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**A short account of the Baroda State.**

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On the occasion of the accession to the Gadi of His Highness Farzand-i-Khas-i-Dowlat-i-Inglishia, Maharaja Pratapsinh Gaekwar, Sena Khas Khel Samsher Bahadur, Maharaja of Baroda, it will not be out of place to make a general survey of the development of State during the last sixty years.

May 27th 1875, was an auspicious day for Baroda, one that will ever be remembered in the annals of the State as marking the opening of a new epoch. For it was on that day, now more than sixty years ago, that His late Highness Maharaja Sir Sayajirao Gaekwar III came to the throne of Baroda as a minor.

2. For a better appreciation of the remarkable achievement of this outstanding personality in the order of Princely India, it is necessary to go back to the origin of the history of the State and trace its development through the past two centuries. We may then understand the nature of the great change which has come over Baroda by the arduous labours of His Highness the late Maharaja Saheb.

#### ORIGIN OF THE STATE.

3. ~~Historically, the origin of Baroda is to be found in the period of the~~ break up of the Moghul Empire and the rise to power of the great Mahratta race under the great hero Shivaji and his descendants, the Kings of Satara. Of the early leaders of the race, one of the most distinguished was Khanderao Dabhade. In 1705, he overran Gujerat (then a Moghul dominion) and imposed a tribute upon the inhabitants. In 1716, he was appointed Senapati or Commander-in-Chief by the then King of Satara. At the same time, his right hand man, another leader named Damajirao Gaekwar, acquitted himself so valiantly in the battles which the Senapati fought for the Maratha Empire that he was exalted to the rank of Second-in-Command and honoured with the title of Shamsher Bahadur, which distinction to this day remains a proud title of the Head of the Gaekwar House.

#### FOUNDER OF DYNASTY.

4. Both Khanderao Dabhade and Damajirao Gaekwar died in 1721. The former was succeeded by his son Trimbakrao and the latter by his nephew Pilajirao who was the founder of the present dynasty of Baroda. Pilajirao, who managed the affairs of Gujerat on behalf of the Senapati, acquired some territory in the province and built the fort of Songadh and made it the headquarters of his power. It remained the capital of the Baroda dominions till 1761. Trimbakrao was killed ten years later in an encounter with the Peishwa (the Chief Minister of the King of Satara) and his minor son Yeshwantrao succeeded him with Pilajirao as his Mutalik or Deputy bearing the title of "Sena Khas Khel". Pilajirao was assassinated in 1732 by the emissaries of the Moghul Viceroy and was succeeded by his son Damajirao II.

#### DAMAJIRAO II.

5. Damajirao captured Baroda in 1734, and since then it has been in the hands of the Gaekwars. When Yeshwantrao Dabhade came of age he proved to be incapable of wielding the Maratha power in Gujerat and in about 1747 the King of Satara appointed Damajirao as his representative in Gujerat. Before long, Damajirao established his supremacy in Gujerat, defeating the Moghul Viceroy and reducing him to a nonentity. Then arose internal strife

among the Mahrattas, beginning with the death in 1749 of Shahu, the fourth King of Satara. The authority of the King of Satara passed into the hands of the Peishwa, who governed the land in his stead in the name of the King. This policy was not approved of by Damajirao and consequently when, two years later, there arose an opportunity to challenge the Peishwa, he prepared an expedition to the Deccan with the object of restoring the then King of Satara, after rescuing him from the Peishwa's thralldom. With an army of 15,000 horse and foot he met and defeated a larger force at Nimb which attempted to impede his progress. Later, however, the fortunes of war changed and he was treacherously seized by the Peishwa and made a prisoner. The Peishwa offered to release him on his agreeing to cede half of Gujerat and of all his future conquests. He accepted these terms and entering into an alliance with the Peishwa, he maintained his sovereignty intact and, two years later, in a joint assault together with the Peishwa's forces, he laid siege to Ahmedabad and captured it. This was the end of the Moghul power in Gujerat and that area was thereupon apportioned between the Peishwa and the Gaekwar.

#### PANIPAT AND AFTER.

6. The next important land mark in the history of those days was the great battle of Panipat, when the Afghans met and defeated the Mahrattas. Damajirao fought on the side of the Peishwa and he and his forces distinguished themselves in the conflict. After the close of the historical battle they were able to withdraw and return to Gujerat, where Damajirao consolidated his power and prevented the Moghuls from gaining any advantage from the battle of Panipat. In fact, he extended his territory by conquering the area which now forms the Mehsana division of the State.

