

TWENTYONE WEEKS
IN EUROPE
(1939)



RAJA RAGHUNATHRAO SHANKARRAO PANDIT
PANT SACHIV
RAJA OF BHOR

Rs. 20/-

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(1930)

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RAJA RAGHUNATHRAO SHANKARRAO PANDIT
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INTRODUCTION

It is the natural tendency of almost all educated Indians in recent times to entertain an eager wish to see actually on the spot, some time in life, the scenes and places referred to in English and continental history and literature which they have to study or read in their school or college careers since their childhood. It was accordingly my ardent desire from my student days to visit Great Britain and Ireland as well as other countries in Europe after graduation. Having had, however, to abruptly give up my college course in the Deccan College, Poona, owing to a sudden eye-trouble in the year 1903, I decided to spend a few years in making a tour in India and Burma with a view to complete the practical side of education by visiting an important portion of the same at intervals, as a preliminary to the long and laborious journey to Europe. After carrying out this programme between 1905 and 1910, I began to make my plans of the long-cherished European tour with the help and advice of the late Sir William Sheppard, retired I. C. S. and ex-Member of the Executive Council of the Government of Bombay and the Council of the Secretary of State for India, as he took a keen interest in me since he was, in his capacity as the Collector of Poona, the Political Agent for the Bhor State in 1904. The plans were almost complete. But the sudden out-break of the Great War in 1914 A. D. came as a bolt from the blue, and I had to shelve the project *sine die* at the time. It was obviously impossible to usefully revive the plan till the European countries were able to rehabilitate themselves after the disastrous consequences of the horrifying hostilities. Meanwhile I was called upon by Providence to assume the reins of my State owing to the lamentable demise of my revered father, His Highness late Shrimant Shankarrao Chimanaji *alias* Rao Saheb Pandit Pant Sachiv on 17th July, 1922. In short, what with the arduous and responsible duties of my changed sphere and what with the then peculiar difficulties of the State administration, I was not able to implement my object till May 1930 A. D.

The delay in carrying out my long-entertained desire was however advantageous in another way, as on that account I was favoured with the good fortune of visiting England as a ruler and of taking along with me my eldest son and heir, Yuvaraj Shrimant Sadashivrao *alias* Bhausahab Pant Sachiv B.A., with the object of giving him a timely opportunity of obtaining under my direct

supervision some useful training which would serve to enhance his fitness for the duties that he would be called upon to assume in his own turn in due course in accordance with divine dispensation.

My object in undertaking this long-cherished journey, apart from the general instinct mentioned at the outset, was to pay my respects to Their Majesties and the members of the Royal Family in their home, to see the Rt. Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India and other ministers and high officials of Home Government as well as to make some new friendships with high personages in the English public life, to renew and strengthen old acquaintances and friendships with retired British officials, and, last but not least important, to observe on the spot the various aspects of life in Europe coupled with the aptitudes and propensities of the westerners which have secured to them irresistible supremacy over the whole world. This, of course, included items such as witnessing the worth-seeing places and objects or programmes of interest by way of amusement and study as well as enjoying the cool and invigorating climate of different places for the benefit of my generally weak health. It is proposed to summarize in brief in the ensuing pages what I saw and did in the course of my hurried sojourn from the above points of view.

It was also my intention from the beginning to write out a detailed separate account of my travel to Europe leisurely on my return; and hence I had taken care to jot down sufficient notes punctually in the course of the itinerary and secure suitable pamphlets and guide-books then and there which are profusely available on the spot and which I thought would be useful in compiling this book later on. I had published through Marathi periodicals short accounts of my travels in Kashmir and Southern India about 1921 A. D., when I had experienced two difficulties in the task. I had no intention to describe my travels when I visited Kashmir and Rameshwar; and so I had not minutely observed the worth-seeing places or kept detailed notes of them. Consequently I found it very hard to pen my descriptive contributions when I thought of doing so later on. With this experience in my mind, I tried as far as possible in my travel through Europe to obtain some broad information about the things to be seen beforehand and was naturally more attentive in carrying out my observations or collecting and jotting out spontaneously the necessary data about them for refreshing the memory at the time of writing the detailed

