attention from the Dewan, and will be given such effect to, as may be found practicable.

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"14. With a view to relieve the Dewan from the duties connected with the control of the Military force of the State, the supervision of this department will for the present, continue in the hands of the Agent to the Governor General.

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"19. It will be the duty of the Agent to the Governor General to maintain on the part of the Government of India a constant and watchful general supervision and control over the proceedings of the Administration, and at all times to offer his opinions and advice freely to the Dewan." \*

A note of certain points, important few of which have been quoted above, were settled and agreed to at a meeting at the Baroda Palace, on 15th September 1875, at which Maharani Jambabai, Col. Sir R.J. Meade, K.C.S.I. Agent to the Governor General and Special Commissioner and Sir T. Madhav Rao K.C.S.I., Dewan were present.

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\* H.P.O. Notes on points discussed at Conference at R.P. on 30th October 1916 . Pp. 39-42.

The perusal of this note will convince anybody that it well defined the nature of the work of each of Maharani, The Dewan and the Agent to the Governor General and it also displayed the anxiety of the British Government that while the Administration should strictly remain native necessary vigilance and supervision of the Agent to the Governor General over the conduct of the State affairs should ~~not~~ not be relaxed. Major operations involving greater financial outlay strictly required Agent to the Governor General's attention and consent. Though Maharani was acknowledged as the Head of the Palace department, she was required to lay open the accounts of expenditure before the Minister whenever the latter required it. Military affairs were strictly to remain, though for <sup>some time</sup> ~~the present~~, in the hands of the Agent to the Governor General the reason given being to lessen Minister's responsibility. Thus these two financial and Military affairs were virtually in the hands of the British Government. Thus an all pervading influence and interference of the British Government is noticeable in the conduct of the administration of the State during the minority period. We will also see that the education and the administrative and moral training of the minor Prince was also to be guided according to the plan drawn up by the Agent to the Governor General in consultation with the Maharani and Minister which he might deem good for the Prince and which he thought would equip him with the necessary ~~power~~ power to deal with affairs of the State.

Thus, however, it appears that though the administration during the Minority of the Ruler afforded a greater intervention in the internal affairs of the State by the British Government, at the same time it showed its beneficial effects in the efficiency of administration

administration , prosperity of the State eradication of some of the social evils provision of justice to all and in such other sphere of life.

#### Education of the Prince.

During the minority of the Maharaja it was laid down by the Government of India that his education, and the general training for the duties that would thereafter devolve on him would be watched over by the Agent to the Governor General in consultation with Maharani Jamnabai and the Minister; periodical reports of the progress made being submitted to the Government of India.

Accordingly Sir R.Meade, ~~xxxx~~ selected as the Maharaja's Tutor, Mr. F.A.H. Elliot \* of the Bombay Civil Service and drew up a scheme of training and instruction based upon the system successfully pursued in the case of the Maharaja of Mysore. The scheme provided that His Highness should be well-grounded in the three languages likely to be of practical use to him as Ruler Gujarati (the vernacular of his territory), Marathi, (the language of his tribe) and English and in all the elements of a high class education. His education was by no means, to be confined to book-learning but include Athletic and Military training, riding and games, and every opportunity was to be taken to improve his mind by travel and make him personally acquainted with every portion of his scattered territory. Moreover, he was to be taught not in seclusion, but in a class composed of lads, about his own age, of good position and intelligence who would compete with him in his studies and join<sup>t</sup> in his games and sports.

(Vide Sir R.Meade and the feudatory States of Central and Southern India P. 225).