#### SAYAJIRAO I TO GOVINDRAO.

7. The death of Damajirao in 1768 was followed by a period of disorder in which two of his sons, Sayajirao the eldest, and Govindrao, born of the eldest wife, disputed the succession. Ultimately the former was declared the heir by the Peishwa and ruled from 1771 to 1778. Owing to his infirmities, his younger brother Fattehsinhrao acted as Regent during his reign. While Sayajirao still lived, Fattehsinhrao assumed powers of State in 1778 and ruled till 1779. On his death a fourth brother Manajirao seized the reins of power on behalf of Sayajirao, and it was not until he died in 1793 that Govindrao became ruler, but only after he had paid a heavy *nazar* to the Peishwa in order to secure the title of Sena Khas Khel Shamsheer Bahadur.

#### ANANDRAO.

8. Govindrao died in 1800 and was succeeded by his eldest son Anandrao. The early part of his reign was a period of trouble and unrest due to the bid for power by his brother Kanojirao who was aided by Malharrao of Kadi, another scion of the family and a vassal of the State. Both parties sought the aid of the British (the East India Company) who decided to help Anandrao, the rightful ruler. A treaty was signed between the Gaekwar and the East India Company in March 1802 and two other treaties in June and July 1802 respectively. These were consolidated in 1805 in a Definitive Treaty which was supplemented by the treaty of 1817. By these Engagements the East India Company bound themselves to support the Maharaja Gaekwar, an offensive and defensive alliance was entered into, and the State agreed to receive from the British a subsidiary force of 4,000 native infantry, 1,000 native cavalry, a company of European Artillery and two companies of gun lascars. For the payment of these troops, the State ceded territory which at that time produced a surplus revenue of Rs. 24,31,909 per annum, and gave over the direction of its foreign policy to the charge of the British Government. By treaties made with the Peishwa at this time the independence of Baroda was recognised.

#### SAYAJIRAO II AND GANPATRAO.

9. In 1819, a year after the Peishwa's power was finally overthrown by the British (and Baroda consequently released from its annual payments on account of past claims), Anandrao died and was succeeded by his brother Sayajirao II. On his succession the British Government withdrew from the minute

interference in the internal affairs of the State which they were exercising while Anandrao lived. At this time an arrangement was made by which the control of States paying tributes to Baroda was retained by the British Government. The reign of Sayajirao was marked by differences between Baroda and the British Government which continued for nearly twenty years, until they were finally composed by Sir James Rivett Carnac, Governor of Bombay in 1841.

After the death of Sayajirao in 1847, his eldest son Ganpatrao came to the throne. In his reign the practice of Sati and that of selling children were suppressed. He also imposed a ban on infanticide and stamped it out. In public works, he adopted a constructive policy and built some roads, bridges and public buildings. Ganpatrao died in 1856 and was succeeded by his eldest surviving brother Khanderao.

#### KHANDERAO.

10. A few months after Khanderao's succession, there broke out the Sepoy Mutiny which threatened to over-throw the British Dominion in India. Its repercussions were felt in Gujerat, where there was a rebellious outbreak, but the Maharaja steadfastly supported the British Government. But for his support in these critical times, the hold of the British over Gujerat would have been paralysed and the Mutiny would have spread to the Deccan. For his services the British Government presented him with a splendid pair of fans made of peacock's feathers (morchals) and remitted the annual payment of Rs. 3,00,000, which had hitherto been made by the State for the upkeep of the Gujerat Irregular Horse. In 1862, an adoption sanad was given to him. Khanderao was a liberal ruler. He reformed the administration, inaugurated a revenue survey of the land and planned many public works which, however he did not live to complete. He died in 1870.

#### MALHARRAO.

11. On the death of Maharaja Khanderao without male issue, the next to ascend the Gadi was Malharrao, his younger brother. It, however, soon became apparent that Malharrao was not fitted for the task of the ruler. He began attempting to wreak vengeance on the supporters of the previous Maharaja and went on to oppress his subjects financially and otherwise. In 1873, the Government of India appointed a Commission to inquire into complaints of misgovernment against him and on its advice called upon him to reform the administration in certain particulars. In 1874 he was tried by another Commission appointed by the Government of India for attempting to poison Colonel Phayre, the British Resident at Baroda. The Commission gave a divided opinion—the three British members holding him guilty and the three Indian members holding him not guilty. The British Government declined to act on this verdict, but finally decided, by a proclamation in 1875, to depose him on grounds of general misrule and evident incapacity to carry out reforms, the necessity of which had been established by the previous inquiry.