account later on. All this was of immense help to me in writing this book; and I would advise every traveller to make it a point of writing out an account of his travels, if the time, money and energy spent in making a journey are not to be allowed to be a mere waste. For, in the absence of such a goal, the impressions of a tourist are bound to fade away soon, and one is very likely to be indifferent in one's sight-seeing, as there would be no necessity to turn one's thoughts ever again to what one has seen or done like the traveller who has to put his impressions on paper; for the latter has to revive his memory by reading and re-reading his notes in conjunction with the relevant pamphlets giving the history and description of what has been seen. This is another reason which has prompted me to undertake this task.

Many of my countrymen like Principal Bhate and the late Mr. R. B. Pavgi, Sardar Vinchurkar and Prof. Gune as well as Mr. D. C. Muzumdar of Baroda and a host of other high Baroda officials who had the good fortune of visiting Europe as a result of the beneficial and liberal sound policy, adopted since long by H. H. the Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwar of Baroda, of deputing some of the State officials every year in succession to make a tour to Europe with the object of enhancing the general efficiency of administration, have already written and have been writing about their European tours and experiences either in Marathi or in English; and I am sensible that there would be very little which would be either new or strange that I can usefully present to the readers of my book. But my object in compiling an account of my trip to Europe, apart from the reasons detailed above, being rather to keep a faithful record of my itinerary like a diary for my personal satisfaction and for the use and guidance of my dynasty as also for the perusal of friends and well-wishers both in India and abroad who might be able to spare the necessary time and patience to go through these wearisome pages on account of their personal interest in or affection for me, than the elucidation of the general public, I have ventured to tread upon the same ground in my own way.

Nevertheless as the field of description is vast and different things appeal to different minds in a variety of ways, I hope I shall be able to take the reader at least occasionally through some new aspects including those which are the special inheritance of different decades. I am fully aware that it is only the gifted writers who can make the description of their travels attractive and

interesting, or present such a vivid idea of the objects described to their readers as to conjure a mind-picture before them so as to make them feel that they are actually seeing those things while reading their account. This difficult task of making others realise the sweetness of sugar by mere words without an opportunity of tasting it is obviously beyond the capacity of an ordinary scribe like myself. Hence it is needless to add that I have only attempted to give a rough idea of what I have seen with the free help of the material I have already referred to, so that those who have already seen it before may be able to read the account with redoubled interest and to revive their recollections of it with some pleasure, and those who have not should get a broad imagination of the same coupled with a desire to have an actual glimpse of it if possible. In doing so, it will be seen that I have tried to give a more detailed description of the important places and objects visited by me than can be found in the books and pamphlets published so far, with the view of creating a greater curiosity and conveying a more real conception about them, as said above, in the minds of all sorts of readers—a desideratum which I have often marked in my review of the literature which has been written till now. If I am lucky enough to know that this humble ambition of mine for impressing upon the reading public the necessity of having this type of travel-books written in a different way has been fulfilled in a small degree, I shall feel amply requited for my labours.

I have written my account in English purposely for two reasons. The first is that a Marathi account of my trip from the pen of Dr. N. N. Bhave who accompanied me to Europe has already appeared in the vernacular weekly paper *Aikya* (meaning Unity) started by my friend and subject, the late Mr. Vagbhat Narayan Deshpande B.A., LL.B. of Satara. Besides there are several other books and pamphlets written in Marathi on this subject, to which a reference has already been made above, not to mention many other contributions which have been recently published and are still pouring in in the Marathi papers especially in the form of letters from Government servants, business men, amateur tourists and more especially students of both sexes who have visited Europe for higher studies. The publications in English on the line chalked out by me are, however, comparatively very few, at least on this side; and hence I trust that my preference for choosing the English language in writing my account will not be misinterpreted.

Another reason for doing so is to enable my friends and well-wishers in other parts of India and abroad to have an opportunity of going through the story of my foreign travel and what I have said about my experiences in the West.