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\* Baroda Gazette Vol. 1 P.605

The programme was faithfully carried out under the guidance and supervision of Mr. Elliot, Maharaja applied himself to the acquisition of sound knowledge. Capable teachers were selected to take him through a difficult course of history, science, philosophy, and metaphysics. The three languages mentioned above were soon mastered by him and when the time of investiture came near he was trained in practical politics and selected officers of the State, including Raja Sir T. Madhavrao, Khan Bahadur Kazi Shahabuddin, Khan Bahadur Pestonji Jehangir, Khan Bahadur Gurusetti Rustomji were appointed to acquaint the Maharaja with the details of the administration and to teach him the rudiments of Civil, Criminal, and revenue laws of the State, Sayaji Rao also acquired a fair knowledge of Hindu as well as Mahomedan law. His physical exercises and recreations were as punctually attended to as his literary studies. He also gained mastery in the art of riding and learnt swimming, shooting and hunting. His Military exercises were also not neglected and a British sergeant was appointed to give him the necessary drill and field training. No travels to Europe were undertaken by him during the period of training.

From the historical point of view it will be interesting to note that Sayaji Rao, himself a product of planned education during his minority, headed a Committee, recommended by the Conference of Ruling Princes and Chiefs held at Delhi on 30th October 1916\*, to advise the conference on the question of education of a Prince during his period of minority.

#### Policy of the British Government.

The form of administration during the minority of the Prince and

his education during this period are two important questions in the political life of a State. These two questions, however, came up before the Conference of Ruling Princes and Chiefs, above mentioned, held on 30th October 1916, and from its proceedings we are able to gather some information with regard to the policy of the Government of India relating these two questions. The views of the Baroda State ~~also~~ can also be noticed here.

The question of Administration during the minority had been under consideration of the Central Government past some time. Various suggestions were offered, e.g.

- (1) That the administration should be conducted by a Regent, where a suitable one is available, either alone or assisted by a Council, or
- (2) That the administration should be that of a Council presided over by the Political Officer in political charge of the State.

As the Government of India itself admitted that in view of the diversity of opinion expressed by those consulted, and the difficulty of formulating any general rule applicable to all States, they had hitherto abstained from defining their policy on the subject. However, their views on this question ~~were~~ well depicted by Sir Lee Warner in his famous book 'The Native States of India'. But we will quote first an extract from 'The Administrative Problems of British India.' by Joseph Chailley Member of the French Chamber of Deputies, 1910. Book II Page 218.

"The age of majority of the native Chiefs was, for a long time, fixed by the Government of India at eighteen, but the tendency is now to postpone it to twenty one, as in the case of the

States directly dependent on the Governments of Bombay and the Punjab when a minor succeeds by the death, abdication, or (it may be deposition) of his natural, or adoptive father to the throne of a Native State, the Regency is, sometimes placed by the Government of India entirely in native hands. It may be confided to the widow of the late Chief, assisted by Ministers, or to a Native Darbar or Council of State, to which the British Resident or Political officer is, sometimes added. Occasionally, too, the administration is placed in the hands of the partly British and partly Indian Council, in which British element must necessarily have the final word."

Speaking on the right to take charge of the States of minors and then even to provide for their education, on behalf of the British Government, Sir William Lee Warner states:-

"To the same source, may be attributed the right of the British Government to take charge of States when owing to the death or removal of a ruler, a fresh succession has not been recognised, or the successor duly recognised is unable, from minority or other cause, to undertake the responsibilities of his high position. Similar in source and nature is the obligation repeatedly and publicly affirmed," to see that a minor Chief is so educated as to befit him to manage his State." The Civil law imposes a special obligation on Government for the protection of minors, and for their education. The principle is of greater importance to the Indian Sovereigns, where Zanana factions and Court intrigues tend, if unchecked, to produce complications that would seriously hamper a young chief in the discharge of the extensive powers which may devolve upon him, whenever, he is

entrusted with the administration of his State. In the discharge of his duties, the Government of India, whilst anxious to pay all deference to the views of the family of the deceased chiefs, admits no right of intervention, and is exclusively guided in the arrangements which it makes by its own conception of the interests of the ruler and his subjects." (Ch. XI P. 334).

