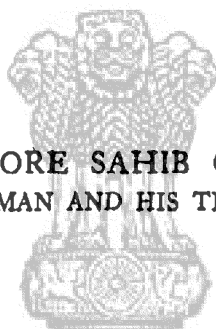


THE THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI
(THE MAN AND HIS TIMES)



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MAHARANA SHRI THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI.

In full Durbat dress, 1912.

{Frontispiece

THAKORE SAHIB SHRI SIR DAULAT SINGH OF LIMBDI, KATHIAWAR

A BIOGRAPHY

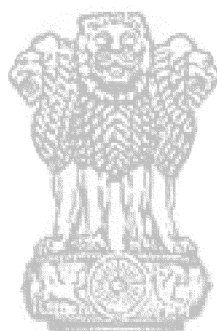
BY
ELIZABETH SHARPE

AUTHOR OF "SHRI KRISHNA AND THE BHAGDAD GITA"
"SHIVA," "THE FLAME OF GOD," ETC.



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CONTENTS

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTE	p. vii
GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THAKORE SAHIB SHRI SIR DAULAT SINGH OF LIMBEDI	p. viii
AUTHOR'S NOTE	p. ix
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	p. xi
GLOSSARY	p. xii
INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER	pp. 1-18

CHAPTER I

Early Jamnagar days. A visit to Jodhpur—Maharaj Pratap Singh	pp. 19-28
--	-----------

CHAPTER II

Marriage—Rana Lakhobhi—Jam Vibhaji—The Thakore Sahib Sir Jaswant Singh	pp. 29-46
--	-----------

CHAPTER III

Lord Harris' visit to Jamnagar—Manœuvres—Musketry—A pilgrimage—Queen Victoria's appreciation—Equitation—Rana Sahib Bhav Singhji—The great famine—Novel forms of charity	pp. 47-64
---	-----------

CHAPTER IV

The Indian Contingent for Australia.	pp. 65-81
--	-----------

CHAPTER V

Lord Curzon's Durbar—Lord Kitchener—The end of Jamnagar	pp. 82-85
---	-----------

CHAPTER VI

Porbander—The Aga Khan—Palanpur—Sir Prabhashankar Pattani	pp. 86-93
---	-----------

CONTENTS

CHAPTER VII

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales—Nawab Rasul Khanji of Junagadh—Death of Thakore Sahib Sir Jaswant Singh pp. 94-99

CHAPTER VIII

Installation—Marriage of Yuvaraj Digvijaya Singh—The Jains of Limbdi pp. 100-111

CHAPTER IX

The Coronation Durbar pp. 112-122

CHAPTER X

England—Lord Morley—Europe—Lord Willingdon's visit—The Marriage of the Kunveri—Transfer to the Government of India pp. 123-133

CHAPTER XI

The new capital—Education—The Gift of Water pp. 134-144

CHAPTER XII

The Pilgrimage of the Four Directions (Char-Dham-Ni-Jatra). —The Southern Pilgrimage of Vishnu, Rameshwar—The Eastern Pilgrimage of Shiva, Jagannath Puri pp. 145-161

CHAPTER XIII

The Northern Pilgrimage of Shiva, Kedar Nath pp. 162-173

CHAPTER XIV

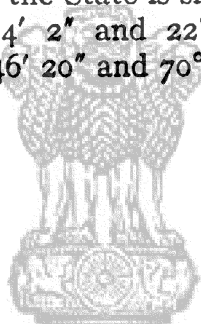
The Western Pilgrimage of Vishnu, Dwarka Nath—The Seven Kanchis pp. 174-178

CONCLUSION pp. 179-181

INDEX pp. 182-188

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTE

LIMBDI is one of the Western India States enjoying full powers of internal autonomy. It is bounded on the north by the Lakhtar State and the British Taluka of Viramgam ; on the east by the British Taluka of Dholka ; on the south by the Bhavnagar State and the British Taluka of Dhandhuka ; and on the west by the Wadhwan and Chuda States. Geographically, the State is situated between latitudes $22^{\circ} 54' 2''$ and $22^{\circ} 21' 10''$, and longitudes $70^{\circ} 46' 20''$ and $70^{\circ} 15' 40''$.



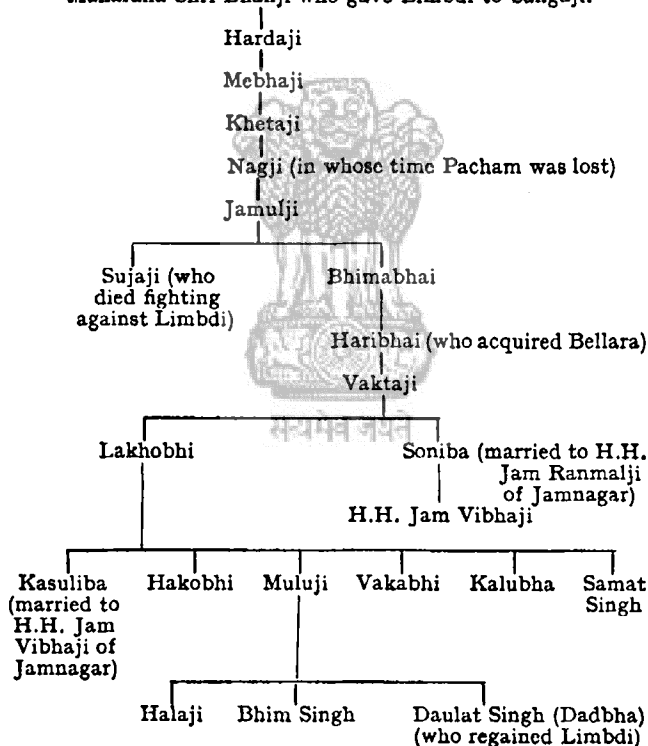
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GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THAKORE SAHIB SHRI SIR DAULAT SINGH OF LIMBDI

A.D. 1486 (SAMVAT 1542)

(MAHARANA SHRI KHETAJI had sons. The eldest Nagji being a cripple, asked the second brother Bhanji to rule in his stead. To avoid all disputes in the future Bhanji retired in favour of the youngest son of all Sangaji. It was Sangaji who gave the village Pacham to Bhanji.)

Maharana Shri Bhanji who gave Limbdi to Sangaji.



FOREWORD

It has been my happy privilege to know His Highness The Thakore Sahib of Limbdi during my visits to his State, and I am glad to have this opportunity of recording here the admiration I cherish for him. Through my brief contacts with him I have been impressed with his deeply human personality having for its background the pervading dignity of a serene religious consciousness in which is combined the worldly wisdom worthy of the guardian of the people and the tradition of ancient India. I am glad to realise that Miss Sharpe in her biographical sketch brings out this rare harmony of his character through a close understanding and a detailed treatment.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE life of Thakore Sahib of Limbdi lies in so rich a setting that, at the expense of being considered loquacious or fond of digression, I have deliberately tried to retain this grand background, with the vivid colour of those old days in Kathiawar, letting the figure of the Thakore Sahib walk in that gorgeous drama with those other figures. This is, no doubt, a new way of dealing with a biography ; but there were indeed giants in those days, and the Thakore Sahib suffers no dwarfing before them all.

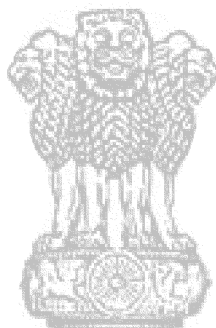
No one knows his Kathiawar better ; no one has keener insight into men's characters. Adored by his subjects, revered by his fellow-Princes and subjects alike ; loved and respected for his purity, his intense loyalty, and his sincerity by the Great British Government, who placed him on the Limbdi " Gadi," the Thakore Sahib's life and his times have a set purpose. The one, as a lesson of how a man may rise to fortune by hard work, sincerity, and dogged grit ; the other, that

AUTHOR'S NOTE

a man, at all times master of his own fate,
may rise above his times ; for the times never
swamp your real men of character.

ELIZABETH SHARPE.

SHRI KRISHANA NIVAS,
LIMBDI,
KATHIAWAR.



सत्यमेव जयते

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MAHARANA SHRI THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI IN FULL DURBAR DRESS, 1912	<i>Frontispiece</i>
THE LATE RANA SHRI MULUJI OF BODI	PACING PAGE 20
THE THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI AS COLONEL COMMANDANT OF THE JAMNAGAR LANCERS	38
THE LATE THAKORE SAHIB SIR JASWANT SINGH OF LIMBDI	42
THE THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI AT 40 YEARS OF AGE	100
YUVARAJ DIGVIJAYA SINGH, AGED 14, IN WEDDING-DRESS	108
THE OPENING OF THE LADY WILLINGDON GIRLS' SCHOOL BY LORD WILLINGDON .	128
A GROUP TAKEN WHEN THE MAHARAJA OF BENARES VISITED LIMBDI	132

GLOSSARY

- Bajro.** A rough, dark millet.
Bania. The trading or agricultural class.
Bhayats. Feudal landowners.
Bide or Vide. Grass-farm.
Chalam. A long pipe; a kind of hobble-gobble.
Chaprasi. Literally, one with a badge, a peon.
Chela. Sanskrit pupil.
Datan. Literally, a piece of Babul wood used by most Indians for cleaning and brushing the teeth.
Dharamshala. Rest-house.
Gadi. Throne.
Guru. Sanskrit teacher. It is an appellation of respect.
Juvar. A kind of barley.
Kamdar. An upper factotum.
Kharita. Literally document. Means, on p. 104, official recognition as ruler.
Lonka gachha. Literally, the collection of Lonka.
Maharaj. The brother of a ruling Prince of Rajputana has the title of Maharaj.
Padmani. There are four types of women described in old Indian manuscripts. The "Padmani" is the highest type.
Pooja. Worship.
Poshak. Valuable presents and cloths of gold presented after marriage to bridegroom and guests.
Pushmina. A warm soft cloth specially prepared from Himalayan wool.
Sadhana. Literally, meditation.
Sadhu. Hindu ascetic.
Shiv Ratri. Literally, the night of Shiva.
Sol—Batri. Literally, sixteen—thirty-two.
Tikka. Literally, the mark of an heir-apparent.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

ABOUT three centuries ago, in the time of the Gaekwar Damoji, before the Maharatha power was definitely broken by the British, the Maharathas overran Kathiawar ; and during one of these raids an adventurous Chief Nagji of the village Pacham under Limbdi, with a party of his men, fell upon one of these Maharatha forces and captured booty to the value of 24,000 Rupees—an extremely large sum in those days.

The Gaekwar Damoji, in reprisal, sent an army against the Limbdi Thakore Sahib, and invested his capital, which was then at Shiani.

The Thakore Sahib was forced to pay up a large sum of money before he could get rid of the unwelcome intruders ; and he, in his turn, sent an army against Pacham to recover the money from Pacham.

Nagji and his son Jamulji were forced to flee from Pacham, whilst Sujjaji, the eldest grandson—whose memorial is still to be seen between Pacham and Pippali—died fighting against the army of Limbdi. Nagji's sister

JABOO MA

was married to the Thakore Sahib Kumbhaji of Gondal, and Nagji, Jamulji, and the second grandson of Nagji, Bhimabhai, took shelter at Gondal, where the Thakore Sahib of Gondal gave them two villages Choradi and Goondala,—still in the possession of the descendants of the old Pacham family:—Kumbhaji also made Bhimaji Commander-in-Chief of Gondal.

A maid-servant of Nagji's went to Baroda, and placing herself in sight of Damoji, with a lighted charcoal-burner on her head—which in Indian India is the sign of a desperate grievance—asked for redress on behalf of her master against the Limbdi Durbar. Damoji was touched at the devotion and the courage of a woman who had come on foot from Kathiawar to Baroda—no easy thing in those lawless days—and he ordered the Thakore Sahib to restore Pacham to Nagji.

The maid-servant, Jaboo Ma, who is still worshipped in Pacham as a kind of lesser goddess, went in all three times to Damoji to request his aid. The third time Damoji sent his own envoy to see that his orders were enforced.

The Thakore Sahib promised the envoy that Pacham would be restored, and the envoy returned to Baroda.

FOUNDER OF THE DYNASTY

The Thakore Sahib neither returned Pacham nor gave the required redress ; but fearing that Jaboo Ma would again go to Baroda and excite the Gaekwar, he had her poisoned. The dying woman cut off her breasts, pasted her hands with the blood, and made the imprint of her hands upside down on the walls of the Shiani Fort, at the same time cursing the " gadi " of Limbdi. She swore that until a descendant of Pacham should reign at Limbdi, no Thakore Sahib of Limbdi should have a direct heir to the throne. Apart from the actual curse of Jaboo Ma, the inverted hands presage coming disaster to any superstitious Jhala. There is a reason for this hand of the Jhalas, which stands above every present-day crest of the princely house of any Jhala.

Harpal was the founder of the Jhala dynasty : a hero who married under strange circumstances a lady with supernatural powers. She is worshipped to-day by every Jhala Rajput as the goddess Shakti Mata. Popular Rajput belief has it that an infuriated elephant was coming down a lane where the sons of Harpal and the goddess were playing. The " devi " elongated her hand from the balcony where she was sitting to the street below, and lifted her little ones out of danger.

AN ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT

The word Jhala (to hōid) is popularly believed to refer to this instance ; but it is just as probable that it refers to the bravery of this clan of Rajputs who in those lawless days could, and did, hold what they won in battle.

The one-time owner of Pacham, Nagji, his son Jamulji. and his grandson Bhimaji all died at Gondal, exiled from Pacham. Haribhi the son of Bhimaji succeeded his father as the Commander-in-Chief of the Gondal Army.

Haribhi appears to be a man of most adventurous spirit,—the theme of many a Gujarati poet,—and with five hundred horse he gathered together a good deal of booty, mainly,—it is to be regretted to have to note,—from his old kinsman's territory.

Haribhi, as may well be imagined, was not popular with the Limbdi Thakore Sahib, and a price was placed on Haribhi's head. This did not prevent that adventurous soul entering Limbdi as often as he pleased,—in disguise of course,—and visiting the house of an influential friend, Kandha, a Rajput of the Rathod clan.

It chanced that the Thakore Sahib of Limbdi went to see Kandha Rathod on the occasion of an illness, when Haribhi was also present. The Thakore Sahib did not know who the stranger was ; but Kandha Rathod,

H A R I B H I

perhaps from a friendly point of view, more likely anxious about his own anomalous position, decided to use Haribhi and his men against the adjoining State Wadhwan, and thus gain for Haribhi his kinsman's favour.

Kandha Rathod seems to have been a man of considerable importance; for he soon procured the necessary permission of the Thakore Sahib to utilise Haribhi and his forces against the Wadhwan marauders. And then there was the novel thought that the Thakore Sahib, in thus enlisting Haribhi's services, gained either way—in the destruction of one or the other of the harassers of his State.

When the Thakore Sahib went to Shiani, the Wadhwan Army plundered Limbdi. Haribhi on its return took the soldiers by surprise, put them to flight, and recovered all the Limbdi booty, following up the victory by chasing them into Wadhwan, and plundering, in turn, Wadhwan. Haribhi did not keep any of the Limbdi booty, but returned it to Limbdi. The Thakore Sahib felt that the time had come for a reconciliation with so brave and useful a kinsman. Pacham was restored, the leading men of the town witnessing the deed; and for the military service Haribhi had done, the village Bellara was added.

DEFYING THE OMENS

Haribhi, leaving part of his army at Bellara, returned to Gondal to bring his family to their old home ; for no Rajput cares to eat the salt of his women-folk ; nor are favours from the female side looked upon as anything but a misfortune. This attitude must not be misunderstood. There is no superiority complex here. Your true Rajput *gives* to his daughter and sister, and ought not to *take*.

But the brave Haribhi was not fated to see Pacham. He met the Thakore Sahib Khumbhaji coming out of the Chorali gate with a large force ; and on enquiring what was wrong was informed that Junagadh had invested Dhoraji, and the Thakore Sahib, in person, was going to its relief at the head of his army. Haribhi enquired why Khumbhaji had taken the longer route. His uncle replied that the astrologers with the army had found the omens on the shorter route too unpropitious. This was no new belief ; for the Brahmins and astrologers even to-day lay stress on omens, and in those old battles the omens were invariably studied with great care.

Haribhi, with a recklessness rare in these matters, decided to ride ahead to Dhoraji by the shorter route with his two hundred horsemen. He and his army arrived at

DEATH OF HARIBHI

nightfall, and met the village cattle returning to the village on its outskirts. Haribhi and his men fixed two lighted tapers on the horns of each animal, and then rode into Dhoraji amidst the frightened cattle.

The onslaught of the two hundred horsemen under Haribhi was so terrific; their arrival so sudden; and so numerous were the lights behind them, that the Junagadh Army, thinking that the whole army of Gondal had arrived and was attacking them, gave way and was soon in full retreat.

Morning found them well out of Gondal; but when day broke they saw, to their intense surprise, that there were only two riders behind them,—two riders chasing the whole of the Junagadh Army,—one Haribhi, and the other an unknown rider whom Haribhi now bade return to the main army with the news that the Junagadh Army was well out of Gondal, and steps be taken to prevent them returning.

Haribhi, knowing that he must now die, prepared to do so as befitted a brave Rajput. He died fighting to the last, and his last act was to kill his beautiful mare, hating that she should have a new master. The Nawab Sahib of Junagadh, when he heard the strange story, reproached his men exceedingly for

A MEMORIAL

allowing this brave warrior to be killed, and ordered a memorial to be built on the bank of the River Ojat to perpetuate Haribhi's brave deed. The memorial is still in existence.

Before Vaktaji, Haribhi's son, could take over the much-longed-for Pacham, he also became involved in a fight against a certain section of Kathis, and lost his life, to the great regret of the other section. Two of Vaktaji's children were a young boy Lakhobhi, and a daughter Soniba.

Up to now the descendants of Pacham were at Gondal. But when Soniba married the Jam Sahib Ranmulji, their fortunes, still derived from the female side, were to take them to Jamnagar, an independent seaport south of Kutch.

The sketch of certain events in Jamnagar have some bearing on the fortunes of Haribhi's descendants, apart from their own intrinsic interest. Jam Ranmulji had been adopted, after the death of Jam Jasaji, by his wife Achuba, a Princess of Dhrangadhra. Jam Jasaji's own mother was also a Dhrangadhra lady; and her legitimate desire to have her son carefully guarded in days when life,—and specially the life of an heir to a principedom,—was placed at a very small value, brought into Jamnagar the first of a long series of

M E R U

adventurous "Khavas" Vazirs. And, possibly, Jamnagar is the only State in Kathiawar that has had Vazirs of the Khavases. The Khavases,—from whose ranks, even to-day, the menials of every palace in India are recruited,—were originally Rajputs, whose blood being mixed with inferior castes fell into disrepute. Their women remarried, even with the first husbands alive; they had no special ritual as regards food, and they became a class apart, not quite "sudra," hankering after old Rajput status, but definitely of a lower order, exempted from intercourse with all three of the upper classes.

Of Meru, the menial who was to be the first "Khavas" Vazir of Jamnagar—of Kathiawar, in fact—a strange story is narrated. He came to Jamnagar, part of the retinue of the Jhala Dhrangadhra lady who was married to the father of Jasaji. Meru fell on evil days, and eked out a scanty livelihood by cutting wood. One day he, and a Mahomedan friend, Jivasetu, had been out all day cutting wood. When evening fell, tired out by his exertions, Meru fell asleep on the side of the road under a tree with Jivasetu beside him, though the Mahomedan was not asleep.

AN EXTRA FINGER

Two "Bawas" (Indian ascetics) passed that way, and the younger stopped, and stooping intently studied the sole of Meru's outstretched foot. The elder ascetic, contemplatively walking on, was recalled by the younger, who said: "Guruji! come here, and look at the line on this man's foot. It is the line of a Prince, and, yet, as you see, he is miserably poor, and he cuts wood for a living—what is this? Do the lines err? Is the science you taught me not stable? Explain to me this mystery."