#### SAYAJIRAO III.

12. In 1875, the British Government authorised Her Highness Maharani Jamnabai, widow of the late Maharaja Khanderao, to adopt a successor to inherit the wealth and power of her late husband. The wisdom of her choice is a matter on which the people of Baroda, then and since, and for many generations to come, have good cause to congratulate themselves. The fortunate lad selected by the Maharani was a scion of the Ruling family who, after long search, was deemed to be best fitted for the arduous task of ruling. He was Gopalrao, son of Kashirao, a descendant of Prataprao, the third son of Pilajirao Gaekwar, the founder of the State. He was born on March 11th 1863, in the out of the way village of Kavhana, in the Nasik district and he inherited from his forbears all the talents in statecraft which have made him a model for other rulers in India. Gopalrao was adopted with all the sacred rites according to the Hindu scriptures and his name was changed to Sayajirao. He ascended the gadi in 1875 while still a minor.

## CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION.

13. The Maharaja was educated under the able directions of Mr. F. A. H. Elliot, I. C. S., who was responsible for the way in which the Maharaja was equipped to meet the demands of the administration. It was also fortunate that the administration of the time was in the able and experienced hands of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao.

Soon after his accession to the throne the Maharaja plunged himself heart and soul into reforming the State and the present day Baroda is the fruit of his incessant efforts to modernise the administration on parallels picked out on his various educational tours throughout the world.

## THE TERRITORIES.

14. The cessions and transfers of tributary States to the control of the British Government, described in paragraphs 8 and 9 above, have had the result of considerably reducing the size of the Baroda dominions. Though, among the most important of the Indian States politically, Baroda has a smaller area and population than several other States. It covers an area of 8,164 square miles and the population is 24,43,007 according to the last census returns. Geographically situated in Gujerat and Kathiawad in Western India, the State is divided into five scattered territorial blocks, separated from each other by the territories of the British Government and those of other Indian States. The particulars about these are given in the following table:—

District	Area in square miles	Population returns in 1931	Number of towns	Number of inhabited villages
Baroda ... ..	1,933	8,24,341	19	823
Mehsana ... ..	3,068	10,10,007	16	1,037
Navsari ... ..	1,811	4,04,377	9	776
Amreli ... ..	1,077	1,73,948	4	242
Okhamandal ... ..	275	30,334	2	42
Total ... ..	8,164	24,43,007	50	2,920

The revenue of the State is about 2,50,00,000.

## STRUCTURE OF STATE.

15. The administration of Baroda is carried on by His Highness assisted by his Executive Council. The Council consists of five members, including the Dewan or Prime Minister, two or more Naib Dewans or Deputy Ministers, and one or two other officials. The Government is further assisted for purposes of legislation by the advice of a Legislative Council. The Dhara Sabha (as the Legislative Council is known) contains a non-official majority, the total number of members being 30, of whom the officials number 14. The official members include the members of the Executive Council together with other Government officers. The functions of the Legislature are advisory, but members can put interpellations and move resolutions.

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

16. The governing machinery is strengthened by a net-work of a local self-governing institutions. The Urban areas are under the control of municipal councils of which there are eleven, and of "Vishisht Panchayats" or minor urban councils with a less elaborate organisation than the municipal councils. There are 33 Vishisht Panchayats. Members of these councils are partly elected

and partly nominated, the former preponderating. In rural areas there are village Panchayats which number 2,118, and over them are five Prant Panchayats or district boards. On all these bodies, the elected members are in the majority. His late Highness took a keen personal interest in the welfare of these bodies. He has presented the premier institution, the Municipality of the city of Baroda with a reservoir for supplying drinking water, which cost half a crore of rupees. The lesser towns and the larger villages have most of them been supplied with sources of pure drinking water by means of water works to which His late Highness had liberally contributed. By his bounty and by the activities of these bodies under his guidance, his subjects have been supplied with amenities of life to a degree uncommon in any part of India.

#### JUDICIAL SYSTEM.

17. The judicial system of the State is well constituted. It consists of Varisht (High) Court with four judges on the bench. This is the highest tribunal in the land, but provision exists for the hearing of appeals from it before the Huzur Nyaya Sabha or Privy Council, subject to certain conditions. The judicial and executive functions have been separated. Under the High Court there are five district judges' courts, together with four courts of assistant judges, 24 of subordinate judges and magistrates, five of district magistrates and 89 of revenue officers who are ex-officio magistrates. In the villages themselves, there are Panchayat courts exercising civil and criminal jurisdiction in petty matters. Thus the legal system is calculated to bring justice within the reach of the humblest in the land. For the disposal of appeals and revision applications against executive decisions of the heads of departments, there is a tribunal named Khatanihaya Sadar Adalat.