As can be seen ~~from~~ the above views also hold good for the all round education of the minor Prince. And what this education aimed at is very vividly brought out, to quote again, by Joseph Chailley in his same work. Talking about the minority education of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore he says:-

"The minor chief was like his father provided with a tutor, whose general functions were those of the "Tutors" in English Universities, but who was a British Official charged with the moral, as well as the intellectual education of the pupil. The English attach special importance to the formation of the character, and that is the primary function which is expected of the tutor. But he has also to teach his Prince what an Indian gentleman and a future ruler ought to know - the rudiments of science, history and literature, facilities in games and sport and the elements of law and administration. (The religious instruction of the boy was left to his family and his priests.

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" But this kind of home education, passed among surroundings and privileges is not the English ideal. They want to convert the young Princes into something better than capricious and spoilt pupils. The Chiefs of India must not think themselves, as Lord Curzon said, in a remarkable speech delivered at the Rajput Chiefs' College in 1900, "a privileged body to whom God

has given a Sanad of perpetual idleness. Their States are not their private property, the revenues are not meant to be swallowed up by their privy purse. Providence has destined them to be the working bees, and not the drones of the hive. They exist for the good of the peoples, and not their peoples for them, and they ought to be models, examples and guides."

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"But perhaps the most remarkable feature of this educational campaign consisted in the remarks made on various occasions by Lord - Curzon. Conscious of the secret apprehensions of the Chiefs, he repudiated any intention on the part of the Government to anglicise their sons. "Learn English" he said to these "for it opens to you so many doors of Western Civilization, but above all, learn the language of your own States. Do not remain strangers to your own peoples, do not break with the ideas, the customs, and the genius of Asia. Ask from the West all that it can give you, but do not forsake the East, which is your cradle. Become English Gentlemen as regards knowledge and sports, but remain Indian nobles by your attachment to tradition. Let your evolution be gradual; ~~xxx~~ be a link between the past and the future." (Pp. 220-225).

And Mr. Chailley ends with the prophetic words that 'Time, however, will fight on the side of the British Policy', and we know that it came out to be true.

We may now turn to note what Baroda Darbar had to say on these points.

Darbar Views.

Minority administration.

The Baroda Government held that as guardians, the Regency Council, as well as the Political Agent, occupied a fiduciary position of trust, and as such, they should not be in a position to commit the state to any permanent measure detrimental to the interests of the Ruler. No long term lease or agreement with a commercial firm or trading Company should be entered into by them in such a manner as to leave no locus penitentiae to the Ruler on his ~~attaining~~ attaining majority. Also the Ruling Chief ought to be free to repudiate arrangements effected during the minority administration within a reasonable time ~~after~~ his investiture, on an equitable basis. Permanent alienations of land revenue, or permanent surrenders of important State privileges which are usually accepted as indications of Sovereignty, like coinage, postal arrangements, fiscal schemes, military forces, or exchanges of territory should be deferred, where possible till the attainment of majority by the minor Chief and ~~this we will note by and by~~ that Baroda Government <sup>did</sup> advance this argument frequently with regard to the above referred subjects.

#### Education of the Minor.

In this question Baroda Darbar agreed with the British views with the only difference that at some stage study and training should cover a ~~stay~~ at some European country, preferably England, with proper checks to safeguard the young mind of the Prince being contaminated by the evils that exist along side the brighter aspects of life in the West. The Darbar said that the old ideals of luxury and comfort are to be replaced by rational ways of living and the zest for strenuous effort and energy to work for the public good is to be acquired by watching how men holding high positions live and work in the West. 'Also, that some of the evils that corrode the

fabric~~x~~ in India become glaringly apparent only when one lives in the midst of Western Society and the shackles of superstition that hamper our movements at every turn and obstruct our progress are then more easily set aside .' \*

Such were the arguments on both sides. However, it is difficult to see ~~an~~ eye to eye with the Baroda view on the education of a minor in Western Country with proper checks. One can easily say that these checks are difficult to put <sup>in practice</sup> and still more difficult to see that they are effective.