The "Guruji" looked carefully at the line and then at the sleeping man, and laughingly said: "Pupil! am I to explain to you the mystery of the whole world? A good sign may be more than annulled by a bad one. This man has an extra finger, as you may see,"—pointing to Meru's extended hand lying in the dust; "whilst he has that unlucky finger, the lucky line on his foot is subdued and cannot fulfil its mission."

The "chela" drew out a sharp razor.

"What are you going to do?" asked the Guru.

"Cut off that finger," said the pupil.

"Nonsense," said the Guru. "Why interfere in his fate? You will only create a

MERU AT THE PALACE

disturbance." But the "chela" had already bent, and chopped off the offending extra finger.

Meru woke up, as might be expected, in a tearing rage, and flung himself at the throat of the ascetic, who only escaped with his life through the intervention of Jivasetu, who assured his friend that the "Bawa's" act had not been unfriendly. The ascetics moved off: the "Guru" pointing out to his pupil how dangerous might have been this interference in what did not vitally concern them; and Meru, binding up his wound and picking up his load of wood, made towards the city, the ascetics moving off in the opposite direction.

Meru and Jivasetu were met by a palace courtier who had been searching for Meru. The Rani wanted someone of her own State to look after her little son. She remembered Meru, possibly some relation of her own maid-servants, and the man was taken to the palace, bathed, shaved and dressed in clean and beautiful clothes, and placed in charge of the little Prince.

Jivasetu had viewed this sudden rise of his old friend to fortune with astonishment. To the credit of Meru, it must be said that he never forgot his old Mahomedan friend, who

ESCAPE OF JASAJI

ultimately rose to Thanadar of Khandorano, south-east of Jamnagar.

Jasaji's father died shortly afterwards, and Meru had sole charge of Jasaji.

It was Meru who had his master married to another princess of Dhrangadhra, and between his wife and Meru, Jasaji was not left alone for a single moment. Meru, as Vazir, was the virtual ruler of Jamnagar, and his three brothers, of whom Bhavan Khavas was the most powerful, all held important positions in the State. Jasaji chafed at his anomalous position ; but was quite helpless.

However, an opportunity occurred at escaping from his prison ; for it was virtually nothing more. Jasaji was then about twenty-five years of age, and the only man he saw besides Meru was the barber, who came once a week to shave the Jam Sahib. It was with this barber that Jasaji sent a message to the Jam's " Bhayats " to rescue him from his jailers. The " Bhayats " were only too willing, and Jasaji managed to escape to one of his citadels.

Bhavan Khavas came to know of the matter and wanted to destroy the citadel. The Jam's Bhayats were prevented from coming by a flood, and the Jam Sahib was stranded. Meru was asked to make himself

SIGN OF SUBMISSION

ruler, but absolutely refused to have anyone on the "gadi" of Jamnagar, except his own master. This was possibly a wise act on his part; for it was very unlikely that the Jadeja Rajput Bhayats would have allowed him to sit there for any lengthy period.

Meru went to Jasaji himself. He carried in his mouth a slipper, which is the sign of meekness and submission, and Jasaji, who does not seem to have disliked Meru,—and Jasaji's strange upbringing must have made him very dependent,—was not ill-pleased to be reconciled with his Vazir, whom he always called Dada, a term of great respect.

Meru explained that he had had no intention of displeasing his master; and at that master's wish exiled his three brothers and their parties. The brothers robbed their respective Tehsils (districts) and made good their retreat. Jasaji made no attempt to prevent them, neither did he wish to recover the booty these adventurers had taken away, merely remarking that as long as the title of Jam had been left to him, he was perfectly satisfied.

A pathetic incident took place on the death-bed of Meru. Jam Jasaji was sitting by the dying man, when he drew up both his legs. It is the custom on a dying bed in India to

DEATH OF JASAJI

ask the dying man to compose his limbs, to prevent breaking the limbs afterwards. This request is neither considered unusual nor unfeeling.

Jasaji said : " Dada, put your legs straight."

The brave old Khavas said : " There is a fort between my leg and its straightness,—the Jasdan fort. I should not have allowed the Raja to build that fort."

Jasaji said : " I swear that before I drink ' Kasumba ' (hemp water) on the eleventh day after your death, I will break Jasdan fort."

Meru straightened his left leg, but the right remained drawn up, and the Jam again asked : " What is it now, Dada ? "

Meru groaned. " Let my right leg be broken. I could have done this thing, but *you* can't. How did I leave Dwarka to the Gaekwar of Baroda ? It should have belonged to Jamnagar."

It was to Meru that Jamnagar owes its present large area.

On the death of Jasaji, his wife, the Jhala princess of Dhrangadhra, who was evidently a lady of character, ruled Jamnagar for a period. But finally she had to adopt a son. This was Ranmalji.

RANMALJI

Jam Ranmalji was an extremely cruel man, and the only thing that could be said in his favour is that during his rule there was not a single theft in the whole of Jamnagar.

Many are the terrible stories told of Ranmalji's cruelty. He was a man of many amours, and should any girl on whom he had bestowed even his temporary favours prove unfaithful, in the presence of a crowded court he bade the faithless one embrace her lover, and had them entombed alive in each other's embrace.

A story is told of a certain girl of the stonemason class. She gained the favour of Ranmalji, who presented her with four of his finest pearls. The girl in turn gave them to her Kamdar, who wore them in pairs in the top of his ears.

Ranmalji saw them, recognised them, sent for the unfortunate "bania," and slicing off his ears with the pearls still in them sent them to their former owner.

Ranmalji delighted in taking the law into his own hands, and he himself rode into Atkot Badla, beat a nephew of his Dewan within an inch of his life, and bade an Arab walk him back to Jamnagar without turban or shoes, and usher him into the Dewan's presence. This Ranmalji did on the com-

FIERCENESS OF PRIDE

plaints of his subjects as to the high-handedness of the Dewan's nephew. But his other acts were not inspired by so high a motive.

The British Government came into touch with Jamnagar in Ranmalji's time. The fierce old Jam, when sent for at Rajkot, absolutely refused to go ; and as he had also sworn that no political officer should come into Jamnagar, the Jam met the political officer exactly on the borders of his territory. The tent, in which the British officer was, had an entrance so low that Ranmalji would have had to stoop to enter.

It was the present Jam Sahib's grandfather Jalam Singh who solved the difficulty by slashing the upper part of the tent door through with his dagger. One can imagine the astonishment of the British officers within at this strange entrance of Ranmalji.

It was to this fierce old tiger that Soniba, Haribhi's granddaughter, and the grandaunt of the present Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, was married. The Limbdi Jhala lady seems to have been the only person of whom the Jam had any kind of fear. Her son Vibhaji was Ranmalji's fifth son, and the news was brought to the Jam Sahib when he was placing the gold ball on the centre of the dome of a new temple.

GRANDFATHER OF GANDHI

Ranmalji was stunned for the moment, and said mournfully : " Jhali's son is sure to be the next ruler."

He said this advisedly ; for the time of the announcement of the birth of his fifth son was, according to Hindu belief, a time so auspicious, i.e., the placing of the gold ball on the dome of the temple, as to ensure that son becoming a king.

Actually Jam Vibhaji did become the heir ; for all Ranmalji's four elder sons died in their father's lifetime.

It was in Ranmalji's time that Porbandar lost Barda Hill. Two Englishmen had been murdered there, and murdered in a very atrocious manner. A very stiff letter went from Rajkot to the Rana of Porbandar.

Gandhi was then Dewan at Porbandar, grandfather of the present Mr. M. K. Gandhi, of non-co-operation fame.

Gandhi sent word to the Agency that the place of the murder was in Jamnagar, not part of the territory of the Porbandar Rana ; and therefore the Rana Sahib could not be held responsible for the murder. The Agency sent on the letter to Jamnagar ; and the Jam had to pay 1600 silver kowries compensation.

The wily Ranmalji promptly paid the compensation, after protesting on paper that

COST OF CARELESSNESS

as the Englishmen had not informed the Jam of their intended visit to his territory, he ought not to have been held responsible for the mishap.

Later on, when boundaries were being demarcated, Porbandar found that Gandhi's carelessness had cost Porbandar nearly the whole and certainly the half of Barda Hill ; for the compensation paid by Jam Ranmalji, recorded in the Agency books, was distinct evidence in favour of the claim of Jamnagar to Barda Hill.

It was Ranmalji who gave the village Bodi to Lakhobhi, his young brother-in-law, and Lakhobhi was the grandfather of the present Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, and it was in Bodi sixty-one years ago that he was born.

Jam Vibhaji, of whom more hereafter, was then on the "gadi" of Jamnagar ; and Kasuliba, one of Lakobhi's daughters, was one of the Ranis of Jamnagar.

CHAPTER I

THE present Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, then Rana Shri Dadbha, was born in Bodi, the seventh child of Rana Shri Muluji and Bai Shri Jijiba, a lady of the clan of Jadeja Rajputs, on the sixth day of the dark half of the Hindu month of Ashad, in the Hindu Samvat year 1924, corresponding to A.D. 11th July, 1868.

Dadbha was a remarkably intelligent child with a keen memory. At the early age of four he recorded a vivid description of his cousin Hari Singh's wedding,—the Jam Vibhaji, the elephants, the procession, and the strange dancing girl with her Mahomedan nose-ring. Rana Muluji, the father of Dadbha, was a man deeply religious, but of so rare an obstinacy that, having formed for himself a particular set of ideas, he could not be made to change them on any account. As an instance of this obstinacy, he made a vow at the age of eight years,—which he kept till the day of his death,—to drink no milk ; because, being very fond of milk, his step-mother

D A D B H A

had reproached him for it when he refused to do some small service in connection with the numerous cattle they had on their farm.

Rana Muluji was anxious that Dadbha should be educated at an early age, and so Dadbha's first lessons were with a Brahmin in Bodi, who taught nine other boys with his own three sons. The lessons were of a rudimentary nature. There were no slates or slate-pencils in those days, and Dadbha and his fellow students learnt to write with sharpened sticks of wood on clean river-sand on wooden boards.

Dadbha learnt to read and write far too quickly for the Brahmin; and Rana Muluji had to send his little boy to Jamnagar to a proper school. Dadbha's brother, attached to the court of Jam Vibhaji, was already in Jamnagar; and Dadbha stayed in the old house at Jamnagar.

Dadbha went to school regularly; but the age produced the usual tyrant of a school-master, who made life for the little boy and his fellows a succession of days too miserable to record. Dadbha was the only Kshatriya boy in the class; and after awhile, egged on by persistent cruelty, in sheer desperation he led the rest of the class in rebellion. The whole affair was sufficiently easy to make the



THE LATE RANA SHRI MULUJI OF BODI.
The father of the Thakore Sahib of Limbdi.

AT SCHOOL

young Rajput a difficult subject for any future master to control. And it is possible that this master and this affair helped materially to check Dadbha's progress at school.

Nearly all the present Thakore Sahib's knowledge is more of people and things rather than of books. Mathematics, his strong point, from earliest school days,—when he gained his answers within a few minutes by some weird process that would not be reproduced on paper,—is still a natural gift that no masters taught, and fortunately none killed.

At the Anglo-Vernacular school in Jamnagar, Dadbha learnt English of a sort. But his mind ran more on adventure than on learning ; and his first experience of a world outside Jamnagar came through that school. It happened in this manner : the nephew of Jam Vibhaji had died at Jodhpur, and according to the custom in India, relatives from Jamnagar had to go to Jodhpur to pay a formal visit of condolence. There were no railways, past Wadhwan, in Kathiawar in those days ; and the party were to leave by steamer to Bombay, and from there entrain a little beyond Ajmere, where the rail-head was at Raipur, and thence to Jodhpur by cart. Rana Muluji was one of the party.

IN A CYCLONE

Dadbha, in a small country boat, ostensibly seeing his father off, boarded the steamer *Oran*, climbed up to a lifeboat, and disappeared under the tarpaulin. One can imagine the annoyance of Rana Muluji, when some hours later the nephew of the Jam Sahib, Kumar Keshari Singh, brought this grimy stowaway before him, whom Rana Muluji recognised as his son. Dadbha was then about thirteen; and, fortunately for his mother's peace of mind, his coming exploit had been advertised, and the non-appearance of the little lad after the steamer's departure did not occasion much uneasiness. But Dadbha had the fate of all stowaways.

The steamer *Oran* was overtaken by a cyclone; the mailsteamer *Pachamba*, running between Karachi and Bombay, going down in front of the horrified eyes of the passengers on the *Oran*.

Dadbha was carefully tied to his bunk,—he was safer that way, his father thought. But if Rana Muluji hoped that his son's spirit of adventure would be quenched by the time of their arrival at Bombay, he was sadly mistaken.

The party stayed in a bungalow with wooden floors, which to Dadbha's dazed eyes seemed to rise and sink as he walked. He was

EARLY EXPERIENCES

tired and sick, and had only the one suit of clothes he wore. New clothes were bought for him; the dangers of Bombay,—the railways, the people, everything,—was, so his father thought, impressed upon his son's mind. But when everyone was settled down for a midday siesta, Dadbha as well,—so everyone thought,—the boy made good his escape; and with an aptitude which is really a gift with him, carefully made notes of leading landmarks, and however far he went or how often he turned, he came back on his traces as accurately as any Red Indian.

It was in Bombay that Dadbha saw his first train going under a bridge, over which he hung in various precarious positions to get a better view;—so much for his father's warnings about railways.

After a few days the party continued their journey to Jodhpur. There was no direct train to Jodhpur in those days, the rail-head going no farther than Raipur, a few stations past Ajmere. The circuitous way that the party had to travel in those days may be judged by the places they stopped at *en route*.

The first was at Khandwa, where a large cattle fair was taking place. A rather wonderful occurrence was supposed to take place there regularly; and the party actually

SIGHT-SEEING

witnessed what happened. The chain, or the rope, that bound the cattle or horses was merely buried in the ground, and the animals stood as if fastened to the spot, though they were not actually bound. No explanation like the one to be narrated very shortly:—the marble chair mystery,—could be found for the phenomena. It was said that the ground had certain power; and certainly guavas grew there and were purchased as large as a small football!

The next stop was at Jubbulpore, where the party visited the marble rocks, and bathed in the sacred river Nerbudda.

At Agra they visited the Taj Mahal; and from there the party went to Ajmere, and alighted at Raipur. From Raipur they went by easy stages in a "shigram" drawn by bullocks. From there the journey to Jodhpur took them three days. *En route* was the village of Bilado, the resort of pilgrims all over India. Here is a temple of the goddess, and the light of "ghee" before the idol has a peculiarity which devout "Devi" worshippers ascribe to a miraculous power; it leaves a deposit of golden instead of black soot.

Attached to the temple was the palatial residence of the temple priest, with whom the party stayed. During the visit, a very large,

A C A T A S T R O P H E

heavy, marble chair with wonderful carved arms and legs suddenly crashed to pieces, the deafening noise of its fall alarming all the inmates in the house who hurried to the scene. The huge slab of the marble seat had fallen on to the legs and arms, smashing them and itself to pieces. There was great consternation amongst the party at this bad omen, and much conjecture as to what had happened.

Dadbha had, evidently, neither heard the noise of the fall, nor the commotion of the assembled people ; for he was so sound asleep in his room, some distance away from the scene of disaster, that it was with the greatest difficulty he was awakened. The goddess was, of course, held responsible for the destruction of the marble chair, though the reader, perhaps, has arrived at a different solution. Dadbha had only climbed on that marble chair to examine a picture, and had liked the feel of the marble under his feet when he jumped ; afterwards, as the reader is aware, he fell into so sudden and so sound a sleep that if he forgot to mention the incident it was but natural !

The party arrived at Jodhpur, made the customary condolences, and visited the Maharaja of Jodhpur. Maharaja Jaswant Singh,

SIR PRATAP SINGH

brother of the famous Maharaja Pratap Singh, was then on the "gadi," and many were the anecdotes told against Maharaja Pratap Singh. In those young precarious days of his when he was dependent on his brother's whimsical favour.

In the days when Rana Muluji went to Jodhpur with his little son, the tide of public opinion had not yet swept in favour of Pratap Singh. That was to come later. It was England that made Pratap Singh, and to his credit, it must be said, he never forgot it, remaining to the last a loyal, grateful, old Rajput.

Pratap Singh, in youth, was an extremely handsome man. The favourite of Maharaja Jaswant Singh was a Mahomedan, Fazar-illa-khan (Bhaya Sahib). The Maharaja's fondness for this man was so inordinate that one day when his favourite became heated by some rough play, the Maharaja himself fanned the courtier. This was more than Pratap Singh could tolerate. He dared not make an open protest, but having recourse to sarcasm, asked Fazar-ulla-khan, who was an extremely ugly man, where he might have been when Allah distributed beauty. Fazar-ulla-khan cleverly retorted that at that time Allah was distributing two things—

WORK FOR THE RAJPUTS

good luck and beauty: only one of each available.

"Don't you know, Maharaj?" said Fazar-ulla-khan. "You took all the beauty, and I all the luck."

Fazar-ulla-khan was one of the obstacles to Pratap Singh's ambition to be a power in Jodhpur. It was he who had managed to have Sir Pratap exiled twelve years before. Sir Pratap was in Jaipur, *de facto* ruler under Maharaja Ram Singh; and when Maharaja Jaswant Singh went there on a visit, he was surprised at his brother's ability. From Jaipur, Jaswant Singh brought his brother back to Jodhpur, and gave him some of the administrative work at Jodhpur.

Apart from his inordinate ambition, Sir Pratap Singh helped to revive many an old Rajput ideal, working always to uplift the prestige of Rajputs: and he was every inch a man. His pride was his weak point.

The writer remembers once on his last visit to Limbdi, how deeply she hurt his dignity at the mere suggestion that in talking English with his son he would gain a greater knowledge of that language. The suggestion was couched in the most tactful form, whilst praising his son's conversational powers,—Sir Pratap had none, at least not in English.

“THE KING SAY THAT!”

Sir Pratap said : “ I—I learn—my son, or my son learn from me ! ” His big chest heaved. “ The King—the *King*, he say me, ‘ You speak beautiful English, Sir Pratap.’ *The King say that.* ”

It took a good deal to console him ! Possibly had it not been for the fact that Sir Pratap appeared to really like the writer, no conciliation might have ever taken place. A signed photograph sent, however, on his return to Jodhpur, shows that he bore no malice at the suggestion that his son might know more,—even if it were only English,—than his father.

This is a lengthy digression, but Sir Pratap Singh was one day to ask for the son of Rana Dadbha in marriage with his niece, a princess of Idar.

सत्यमेव जयते

CHAPTER II

DADBHA's return to Jamnagar, as well might be expected, with a history of his adventures, made him a hero amongst his school-mates. Dadbha was invariably the first boy in his class ; but this appears due more to a knowledge of his master's chagrin that a boy with so little application gained the envied position so easily,—it would have pointed a better moral had Dadbha come last,—than to any real love for lessons.

Finally, Dadbha was obliged to leave the school, though his education was incomplete, to look after the family affairs.

Dadbha's marriage took place when he was fifteen, to Shri Baluba, daughter of Jetiji, a Jadeja Rajput, landowner of Panchasara. The bride was only eleven years of age, and remained with her mother-in-law at Bodi.

Nothing of importance was ever done, either by his father or brothers, without waiting for Dadbha to come to Bodi, though this was taking the advice of the youngest of

RANA LAKHOBHI

them all. When Dadbha's youngest sister Phuliba was married to the first cousin of the Maharao of Kutch, the Durbar of Tehra, it was the boy Dadbha who was in charge of the whole arrangements ; and his freeing his father's lands within a short time from mortgage gained for him an enviable reputation amongst the older people of Bodi. Rana Lakhobhi, Dadbha's grandfather, was still alive, and Dadbha was to the last his grandfather's favourite. This wonderful old man, who lived to the age of ninety-eight ; and who was so fortunate that during his lifetime not even a child of his large family died, was a unique character, typical of the old Rajput, who is, alas ! fast becoming no more.