#### ARMY.

18. The State maintains an army consisting of 3,182 regular infantry, 1,500 regular cavalry and 7 guns.

#### POLICE

19. The State maintains an efficient police consisting of 5,140 officers and men; of these 227 are mounted officers and men.

#### REVENUE SURVEY

20. In other departments of State, there has been such a quickening of the administrative pulse as has resulted in radical reforms all round. For instance, soon after he took over the reins of power, His late Highness set on foot a scientific land revenue survey. The new settlement established security of tenure and definition of rights, where formerly there had been confusion. It did away with payment in kind, it lowered the prevailing rates of land revenue and it placed taxes on an equitable basis according to the nature of the soil. Further, it overhauled the system of revenue collection and laid down a definite body of rules. The tenant was thus in a much better position than he had been, for he could till the land in the knowledge that his dues were fixed and his rights would be respected.

#### AID FOR AGRICULTURE.

21. The establishment of a department for agriculture was one of the earliest reforms undertaken by His late Highness. It has been followed by a series of measures which have helped the agriculturist to maintain himself on a sound economic basis. The establishment of model demonstration and experimental farms have shown the people how to improve their methods and thus get greater return from their labours. Village uplift is inculcated through these and other agencies, so that cultivators are taught the best methods of tillage, the values of manures, the rotation of crops, scientific irrigation, and other practical aspects of their occupation. Special inspectors tour the villages demonstrating and lecturing to cultivators, and advising them on problems of husbandry, such as improved ploughing, better seed, greater return per acre and destruction of pests.

## SHRI SAYAJI RAO III DIAMOND JUBILEE TRUST.

22. On the occasion of his Diamond Jubilee Maharaja Sir Sayaji Rao III announced a personal gift of one crore of rupees, the income of which would be used for supplementing the efforts of the Government to improve village life in all its aspects—economic, social and cultural.

The objects are (i) the development of the backward tracts of the State (ii) improvement in the living conditions of communities like the Raniparaj, the depressed classes and other backward people among the subjects of the State.

In order to implement the scheme, a broadcasting station with a net work of village receivers is to be opened at Baroda. The educational value of broadcast programmes has been recognised on all sides.

The other scheme is the cottage Industries Institute which will *inter alia* teach other subsidiary occupations to agriculturists.

The third is a scheme to develop the poultry farming industry in the State.

Arrangements are nearing completion to inaugurate the three schemes mentioned above.

## RESEARCH WORKS.

23. The State being a constituent member of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in India, is in a position to keep in touch with the latest scientific developments in agriculture. Cotton is largely grown in the State and special attention is paid to improving its cultivation; with the result that to-day inferior varieties of cotton have been almost completely eliminated, while war is being waged on the pests which attack the cotton plant. A State representative has a permanent seat on the Indian Central Cotton Committee and under its auspices research on "root-rot" in the cotton plant in Gujerat is being conducted by the State department of Agriculture at the Baroda experimental station.

## CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

24. Another branch of the rural reconstruction movement which has received every encouragement at the hands of the State is the co-operative movement, now widely spread through the State. There are 1139 co-operative societies with a membership of 55,735, and a working capital of Rs. 91,81,048, in addition to non-credit societies and the like. In the early days of His late Highness' reign, the numerous miscellaneous *Veros* or imposts in the nature of professional taxes, which were levied upon people residing in villages and following several occupations and trades, were abolished and a uniform system of income tax was introduced. Transit duties also went by the board. Now, the State has opened a rural reconstruction centre at Kosamba for the purpose of uplift propaganda and tuition.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

25. On the industrial side, the progress made has been nothing short of phenomenal. His late Highness' warm support of commercial and industrial enterprises, with the forward policy adopted for the encouragement of all practical projects, have resulted in a large expansion of the industrial activity of the State. Baroda today supports a large number of flourishing industries, and is engaged in fostering a number of infant industries which some day will be equally flourishing. Among the more important enterprises thriving today are several cotton mills, dyeing and bleaching works, chemical works, tile factories, potteries, cement works, oil mills, and rope factories. In addition, there are a number of subsidiary industries on a smaller scale, but they are all growing. Financially it has been the policy of the Bank of Baroda (a sound private institution largely supported by the State, with a clientele extending far beyond the boundaries of the State) to extend assistance to these industries, consistent with the circumstances. Further assistance to industry has been forthcoming from the State itself which has undertaken scientific problems, and has enlisted the services of experts at its own cost to advise manufacturers. The department of industries has introduced improved processes in weaving, calico printing, tanning, lacquer work and other

industries, and has conducted wide surveys of the economic resources of the State with a view to encourage industrialists to invest their money in the development of those natural products which have hitherto lacked exploitation. Forestry and fisheries have also come in for their share of attention and are both being administered on the most scientific lines. Baroda is rich in timber, and her wealth is being conserved by afforestation, while at the same time it is being put to good use by exploitation in rotation.