I am not unmindful that there has been a considerable delay in bringing out this compilation, as it is about six years, since I returned from Europe. But there were numerous difficulties in the way. At the outset I lost my beloved wife within six months from my return from the foreign journey which naturally gave me a severe shock and upset my mind for a long time; and then there were serious administrative concerns due to the vigorous prevalence of the civil disobedience movement in the British territory coupled with a long illness in the interval consequent on my sad bereavement. Thank God, in spite of all this I have been able to fulfil my intention by His inspiration and blessings on the eve of my second visit to London for the coronation of H. M. King George VI.

I am happy to acknowledge with thanks the very valuable assistance I received during the whole of my tour and the production of this book from my son the Yuvaraj in various ways. It was he who selected the scenes and places to be seen beforehand and was ever ready to explain the biblical, historical, literary and mythological references relating to the statues, pictures etc., which we happened to see in hundreds in the course of our sight-seeing, as they were quite fresh in his memory, he having then just emerged as a full-fledged graduate from the University of Bombay. The Yuvaraj has also mastered the art of photography; and he did not lose a single important opportunity without taking a photograph with his camera. A few of these photographs and others selected by him for insertion with a view simply to inculcate a concrete idea of the scenes visited have been incorporated in this pamphlet by the courtesy of the Publishers; and this, it is needless to add, has contributed in no small degree to make the get-up of the book peculiarly attractive.

Lastly I have to express my indebtedness to Rao Saheb A. R. Joshi B.A., LL.B., who accompanied me to Europe, for the great and invaluable help rendered by him in the compilation of this book.

I am also thankful to the authors of the various guide-books and other pamphlets which, as already mentioned, have been of great use in writing my account,