Sitting often with his favourite grandson, Lakhobhi used to dilate on his young days in Gondal. The family had a tremendous amount of wealth ; and Rana Lakhobhi in his village Choradi found that this fortune could not be got rid of easily.

His generous heart had exhausted all its means as regards menfolk ; so he had large fields cultivated with sugar-cane, bought the finest " shigram," and plough bullocks possible, and allowed them in the sugar-cane fields.

" That," Rana Lakhobhi used to say frequently in a reflective manner, " is a

MARRIED TO THE SWORD

really wonderful way of getting rid of money."

His generosity brought down the family's fortunes ; but regret was something the old man refused to admit in his happy life.

" Only three people," he used to say, " come to the world by the favour of God. Their gifts cannot be cultivated or acquired. These people are the pious, the generous, and the brave."

It is rather significant of those early Rajput days that Rana Lakhobhi was married at the age of twenty-two years ; and his mental attitude towards marriage may be gauged by the following story.

By way of parenthesis, it should be remembered that it is an old Rajput custom to send the sword to the bride's house. The bride would be married to the sword, and then brought in procession to the bridegroom's house, where the marriage festivities and the remainder of the religious ceremonies would take place.

The bride's procession would be met as a matter of course by the bridegroom on horseback. He would then descend and enter the chariot drawn by bullocks, and seat himself in this curtained recess beside his bride.

One day Rana Lakhobhi and a friend happened to be testing kites, and Rana

"A REGULAR PADMANI"

Lakhobhi was getting one more kite ready. His friend said casually: "Hullo! here's a wedding party! Who is getting married, I wonder?" Lakhobhi said: "Be quick with the last kite. That's *my* marriage procession, and I'll have to go." But an irascible servant had already arrived. The whole family were in despair at Lakhobhi's absence, and had been searching for him in vain. Lakhobhi was hurried away; all his relatives were much more irritated; he was hastily bidden to bathe, was dressed hurriedly in all his finery, dashed on to his horse, and sent out to meet his waiting bride.

"Your grandmother was a lovely creature," Rana Lakhobhi used to say, "a regular 'Padmani'; and *work*!—why, no woman could work like your grandmother! She got up at four o'clock in the morning, and prepared all the food for the farm-hands and me, only holding back one 'bajro' cake to bake hot for me when I returned from my fields. And by eight o'clock everything was cleaned up and she sat in her verandah, with a green satin skirt on, a green bodice trimmed with gold thread, and a gold thread 'sari' over her beautifully dressed hair, and in her hand her embroidery. And all the women who saw her used to think that Lakhobhi's

H O B B I E S

wife never did a stroke of hard work in her life. "Your grandmother was indeed a most wonderful woman. But you know," he would add, "I never did get a chance of flying that last kite ; and the next day, when all my bridegroom's clothes were off me, it wasn't as if I were really anything different."

Lakhobhi had quaint hobbies : he loved sewing ; he cobbled his own boots and those of his grandchildren, and till the day of his death he threaded his own needle without spectacles. Towards the end, the shaking of his hand disturbed his needle-threading ; he then used to steady his needle in the pith of a piece of tender cane. When his grandson would offer to thread the needle for him, the old man invariably refused.

"When I want to sew," he would say, "you can't expect me to have first to hunt you out."

When Dadbha was building a house on modern lines, Lakhobhi, coming to look over it, appeared very interested, and enquired : "What are those big holes all over the place left for ?"

Dadbha rather proudly replied : "These are for windows to be put in. The more windows you have, the more fresh air you get, and fresh air makes you healthy and strong."

Lakhobhi with his tall figure and massive

DEATH OF LAKHOBHI

limbs could afford to smile. "Well," he said, "I was born in a house where the air came through the roof, and there were only two small windows. It didn't make *me* weak. I think if you keep your mind and heart pure, grandson, the windows of your mind and heart will catch God's pure air; your house windows are of little account."

Lakhobhi was very fond of visiting his large number of friends and relations; and as he was very popular with them all, he was always made welcome. He rode his own horses, and rarely went into a "shigram." As the years passed, Muluji once suggested that it would be better if his father did not travel at so advanced an age; for if Lakhobhi fell ill, protested Muluji, it would be very troublesome for the old man to be in some out-of-the-way place. Lakhobhi used to say laughingly: "I shall come home to you to die."

And this really happened. He arrived at Muluji's house ill, and died three days afterwards, one of the grandest and most wonderful old Rajputs of his time. To the last he predicted a wonderful future for his favourite Dadbha.

There were at least 20,000 people at Rana Lakhobhi's funeral-feast — *kharaj* — which

JAM VIBHAJI

always takes place in Hindu ritual eleven days after death. Jam Vibhaji himself was present.

Dadbha was nearly twenty when his grandfather died. Some astrologer had told the boy not to sell his luck,—an old superstition,—by entering the service of another. This, and a certain dislike for the court life of Jam Vibhaji, kept Dadbha away from the Jamnagar court.

Jam Vibhaji himself was an extraordinary character. Son of that fierce old Ranmalji, and the sister of Dadbha's grandfather, he presented, as was natural, an amazing clash of characters. So generous, that to this day, his name uttered in the morning in Kathiawar is supposed to bring good luck to the inmates of any house, his history might have been written in blazing gold characters, had he not been surrounded from an early age by menials and sycophants in galore.

In his reign Jamnagar had Khavas Vazirs again, following the precedent of Jam Jasaji. The first was Mavji Khavas, who was succeeded by Raghubhai, whose only claim to attention was that he had once run at the stirrup of Jam Vibhaji, and gathered wood for Jam Vibhaji's famous brewery, where a concentrated form of rose wine filled with aphrodisiacs was distilled of so valuable a de-

THE JAM'S BATH-BOY

scription that one bottle alone of the rose wine cost 200 Rupees in the making, even in those days when money held a bigger value than the present day. The learning of the famous recipe made the erstwhile stirrup boy Vazir.

When Raghubhai's downfall came, he used to boast that when the six months' stock of rose wine came to an end, Jam Vibhaji must surely send for him again, as only he, Raghubhai, had the recipe. But man's own foes are certainly those of his own household ; and Karsunbhai, a cousin of Raghubhai's, had cunningly gained both the recipe and with it the Vazirship ; so Raghubhai was never reinstated.

Kamo, another Khavas, the Jam's bath-boy, —an old playmate,—was a better character, and seems to have held his master's affection to the end ; though Jam Vibhaji, usually the most generous of men, gave him nothing, and the bath-boy walked the streets of Jamnagar in his old clothes, with his old blanket, thickly folded, thrown over one shoulder. The Jam, sitting on his bath-seat, with the bath-boy pouring the water over him, used often to comment on this lack of generosity.

" Whenever I want to give you something, you make me angry, and I change my mind."

And Kamo would reply : " It seems fated

A BIG FEEDER

you are to get work from me ; and I am never to get anything from you."

The Jam often got angry with the bath-boy. The scene would end in very much the same way each time.

The Jam Sahib would shout : " Wretched, careless fellow, get out of my service. I don't like you."

And Kamo would bluntly reply : " Yes, I know you don't like me ; for you have told me so a thousand times ; but the misfortune is that *I* like you, and if you don't stop this ceaseless babble, you'll hear something from me." This invariably silenced the Jam Sahib for that particular time.

Jam Vibhaji was a tremendously heavy man, and a big feeder. He required, in addition to his other food, sixteen marrow-bones for dinner ; and the milk of two buffaloes was given to one, and the milk of that one was drunk by the Jam. No ordinary man could digest this milk ; one did try, a cupful only, and found it a strong purgative.

Jam Vibhaji had twenty-two Ranis. and nine lesser Ranis. One of the Ranis, and the most strong-charactered of them all, was Rana Lakhobhi's daughter Kasuliba, the niece, it will be remembered, of her mother-in-law Rani Soniba.

EUROPEANS IN JAMNAGAR

The Europeans in Jamnagar, when Dadbha was twenty, were MacLaren the engineer, Captain Forbes whom Government had sent to help in the organisation of the Jamnagar Imperial Lancers, and Mr. O'Connor, the police superintendent, who recently died in Porbandar at the ripe age of eighty. Captain Forbes, at one time A.D.C. to Lord Reay, was a man of intense sympathies, and deeply loved by one and all. He was recruiting for the Imperial Lancers. Mr. O'Connor, an Irishman of the fine old type, was recruiting for the police.

Dadbha went to Mr. O'Connor first of all, very shy about taking service, and very uncertain. The Dewan of Jamnagar, Mr. Maganlal, hearing of Dadbha's approach to Mr. O'Connor, asked him to secure the boy on special terms, not only because he was the nephew of the Jam Sahib, but because the boy's ability was not unknown to the people in power at Jamnagar.

Dadbha's first exploit was the unearthing of a murder plot against both the Dewan and Mr. O'Connor. Dadbha took the astounded police superintendent hidden in a tonga to a small house outside the city in a secluded garden, concealed him in an upper story, and let him learn for himself all the details



THE THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI.
As Colonel Commandant of the Jannagar Lancers

RECRUITING THE LANCERS

of the plot from the incautious conspirators' own lips when they assembled later. Dadbha gained promotion six times within his first six months of police service.

Meanwhile, Forbes was finding great difficulty in recruiting for the Lancers. They were still ninety men short of the strength required, and only a month left of the allotted time. Jamnagar, and Forbes most of all, was anxious that the Imperial Lancers scheme should be a success, and not fall through. It was suggested that Dadbha be asked to help in the recruiting.

He brought in the required number of men within a fortnight, and was offered the command, which he accepted. Dadbha was then twenty-two years of age. He was always a great soldier, strong, with a deep patience; and this patience is still a noticeable and extraordinary quality in the present Thakore Sahib:—a power to bear what few other men in power would or could tolerate.

In the same year of his command, 1892, Dadbha was sent to Poona on a course of equitation, with an introductory letter to Sir William le Warner, then Political Secretary to Lord Harris, Governor of Bombay. Sir William gained a good deal of criticism about his book, and his policy with regard to the

CADET RIGHTS

Princes of India ; but no man was loved more for his personal qualities. It was Sir William le Warner who introduced Dadbha to his kinsman, the then Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, Sir Jaswant Singh. The dispute between the Thakore Sahib of Limbdi and Dadbha's family regarding their village Bellara was then at its height.

Haribhi's descendants claimed cadet privileges which Thakore Sahib Jaswant Singh was not then willing to recognise. The case was referred to the Agency, which highly displeased the Thakore Sahib, as Agency intervention, even in those days, was much resented. The Thakore Sahib and Dadbha were mutually attracted to each other. During one of their drives together in Poona they visited the Parvati temple there, and behind this beautiful temple, on the temple seat, discussed Bellara.

The case was a very vital one for Dadbha's family. Bellara was the one link with their old rightful home, Limbdi. If the Thakore Sahib persisted in denying them cadet rights their status as Limbdi Bhayats would be seriously challenged. Dadbha pointed out to the Thakore Sahib that this question would affect the future status of the daughters of their house, who till now had been given to

THE BELLARA CASE

ruling families, like Gondal, Jamnagar, and Kutch.

The Thakore Sahib in reply swore on oath that he did not wish to lessen their status, merely lessen their pride. He asked Dadbha to help in effecting a compromise.

Dadbha's father from Jamnagar was ill-pleased at any compromise of the Bellara case. He wrote a warning to Dadbha to allow the case to go before the Agency and stand on its own merits. The Thakore Sahib asked Dadbha to come to Limbdi, and Dadbha went there shortly afterwards.

The Bellara case never interfered with their friendship, though it was not till three years later that it was finally settled. Dadbha had prevented it being finally decided by the Agency, feeling wisely enough that it was not for a scion of Limbdi to damage the prestige of a Limbdi Thakore Sahib. The final terms were arranged by the Thakore Sahib and Dadbha, personally, at Gondal; and the agreement registered in the Agency court.

As Dadbha's fortunes were to be inextricably bound with those of the Thakore Sahib Sir Jaswant Singh; a short sketch of his career might prove interesting. He was born on the 23rd May, 1859, losing his father, the Thakore Sahib Futteh Singh, when he was

IN EUROPE

only three years of age. The State was administered by the British Government in 1867.

The young Prince was educated in the Rajkumar College of Rajkot, and in the administration report of 1873-4 the Governor of Bombay spoke of him as the most promising of the Princes of the Rajkumar College. Amongst the distinguished people the Thakore Sahib as a boy met were : King Edward VII when he was Prince of Wales, who presented the Thakore Sahib with a silver medal of appreciation, remarking at the end of the visit that he would not forget the young prince ; the Duke of Connaught, the Earls of Northbrooke and Dufferin, the Marquis of Ripon, and the Marquis of Lansdowne.

The Thakore Sahib was the first Kathiawar prince to visit England ; for few princes, at that time, ventured to cross the ocean. He sailed in April 1876 with his old teacher, the Principal of the Rajkumar College, that great soul, Mr. MacNaughton.

In England the Thakore Sahib was presented to the German Empress, and met Lord and Lady Salisbury and the cream of English society. He returned in 1876, and was installed the following year on the Limbdi "gadi."



THE LATE THAKORE SAHIB SIR JASWANT SINGH OF LIMBDI.

A UNIQUE OFFER

In 1884 Sir James Fergusson, the Governor of Bombay, who had met the Thakore Sahib in the summer of 1881 in Mahableswar, singled him out for rather a unique offer—the offering him a seat in the Legislative Council.

The actual letter ran as follows :

" 10th June, 1884.

" MY DEAR FRIEND,—

" A vacancy occurs in the Legislative Council of this Presidency on the 17th instant. It has occurred to me that possibly you may not be averse to accept of a seat. The ordinary tenure is two years.

" The motive in offering it to you is my sense of your abilities, acquirements, and administration, and my desire to mark that sense in a public manner. It would also be personally agreeable to me to be thus associated with you. The meetings of the Legislative Council are not frequent, and it is my habit to study as far as possible the convenience of the honourable members in fixing them. I hope, therefore, you may find it convenient to accept the appointment.

" Your sincere friend,
(Sd.) " JAMES FERGUSSON."

The Thakore Sahib accepted the offer and sat on the Council for the required two years.

TRIBUTE FROM LORD REAY

On the expiration Lord Reay wrote to him as follows :

" MY DEAR FRIEND,—

" Now that your tenure of Office in the Legislative Council has expired, I write to say how sorry I am. Government will be deprived in the future of your services, and I must be permitted to add that in you Kathiawar had a most worthy representative. The difficulty of making appointments to the Legislative Council is very great, and you will not consider it an idle compliment when I say that it causes me deep regret that the other claims which I cannot overlook do not enable me to give this Presidency the continuation of your services in a position so worthily filled by you. I need not say that it will always give me the greatest pleasure to hear your opinion on any matter which concerns the welfare of the Presidency or of Kathiawar.

" Your sincere friend,

(Sd.) " REAY.

" GANISH KHIND,
" 21st June, 1886."

On the occasion of the Jubilee of the Queen-Empress, Sir Jaswant Singhji had the honour of being elected as one of the representatives of the Kathiawar princes, on whose behalf an address of loyal congratulations was

BEYOND THE ATLANTIC

presented to Her Imperial Majesty at Windsor on the 30th June, 1887. Queen Victoria gave the Thakore Sahib a special audience, enquired about the welfare of her Indian subjects, particularly those of Kathiawar, and bestowed with her own hands the decoration of K.C.I.E. in addition to an autographed photograph of herself, which is still a treasured souvenir of the present Thakore Sahib.

From England the Thakore Sahib proceeded to Scotland, and thence to Ireland. From the British shores he set sail to Canada, where he was hospitably received by the Marquis of Lansdowne, and entertained by nearly all the ministers of that dependency.

From Canada he proceeded to the United States of America,—again the first Indian Prince to visit America. He visited Mr. Cleveland, the President, at the White House at Washington, and all the important places: New York and Boston, the Falls of Niagara, Chicago, the Yellow Stone Park, Portland, and other places of interest as far as San Francisco.

The *New York Herald* wrote: "Jaswant Singhji is a young man of about twenty-eight years of age, and in his appearance and bearing is a fine representative of the land

NO SONS

‘where the East with richest hand showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.’

“In manner, he is frank and affable, and his conversation shows him to be remarkably fluent and a master of ‘the King’s English as it is spoken’ with no hampering accent that generally marks the speech of those born in a land where English is not the mother tongue.”. . .

This Prince had four Ranis, but no sons. It was this sane, discriminating Prince who finally, for his successor, chose not a young boy but a man capable of taking on his shoulders the burden of an administration:—this man was to be Dadbha.

The Ranis, who knew of the Thakore Sahib’s love for Dadbha, had at first suggested the adoption of Dadbha’s son Digvijayasingh; but the Thakore Sahib was totally against the idea, and as he refused absolutely, no adoption took place. He wanted, he said, not a child, but a man—a man, moreover, of whose character he could, himself, be fully assured.

Dadbha was later on to learn of how the Thakore Sahib thought of him, and the high place that was to fall to his lot in the future.

CHAPTER III

IN 1892 the Governor of Bombay, Lord Harris, visited Jamnagar. His steamer was delayed by a cyclone. The Governor was met by a deputation consisting of Captain Forbes, Mr. MacLaren, and Commandant Dadbha.

Dadbha's mere presence in so important a deputation made a number of Jam Vibhaji's courtiers uneasy. The very existence of these sycophants depended upon the preventing of all new influences. When the Governor made pointed reference to Dadbha in his public speech, their apprehension increased by bounds. It is a humorous fact, typical of those old Court days, that it was actually suggested to the Jam Sahib that the Governor had referred to Dadbha in these warm terms at the Commandant's own request !

Dadbha's uncle, however, was too astute to believe such arrant nonsense, and soon Dadbha found himself obliged to attend his uncle's Court functions. At the Palace

dinners he sat with the Jam Sahib, and when any English guests were present, acted as an interpreter. The Court interpreter—a Parsi—was in despair; more especially as the Jam Sahib had openly expressed the opinion that his nephew would prove very useful in this capacity, and be more congenial, where orthodoxy was in question.

Amongst his Ranis, the Jam Sahib had two Mahomedan ladies, sisters, both acknowledged by the British Government, as both were the mothers of the future Jams of Jamnagar—one actually becoming the Jam. The eldest Rani's son was Kumar Saheb Bhimsinghi—Kalubha—whose succession to the throne was accepted both by the Government and the ruling princes of Kathiawar and Rajputana, which only goes to prove that the question of an Indian Prince marrying out of his own caste did not, in those days, debar the issue from succession to the throne.

Bhimsinghi, however, displeased the Jam Sahib by his bad behaviour. He was sent—in a final hope of his reform—to tour India under the guardianship of Captain Tate, afterwards Political Agent of Kutch; but the boy did not change his wild habits. His father, therefore, cut him off from the suc-

TRoubles AT COURT

cession. Bhimsinghji remained till the day of his death, practically, a State prisoner in Ahmednagar.

The next heirs were Bhimsinghji's son in direct succession, and the son of the second Rani, Jasuji, second in succession, who was born some time later, and before him there was an adopted son. Jam Sahib wanted his second son Jasuji to succeed in preference to his grandson, or adopted son. The courtiers saw their chance. They represented privately to the Jam Sahib that his nephew favoured the claim of Lakhubha. Fortunately for Dadbha and his career as a soldier, Jam Vibhaji seems to have given some credence to this second piece of fiction and Dadbha's attendance at Court was no longer made imperative.

Dadbha, noticing this difference in the Jam's behaviour, would have resigned, had not Jam Vibhaji sent him a private message by Manishanker Bhatt, the Court physician, explaining that this action of the Jam's did not mean any lessening of his affection, but was merely part of a policy. This explanation Dadbha had to accept, and it was quite sufficient.