#### RAILWAYS.

26. Allied to the subject of industrial development is that of the growth of the railways, and here again Baroda has been in the vanguard of progress. Ever since 1856, when the first sod of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway was turned and Maharaja Khanderao made a free gift of the lands needed for railway purposes, the policy of the State has been to encourage the existence of railway enterprise. In addition to about 200 miles of railway built by the B. B. & C. I. and other companies, the State now owns 21.42 miles of broad gauge railways, 345.85 miles of metre gauge and 355.73 miles of narrow gauge railways, the construction of which has cost over five crores of rupees. In this matter, His late Highness took the view of the true economist, namely, that even if a railway is not directly remunerative, having regard to the volume of traffic it carries, yet its existence is justified if it opens up a new hinterland and enables its inhabitants to avail themselves of transport facilities for the marketing of their produce. The soundness of this attitude has been borne out by the extent to which railways have resulted in the development of the interior and have contributed to the well-being of rural districts.

#### MEDICAL RELIEF.

27. His late Highness had provided a net-work of hospitals and dispensaries throughout the State. The number of these in 1937-38 was 109. These are staffed by 24 men-doctors, 4 women-doctors and 121 sub-ordinate medical officers including 7 women, and 1 dentist. The number of trained nurses and midwives was 106. The total expenditure on medical relief in the State was about 7 lakhs of rupees. There is in addition a sanitary department to advise on sanitary matters.

#### PORT DEVELOPMENT.

28. Together with the railways, the late Maharaja has been responsible for a bold policy of port development, and the State now possesses a modern outlet for its trade in the port of Okha, on which over thirty-four lakhs of rupees have been spent. Okhamandal in which port Okha is situated has, from time immemorial, been a centre of Hindu pilgrimage. The railway to Okha passes through the territory of the Nawanagar State, the Baroda Government having made a loan to a company on the guarantee of that State for the building of the railway and the port serves a large hinterland in Gujerat and Rajputana. Of this port, the Davidson Committee appointed by the British Parliament in 1932 to investigate certain fiscal questions relating to Indian States speaks in the following terms:—

“Port Okha, situated in a detached portion of Baroda State, far distant from the Gaekwar's main territories, is wholly dissimilar from all other Kathiawar ports. It is not, like them, an evolution, from beginnings lost in antiquity, of the food-stuff trade which they still conduct. It is an entirely modern conception, begun and completed with great enterprise, for the express purpose of dealing with ocean-going traffic in commodities unconnected with the trifling requirements of the scanty population of Okhamandal. It lies in a strategic position at the extreme north-west point of the Kathiawar peninsula, readily accessible to all steamers trading along that coast. The harbour scheme has been well designed; there is an excellent ferro-concrete jetty, served by railway lines and cranes, alongside which two large vessels can lie at all states of the tide, and there are also swinging moorings for other vessels in a protected position. The harbour is well lighted; the warehouse accommodation and railway connection are all excellent; and the lay-out of the administrative



buildings and residential quarters is well conceived and executed. The port is available even to large ships, at all states of the tide and at all seasons of the year. The disadvantages are that the approach channel from the sea is circuitous and not devoid of risk and that Okha is far removed from the large centres of population, being 231 miles from Wadhwan Junction, through which railway centre its traffic must pass"

In 1937-38, 232 ocean-going steamers and 743 coasting steamers visited the port. The total capital expenditure up to 31st July 1938 was Rs. 42.28 lakhs.

The Port Okha has given an impetus to the development of the already existing industries and also the establishment of new ones. The Burmah Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Company have constructed an oil installation at Okha at a cost of Rs. 15 lakhs. Messrs. Tata Sons Ltd. have started a company under the name of Tata Chemicals Ltd. with a capital of 5 crores for the manufacture of heavy chemicals.

#### PUBLIC WORKS.

29. As in other directions, so in public works proper, the late Maharaja had been progressive. The Public Works department has an annual allocation of some twenty five lakhs of rupees, and even the most remote country districts are served by good roads. The cities have all the architectural amenities of today, the palaces and parks are well cared for, and the State is rich in noble edifices worthy of itself. In particular, its schools are well housed and numerous.

#### EDUCATION.

30. Primary education has been free and compulsory in the State since 1906, having been tentatively introduced in one taluka thirteen years before that and later generally applied. The total number of primary schools in the State is 2,364 and the number of pupils, boys and girls, attending them is 2,53,770. This figure represents about seventy per cent of the population of school-going age, and is much above the percentage in any other part of India. The State has 114 secondary schools of all grades and a first grade college, a fully developed technical institute with five subordinate industrial schools and a well-equipped science institute. There are three training colleges for teachers, two for men teachers and one for women teachers. The education of depressed classes has received special attention.