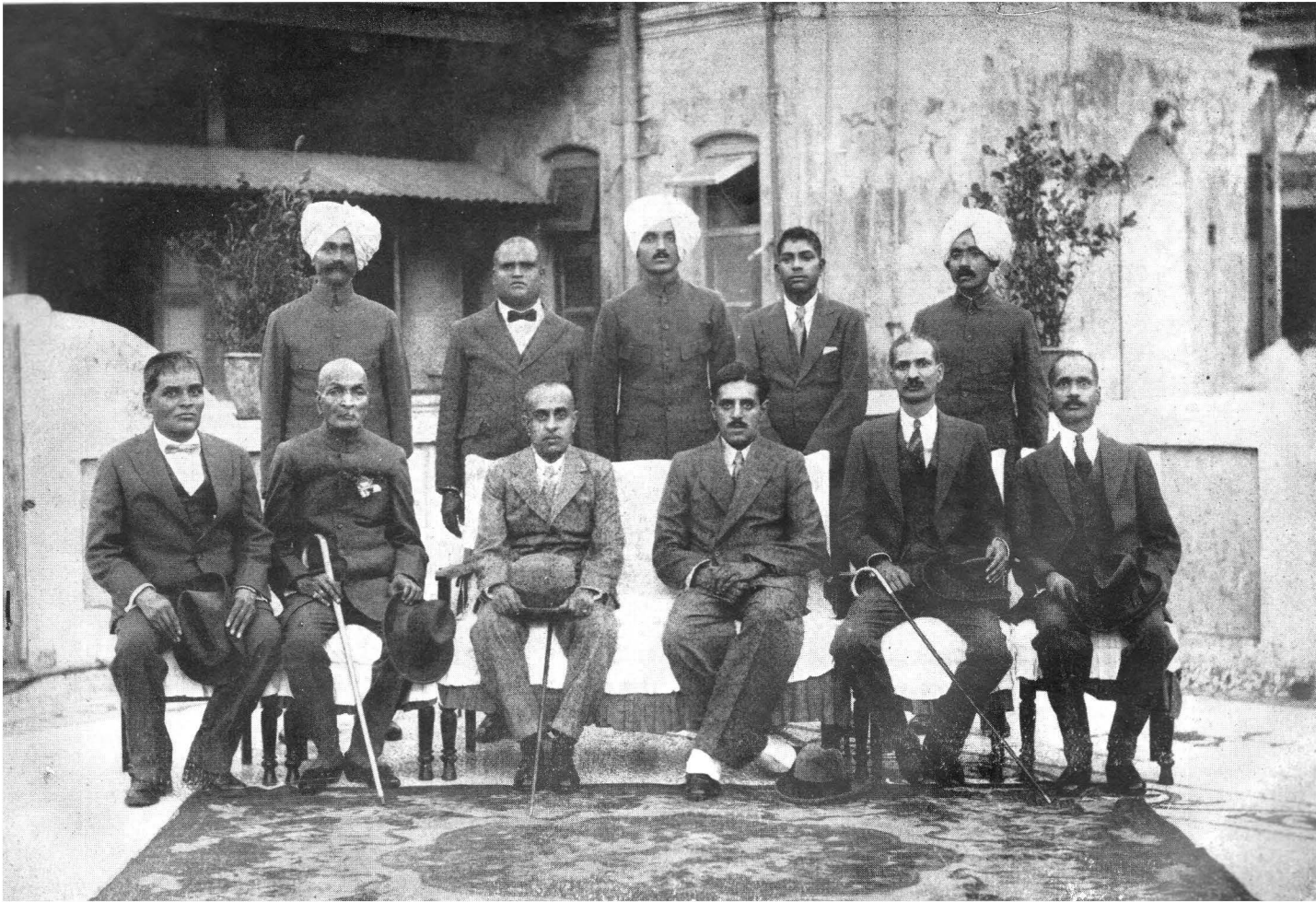
Some of my friends and well-wishers, including among others, Lord Sydenham, Sir William Sheppard, His Highness the late Maharaja of Dewas (Jr.), Rao Bahadur Satbhai, Lord Reading, Mr. L. C. Swifte and lastly Mr. Amulya Chandra Chatterji who died under very tragic circumstances in February 1935, have unfortunately left this world since I met them in the course of my tour and have been referred to in the ensuing pages in some connection or the other. I am extremely sorry that the delay in bringing out this book has deprived me of the pleasure of bringing this book to the notice of some of the above gentlemen as promised and knowing their impressions about my publication. The greatest grief is that the work could not be published during the life-time of His Majesty King George V whom I had the privilege of paying my respects in London so recently and who treated me with great cordiality and was pleased to arrange to give me every facility in my tour especially during my stay in London for which it is impossible to find words to express my gratitude. But these are all matters which are beyond human control.

In conclusion I have to request those who will happen to read this to excuse me for any inaccuracies of language or in the description that may have crept in through inadvertence, slip of memory or the incorrectness of any information which may have been supplied to me. It is needless to say that I shall feel extremely grateful if these are pointed out to me by anybody. My thanks are also due to Messrs. D. D. Neroy & Co., for nicely preparing the blocks within a very short time, and the Manager of the Bombay Vaibhav Press who arranged to print this book promptly within only 2 months.

A glossary of some technical words has been attached at the end for the ready use of the readers. I must in the end sincerely thank Mr. P. N. Warde, M.A., B.Com., for kindly supervising the printing, and Mr. A. P. Karandikar, State Artist, for supervising the art work, which alone has enabled me to bring out this work in the scheduled time.

Bhor :
12th April 1937. }

RAGHUNATHRAO PANT SACHIV,
Raja of Bhor,



Group Photo of the Party Proceeding to Europe

Taken at Sardar Giiha on 2nd May 1930

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Standing : 2—V. S. Parkhi, 3—S. D. Nimkar, 4—S. S. Mahashabde.

Sitting : 1—Dr. N. N. Bhave, 2—R. B. S. A. Satbhai, 3—Rajasaheb of Bhor, 4—Yuvarajsaheb of Bhor, 5—Mr. N. G. Ambekar, 6—R. S. A. R. Joshi.

TWENTYONE WEEKS IN EUROPE

PART I

TOUR IN A NÜTSHELL AND GENERAL
REFLECTIONS