Dadbha now began his soldiering in real earnest. Manœuvres between Poona and

FITZGERALD

Sirur, under General Bevil,—a name that was well adapted to a change, when profane subalterns and Tommies thought themselves overworked,—lasted six months. Those were the days when there were three Commanders-in-Chief in India; General Roberts was at Calcutta, Sir George Greaves at Bombay, and another Commander at Madras.

Sir George White succeeded Roberts and Sir George Greaves resigned in consequence; because he felt that the Commander-in-Chief at Bombay should have naturally succeeded to the Calcutta Command. This impasse hastened the abolition of the three commands, and shortly afterwards Kitchener became Commander-in-Chief of the whole of India.

It was in 1892 *en route* to Poona that Dadbha first met Mr. Fitzgerald, a man who was to play a large part in Dadbha's future. Mr. Fitzgerald was then only Prant Sahib at Wadhwan, and Dadbha and he were travelling in the same compartment.

Mr. Fitzgerald, of whom more anon, was a man of extraordinary character, and the friendship of the future was based on an amusing incident. The Gaekwar of Baroda was arriving in Bombay from his first visit to England, and despite the fact that two special compartments were put on the train

A FINE FRIENDSHIP

at Baroda, there were still two Baroda officers over.

"Don't allow them in," roared the old lion of Kathiawar to Dadbha. "Remain quiet. I'll say you are a Raja, and I'm your secretary; and you are dangerous when disturbed, so the carriage is specially reserved."

The guard of the train, however, approached Dadbha, saying he knew Mr. Fitzgerald and Dadbha both well; that it was quite impossible not to allow the two officers in the compartment, and begged Dadbha to make Mr. Fitzgerald reasonable.

Dadbha tried, and received, after a good deal of talk, a grudging assent to the Baroda officers entering.

"But you must not talk to them, mind that," grumbled Mr. Fitzgerald, who was only rough-tongued, and had the tenderest heart.

Dadbha agreed smilingly, and from that day the two were great friends, never quite losing touch with each other; till they clashed at Porbandar, when Mr. Fitzgerald was Agent to the Governor; and afterwards became stronger friends than ever.

In 1894 Captain Cox,—afterwards General Sir H. V. Cox,—came to Jamnagar on a musketry inspection. He met Dadbha in due

ON PILGRIMAGE

course, and thought that as a musketry class for Imperial Service troops had been opened at Meerut under Cox himself, it would be useful if Dadbha could come to Meerut and go through the course. This would be useful not only to Dadbha himself, but to the Jamnagar Imperial Lancers as well. Dadbha accordingly went to Meerut the next year, and distinguished himself by coming first amongst all the Imperial troops in the whole of India. He was chosen, from here, to be one of the officers to represent the Meerut musketry class of all India Imperial Service troops at Lord Elgin's Durbar. This Durbar was held at Lahore, for the greater convenience of the Frontier Chiefs.

Before leaving Meerut, Dadbha decided to make a quick pilgrimage to Hardwar, a very sacred place to all Hindus. He was with a Hyderabad friend, Sirdar Prem Singh, and an incident took place at Harni Pedi, Hardwar, not without its humour. On the River Ganges, at Harni Pedi, there is a Dharamshala, in which the friends stayed. The priest of the temple had warned the two pilgrims about the monkeys, especially asking them to keep all doors and windows closed, if they would preserve their things intact.

MONKEY AND TROUSERS

Dadbha and Prem Singh undressed in the rest-house, and went to bathe, carefully closing up, as they thought, all doors and windows. Unfortunately a little window in Dadbha's room had been overlooked, and whilst Dadbha was bathing in the Ganges, a materialistic temple monkey stole his only pair of trousers. The consternation of Dadbha may well be imagined, and his efforts to make the monkey return his ill-gotten gains. When monkey and trousers were discovered together, parched gram was thrown to the monkey. It ate the gram and held on to the trousers; and finally calmly tore them to strips before Dadbha's disgusted eyes, and all hope was now lost.

Dadbha, being an Indian, managed to travel back to Meerut in the loin-cloth he had bared in; but what would have happened to the proprieties of an ordinary British soldier under similar circumstances is something to contemplate. No monkey stood nearer to death than that particular sacred monkey. Harni Pedi, which, under ordinary circumstances, must have held only sacred memories, was therefore unnecessarily associated with the profanity of a monkey.

Dadbha returned to Jamnagar. His Lancers were fast gaining a name for efficiency,

COLONEL CHISHOLM

and when Queen Victoria wrote and warmly congratulated the Jam Sahib about his Lancers, the world knew of Dadbha's work. The Jam Sahib sent the Queen Empress's letter to Captain Forbes, stating that this honour was entirely due to his service ; but Captain Forbes was too great a man and too good a soldier to take a credit that was not his, and wrote back that the credit was due to Commander Dadbha.

Dadbha was again singled out for the honour of being chosen as one of the two officers from Kathiawar for an advanced course in equitation. This was in 1896, and both were attached to the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, then stationed at Muttra : Dadbha—Daulat Singh—from Jamnagar, and Dan Singh from Bhavnagar.

No words can record the effect that Colonel Chisholm, Commanding the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, had on the two young Rajput Commanders. Colonel Chisholm was typical of the best kind of British gentleman : the kind who laid the real foundations of the British Empire in India.

From the very first the two Indian officers were treated on equal terms with the British officers, and made members of the same tent club, a great thing in those days ; for even

"A SPLENDID SOLDIER"

to-day the Yacht Club in Bombay bars its doors to the Indian, though an Indian made its existence possible.

Colonel Chisholm was very fond of Dadbha and recorded of him that he was a splendid soldier. Those two words are the greatest tribute that one soldier can pay to another.

Dadbha returned to Jamnagar. His uncle, the Jam Sahib, died in the March of 1895, and his son Jasuji was now on the throne, and a minority administration under Colonel Kennedy was formed. In the following year Dadbha's eldest son,—the present Yuvaraj of Limbdi, Digvijayasingh,—was born on the 10th April.

In 1896 Dadbha, with the whole of the Imperial Lancers, joined the manœuvres under General Hogg at Deesa. In these manœuvres the Bhavnagar and Junagadh Lancers joined with the 3rd Cavalry, Erinpura Bhil Corps, two Infantry regiments, and a Field Battery. General Hogg was another General who placed upon paper the highest praise for Dadbha.

It was in 1897 that Dadbha met a friend, the Rana Sahib Bhav Singhji of Porbandar. This was at Barda Hill, Kileshwar, near where the boundaries of Jamnagar and Porbandar meet. To-day there is a proper

road to Barda Hill, and a pleasure-house ; but in those days there was only a small path where riding, even, was sometimes impossible. It was a favourite spot for "shikar," and Dadbha often went with the Kennedys.

On one occasion Dadbha remained behind after big game. The Rana Sahib of Porbandar was after game too on his own territory, where, to this day, the same heart-burnings occur when a so-called Jamnagar panther walks into Porbandar, and vice versa, and is shot over the boundary.

Rana Bhav Singhji was very anxious to meet Dadbha, and knowing who was hunting on the Jamnagar side, sent for the young soldier. In those days the efficiency of the new Jamnagar Imperial Lancers was the talk of Kathiawar. Even to-day they are known by the name of Dadbha no Rasalo, (the Lancers of Dadbha).

A friendship, that was to be of mutual advantage in ensuing years, grew up from that first meeting between the Rana Sahib and Dadbha. They spent those first few days of meeting entirely together, sleeping in small huts. And when they parted, the Rana Sahib had already extracted a promise that Dadbha should come to Porbandar in the event of his ever leaving Jamnagar.

GRASS INSPECTING

Dadbha often had a chance to visit Porbandar : he was always a splendid horseman, and his power of endurance in the saddle may be judged from the following feats of his youth.

One day's diary : " On grass inspecting—riding into Jam Jodhpur,—where the Mamlatdar gave him breakfast,—visiting all the 'bides' in the vicinity ; changing horses and riding to Sukkurpur and Khavasani Bedi ; and visiting all the grass farms there."

As Porbandar was near, he would catch the train at Vansjalia at 7 p.m. to Porbandar, spend the time till 3 a.m. with the Rana Sahib, return by train to Vansjalia, get back in the saddle, reaching Jamnagar eleven hours before his servant, who came directly by train with all Dadbha's kit. Those who know their Kathiawar will find that this makes a total of ninety-three miles in the saddle.

Dadbha rode three times a week regularly to Bodi, a distance of thirty miles, and back before breakfast ; and often to Rajkot and back, a distance of 120 miles. He rode always alone, entirely without fear, though those days were lawless days.

Kathiawar has always been the home of dacoits. Apart from the natural conveni-

DACOITS

ences of a country of alternate jungle, and high fields of wheat and "juvar" at harvest time, there is the vexed boundary question to help the dacoits; and every Kathiawar dacoit knows exactly where the boundaries end, and, to the cost of his pursuers, the law of extradition. The most powerful band of dacoits at that time were the Sindhi dacoits of Gondal. This band gathered recruits from the ruffian element of nearly every State in Kathiawar.

These dacoits formerly sheltered in Jamnagar villages, amongst the ravines and hills, and for a time Jamnagar villages were not molested. Till then Jamnagar enjoyed a kind of freedom from their ravages. Later on, when attempts were made to drive the dacoits out of Jamnagar, they started to plunder Jamnagar villages; and many a pitched fight now took place between the dacoits and the Jamnagar police.

Dadbha riding, as usual, alone, inspecting the grass "bides" one day, met five of the ringleaders smoking their "chalams" in a ravine, with their guns across their knees. They sprang up as the Commander passed; he drew rein and called out: "Who are you?"

They replied, "Passers-by."

"What are you doing there?"

A FIGHT

"Smoking our pipes."

Farther on Dadbha met Mr. Mulshanker, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, with a posse of men. Mulshanker reproached Dadbha for his lack of discretion in riding alone when dacoits were so plentiful.

"Ah!" said Dadbha lightly. "But I have to be the Raja of Limbdi, and I can't be killed before that happens, you know."

"Well," said Mulshanker, "supposing they capture you, and hold you for ransom, won't this be a disgrace for Jamnagar?"

Dadbha said laughingly: "Well, I've passed them on the road, and they have already missed the chance. You had better get after them quickly."

Mulshanker at once went towards the direction pointed out; and came up with the dacoits about six miles away from the ravine where Dadbha first saw them smoking. A fierce fight ensued, three of the dacoits being killed outright, and two taken prisoners. Outlaws are still in Kathiawar—as one band is broken up, another forms.

The old police officer Mulshanker, a few years back, remet the Thakore Sahib at Mehsana, *en route* to Oodeypore, and reminded him of this old incident of their Jamnagar days.

LONG RIDES

These long rides of Dadbha were the cause of another incident, when the Accountant-General expostulated with Colonel Kennedy about his countersigning Dadbha's mileage, questioning the fact that any man could make an average seventy-two miles a day. Colonel Kennedy, who knew of Dadbha's feats in this direction, laughingly begged the Accountant-General not to allow Dadbha to know of this doubt, lest the Lancers' Commander bring his average to 100 miles. As a matter of fact, Dadbha did do nearly 100 miles for several days afterwards, and drew mileage accordingly, for the sheer fun of upsetting the Accountant-General's calculations.

In 1901, the year of the terrible famine in India, Dadbha, alone, was responsible for the fact that his Lancers had sufficient grass,—a hay-stack of seven lakhs pounds in reserve to be exact; and there would have been fourteen lakhs pounds, but for the unfortunate fact that one of the hay-stacks, whilst being thatched, caught fire. How so large an amount of grass happened to be in reserve is in itself rather a strange story; and as it was generally known in Jamnagar at that time, it may well bear repeating here.

Dadbha has, from his childhood upwards, ever been devoted to ascetics and holy men.

HELPFUL PREVISION

In Jamnagar, at that time, was a Jain ascetic named Jasuji Swami, a Rajput from the Punjab, and one credited with great virtue. Dadbha often visited this holy man at the Jain hermitage, and as Jain Sadhus are more often than not of the Bania class, the Rajput Sadhu and the Rajput soldier had, besides a love for each other, the common link of caste. To Jasuji Swami Dadbha confided his fears that the next year the rains would fail and there would be a famine; and the sudden, surprised look on the face of the Jain Sadhu confirmed Dadbha's own doubts. For, though this may appear fantastic to Western readers, it is fairly well known in India that the real Indian ascetic can always predict whether a year will be bad or fair. Dadbha began to collect grass, and soon had his two large stacks ready. The revenue officer wanted grass, and as Dadbha had so much grass in reserve the revenue officer asked for some from these stacks, and on Dadbha refusing to give any went to the Administrator. Colonel Kennedy sent for Dadbha, listened smilingly to his forebodings as regards the coming famine; but allowed Dadbha to keep the grass he had so carefully collected.

Dadbha also bought grass for his eldest

THE FAMINE OF 1901

brother, who foolishly sold it at five times the price, and grass for his other brothers, who fortunately decided to believe in Dadbha's prediction.

On "Ashad Punam," a full-moon day, rain poured down, recording nearly three inches, and as the rain had come on a day counted lucky in India, all forebodings as regards the year vanished, and the agriculturists started sowing.

Colonel Kennedy sent a message by his personal assistant, Mr. Manilal, to Dadbha :

" Please ask your stupid friend what *has* become of his terrible famine."

Mr. Manilal faithfully repeated the message.

Dadbha said : " This means a more terrible famine, Manilal. The poor people had six months' grain in their houses ; and this rain has cheated them and taken even that away."

Manilal was most thoroughly disgusted at this unheard-of pessimism ; and went away after telling his friend that he was quite a hopeless case.

The sequel of course is well known. No famine in the history of India has been so terrible as that dreadful famine of 1901. Even with Dadbha's foresight, the Imperial Lancers was, in the end, buying grass at

CHEATING CLERKS

3 Rupees a maund, which Dadbha had bought in the first instance at 6 maunds for 1 Rupee.

Relief works opened at Jamnagar were badly conducted. The poor people were cheated by certain clerks, who mixed sand with the grain that the State was distributing. This coming to Dadbha's notice, he informed Colonel Kennedy, who did not give proper credence to the report. But when cholera swept through the villages, one of these very clerks dying of cholera, an only son of a widowed mother, the mother brought 6,000 Rupees to Colonel Kennedy and weepingly said: "Take this bad money that my son gained through cheating the poor. It has brought bad luck. I won't have it in the house at any cost."

Dadbha's unostentatious charity, so great a feature in the Thakore Sahib of to-day, started in those Jamnagar days. As a Commandant he came in touch with a large number of people, and found how many were too proud to beg, and were starving and unclothed.

Two favourite forms of his charity were: one, to wait for the master of a certain house to leave his place; then Dadbha would go to some grain merchant and pay for a large amount of grain to be sent immediately to

PRIVATE GIVING

the man's wife as if the husband himself had come to some arrangement. The grain was delivered in due course, and there would be great puzzlement as to who was the donor. Indeed, it was never always found out, as the grain merchant kept the secret fairly well. Another form was the mending of bad roads. Dadbha would go to some respectable person of the nearest village and deposit a sum of money with him for this purpose.

Once it chanced that Dadbha's own father had to travel over a one-time bad road in a "Shigram," and he said to some one of the village :

"Ah! To-day my old bones were indeed rested instead of being shaken as usual. What fortunate, virtuous man has had this dreadful road repaired?"

The man smiled ; for he knew the secret.

There were several other methods ; these two, being more often used, were finally known by several other people.

CHAPTER IV

IN the December of 1900, Lord Curzon came to Kathiawar, and Dadbha was presented to the Viceroy at Rajkot. Dadbha was chosen to represent Kathiawar at the opening ceremony of the Federation of Australia, forming one of a contingent of forty officers,—six of which were Imperial Service,—and sixty non-commissioned officers chosen from Indian regiments from all over India.

The notice given to Dadbha was very small, and no one seems to have taken trouble to put the Indian contingent right as regards its outfit, with the result that all of them were far too warmly clad for Australia.

The concentration camp was at Deolali. Colonel Paton was in Command. He was hardly strong enough for the occasion; for as it was to be seen afterwards, he allowed himself to be overruled in racial questions by Captain Campbell, the Cavalry Commander, and Lieutenant Pocock, the Adjutant. Now, for the first time, Dadbha came across a type

STUPID OFFICERS

of officer who thought he upheld British prestige by pressing home the humiliation of being an Indian. It started at Deolali, where the Indian officers were asked for a list of their requirements, and "jaggery," a coarse kind of molasses, was given them instead of sugar for tea.

On board the ship, those officers who lived in English style, of whom Dadbha was one, were told they must arrange for the cooking of their own food, and definitely debarred the mess of the British officers.

Pofart, Captain of the *Dalhousie*, was so irritated at this unnecessary distinction, involving so much extra trouble, that he himself refused to sit at the dining-table, and had his meals in his cabin, where he invited Dadbha to join him there.

The Indian contingent suffered considerably. The heat was intense; rations went bad; moreover, it was impossible to sleep in the cabins. The deck of the *Dalhousie* had been partitioned off by chalk lines, by Campbell, in a remarkable way. More than half of the best portion of the deck was reserved for the six British officers, a mere strip for the forty Indian officers, and the remainder for the sixty non-commissioned officers.

Dadbha who, to this day,—even as Thakore

ABOARD THE "DALHOUSIE"

Sahib,—never sleeps in a room if he can sleep in the open, was the first to arrive on deck with his bedding; and he slept a few inches away from the chalk line nearest to the portion claimed by the British officers. The Jamnagar Commander's example was soon followed by the rest of his brother officers.

The last to arrive was a Sikh officer,—Sirdar Ram Singh,—who, finding no room at all, slept next to Dadbha, a little over the chalk line.

Campbell, who came up later, actually ordered the poor man off the spot immediately. This was the last straw to the patience of the Captain of the *Dalhousie*. He once more put up an indignant protest; but Campbell was quite obdurate as regards allowing the Indian officers under him to sleep on any part of the portion of the deck allotted to the British officers. And Captain Pofart, who seems to have added a strong sense of humour to a sense of justice, made his lascars sleep on Campbell's reserved deck. As the deck had not been portioned out with Captain Pofart's approval, Captain Pofart, in the absence of any service orders to the contrary, was quite in his rights as regards his own ship and his own lascars.

To the writer, with long experience of India and its conditions, it is a happy enough

THE PRICE OF SHEEP

omen for the fortunes of Great Britain, that in most cases it has always happened, as it happened on the *Dalhousie*, that it is Englishmen themselves who constitute themselves champions of the oppressed, and fight against any injustice done by one of their own race. This is why England often profits by those very mistakes that sometimes cost other countries dearly.

That journey to Australia, with all its minor hardships, included a storm so severe that everyone made a vow to his patron Deity, if he should reach harbour safely. Dadbha's own vow seems to have been tempered by shrewd practicalness.

He had promised the lascars on the ship a feast at Albany,—the first land they touched,—and they had asked that part of the feast should be fresh meat. Dadbha gave them two guineas for two whole sheep: sheep in India in those days cost at the most about 2 to 3 Rupees. An Australian sheep is a very different animal to its Indian brother, as Dadbha was soon to find out, and its price, £5 each, was very different. On enquiring as to why the sheep cost so much, Dadbha was informed that there was only one herd in Albany, and that a very small one of hardly ninety-five thousand head !

AMUSING INCIDENTS

The *Dalhousie* survived the storm, and all vows, one presumes, were paid. The contingent reached Sydney, and landed about Christmas time. It went in procession to the Agricultural grounds where it was to encamp; and received a most enthusiastic reception. The streets of Sydney were lined by a populace whose cheers and welcome were perfectly genuine.

The procession was not without its amusing incidents. An exhilarated lady of mature proportions with an ecstatic cry of "Dear, dear Indian brothers!" made a dive at Dadbha, who dodged the wide-opened loving arms; but the following man—a very sedate Jemadar from Mysore—was not so fortunate. He found himself in the buxom lady's arms, and was rescued with difficulty, only by the intervention of an Australian sergeant.