A useful adjunct to the compulsory scheme is a network of district, village and travelling libraries on which an expenditure of Rs. 1,06,000 a year is incurred. There are in the State one central library, 46 town libraries, 14 women's and children's libraries, 1,150 village libraries, 262 reading rooms and 276 travelling libraries. The Oriental Institute which edits the Gaekwad Oriental Series is famous the world over.

The total expenditure on education per annum excluding that on buildings, is Rs. 39,00,000. This large sum is all spent with discrimination and forethought, and it has resulted in the literacy statistics for Baroda showing a vast improvement in the past two decades. Education is popular in the State and is eagerly availed of by the people. Whatever objection there was at first to free and compulsory primary education (and it has to be remembered that His late Highness was the first in India to embark on this bold step) has long since vanished and parents are now enthusiastic supporters of the principle for their children. Thus His late Highness' view, that the measures were absolutely necessary "for the realisation of my ambitions and wishes for the future of my people" has been amply borne out by experience. His example has been followed by others, but Baroda was the first to reap the benefits of this enlightened policy.

#### BARODA COLLEGE.

31. Of educational institutions in the State, the foremost is the Baroda College. Founded in 1882, it is recognised by the University of Bombay for all courses in Arts and Science. It is staffed by a number of scholars well-known in their particular branches of learning, including a principal and sixteen

professors. The alumni of the college include in their ranks many who have made good in all walks of life, and there are distinguished men throughout the length and breadth of India who owe their success partly at least to the excellent instruction imparted by their *alma mater*, the Baroda College. The fame of the institution is such that it draws pupils from all over Gujerat, but the people of Baroda are well represented in the ranks of its students. Many officials of the State are largely graduates of the College.

#### OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

32. Apart from the College and the Jubilee Science Institute, splendid work is being performed by many other institutions too numerous here to dilate upon. Suffice it to say that the library movement has been organised to such an extent that its influence permeates through the villages; that the education of girls and of the depressed classes has made enormous strides, that the Public Museum and the Picture Gallery in Baroda are both institutions whose scope and standard have earned for them recognition in foreign countries; and that the Kalabhuvan (approximating to a Polytechnic school) has inculcated the theory and practice of such subjects as civil and mechanical engineering, chemical technology, textile manufacture and commercial training to a large number of Baroda subjects.

#### SOCIAL REFORM.

33. In another respect also, Maharaja Sayajirao had earned an enduring niche in the hall of fame. Social legislation had always been His late Highness' personal concern. From his early days, he had waged war upon such pernicious practices as child marriage, caste disabilities, the prohibition of widow re-marriage, purdah and untouchability. In 1901 was passed the Freedom of Religion Act which removed disabilities in regard to inheritance attaching by law or customs, to change of religion. In 1904, the Infant Marriage Prevention Act was passed. This Act prohibits the marriage of girls below the age of 14 and of boys below the age of 18. When the Act was first passed, the penalty attached to infringements of this provision was a fine not exceeding one hundred rupees. As it was found that this was not a sufficient deterrent, the penalty was increased by an amendment made in 1929. The amendment makes a person, who is found guilty of performing the marriage of a girl or a boy under eight years of age, liable to be punished with simple imprisonment not exceeding one month or with a fine not exceeding two hundred rupees and a person, who is found guilty of performing the marriage of a girl who is more than eight years of age but not more than fourteen years, or of a boy who is more than eight years of age but not more than eighteen, liable to a fine not exceeding two hundred rupees. It has also been enacted that a marriage in the State between a boy and a girl either of whom may be less than eight years of age shall be void. Under the State Penal Code, age of consent for girls is fourteen within marriage and eighteen outside marriage. As it stands today the Infant Marriage Prevention Act is far from being a dead letter and is rigorously enforced.

#### RECENT ENACTMENTS.

34. By a recent amendment of the Hindu Marriage Act of the state, it has been laid down that the priest officiating at a marriage must translate and explain to the bride and the bridegroom the *Mantras* (hymns) recited at the ceremony in their own vernacular. Authoritative translations of the marriage ritual in Marathi, Gujerati and Hindi have been published by the State. The Hindu Divorce Act is another important piece of social legislation, and contains provisions for dissolution or nullity of marriage, judicial separation, separate residence, maintenance of offspring etc. A further radical breach with tradition is the proposed Caste Tyranny Act, which is designed to give relief to persons from certain tyrannous customs prevailing in certain castes, such as the restriction of marriages to "gols" (circles) within castes.