He begged the enthusiastic lady: "Go easy. Didn't she see she was holding up the procession?" And, now, it was the turn of the British officers to find themselves of small account, actually neglected, in comparison to the hitherto despised Indians. The warm-hearted Australians poured into the Indian camp fascinated by the novelty of one and all: the Gurkhas, who decapitated their sheep with one blow of the curved

IN AUSTRALIA

"Kukri"; the Mahomedans, who prayed to Allah with no false modesty; the burly Sikhs, and the proud Rajputs.

On the 1st of January, 1901, Lord Hopetown became the first Governor-General of Australia. The swearing-in ceremony took place at a specially erected "pandal," with the Indian contingent in a specially prominent place. The heat was so intense, and the elaborate all-wool Indian uniform, specially prepared for the occasion, most unsuitable for the climate. The Gurkhas from Northern India were the chief sufferers. Their exhibition man, the Subadar Major Sirdar Bahadur Jangi Thapa, with his four rows of medals, suffered the most.

The ceremony over, the contingent was now free to accept of the hospitalities offered them so freely in public and private entertainments. It was in Sydney that Dadbha first met Sir William Lyons, then Premier of Sydney, and it was Sir William Lyons who arranged that Dadbha should visit Lord Hopetown.

Government House at the time of the contingent's visit presented a strange appearance, carefully surrounded by sheets of corrugated iron. This, Lord Hopetown told Dadbha, on the occasion of a visit, was to prevent the

LORD LAMINGTON

plague rats entering Government House from the ships in the harbour, some of which had plague on board.

Sir William was responsible for a good deal of Dadbha's happiness in Australia,—one of the most hospitable men, one could imagine,—and at his lunches, Dadbha must have met every notable of Sydney ; one of them was Dr. John Hay, whose farm Dadbha was to visit later.

The Colonies now wanted to see the Indian contingent. Colonel Paton was not able to give the required permission ; so the Colonies cabled to Lord Curzon to grant the permission. As soon as it was granted, the contingent sailed for Queensland.

Lord Lamington was a man of so genial a disposition that he was loved by one and all. As an incident of his kindliness of heart, it was he who arranged for Dadbha, on hearing that he was a bad sailor, to return from Brisbane to Sydney by rail in a specially reserved compartment. In those days each colony had its separate railway, and to emphasise this, each had a different gauge ; this difference was in many instances only a inch.

The inconvenience to travellers can well be imagined. It meant that Dadbha had to leave his comfortable compartment as soon

NANCE O'NEILL'S QUESTION

as he reached New South Wales' limit. Fortunately, the station-master at the terminus was an old ex-sergeant from India, so delighted to air his Hindustani, that sleeping accommodation for Dadbha was soon arranged.

Dadbha saw his first English drama in Sydney, when the famous actress Nance O'Neill was touring through Australia. Dadbha was sent for at the back of the scenes, where Nance O'Neill and a delighted chorus made him sit in the wings for the rest of the play, and specially played, no doubt to the wonder of the audience in the front, to the wings.

"Do tell us," asked Nance O'Neill, and the ladies of her gay company: "have Indians a different way of kissing, or do they kiss as we do?"

The answer is not recorded.

Dadbha spent a very happy time in Sydney, marred again by the inconsideration of Campbell, who, meeting Dadbha at the Melbourne Club, where he had been made a member, actually asked him to avoid coming there when Campbell was present. It is satisfactory to note that on the matter being referred to Colonel Paton, that officer gave little support to Campbell.

NEW ZEALAND

The South African War was on at the time, and Captain Chapman, the Camp Officer, had to leave with his men. As a happy contrast to the racial superiority just narrated, the Australian officer was personally anxious for the young Indian officer to stay with his wife and their two children, and look after them in his absence. Dadbha, with Colonel Paton's permission, readily acceded to his friend's request, and went to stay with the Chapmans.

Colonel Paton's support in the club incident gave Dadbha courage to continue with the contingent. He had seriously considered returning to India when the contingent sailed for New Zealand. Fortunately, for the complete record of the contingent's trip, he finally did accompany the contingent. And to the credit of the British officers it must be said that in New Zealand their attitude had completely changed with reference to Dadbha.

At Auckland, the first place of landing, there was a grand procession to the Domain, where the contingent camped. The visits were now more or less stereotyped, i.e., the usual scenes of wild enthusiasm for the Indians, the processions, the camps, and the streams of spectators. Major Jacky Hughes

THE GEYSERS

was the Camp Commander, and he proved another good friend to Dadbha.

At every big junction, even at dead of night, the stations were lined with an anxious waiting crowd : the contingent had to get out and parade. In the bitter cold of a New Zealand night, the warm uniforms, so useless in Australia, proved very useful. At these stations hospitable citizens filled the compartments with fruit, once more proving that, where warm hearts are concerned, racial differences cease to exist.

From Auckland the contingent went to Rotorua. At Rotorua, Sir William Lyons had cabled to Mr. Ingle, of the New Zealand Government, specially to look after Dadbha. It was Mr. Ingle who took Dadbha to see the geysers burst 200 feet up into the air, and pulled the unsuspecting Indian from the innocent-looking holes in the ground that were powerful geysers, after Mr. Ingle had made them play by placing in them a large quantity of soap.

From Rotorua to Taravida to see the ruins, and the volcano. Beautiful New Zealand was something never to be forgotten ; and the geysers and lakes of Rotorua sights of wonder.

The great drought of India had not left

A GREAT DROUGHT

Australia untouched. Twenty-three millions of sheep had died that year in Australia, only for want of water.

Dadbha met one of the largest of the Australian sheep owners, the MacAckeys, in Rotorua. Mr. and Miss MacAckey were anxious that Dadbha should visit their farm on his return to Australia. They had three million sheep on their farm, two thousand of which were sheared daily; and as labour was scarce, no sheep could be sheared more than once a year.

From Rotorua the contingent went to Napier, and from thence to Christ Church. At Christ Church both Dadbha and his friend Major Hughes stayed with the millionaire, Mr. Stead, whose house and farm were noted in New Zealand, combining as they did both luxury and good taste. They had their tea in the garden picking their own fruit from the trees and vines: pears, apples, and grapes in rich abundance; something never to be forgotten by the Indian officer.

The Mayor of the town at Napier had a Maori wife, with her face tatooed in true Maori style; but who spoke English fluently, and was highly cultured. Dadbha was introduced to both the Mayor and his wife, but not to the daughter, who stood by her parents'

GUEST OF THE PREMIER

side, one of the most beautiful girls in New Zealand.

The Mayoress, who came to hear of Dadbha's disappointment at not being introduced to her beautiful daughter, told him, with tears streaming down her cheeks, that that daughter was born deaf and dumb.

From Christ Church the contingent went to Dunedeen and thence to Invakaghill. From Invakaghill the contingent went to Wellington, where Dadbha was the guest of Mr. Sedan, the Prime Minister. Sedan had been re-elected two or three times then; and was likely still to remain in power. An amusing incident in this connection occurred at a picnic given by a prominent citizen.

This citizen was very much anti-Sedan; but the fact remained that he had voted for Sedan, regularly, every time. The matter was freely discussed at the picnic. Sedan's explanation was that he had a wife and seven daughters all with the power to vote. This was in 1901 remember. Not only did they vote regularly for Mr. Sedan, but the solitary man of the family simply dared not do otherwise. He told the story himself before his smiling womenfolk.

From Wellington the contingent went on to Hobart, Tasmania, and thence returned to

BUYING A PISTOL

Melbourne. Dadbha went by a private steamer *Koosie*. But the fate of being a bad sailor pursued him there; and after the first few hours, the beautiful scenery was entirely lost for him, the only thing remaining to be appreciated was the intense kindness and consideration of his fellow-passengers.

In Melbourne Dadbha stayed at Menzies' Hotel, and went for his first trip on a torpedo-boat with Mr. and Mrs. Menzies and Sir Rupert Clarke. The boat went at a speed of 42 knots an hour, so quickly that it had no time to roll; and this was the first boat on which Dadbha ever enjoyed a sea-trip!

A rather funny incident took place in Melbourne when Dadbha, for the first time, saw a Mauser pistol,—and very surprised was he to see a pistol that carried a thousand yards!

He asked the shop-keeper to show him how the pistol was assembled; but the shop-keeper said that this tuition alone was worth £5, and unless Dadbha was prepared to buy the pistol, which the shop-keeper priced at £10, he did not propose to take the tremendous amount of trouble involved in the process.

Dadbha agreed to buy the pistol, and the shop-keeper took it to pieces. Dadbha, sur-

SCIENTIFIC INGENUITY

prised, asked the shop-keeper why he considered this so tremendous a task.

"Well," said the shop-keeper, nettled no doubt, "if you put it together again, I'll give you the gun for £5."

Dadbha carefully reassembled the Mauser.

"Well, I'm blest," said the shop-keeper. "Look here. Now you take it to pieces, and put it together; and I'll give you 200 cartridges, or we'll call it quits."

Dadbha took the pistol to pieces, and then put it together.

"You've been working in an arsenal," said the disappointed shop-keeper, which, of course, was not true.

That was the cheapest Mauser Dadbha ever bought.

By way of parenthesis, the Thakore Sahib, even to-day, has the gift of observation extraordinarily developed. No puzzle can for long hide its secret, and however intricate a piece of machinery may be, it is not too intricate for him to know the parts thoroughly after the most cursory examination.

Once, in recent days, whilst visiting the Kolar Goldfields, and watching the numerous processes, he casually suggested a certain method by which more gold could be extracted.

A GREAT FARM

The manager looked up. "Are you an expert, Raja Sahib? You know something of gold-mines."

"No, I noticed a defect, and thought this might remedy it."

"You are quite right, sir," said the manager, earnestly. "That is the defect all right; and the method you mention is the right one also, and only after long experiments we've just got it, and have sent for it from Europe."

On his return to Sydney, Dadbha, remembering his old promise to Dr. Hay, went by special, arranged by Dr. John Hay, to visit his farm at Kooranghata. This wonderful farm was an inheritance from Dr. Hay's old master Berry. The extent of the farm and its activities may be judged by its output: 18,000 pounds of butter and 1,500 tins of condensed milk daily—condensed milk was then quite a new process.

Dadbha's kind host took much trouble in showing all the various processes of butter-making. The butter was pressed and rolled by special machinery, salted by hand sprinkling by an expert, and it was the first occasion that Dadbha had of seeing anything of this kind.

Dr. John Hay further greatly endeared

A GREAT HUMANITARIAN

himself to his Hindu friend by assuring him that not a single one of his cows had ever gone to a butcher. When they grew too old for milking, they were turned out into a field, and allowed to live happily till their death.

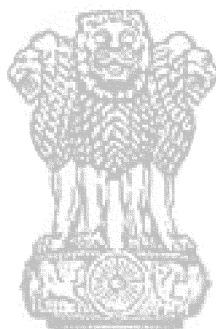
This consideration by one who had no religious fetish, but was merely a great humanitarian, made a tremendous effect on the Indian officer, who knew that in his own country, more often than not, it was a Hindu Patel who sold his old cows to the butchers.

When Dadbha became Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, one of the first laws he promulgated related to the prohibition of the export of cows from his own territory, and he often remembered the Berry Farm and Dr. John Hay.

The visit to Australia was now coming to a close. Soon the contingent was back on the *Dalhousie*, working its way by the North of Australia to Port Kennedy, where Dadbha visited the black pearl fisheries. There was a volcano in eruption in the Torres Straits, a most awesome sight, that made Captain Pofart extremely nervous, and with good cause too, for the first news the *Dalhousie* received at Colombo was that six steamers

AN ERUPTION

following the *Dalhousie* had been lost, and 300 country craft ; some of the old islands had been submerged, and a new island had appeared, making many differences on the seaman's chart.



सत्यमेव जयते

CHAPTER V

IN 1902 Dadbha was again on manœuvres, this time between Amballa and Delhi. He was one of the four gallopers to General Mason. That fine old General recorded his unstinted praise for the Jamnagar Commander, and specially noted the punctuality which brought this galloper invariably first at the General's tent in the small hours of the winter mornings. "I have never known this officer a minute late," wrote the General.

Lord Kitchener was chief umpire at the manœuvres. One who knew Kitchener intimately once spoke of him to the writer as a man with the softest-looking eyes he had ever seen, and the hardest heart. K. of K., riding through the first camp of 1902, marked two things with those "soft" keen eyes of his: that every officer had a tent, that private soldiers were in charge of herds of sheep and goats to supply the army with fresh meat and fresh milk.

Lord Kitchener was reported to have

wondered whether he had accidentally stumbled on a picnic instead of an army supposed to be at war. In that first day's Army orders, all officers, except the Brigadier-General and foreign officers, were ordered to sleep under their waterproofs on the ground, and the sheep and goats were to be disbanded immediately.

Lord Curzon's brilliant Durbar was due to take place, and the manœuvres were to finish at Delhi, where the troops would take their part in the proceedings. The Ruling Princes of India had already arrived in Delhi, and the place presented an animated scene, a pageant of pomp and splendour. Amongst the Ruling Princes was the Thakore Sahib Sir Jaswant Singh of Limbdi, the Prince who had always thought of Dadbha as his future heir. It was this Prince who always called Dadbha by his full name, Daulat Singh.

General Bitson, then Inspector-General of all India Imperial Lancers, acceded to the wishes of the Thakore Sahib in allowing Daulat Singh to stay with him at the Prince's camp.

An interesting incident bearing on Daulat Singh's future took place at Delhi, when Lord Northcote, Governor of Bombay, was to return the calls of the Princes of his Province *en masse*. The Maharaja of Kolhapur's tent

THE HEIR-APPARENT

was chosen for the occasion, and as want of room was a serious problem, only Princes and their heirs-apparent were asked to be present. The Thakore Sahib asked Daulat Singh to accompany him to the Durbar ; and the Dewan Sahib of Limbdi, Mr. Javerbhai, noting this, and thinking that the Thakore Sahib had not properly read the circular, drew his attention to the salient fact that only heirs-apparent were permitted in the Durbar. The Thakore Sahib replied that Daulat Singh accompanied him in that capacity. This news was not quite unexpected ; but it was certainly the first time that it had been discussed in this open way before officials.

The Thakore Sahib wanted Daulat Singh's help in his administrative work, and was eager to have him at Limbdi. Daulat Singh, not yet sufficiently sure of his powers in this direction, hesitated at accepting this kind offer. Besides, he was genuinely attached to his own Lancers. But Fate was to make Daulat Singh leave his beloved Lancers after all.

Captain Forbes, a great link, had been replaced by Captain Paton, a great soldier, and then Captain Talbot—the wrong man for the time and the place, who could not stem the intrigue of an Indian Court.

INTRIGUE

The Jam Jasubha was in the hands of fresh favourites, and had married the sister of one of them ; it was for her brother that Jam Jasubha wanted the Command of his Lancers.

On his return to Jamnagar, Daulat Singh soon became aware of the intrigue that looked in vain for some fault to condemn and replace the Commander who had done so much for the Lancers of Jamnagar. The proud Rajput Commander went to Jam Jasubha, surrounded by his courtiers, and handed in his resignation in person. He frankly told the Jam Sahib that he need not have stooped to this intrigue. Had he expressed the wish to Daulat Singh himself, he would willingly have given his resignation. The matter ended there. Jasubha, ashamed, made no reply.

Daulat Singh left Jamnagar the same night, allowing his cousin no chance to repent. He went to Porbandar as Sena-di-Pati (Commander-in-Chief), fulfilling an old promise to his friend the Rana Sahib that if ever he left Jamnagar he would come first to Porbandar.

CHAPTER VI

WHEN Daulat Singh went to Porbandar in 1903 the place was in an unsettled state. The late ruler, Rana Vikram Singh, had been deposed by the British Government for maladministration.

This extraordinary man, a miser, living in the meanest possible manner, obstinately refused to allow his grandson, Bhav Singhji, then a student at the Rajkumar College, Rajkot, to be called Ruler of Porbandar, whilst he, Vikram Singh, lived. Government humoured him in this, which was hardly to Bhav Singh's advantage, either as a boy or future ruler. Two British Administrators were appointed, Sir Frederick Lailey, and afterwards, Mr. Morrison. Both brought some kind of order out of the chaos created by Vikram Singh.

When Bhav Singhji did come to the throne, he was no longer young, and his irresponsible life, with wrong companions, had made Government uncertain of his abilities ; it had therefore, to put in its own man, Mr. Manilal, as Dewan.

A 'SENA-DI-PATI'

Daulat Singh stayed with Manilal; the two were friends from Jamnagar, which in the light of future events was fortunate. The Rana Sahib, fond of Daulat Singh, and eager to have his advice in administrative matters, invariably insisted on his presence when the Dewan Sahib came with important State papers. Bhav Singhji followed Daulat Singh's advice implicitly, and sometimes took it in preference to that of the Dewan.

On one of these occasions, Manilal suggested to Daulat Singh the anomaly of having a "Sena-di-Pati," who was doing the Dewan's work instead of the Dewan. Daulat Singh, anxious though he was to please the Rana Sahib, quite saw Manilal's point of view, and did not like hurting him; and when Manilal passed an order in the interests of the police department, which was also under Daulat Singh, that he spend three weeks in the districts and only one in the capital, he made no demur. The Rana Sahib, however, was furious at Daulat Singh's absence, and learning of the facts, tore up the Dewan's order.

Manilal was no less annoyed at the scant courtesy paid to his order. He told Daulat Singh that, legally, the Rana Sahib had no power to cancel the Dewan's order, as he—

THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY

the Rana—was on the throne with limited power, actually eleven restrictions, and one restriction was that very one with respect to interfering with the Dewan's order. In other words, the Dewan was the highest authority in Porbandar.

Daulat Singh felt very sorry for the anomalous position of Bhav Singhji, who was a Raja, and yet not one, at the same time. Daulat Singh suggested that the restrictions should be removed, but Manilal did not agree. He pointed out, with some degree of justice, that these restrictions were the only protection for officers of his and Daulat Singh's standing against any unscrupulous favourites of the Rana.

Still, Daulat Singh was determined to help Bhav Singhji gain full powers, and advised him to write to Colonel Kennedy, who had now become the first Agent to the Governor at Rajkot. Daulat Singh himself took the letter, and gained for the Rana Sahib a sympathetic hearing.

Kennedy, in his answer, whilst admitting the satisfactory nature of Bhav Singhji's reign up till then, taking into consideration the shortness of the time he was on the "gadi," suggested that matters had better remain as they were, at least for a period.

SIR CLAUDE HILL

Here was a definite advance, i.e., the admittance of the satisfactory nature of Bhav Singhji's rule, afterwards to be a determining factor for Daulat Singh's project.

After some months had passed, Daulat Singh once more advised the Rana Sahib not only to write again, but to enlist the help of the late Thakore Sahib Sir Vaghji of Morvi, who was also the Rana Sahib's brother-in-law. Naturally enough the Morvi Durbar was anxious to have his brother-in-law's status improved, and agreed to help, stipulating, however, that Bhav Singhji should keep a Dewan of the Thakore Sahib of Morvi's own selection. This was very easy for Rana Bhav Singhji to promise.

Mr. Claude Hill—afterwards Sir Claude Hill, and now Governor of the Isle of Man—was then Political Secretary to Lord Northcote. Daulat Singh went to Poona with the Rana Sahib and the Thakore Sahib of Morvi to see the Governor, and Bhav Singhji's case came before him and was decided, shortly afterwards, in the Rana Sahib's favour. Thakore Sahib Sir Vaghji's own man, Mr. Morarji, came to Porbandar as Dewan; but as the Rana Sahib wanted a Dewan of his own selection, Mr. Morarji had no chance to be popular; he resigned shortly afterwards.

PORBANDAR A FREE PORT

Daulat Singh next helped Porbandar to become a free port. Mr. Fitzgerald, C.S.I., was now Agent to the Governor, a strong, rather unique personality, a terror to all his subordinates, and a greater one to all intriguers, and weaklings.

At that time Bhavnagar was a free port ; and the tariff both there and at Bombay was equal—about 7 per cent. Porbandar, whose trade had greatly diminished since Bhavnagar had become a free port, was fighting for its very existence. The village Chaya, two miles from Porbandar Port, sent its goods 200 miles by rail to Bhavnagar to secure the advantages of the free customs to Bombay ; Porbandar lowered its tariff to 5 per cent. in an endeavour to get back some of its lost trade.

Mr. Fitzgerald, who had known Daulat Singh since '92, had drawn up an agreement by which Porbandar must not only conform to the 7 per cent. tariff, but a Government Port officer should be borrowed to manage the port. Daulat Singh advised the Rana Sahib to stand out for a free port and equal tariff.

Mr. Fitzgerald, who had expected an ally in Daulat Singh, was very irritated. Daulat Singh pointed out to the Agent to the Governor that he could not conscientiously

THE AGA KHAN

advise his Durbar on a course of action that was detrimental to the interests of the State, even if that advice was detrimental to Daulat Singh's own interests. At best he could resign, if, by doing so, Mr. Fitzgerald would be assured of the sincerity of their old friendship. Daulat Singh could do nothing more.

Long was the battle: interests of the paramount power against the interests of a small State, and only one real fighter for Porbandar, Daulat Singh; no other person dare face that old lion, Mr. Fitzgerald. But Mr. Fitzgerald was the right man to appreciate loyal, disinterested service in its true light, and Porbandar finally won its free port.

Daulat Singh made two new friends in Porbandar—His Highness the present Aga Khan, and the late Nawab Sahib of Palanpur.

The Western world has hardly realised the enormous prestige the Aga Khan holds amongst his followers. Not only is he a prince, but the spiritual head of the Khojas. Actually even the spittle of the Aga Khan is held sacred. The writer remembers in the days of the Great War, when things were at their gloomiest for the Allied forces, one of an assembly of Indian ladies venturing to dilate

A GREAT LITTLE MAN

on the possibility of England's defeat,—a Khoja lady jumped up and in ringing accents cried :

“ Never ; do not say so ; it is blasphemy.”

“ Why blasphemy ? ” asked several ladies in surprise.

“ Because our Aga Sahib—our Pir—our Imam is on the side of the British,” said the Khoja lady, “ therefore the British *must* win.”

The Aga Khan is a winning personality, a sincere friend, and a prince of culture. His mother, Lady Ali Shah, is a powerful personality, tall, magnificently built, with a rich organ-voice like a man's. She counts Daulat Singh as another son, and he loves and respects her like his own mother.

The late Nawab Sahib Sher Muhammed Khan of Palanpur loved Daulat Singh with a love that lasted till the Nawab's death. A little, frail man, despite his big heart, it is hard to realise that he had so tall and stalwart sons as the present Nawab Sahib Taleh Mahomed Khanji, recently representing India on the League of Nations, and the late Nawabzaba Tava Hussain Khan. The late Nawab Sahib often came to Limbdi, after Daulat Singh became Thakore Sahib ; and many were the anecdotes the Nawab Sahib

YARU BHAI

told of a certain Fakir in the neighbourhood of Palanpur, for whom he had the greatest respect.

The strangest of them all referred to the marriage of his youngest son, Yaru Bhai. The Nawab Sahib would never allow Yaru Bhai to marry, saying that the Fakir had told him—the Nawab Sahib—that Yaru Bhai would die a month after the marriage. When Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan died, Yaru Bhai was thirty-one years of age, and still unmarried. The Nawabzada was anxious to marry, and as little credence was given to what was considered a mere superstition, fostered by the Fakir, of the late Nawab Sahib, regarding Yaru Bhai's certain death in the event of marriage, a suitable bride was chosen, and the marriage took place. Strangely and sadly enough, Yaru Bhai died exactly one month to the very day after his marriage. Fortunately for the consolation of the bride of one month, God had given a child which was born in due course to its bereaved mother. It was in Porbandar, also, that the friendship with that grand old man Sir Prabhashankar Pattani grew apace: and thirty years have passed over the friendship, leaving it more firmly cemented.

CHAPTER VII

IN 1904 Daulat Singh accompanied the Rana Sahib of Porbandar to Bombay to meet His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, our present King George. At the Apollo Bunder, waiting for the Prince to alight, Daulat Singh met the old Nawab Rasul Khanji of Junagadh, who had been one of those rulers anxious to have Daulat Singh in his State. The old Prince always wore rings on every finger, thumbs as well. These rings often vanished in a day, distributed by the generous Nawab to favoured friends.

Catching sight of Daulat Singh, the warm-hearted Nawab came up, and in grim quasi-serious tones enquired if Porbandar had grown larger than Junagadh, since Daulat Singh preferred to stay in the former State. Daulat Singh protested, of course, "No," it was only that he had promised the Rana Sahib Bhav Singhji first of all. Off came three of Rasul Khanji's rings, and despite all remonstrances, one went on Daulat Singh's

THE PRINCE OF WALES

finger, and is still a treasured and valuable memento of a man whose type is fast disappearing from India.

The Rana Sahib paid a formal visit to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who returned it in due course. The return visit took place in Shanti Bhuvan, a house in Pedder Road, Malabar Hill, belonging to the late Mr. Narotam Morarji, who recently met his death in such tragic circumstances, accidentally falling from Tiger's Leap near Lonavala. This visit had an interesting sequel, illustrating the wonderful memory of the Prince.

Certain details essential to the sequel are narrated here. The curtains of the lovely Indian Drawing-room in Pedder Road were completely Indian, made in a special way peculiar to India alone. The cloth used is made by special workers, who grow a very long forefinger and thumb nail to assist them in tying little raised knots in a fixed pattern on Indian silk. The completed silk is dipped in various dyes, the tied portions remaining in the original colour of the silk in the form of small rings. The tied threads are gently pulled away, and the whole has a soft crêpe-like effect. The work takes a great deal of time and patience, and is therefore very expensive.

ROSE-WATER AND THE "PAN"

The Royal Prince was greatly struck with these curtains. At the time of his departure, the usual garlanding, the sprinkling of rose-water and the giving of "pan" (betel leaf) took place. This "pan," on very ceremonial occasions, is covered with gold leaf affixed by honey. The honey on the "pan" obviously bothered the Prince of Wales a good deal, and Daulat Singh quickly relieved the grateful Prince of the sticky mess. The sequel will be referred to in its proper place.

Daulat Singh also met the Thakore Sahib Sir Jaswant Singh of Limbdi in Bombay, who was very unwilling that Daulat Singh should remain on at Porbandar. The conservative Limbdi Prince feared that the easy-going life of Porbandar might prove detrimental to one who might one day rule in Limbdi.

The Rana's health was very unsatisfactory at this time. He had diabetes and violent neuralgia, and the local doctor had advised the entire removal of his teeth. Daulat Singh, fearing lest the diabetic tendency might have an unfavourable reaction, decided not to allow the Rana Sahib to have his teeth out without a specialist's advice. Several doctors assembled, and one of them, Dr. Meyer, found that the Rana Sahib was in

PHTHISIS

the first stage of phthisis. This was shocking news to Daulat Singh.

The Thakore Sahib Jaswant Singh's own health was not satisfactory either. He had never quite recovered from the shock of part of his palace being accidentally burnt down ; from which he, and his last surviving Rani, had to escape at night in their night-clothes. The memory of the magnificent Limbdi library, with its wonderful old Sanskrit manuscripts, would invariably bring tears to the Prince's eyes.

But for Dr. Meyer's terrible diagnosis, Daulat Singh must have left Porbandar to stay with his foster-father. But the new and terrible need of Bhav Singhji made Daulat Singh's presence necessary at Porbandar. Dr. Meyer had said that if his treatment were carried out minutely, the disease could be arrested indefinitely.

Daulat Singh hardly left the Rana's side, fearing always, lest the irregular habits of Bhav Singhji might mar the effect of Dr. Meyer's medicine. This medicine Daulat Singh always administered with his own hands. Night and day Daulat Singh, on his part, watched over the Rana Sahib, and Dr. Meyer, examining the Prince a year later, was astonished to find that the small patch over

SAD NEWS

the lungs had not advanced, and was exactly the same. Dr. Meyer frankly put this down to the tender, unremitting care of Daulat Singh.

Meanwhile, the late Thakore Sahib of Limbdi's health grew worse, and it was decided that he should spend the hot Kathiawar summer at Mahableshtar. He chose this place ostensibly for his health, but really to see the Governor, and settle about the adoption of Daulat Singh, who was to join the Thakore Sahib later at Mahableshtar. But at Bombay the Thakore Sahib fell seriously ill, and wired for Daulat Singh to come immediately to Mahableshtar, to which place the Thakore Sahib, under doctor's advice, proceeded the same night.

Daulat Singh left Porbandar immediately on receipt of the wire with Doctors Meyer and Rao. But at Bombay he was met with the shocking news that his beloved foster-father had died on the 15th April, 1907, of heart failure, the very day he had arrived in Mahableshtar.

With the late Thakore Sahib were his old friend, the late Thakore Sahib Karan Singh of Lakhtar; Thakore Sahib Sir Jaswant Singh's Private Secretary, Mr. Vrajlal; and Mr. Megubhai; and to these three the Limbdi

THE LATE THAKORE SAHIB

Durbar had given out his last wishes regarding Daulat Singh's succession as heir to the Limbdi "gadi," asking them to carry them in person to Mr. Queen, the Political Secretary to the Governor. For the time being there was administration in Limbdi under that genial, lovable officer, Colonel Wodehouse.

The last wishes of the late Thakore Sahib were, however, respected by the Government of India, and after the necessary formalities were over, the Government placed Daulat Singh on the Limbdi "gadi." The late Thakore Sahib was burnt near the old Mahableshtar temple. In his memory, his foster-son rebuilt the "khund"—tank—and the cremation place, that were in a very dilapidated state, made the Thakore Sahib "Sir Jaswant Singh Walk;" and built the operating theatre of the Mahableshtar Hospital.

CHAPTER VIII

DAULAT SINGH, who must now be known by his proper title Thakore Sahib, was installed on the " Gadi " of Limbdi on the 14th April, 1908. His old friend, Mr. Fitzgerald, was still the Agent to the Governor, and it was he who performed the ceremony of formally placing the Thakore Sahib on the " Gadi " of his forefathers. A number of guests were present, and Mr. Fitzgerald's speech, which was extremely interesting, was carefully followed.

" The Limbdi House," said Mr. Fitzgerald, " was founded by Manguji, one of the sons of Harpal who, coming from Karanti in Marwar, first led the Jhalas into Kathiawar in the ninth century. Manguji established himself at Jambu in A.D. 854, and the subsequent history of the family is one long record of warlike efforts and gallant deeds.

" You, Thakore Sahib, are a direct descendant of the famous Khetoji, whose marriage with the affianced bride of Godhar Vaghela of Sardha was the cause of the long war



THE THAKORE SAHIB OF LIMBDI AT 10 YEARS OF AGE.

MR. FITZGERALD'S SPEECH

between your ancestors and the Vaghelas : a war which so nearly annihilated this State. Khetoji was killed at the battle of Kundni in about the year 1486 ; and for a long period after that, the fate of the family, of which you now become the head, hung in the balance.

“ To a certain extent the fortunes of your house were retrieved by the gallant Sanghoji, who was a younger brother of your ancestor Bhanji, but who appears to have been selected leader by all Khetoji's sons when Khetoji died, partly because the eldest son Nagji was physically incapable of leading them, and partly, no doubt, because Sanghoji from boyhood had been his father's constant companion ; and had learnt the art of war under him. The fortunes of your house were at that time desperate ; but Sanghoji recovered Jambu from the Mahomedans, and later Kundni was recovered.

“ For a long period the State was ruled from one or other of these places till Harbhamji the First, on ascending the ‘ gadi,’ fixed his capital here at Limbdi, where it has ever since remained. The Limbdi family is thus amongst the most ancient in the world, and you have glorious traditions to sustain and guide you in the career to which you are now about to enter.

GREAT SERVICES

“ You, yourself, have had to my mind an excellent training for the position you are now called upon to fill. Educated, and in a great measure brought up at Jamnagar under the eye of your first cousin, the late Jam Vibhaji, you were entrusted by that Chief with the Command of the Jamnagar Imperial Service Lancers, *which you practically raised, organised and trained*, and of which you remained in command for thirteen years.

“ During that time, and even after it, you were attached to various British cavalry regiments, both native and European, for training, and invariably won the good opinion of the various Commanding Officers under whom you served.

“ That distinguished soldier, the late Colonel Chisholm, Commanding the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, I know, formed the very highest opinion of your qualities as an officer and of your personal character, and recorded of you that you were a ‘splendid officer.’

“ While attached to the Imperial Service troops, you visited Australia and New Zealand, and since leaving them, you have gained much administrative experience in Porbandar and elsewhere. Your record has been uniformly excellent, and the varied experience

NO EASY TASK

that you have gained, combined with the strict sense of discipline and habit of command which your military training has given you, should be of the greatest advantage to you as a ruler.

“ You will have no easy task ; for the responsibilities of a Ruling Chief are great, and the temptations many ; but I have every confidence, from my long knowledge of your character, that you will discharge your responsibility with wisdom, that you will rule justly, and that the people of the State will enjoy to the full all the benefits of an enlightened and progressive administration.

“ Thakore Sahib, your accession has been hailed with delight by the people of your State who know you, and have endorsed the wishes of their late Ruler. You have received the warmest telegrams of congratulations from most of the Chiefs of Kathiawar, including your brother Jhala Chiefs of Vankaner, Chuda, and Sayla, and from Chiefs and friends in more distant parts of India.

“ This assembly testifies to your popularity, and the hearty good wishes with which you start on your career as a ruler. We all hope that you may have a long life and a prosperous reign, and that in the exercise of your high

LOYALTY TO THE KING

powers you may ever receive the help and guidance of God."

The Agent to the Governor, after his speech, conducted the Thakore Sahib to his "gadi," and having seated him thereon, presented to him a "kharita" from the Governor of Bombay. A salute of nine guns was fired, during which Captain Coghill, the Political Agent, Jhalawad, delivered to the Thakore Sahib the seal of the State and the key of the Treasury.

The Thakore Sahib made a suitable reply, reaffirming his loyalty and affection to the British Government and the person and throne of the King-Emperor.

An auspicious time had been fixed for the religious ceremony of adoption. This occurred on the 6th May, 1908, when the Dowager Rani Sahib of Limbdi—Bama Sahib—adopted the Thakore Sahib as her son in accordance with the Hindu scriptures. The next day the Hindu religious rites of accession to the "gadi" were performed by the priests. At this ritual, the highest priest of the Goswami Sect at Nath-Dwara—Tika yat—was present.

It was not to be expected, however, that the sudden accession to the "gadi" of Limbdi would be an occasion of joy to

TALSANA'S CLAIM

everyone. The largest "bhayat" of Limbdi—under Agency jurisdiction—is the Durbar of Talsana, and K. S. Harbhamji of Morvi was in Talsana's favour. Talsana's claim to the Limbdi "gadi" had already been made; but had been rejected by the Government of India. Talsana's appeal was also rejected; a Government Press note was made on the subject :

" The wishes of the late Thakore Sahib and his widow were before Government in such a form as to be beyond question. The late Chief has placed on record in his own handwriting his desire to be succeeded by the collateral who was eventually selected. The document, though falling short of a regular adoption, constituted in the eyes of the Government so clear an indication of the late Chief's intention, that in the absence of any valid objection to the person named, Government felt bound to respect these intentions. When a deceased Chief leaves no direct issue, the claim of an adopted son is greater than that of any other, and in the present case His Excellency the Governor in Council, in the exercise of his jurisdiction of selection amongst collaterals, accorded due weight to the evident intention to adopt—an intention which, so far as can be ascertained—only failed of being carried into effect by reason of

THE DIFFICULTY SETTLED

fortuitous circumstances. The main object of Government in making the selection of a successor to a Ruling Chief is to assure, as far as possible, the welfare of the State which is to be committed to his charge. The personal fitness of the person selected is, therefore, a consideration of the greatest importance, and one which in the present case was accorded the fullest attention."

This was, of course, the end of all further outside interference in Talsana's favour.

As the Dowager Rani Sahib—Bama Sahib—was very anxious to make a pilgrimage to the sacred places of the Hindus, the Thakore Sahib made all the necessary arrangements, and the party, consisting of the Thakore Sahib, the Dowager Rani Sahib, the widow of the late Thakore Sahib's brother Hiraba of Belur, the Thakore Sahib's own Rani Saheb, and their two daughters, Kumari Sahib Rupaliba (now Maharani of Porbandar) and Kumari Sahib Pratapba, youngest child of all, left for Benares. The Thakore Sahib's sons were at Rajkumar College, Rajkot. Next to the heir-apparent came in succession K. S. Pratapsingh, K. S. Futteh Singh, K. S. Ghanshyam Singh.

The Thakore Sahib, on returning to Limbdi, went to Rajkot to see his sons. It was here

PROPOSAL OF BETROTHAL

that Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh of Idar approached the Thakore Sahib with the proposal that he should betroth his heir, Digvijaya Singh, to Nandkunverba, daughter of the late Maharaja Keshari Singh of Idar. This early betrothal was hardly to the Thakore Sahib's taste, and he refused for the time being. The Yuvaraj Digvijaya Singh was only fourteen, whilst the Kumari Sahib of Idar was barely thirteen.

Of course, this hesitation only fired Sir Pratap's determination. No stone was left unturned, no words left unsaid, to achieve the wished-for marriage. Socially, too, the match was an important one for Limbdi. Idar was a cadet of the Jodhpur House. A Rathod Maharaja's daughter coming to the son of a Thakore Sahib was an unusual honour.

Kumari Shri Nandkunverba's maternal uncle, the Thakore of Mundeti, had been the first to reproach Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh for giving Maharaja Keshari Singh's daughter to the son of a mere Thakore Sahib, when Maharaja Keshari Singh's sister had been given to the Maharaja of Udaipur, the premier Rajput Prince of India.

Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh asked the Thakor of Mundeti himself to procure a

MARRIAGE OF DIGVIJAYA SINGH

better place, or a more suitable match, adding that he gave his niece to the one place where she stood the chance of gaining the most happiness.

The Thakore Sahib of Limbdi finally consented to the betrothal, stipulating, however, that the marriage should not take place before his son had returned from Eton. Sir Pratap gave the required promise in the February of 1910, with no intention of keeping it, as subsequent events fully proved.

He gave out that his death was near, and he must see his niece settled before he died. The dear old man, happily, was to live many years after the marriage; but this belief in his approaching death gained him his point, and the marriage was fixed for the 20th May. Not even the sad death of the Emperor King Edward VII made Sir Pratap Singh consent to a change in the date. The marriage, of course, had to take place very quietly. All the British officials who were to come were unable to be present.

There are three children from this marriage—Kumar Sahib Ram Rajendra Singh—Tikka Sahib—who was betrothed on the 25th November, 1929, to Kumari Shri Giri Raj Kumari, daughter of His Highness, the Maharaja of Tehri; Kumari Sahib Prem



YUVARAJ DIGVIJAYA SINGH.

Aged 14, in wedding-dress.

THE NEW TEACHING

Kunverba—Baijilal ; and Dharamendra Kunverba—Baba Sahib.

Limbdi is the "gadi" of the two sects of Jains. It was the great Ajaramalji who founded the "gadi" of the reformed Jain sect in Limbdi in the middle of the seventeenth century. The reformed Jain sect came into existence in the Vikram era, 1531, in Ahmedabad, gaining force through the Reformer Lonkashah, a contemporary of Luther in Europe, a Kshatriya by caste, and a banker. He was so excellent a scribe that a Sadhu named Guan Rishi asked him to copy for him some of the old Jain scriptures. Lonkashah readily complied with this request ; and copying these old manuscripts he had the occasion to read and thoroughly assimilate the old texts and commentaries.