Among other important measures may be mentioned the Rent Regulation Act, the Agriculturists Debt Regulation Act and the Debt Conciliation Act, (all of which give relief to agriculturists) the Hindu Code consolidating all the

previous Acts pertaining to different branches of Hindu Law, and the Trade Unions and Trade Dispute Acts, which are meant for the regulation and protection of the trade unions formed in the State and the prevention and settlement of trade disputes.

#### WAR SERVICES.

35. His late Highness' war services are well-known. Assistance in the shape of men, money and materials was readily forthcoming from Baroda for the Empire in its hour of trial, and the strength of the State's loyalty to the Crown, as in the dark days of the Sepoy Mutiny, was amply demonstrated. The following is a short account of the assistance rendered by Baroda and its Ruler from 1914-1918:—

The number of subjects of the State who is joined the British Indian Army up to November 1918 as combatants, non-combatants, skilled and unskilled labourers, was 1417. From the regular State Regular Forces 157 men were allowed to join the British Army and three European officers were given permission to go to England on special leave to join the Expeditionary Force, while a fourth was also granted special leave to join the British Army at Muttra. Two hundred sowars and six officers were sent to Muttra to train remounts. The services of Dr. C. A. L. Mayor were placed at the disposal of the British Government and he was paid a salary of Rs. 1200 a month by the Baroda State in addition to the allowance drawn by him in British service.

The total of money gifts by His Highness for War purposes was Rs. 33,96,050. This sum included moneys for the provision and equipment of aeroplanes, for the War Gift Fund, for Ford Motor vans, Red Cross subscriptions, contributions to the prince of Wales fund and contributions for miscellaneous purposes. Further both His Highness and his people subscribed very largely to the various War Loans, the total of such subscriptions being more than a crore of rupees.

Lastly, for hospital the Baroda State gave freely of materials, such as horses, tents, loans of a palace and of a steam tug, while it supplied on payment such needed articles as horses, a large amount of railway rolling stock and surveying instruments. Thus it will be seen that the contribution of Baroda to the ultimate triumph of the Allied Arms was generous in the extreme.

#### A MIRACLE.

36. Inadequate as is this resume of the history of Baroda, it contains within it enough facts to convince the most casual reader that in the brief space of five decades, well-nigh a miracle has been wrought within the boundaries of the State. That miracle is the change that has come over the face of the land and over the condition of the people as the result of a great driving force intelligently applied. The intelligence lies in this that whereas all influences making for stagnation and backsliding have been ruthlessly eliminated, those other factors characteristic of the best elements of an Indian State have been encouraged. Maharaja Sir Sayajirao had concentrated his energies on giving his people the benefits of that type of personal rule which makes the greatest good of the greatest number the paramount consideration. His success is unquestionable it is evident on every side, and a stranger in search of proof, need only go to any village or town of Baroda.

Thus from the memorable day in May 1875, when His late Highness ascended the throne till death recently, the record of Baroda State has been one of rapid and consistent progress along all lines, so that the State stands now in the forefront of Indian India, and has become well-known throughout the world, as an example of what an enlightened, public-spirited and statesmanlike Ruler can do to ameliorate the lot of his people and promote the moral and material welfare of his subjects. The past half-century has witnessed an advance in the spheres of social reform and education, industry and agriculture, art and culture, which is well-nigh without parallel elsewhere. For this, Baroda has to be grateful to the genius who with consummate skill and intelligent foresight has guided her destinies throughout this long period.

### HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA PRATAPSIKH

37. With the accession of His Highness Pratapsinh Gaekwar to the Baroda gadi on February 7, 1939, Baroda State enters upon a new stage. Following as he does upon the 63 years' rule of His late Highness Sayajirao III, the young Maharaja has his work cut out for him; but the thorough and many-sided training he has received and the long apprenticeship he has served under such a wise guide as His late Highness gives every promise that Baroda can look forward to a period of peaceful progress and achievement in keeping with the new spirit that is in evidence everywhere.

His Highness' temperament, his easy intimacy with affairs of State, his disciplined mind and body moulded by his keenness for sport of all kinds, and his sympathy for his subjects all go to make this promise doubly secure. His Highness received his early training at the Princes' School in the company of half a dozen boys of his own age selected from among sons of Sardars and officers. Later, after a short spell at a school on the South Coast of England, he matriculated from Baroda High School and passed two years subsequently at the Deccan College, Poona.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING.