Lonkashah soon proclaimed his own interpretation of the text, and the movement started by him gathered strength. He himself was too old to become a Sadhu, but succeeded in forming a group of forty-five new Sadhus, who accepted his version of the Jain texts. This group was named after him, and is designated "Lonka gachha" to this day.

The new teaching spread over Kathiawar, Gujarat, Malwa, Kutch, and surrounding

THE JAINS

districts. It discarded image-worship, and did away with all external rites and ceremonies, laying stress on the ~~inner~~ "sadhana," which is the heart of Jainism. The disciplinary side of the Sadhus' life was very much emphasised, and all laxity or compromise came to an end.

From this sect came the remarkable Sadhu Dharmadaya in the Samvat year 1716—A.D. 1660. He made ninety-nine disciples, and it was from this line of Sadhus that the Great Ajaramalji, who founded the "gadi" (seat) at Limbdi of the Sthanakwasi order of Jain Sadhus came, being in many respects the most remarkable man of his age. He was born in 1753 in the village of Padana near Jamnagar, the only child of a widowed mother, who took initiation at the same time with her son in 1763. Many anecdotes are still prevalent about the greatness of Ajaramalji, and the miraculous powers he possessed. He breathed his last in 1834 on the first day of the dark half of Shravan at Limbdi, where he had spent the last five years of his life, no longer able to travel.

The fact of Limbdi being the Jain "gadi" makes the Thakore Sahib of Limbdi one of the most important Princes over the Jains of this sect, and in deference to the wishes of

THE LEAD IN REFORMS

so important a section of his subjects, the Thakore Sahib, shortly after ascending the "gadi," forbade killing in his State on all the holy days of the year, and the whole of the Hindu sacred month of Shravan.

The Hindu community of Bombay, under the presidentship of Sir Har Kishan Dass, gave the Thakore Sahib a congratulatory address of thanks, and later on, when the Thakore Sahib forbade the export of cows from his territory, the leading Jhalawadi Jain Sabha of Bombay, under the presidentship of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ganpat Sadashiv Rao, gave him a second address of thanks in a silver casket.

The Thakore Sahib's example in these matters has since been followed by other devout Hindu princes: but, like so many other of the reforms he has introduced, it was Limbdi, under his guidance, that first initiated them and the other States that followed his example.

CHAPTER 1X

THE Coronation Durbar of His Majesty the King-Emperor was to take place on the 27th November, 1911, and the Thakore Sahib went to Delhi to be present on the occasion. All the Princes were on the station when His Majesty alighted at a specially arranged station in the ancient Delhi Fort.

The Maharana of Oodeypore, that grand old man who died in 1930, had been appointed Chief-in-Waiting to His Majesty, and walked behind the King. Most people, in the political world, know how definitely Oodeypore refuses to sit under Hyderabad, but with what tact the matter was handled is not so open a secret.

The story goes about one of the Maharanas of Oodeypore that, when His Majesty King Edward—as Prince of Wales—came to India, the same old Oodeypore question came up in all its old trouble. The Maharana of those days wanted to meet His Royal Highness ;

AT OODEYPORE

but refused to be presented to him after the Nizam, and in this instance, not even the Nizam, but Sir Salar Jung, as Hyderabad's representative. The tact of the Resident—an old class-mate of King Edward's—of Oodeypore, and the greater tact of His Majesty King Edward VII, the great peace-maker, averted a scene.

In Oodeypore there are two special Houses of Parliament, called the Sol—Batri (House of Lords—House of Commons), composed of sixteen of the highest Rajput Amirs and thirty-two of other Rajput Amirs. These parliaments were formed for two purposes: one to give protection to all orthodox Rajputs, who were unable to withstand the pressure that might force their daughters to marry the Mussulman, the Jodhpur precedent pressing them very hard as well; the other to serve as a guide to the Raja as regards public opinion in matters relating to the constitution, or the honour of the State.

The Maharana of Oodeypore always allowed himself to be guided by his "Sol-Batri," and these parliaments would not agree to the Maharana being presented after Sir Salar Jung.

On the other hand, the wise Resident of Oodeypore saw how necessary it was that the

THE PRINCE'S TACT

Premier Rajput Prince of India should meet the Prince of Wales. The Resident persuaded the late Maharana to accompany him to Bombay incognito, assuring him that there would be no lowering of his prestige.

The Maharana accompanied the Resident ; but Government House was adamant as regards allowing the Maharana to be presented before the representative of Hyderabad. The Resident was in despair ; he sent in his card to the Prince of Wales before His Royal Highness came on shore, was received by his old class-mate, and given a sympathetic hearing ; the Royal Prince solved the difficulty, as usual, by that wonderful tact for which he was famous.

The Prince of Wales sent for the Maharana and met him, not on the Bunder at all, but on the ship, the Maharana leaving Bombay immediately afterwards by special. It was to avoid something similar that the present Maharana attended as Chief-in-Waiting to His Majesty.

The Maharana is a devotee of Mahadeva, and calls himself the Dewan of the Great God (the Dewan of Ekalingji) ; and on Shiv Ratri, to this day, the Maharana in full dress and gold sceptre (" chadi ") stands the whole night at attention before the temple of Shiva.

STORIES OF OODEYPORE

It was from Oodeypore that every Jhala gained the hereditary title of Rana, when an ancestor of the Jhalas helped the wounded Maharana to get away from the heat of the battle by donning his turban and sitting on the Maharana's elephant under the umbrella, bringing the enemy after the gallant Jhala. This was the Rana of Sadhari, who from that day was called the second Dewan of Ekalingji.

Many are the beautiful stories of Oodeypore, illustrating so vividly the traditions associated with real Rajput chivalry, that the writer must be pardoned if she repeats a few.

The Rana of Sadhari, a Jhala Chief under one of the Maharanas of Oodeypore, gained the favour of the Maharana to so great a degree that the Maharana gave him a daughter in marriage. The bride came to Sadhari in great pomp with all her retinue, and the Rana thought to test her—whether she came to him, as a Hindu wife should,—in all humility,—or as a Princess of Oodeypore. On the terrace alone with him, he asked her to bring a piece of lighted charcoal from the brazier near-by, for his “chalam.”

The Princess indignantly refused, saying it was the work of a servant.

On Sadhari insisting, she descended from the terrace, returned to her chariot that was

STORIES OF OODEYPORE

still in the courtyard, and ordered her people to take her back to Oodeypore.

The Princess gained the ear of her mother ; and both of them requested the Maharana to take away the "jagir" of the insolent Sadhari, who did not appreciate the gift of a girl from a Royal Household.

The Maharana said nothing, but called for his Sol-Batrissi, and Sadhari, as one of the sixteen, was also summoned.

Sadhari, rather repenting of the hasty test, wondered what would follow.

In the palace of Oodeypore is a small corridor, where only one man at a time can walk. The Maharana followed his son-in-law, after carefully instructing the palace servants to place his slippers in a certain place. The corridor opened out into a courtyard, overlooked by the zenana, and it was here father-in-law and son-in-law came out after the meeting.

"Put on your slippers," said the Maharana ; but the slippers were not to be found.

The Maharaja went to a certain spot, brought them out with his own hands, and dusted them with his pocket handkerchief.

Sadhari fell on his knees before his master :
"My Lord ! My Lord," he stammered.
"You shame me, and make me feel sinful."

A BREACH OF MANNERS

"Why," said the Maharana pleasantly. "Here, alone, we are not master and subject; you are my son-in-law; and the Hindu scriptures demand that I respect you in an unusual manner."

The Princess from above saw all, heard all; there and then, she sent for her chariot (rath) and went to the house where Sadhari was staying.

"Bring me your 'chalam,'" said the Oodeypore Princess to her Jhala husband. "I am not greater than my noble father."

When the late Maharaja Sirdar Singh of Jodhpur went to marry the daughter of the present Maharana of Oodeypore, many years elapsing after the actual betrothal, the Maharana sent a message to the Jodhpur Prince to wear his Bijesai national head-dress. Sirdar Singh refused, and insisted on being married in the ordinary "safar," which orthodox Hindus think a Mahomedan head-dress.

The old Maharana, sore for the prestige of his daughter, who had been left so long unmarried after the Jodhpur betrothal, swallowed this further insult to his pride till after the marriage was completed.

It is customary to give valuable presents after marriage to the son-in-law; and for this purpose a large Durbar was convened.

THE KING'S UMBRELLA

The Maharana sent a message to Maharaja Sirdar Singh: "Now, come to my Durbar in Bijesai head-dress, or do not come at all. An Oodeypore girl could not be married elsewhere after she had been once betrothed to a prince. The marriage has been performed, none can now cast an aspersion on her or my State. If you want her, very well; if not, return the way you came; but you shall not enter my Durbar, nor shall you get your 'poshak' till you conform to the rule of my State, that demands that a Hindu must wear his national head-dress."

Sirdar Singh came to the Durbar wearing his Bijesai head-dress; and the Princess of Oodeypore returned with him to Jodhpur.

To return to the Delhi Durbar: in Delhi the officials concerned made a very big mistake in His Majesty King George's procession. The carriage, with the Imperial umbrella above, contained Her Majesty alone, His Majesty riding with his escort in front.

As the King passed through the crowded streets, he met with little applause; and passed practically unnoticed and unrecognised; his loyal subjects' eyes being glued to the carriage with the Imperial umbrella. And great was the disappointment at not seeing the King.

LOVE FOR THE KING-EMPEROR

Many Purdah ladies, who had hired special houses to see the King, were bitterly disappointed. The Princes offered fealty on the 10th December at 11 a.m. in the amphitheatre of the Imperial camp ; and no words can describe the picturesque scene.

There was no prescribed form of homage, each Prince giving to his Emperor of his best ; and that Emperor receiving *en masse* the willing fealty of Indian Princes, who, for the first time in history, gave homage to a British Emperor.

The King's beautiful personality has gained for him much love in India ; and his wonderful calmness in the face of danger was very patent during the investiture ceremony when, knowing that the adjoining tent of the Queen's brother had caught fire, the King went on as if nothing untoward had occurred. This made a great impression on all assembled, especially on the Rajput Princes, who know well how to admire courage.

The long-delayed sequel of the Malabar Hill visit occurred at this Coronation Durbar. The Thakore Sahib had met Their Majesties at dinner on the 8th and 10th December, at the State dinner and reception on the 12th, and the grand Durbar on the 12th, at the Garden-party in the Selimgadh Fort on the

THE DELHI DURBAR

afternoon of the 13th, not counting a number of other minor ceremonies. So when at the audience chamber, during the four minutes' audience granted to nine gun Princes, the King suddenly asked the Thakore Sahib where they had met before, the Thakore Sahib started to enumerate the above places.

The King shook his head, and then referred the Thakore Sahib back to the house with the lovely Indian curtains in Malabar Hill.

His Majesty said laughingly : " And how grateful I was to you about that sticky leaf."

The Thakore Sahib was tremendously impressed by this extraordinary memory of one whose life, filled with so many meetings and incidents, could yet retain this incident and remember a face of one who was not then a prince.

King George has indeed the " kingly " memory to an unusual degree.

The four minutes grew longer ; the equerry with the garlands appeared behind the King, motioning the Thakore Sahib that he should now retire. This, of course, was impossible with His Majesty talking ; and the equerry, thinking perhaps, that it was the Thakore Sahib who was usurping the time, came forward with the tray of garlands.

DEVOTION TO THE KING

His Majesty turned—very much the Emperor here—and in a tone of intense dignity said: "I know." Of course the equerry vanished in an instant.

The love for the King inspired from that day onwards in the heart of the Thakore Sahib, is one of the most sincere of his life. The Thakore Sahib sees in the King-Emperor something divine; the King-Emperor's portrait is one of the first he always sees in the morning when rising from his bed. The Thakore Sahib will never consciously tear a postage stamp.

Once some one showed him some very pretty pictures made out of postage stamps; but the Thakore Sahib could not admire them, hating the King's portrait on the stamps to be defaced or cut. He is very faithful to this sentiment; and there are boxes and boxes of used postage stamps in the palace, carefully stored and never destroyed. It was at the Coronation Durbar that the Thakore Sahib met his old musketry inspector, Captain Cox. The incident of the meeting between these two old friends is still told by mutual friends with gusto.

"Hullo, Coxy! what are you doing here?"

The reply very friendly but with great dignity:

THANKSGIVING

"I've become General Commanding a Division, and am on the Durbar Committee in charge of the camps. But, Dadbha, what are *you* doing here?"

"Oh, I've become one of those Rajas living in one of your camps."

Every loyal Prince of India was pleased at the reception Their Majesties received in India, and every loyal citizen of India, prince and subject alike, breathed a sigh of relief when Their Majesties left India safe and sound, without any kind of untoward incident that would have reflected on the good name of India famed for her hospitality and loyalty.¹

As a thanksgiving for this happy and safe departure, every school-child in Limbdi still receives, on this day, sugar.

¹ These words are hardly true to-day (1930) when non-co-operation with its boycott of food, its tampering with the young, has tended to lower India's fame here.

CHAPTER X

THE Thakore Sahib paid his first visit to England on the 6th April, 1912, to enter Digvijaya Singh at Eton.

A very memorable interview with Lord Morley took place during this visit.

Lord Morley, with the best of intentions, was against Indians having their education in England. He asked the Thakore Sahib if he had consulted any English friend as regards the advisability of having his son educated in England, and the Thakore Sahib replied in the affirmative: he had consulted Lord Reay, who thought it a good thing, and Lord Harris, who did not like the idea.

Lord Morley, in his gentle way, said: "Don't you think, Thakore Sahib, that Lord Harris was right?"

The Thakore Sahib frankly replied: "Not whilst the facilities for an English education are so poor in India. Do you think, sir, we like our boys so far away from us? and without our urgent need to see them properly educated we would let them come so far

LORD MORLEY

away? My own son had the highest diploma of the Rajkumar College: in Eton he is in the lower fourth remove. All examinations of importance are held in England. And until the same examinations are held at the same time in India, and accorded an equal value, Indians are forced to send their boys to England."

Lord Morley was much impressed by this interview. Gokhale was in England at the time pressing for better educational facilities in India. Lord Morley for the first time expressed his desire that India should get these educational facilities. Gokhale always said that the Thakore Sahib had done a great service to Indians and India by expressing his views so frankly to Lord Morley, that great and sympathetic soul.

When the Eton vacation occurred, the Thakore Sahib and the young Yuvaraj travelled incognito throughout Europe—France, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Austria, Hungary, and Holland. Their visit to The Hague was the occasion of a surprising incident.

The programme had been carefully fixed: they were going on to Amsterdam, and a compartment had to be reserved, and all arrangements were in abeyance till the party returned from sight-seeing.

Something delayed the party, including

TOUR OF EUROPE

the Private Secretary, who was responsible for all the arrangements. The party arrived at the station evidently very much too late for any arrangement to be made for their leaving according to programme. Their luggage had also, unaccountably, disappeared from the waiting-room, and Mr. Dahya, the Thakore Sahib's personal attendant, was nowhere to be seen. As Dahya could not speak any other language but his own, there was some considerable consternation amongst the party as to what had happened. When Dahya was sighted, it was found that he had reserved the required compartment, booked all the luggage to Amsterdam, and was just waiting for the arrival of the party. No one yet knows how he managed to make himself understood, and get everything ready, without knowing the language.

The tour of Europe over, the Thakore Sahib left for India from Paris, and the Yuvaraj returned to Eton. The Thakore Sahib arrived in India on the 20th August.

India, in 1912, was going through a period of disorder: a bomb was hurled—the incident is too well-known to need more than a passing reference—at Lord Hardinge, the most popular of all Indian Viceroys excepting the late Lord Minto and the present Lord Irwin.

AN OUTRAGE

This happened on the 23rd December of that year, when Lord Hardinge was making his State entry into Delhi ; and the narrowness of his escape may be judged from the fact that the " Chaprasi " behind the Viceroy holding the State umbrella over his head was blown to pieces.

Who flung that dreadful bomb has never yet been known. It came from a house that was crowded from top to bottom with frightened spectators. The act naturally aroused intense indignation, especially amongst those Indians—and they were many—who knew and loved Lord Hardinge.

The Thakore Sahib personally convened a public meeting in Limbdi, and expressed intense abhorrence for an outrage that brought disgrace to India. He forbade portraits of the extremist members, notably Tilak, being sold in the streets of Limbdi, saying it was no time for any emotional excitement. This standing firm against unusual movements has always been part of the Thakore Sahib's far-sighted policy, though a certain rowdy element of Bombay hissed him for the Tilak portrait episode, when he went to Bombay.

But the Thakore Sahib is far too strong a man to allow any mistaken notions of vanity to interfere with his principles. The Thakore

STILL A MYSTERY

Sahib knows too well the fatal tendency of emotional Indian mobs to lose control. When non-co-operation came, and British India was racked from end to end with political disorder, Limbdi remained absolutely calm with Viramgam burning.

Communal rioting came up to Wadhwan thirteen miles distant; but left Limbdi untouched, and Limbdi was the only State in Kathiawar where foreign cloth was not burnt, either in public or private during Gandhi's boycott.

The Thakore Sahib went to Delhi at the beginning of March 1913 for the higher education conference of Princes; and in Delhi he had the opportunity of meeting Lord Hardinge and personally expressing to him his horror that the outrage should have happened, more especially to one who had always helped India and Indians.

There are many Indians who believe that the bomb was not thrown by an Indian, but the matter remains shrouded in mystery.¹

¹ The tragedy, since these lines were written, has, alas, repeated itself; though again, thank God, the Viceroy has escaped. Exactly seventeen years afterwards, on the very day, 23rd December, a bomb was placed on the permanent way over which Lord Irwin's special passed, two miles outside New Delhi, near Moghul King Humayun's fort.

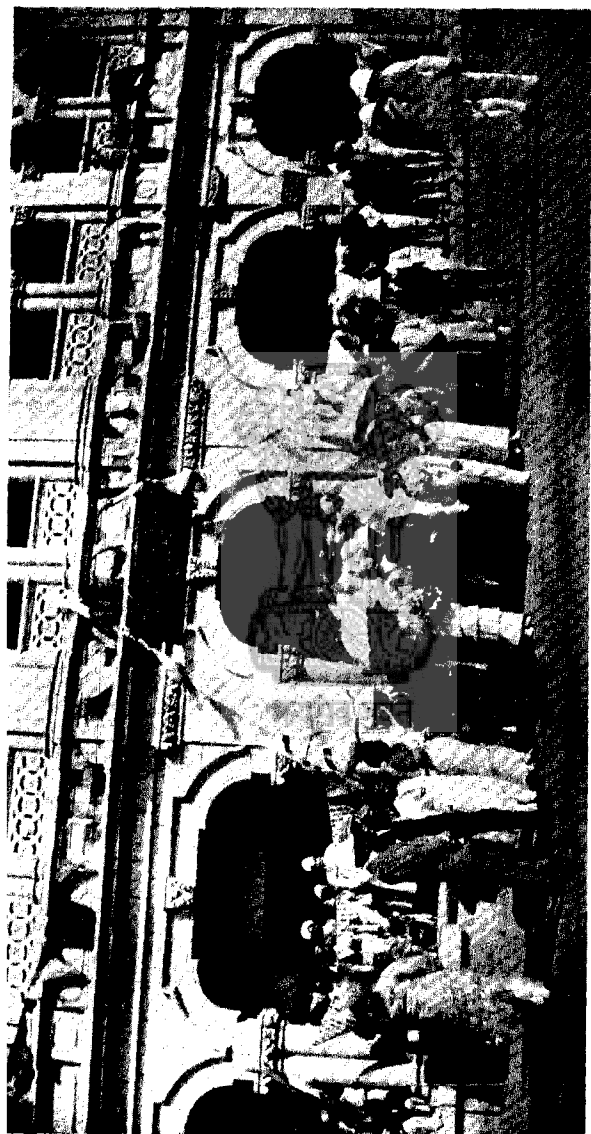
LORD WILLINGDON'S TRIBUTE

In 1916 Lord Willingdon, then Governor of Bombay, visited Limbdi. It was during his visit that the Lady Willingdon Girls' School was opened by Lady Helen Brassey, and the foundation-stone of the King George Coronation Hostel laid by Lord Willingdon. Both these events will be referred to later. Lord Willingdon was the third Governor to visit Limbdi. Sir James Fergusson in 1880 was the first, and Lord Reay in 1886 the second.