38. At this stage His late Highness, who personally settled every detail of his successor's training conceived the idea of associating the young Prince with the affairs of the State instead of letting him spend his time merely upon academic studies at College. His Highness started on the lowest rung of the ladder in the Revenue department which, after all, is the centre of the whole administration in a predominantly agricultural State like Baroda and which comes into closest contact with people of all stations.

Step by step, as experience grew, he occupied in succession different higher positions in the State, working intensively at every stage under the guidance of wise and able administrators like the late Mr. Ramlal Hiralal Desai, Col. Kumar Shiv Raj Singh, Sir V. T. Krishnama Chari and others, but taking full responsibility for all the work he had to do. This lasted for eleven years, about eight of which were passed at the Secretariat in the executive role of Karma Sachiv who is at the same time a member of the State Executive Council and is responsible for putting its decisions into effect.

His Highness has also worked on many occasions as Secretary to His late Highness, but his administrative training is not confined to work in the Secretariat and the various departmental offices; it ranges far wider over the field of international politics and world affairs.

His Highness, in company with His late Highness, attended the Round Table Conference, the Coronation of His Majesty King George VI and the Imperial Conference. Though not a globe-trotter, His Highness has travelled fairly widely abroad. He has visited Europe four times and the United States and Japan once. There is not a part of India that His Highness does not know well.

In the midst of such intensive administrative training begun at such an early age, His Highness has always managed to find time both for intellectual and physical relaxation. His Highness is fond of books and though a man of few words, has an inquiring mind that stores up information on a number of subjects. At the same time he is a great believer in the cult of personal physical culture and keeping fit as a duty one owes to one's self. At one time a keen and brilliant cricketer, he seems to have neglected if not forgotten his first love and is now, and has been for some years past, more keen on tennis; he has worked his way up to the top class among tennis players in India. Among his other diversions are polo and shooting wild game.

He is very fond of horses and a good judge of them. He prefers often to swelter in the hot forest shooting-boxes within State territories or outside tracking down tiger, panther or wild boars in his summer holidays, rather than pass his time at cool and fashionable hill stations. Motoring also finds a place among His Highness' diversions.

His Highness married Shrimant Shantadevi Rajé of the famous Ghorpade family of Kolhapur in 1929 and has three daughters and two sons by his marriage. Shrimant Fatehsinh Gaekwar, the eldest is nearly 9 years old and will now be known as the Yuvraj. His late Highness was inordinately fond of this young Yuvaraj and used to take him with himself to many a function. Her Highness, in spite of the purdah that she observes, is known to have a gifted and charming personality.

#### WELL BELOVED FIGURE.

39. His Highness will be new to his people only in the role of a ruler. Otherwise he is a familiar and well beloved figure in the Secretariat, in the precincts of the Sayaji Vihar Club, on cricket field, tennis court, or polo ground; or again roughing it in some outlying forest area in pursuit of *shikar* followed by the humble Raniparaj; or at formal functions in various parts of the State deputising for His late Highness, laying the foundation stone of a building or opening a bridge.

By his unassuming ways and his ready sympathy in listening to the grievances of deputations from the districts, His Highness has endeared himself especially during the last few years when he has been Karma Sachiv

About the middle of 1938, a committee was appointed to investigate the question of the manner in which relief should be given to agriculturists in the State in view of the depression caused by the fall in prices of agricultural produce. After considering the proposals of the Committee His Highness the late Maharaja was pleased to approve reductions amounting to Rs. 21 lacs. As a practical manifestation of his sympathy and affection for his people, His Highness on his accession to the Gadi directed that the reduced assessment be substituted for the existing settlement rates which shall be varied only in the course of revisions of settlements.

Early in 1938, Government appointed a representative committee of officials and non-officials with very wide terms of reference to consider constitutional advance. In December last, this committee presented a unanimous report. The main recommendations of the report are threefold;— (1) the creation of an enlarged Dhara Sabha, with an elective majority based on a wide territorial franchise and representation of interests: before which all legislative proposals and the State budget will be placed in accordance with rules to be framed; and the appointment of a non-official deputy president to the Dhara Sabha. (2) The appointment to the Executive Council of a non official gentleman with a record of public work such as would make him acceptable generally to the Dhara Sabha, such member to be responsible to His Highness in the same way as the official member of the Executive Council. (3) The appointment of two Parliamentary secretaries from among the members of the Dhara Sabha to assist members of the Executive Council in their Dhara Sabha work

His Highness in a message to his people on his accession has given his assent generally to the recommendations of the Committee.

His Highness has decided to set apart a sum of rupees one crore from his private fund to perpetuate the memory of His late Highness and a comprehensive scheme is under consideration and the benefits will be available to all classes and communities in the State without exception.