Lord Willingdon, in his public speeches, paid glowing tributes to the Thakore Sahib, and was deeply impressed by the new broad roads and the building of the new capital.

On the 5th February, 1920, the Thakore Sahib's eldest daughter, Kunveri Shri Rupaliba, was married to His Highness the Maharaja Rana Natwar Singh of Porbandar, son of the Thakore Sahib's old friend and master, Rana Sahib Bhav Singhji. Rana Sahib Bhav Singhji had died six months after the Thakore Sahib's leaving Porbandar, of galloping consumption, leaving behind him a little son of about five years of age.

There was again administration in Porbandar, with Colonel O'Brien as the last



THE OPENING OF THE LADY WILLINGDON GIRLS' SCHOOL BY LORD WILLINGDON.

Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay (centre), accompanied by Lady Helen Brassey (on Lord Willingdon's right). The Thakore Sahib is just behind. The actual opening ceremony was performed by Lady Helen Brassey, and the silver key and padlock are still in her possession.

KNIGHTHOOD

Administrator. The young Maharaja of Porbandar was one of the most brilliant of the Rajkumar College students, and at the time of his marriage had been only a few days before installed on his "gadi," and was then eighteen years of age. He has always been a very gentle and lovable character, a popular prince in Kathiawar. No marriage of a Limbdi Princess had taken place since a Princess of Limbdi married Maharao Shri Desalji, the grandfather of the present Ruler of Kutch; and when Maharaja Natwar Singh came into Limbdi to marry Kunveri Shri Rupaliba, the people poured in from every village of Limbdi. The roads were lined with crowds whose unprecedented numbers amply testified the love the people bore their Ruler.

The Thakore Sahib received his knighthood in 1920. And in 1921, revisited Delhi for the opening of the Chamber of Princes, which was inaugurated by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught.

Limbdi came into direct relationship with the Government of India in 1924, and Mr. C. C. Watson,—now Sir Charles Watson, Political Secretary to the Government of India,—became the first Agent to the Governor-General for the Western States. This

INDIAN REFORMS

assumption of direct relationship between the Princes of Kathiawar and the Government of India was one of the principal events of the year.

Sir George Lloyd—afterwards Lord Lloyd—was then Governor of Bombay, and he was very opposed to the step, Bombay having had the Kathiawar States in her jurisdiction for 126 years.

Both Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu, in their famous report, agreed that relations with the Indian States should not be matters of provincial concern. They also proposed, as a general principle, that all important States should be placed in direct political relations with the Government of India, and that there should be, wherever possible, only one Political Officer through whom the State would correspond with the Government of India.

This reform was suggested not only as a matter of administrative convenience, but as a measure calculated to ensure a uniform policy towards all the States. It was in pursuance of these proposals that the Kutch, Kathiawar, and Palanpur Political charges were transferred from the Government of Bombay to the Government of India, and the Western India States Agency was formed

A MISUNDERSTANDING CLEARED
under the charge of an Agent to the Governor-General.

As a preliminary step, and in order to give effect to the suggestion made in paragraph 110 of the report on Indian constitutional reforms, viz., that there should be, wherever possible, only one Political Officer, through whom the important States would correspond with the Government of India, the fully autonomous States in Kathiawar—the First and Second Class States according to the now obsolete classification—were requested first to communicate directly with the Agent to the Governor-General, instead of through the Prant Officers (Political Agents).

There is no doubt that the Kathiawar Princes were glad of the change, and had felt that a good deal of misunderstanding existed as regards their status, merely because they were under a provincial Government. No Viceroy had visited Kathiawar since Lord Curzon. And Lord Reading's visit in 1924, with the momentous announcement of the change, was an epoch in Kathiawar history.

The classification of Kathiawar States into seven classes, according to the jurisdiction enjoyed by them, made by Colonel Keatinge, as early as 1866, was abolished

THE SALUTE

during the year by the Government of India. The connection between procedure in Durbars, and jurisdictional powers had proved inconvenient in practice.

And a good deal of misunderstanding still prevails. In Kathiawar, a "Darbar" means a landowner without any jurisdictional powers; in Rajputana and the Central Provinces it means the Maharaja or Raja. In the same way Thakore Sahib means a Maharaja or Raja in Kathiawar (Bhavnagar, Gondal and Morvi Thakore Sahibs are now officially Maharajas), whilst in Rajputana and Central Provinces a Thakore is a landowner. Of course the one is officially entitled to the "Sahib" at the end, and the other is not, but confusion remains; for the "Sahib" is as much a courtesy title as an official one.

The salute test was declared to be incorrect in fixing status; for the grant of a salute, whether personal or dynastic, was a matter entirely distinct from that of jurisdiction. But strangely enough, though a Prince may have full regal rights in his own State, be part and portion of the Chamber of Princes, he is not officially called Highness in English unless his salute is over eleven guns.

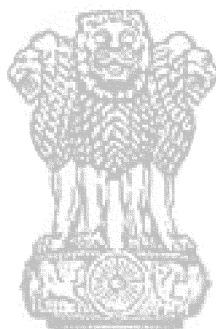


A GROUP TAKEN WHEN THE MAHARAJA OF BENARES VISITED LIMBDI.

The Maharaja is on the right of the Thakore Sahib, and the latter's grandson
on his left.

“AN IMPORTANT STATE”

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report defines an important State as one whose ruler has full powers of internal autonomy in his State ; and it is possible that the present anomaly will be corrected in the near future.



सत्यमेव जयते

CHAPTER XI

THE Limbdi capital on modern lines is the entire work of the Thakore Sahib. It was a stupendous task, as well may be imagined. The old houses—some are still left—were without any kind of sanitary conveniences, clustered together in narrow roads; and epidemics, when they came, swept the town from end to end. A fire in any house stood little chance of being controlled before it had done untold damage. Indeed, a fire in Limbdi, that occurred a few years after the Thakore Sahib's coming to the "gadi," starting on one side of the street of the old bazaar, burnt the opposite side as well, before its progress could be checked. This would not be possible to-day in the rebuilt capital with its broad streets, and large buildings of stone, with stone frontages, beautifully carved: all the shops and houses have high plinths of black granite, and these weather-proof granite plinths, insisted upon by the Thakore Sahib, first counted as a mere fad,

THE SHAH JEHAN OF LIMBDI

saved the whole town from absolute destruction in the terrible floods of 1927.

The Aga Khan always, and rightfully, refers to the Thakore Sahib as the Shah Jehan of Limbdi. The whole capital has been practically rebuilt; and the town improvement scheme has made Limbdi, as far as human efforts can reach, immune from epidemic and fire.

The Thakore Sahib has also given great attention to the uplifting of the Rajput community. As a land-owner, he knew full well how badly equipped was the ordinary Rajput for the battle of life against the educated Brahmin and Bania. He saw that an education filling modern needs was absolutely essential if the Rajputs were to hold their own against the growing competition of the other classes.

The King George's Coronation Boarding-School was established in Limbdi, where the poorer Rajput boy is boarded and lodged free of cost, and the richer ones pay a nominal fee. This school is the first of its kind in Kathiawar. The boys attend the Sir Jaswant Singh High School, which is one of the finest and oldest schools in Kathiawar, and has, for successive years, topped the list in Kathiawar for successful candidates for the public matriculation examination.

Indeed, in the annual report of the Syndi-

EDUCATION

cate of the Bombay University for the year 1927-8, the Sir Jaswant Singh High School of Limbdi received not only special mention for its 65 per cent. results, but *was the only school in Kathiawar* to be included in the table of *very good schools*. This, for a small State, is in itself a remarkable achievement. (See *Times of India*, Mr. M. R. Paranjpe's article, August 28th, 1928.)

All education, both higher and primary, is free, Limbdi being the first State in Kathiawar to make all its education free. Indeed, Limbdi has always given the lead to every other State—with the exception of Baroda and Mysore—as regards education, and old historical records show that female education, so difficult still in India, dated in Limbdi as far back as the first of March 1859, when the first Girls' School was opened with forty-one pupils. There were only four standards taught in those days. It was not possible to obtain any female teachers, the first head-mistresses available being in 1884. In 1877, the number of the girls studying in the school rose to 199; and in 1882 to 150, which soon rose to 200. The fifth standard was added in 1874, and with the addition of the sixth, the school became a full-course Girls' School in 1882.

Until 1871-2 the school had no house of

COMPULSORY FOR BOYS

its own, but was located in a hired building which, though commodious and convenient for the requirements of the time, soon became too small. The present school—Lady Willingdon Girls'—was built in 1916, and opened by Lady Helen Brassey during Lord Willingdon's visit. This school has sent out as many as a hundred students to the Barton Female Training College at Rajkot, and most of them have attained the position of head-mistresses in the various Girls' schools in the province.

Education is not compulsory for girls; but it is compulsory for all boys residing in the capital Limbdi. But every village is supplied a school on request; and the conditions of the school are calculated to make the education of the boys, outside of the capital, more or less compulsory. To digress a little: when the Thakore Sahib was in England, he heard Mr. Montagu's debate on India in the House of Commons: here the fact was emphasised that, according to a certain Maharaja's information—it was, to be exact, the Maharaja of Rajpipla—education in India could never be compulsory. The Gaekwar of Baroda was the first to make it so in his State. Mr. Montagu alluded to the unusual hardship to the people of Baroda as regards the enforcing of the rule, showing

ENERGY AND ENTERPRISE

that thousands of rupees in fines were taken during the course of a single year.

When the Thakore Sahib decided to make education compulsory in his villages, remembering the debate, and very anxious to avoid undue hardship on his subjects, he formulated a novel plan which obliged the three headmen of a village themselves to assist in the persuasion of parents as regards the education of their children.

This is the Thakore Sahib's own idea of dealing with a difficult problem : in the event of the attendance of these village schools falling below the number of half the school-going boys in the village, half of the cost of the school will be placed to the account of the village. As it is rather a point of honour for each village to have its school, the headmen ask for one, and see to it that the State pays in full, and nothing is paid by the village.

The Thakore Sahib has the unusual gift of imparting his own energy in all matters of enterprise. He has restored the Limbdi cotton trade by legislation that deals severely with any growing of inferior cotton or adulteration. The Futteh Singhji Ginning Factory and Press, built under the Thakore Sahib's personal supervision, supplied a tremendous need, and helped the cotton trade still further.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Limbdi itself has changed not only in appearance but in prestige since the present Ruler sat on the "gadi."¹

In 1907—the year before the Thakore Sahib came to the "gadi"—Limbdi had its trade at its lowest ebb; the ryots were in debt, and corn scarce. There were only 67,000 acres under cultivation. To-day almost all classes of people are prosperous. Labourers and artisans are specially well off, and obtaining high wages, and there is still a great demand for land for agriculture. Several acres of Padtar land are given to the ryots on liberal terms, the new tenants paying no revenue to the State for a period of three years. The State always contributes towards the building of houses in the newly populated villages. Eight new villages have sprung up during his rule, and practically all good land is now occupied by tenants and cultivators.

The total area of cultivated Durbar land (excluding alienated and fallow lands) during the year 1925 was 124,722 acres, a big comparison to the old 67,000 acres. The old ivory, brass, copper, and cloth industries of

¹ The connections have been widened, and the income quadrupled. The recognised loyalty of the Thakore Sahib, his unprecedented help in the present Salt raid trouble, have made him a definite power in Kathiawar.

WATER SUPPLY

Limbdi, almost gone, are being carefully fostered.

The opening of the Limbdi Bank in 1910, where the Bank advances money to cultivators at a small interest, has protected the ryot from the money-lender. But the biggest gift of all that the Thakore Sahib has given to his people is the supreme gift of water. The water supply of Limbdi up to 1910 was limited. In the hot summer months water had to be dug up from the beds of the dry river with a great deal of trouble, and was barely sufficient for domestic purposes.

The conditions of the country itself have always presented a serious obstacle to any scheme for large storages of water on account of the brackish soil. At Utelia, a State quite close, the one well that does not dry up in the summer has always been besieged by women with their water-pots from two in the morning; and still does not fulfil the needs of the people.

In 1910 the Thakore Sahib decided to experiment with some of the wells fed by the under-current of a river which is dry nine months of the year. A pump driven by an oil engine was attached to one of these wells, and proved a success: water was carried to the palace and station. The old

ELECTRICITY

oil engine was then replaced by an up-to-date steam engine producing electricity, and the water supply is now carried throughout the whole of the capital.

The Thakore Sahib did not rest there : he had the old Chaliya Lake widened and deepened. He practically rebuilt the small town lake, widening and deepening it to the extent of six lakhs cubic feet, and had the lake surrounded by a strong stone wall. The lake contains a water supply for about three years fed by canals in a catchment area of about twenty-five square miles, which collect the rain-water. The overflow, which used to run to waste, goes into a fresh lake built specially for women. The funds for this tank were given from the personal purse of the Rani Sahib Shri Baluba.

This great gift of water to the people of Limbdi can only be fully appreciated by those who know the hot Kathiawar summers and the terrible droughts, where cattle and men alike suffer tortures. The original well in the Limbdi river has been made an underground canal, 1,200 feet long.

The Thakore Sahib is, moreover, still the first Raja in Kathiawar to have his streets lighted by electricity. He has spent 52 lakhs of rupees up to now on Public Works, and the

A VALUABLE EXPEDIENT

time and energy and the amount of forethought and care behind all this have been spent single-handed at a tremendous personal sacrifice.

The income of Limbdi has risen during his reign from an annual $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs to 14 lakhs.

The prosperity of the people was very noticeable during the famine of 1912, when Sir Claude Hill, then Agent to the Governor, passed through eleven Limbdi villages, to the relief works in Agency villages. Sir Claude Hill particularly noticed the big stacks of hay in the Limbdi villages, and wanted to know of the headman of one of the villages if he required any relief. The headman laughed: "You white men come and go. I see you now and then—why should I ask from you, when I can ask from my Raja any day? He is always available to us when any of us want to see him."

The size of the stacks that so surprised Sir Claude Hill was due to a novel scheme introduced by the Thakore Sahib, and still followed to-day. The Thakore Sahib knows how improvident the ordinary ryot is, and to encourage him to stack his grass, he gives annually a rich turban of honour to the ryot who has the biggest stack. This saved Limbdi from the biggest brunt of the 1912

AN ENLIGHTENED LAND POLICY

famine, for she kept her cattle alive. It has also inculcated in the ryot a habit of collecting his valuable grass.

That the ryots are intensely happy under the Thakore Sahib, and the agriculturists enjoy security of property, are amply testified: the first by the Ahmedabad Talukdari's report of the prosperity of the ryots under Limbdi—Limbdi has 32 villages under the Ahmedabad Collectorate—and the second by an amusing instance that occurred recently when the Thakore Sahib was touring his Barvala villages. One of the headmen of a certain village Pandvi, asked for more land in the same village. The Thakore Sahib agreed; but on consulting the Revenue Commissioner with him, found that all the land was occupied. The headman said that in that village nine "kolis" (an inferior caste) had been given land, and that they were not cultivating it properly, that, if this land were taken away from them and given to Kunbis, it would be cultivated properly, and the Durbar would gain in proportion.

"That is possible," said the Thakore Sahib with a smile. "But what is the certainty if I do this thing to-day with them, that I won't do it to-morrow with you.

CHAPTER XII

THE four most famous pilgrimages of India are *Jaganath Puri* in the East, *Dwarka Puri* in the West, *Badri Kedar Nath* in the North, and *Swetbandu Rameshawar* in the South.

Of these the two first are the places of Vishnu, and the two last of Shiva. To visit the four places is supposed to be highly meritorious, and it is no easy task, especially in the case of the *Badri Kedar Nath*, high up in the Himalayas. Still, the *Thakore Sahib* in his busy life found time to make these pilgrimages. He did the southern one first in 1915, leaving *Limbdi* with *Yuvaraj Digvijaya Singh* and a very small party of attendants. Mr. *Nuruttum Morarji*, of *Bombay*, joined the party at *Bombay*: all then proceeded to *Ootacamund*, and stayed there twenty days.

The first grandson of the *Thakore Sahib*, an infant of six months, had died at *Matheran* a month previously; and the *Thakore*

LORD PENTLAND

Sahib made no official appearance in Ootacamund. But he met Lord Pentland, that quiet, gentle Governor, before leaving for Arnakolum in Cochin State. Arnakolum is on the mainland, and the capital Cochin is an island. At Cochin, the Thakore Sahib visited the Synagogues there: possibly the oldest in the world. He returned to Arnakolum; and from there, by two steam-launches, the party left for Kailun, an important city of Travancore. This journey, by breakwater, along the Malabar Coast was one to be remembered.

These 200 miles they travelled between shores fringed with graceful coco-nut palms, which painted their vandyke brown against pink and yellow sunset skies, or an emerald green splashed against a pale-blue dawn, included the most beautiful scenery in the world. The Thakore Sahib saw the Nair girls for the first time. These girls are always stripped to the waist, and amidst the coco-nut palms looked, with their young upright forms and firm well-moulded breasts, like so many golden statues.

At Kailun the party visited the mission-houses and the colleges. It was noticeable here that even the poorest and youngest citizen could speak English, and that, too,

THE NAIR LAW

fluently. The Thakore Sahib motored from Kailun to Travancore, and met the late Maharaja of Travancore. He was then very old and tired. In his large chair, on the veranda of his great palace, he appeared smaller and more fragile than ever.

The Thakore Sahib found him a man of great culture, extremely orthodox, and very devout. He had no children, and was obliged to adopt two Nair girls—who are now the present Maharanis of Travancore—whom he married to Brahmins of the highest sect; and it is the son of the younger of these Maharanis who is now the present Maharaja of Travancore.

To the Kathiawar prince, from a house and province where the law of primogeniture has been in vogue for centuries, the Nair law appeared very complicated: the succession always goes to the *son* of the eldest *female* relative.

The Maharaja was very anxious that the Thakore Sahib should visit the temple of Janardhan, where the Maharaja invariably fed one thousand Brahmins daily. This temple is one of the most orthodox in the whole of Southern India; and whilst the Thakore Sahib was very grateful for the deep honour paid him by the Maharaja,

EASY DEFILEMENT

he knew that his visit to England made his entrance, in the orthodox temple, a cause for purificatory rites being performed. He enquired from the Diwan of Travancore what the probable cost of these purificatory rites would come to ; and was told that they would cost the Maharaja, at least, ten thousand rupees. The Thakore Sahib decided that he should not impose so heavy a fine on his gentle host ; and, despite the Maharaja's expressed wish, did not visit the inner temple.

It was in Travancore the Thakore Sahib met the Raja of Kulangar, and from Travancore paid a visit as State guest to Kulangar : a visit made memorable by many unusual incidents. Food here was not served in utensils, but on large plantain leaves, and the Raja did not have food with his guests.

The Thakore Sahib enquired why he did not sit down with them ; and was told that in those parts the mere *sight* of another on one's food meant defilement, and each person of rank ate entirely alone.

" Tell me, Raja Sahib," enquired the Thakore Sahib. " You have such charming sons ; honestly have you not even taken a glass of water from the hands of their Nair mother ? "

A FORM OF RESPECT

The Raja was aghast: "What do you say? *Never*. I am a high-class Brahmin, she is a Nair. Moreover, if anything happens to me; before my corpse can be cremated, she and my sons must leave my palace for ever."

The Thakore Sahib was stunned for awhile; finally he asked what would happen to the Rani and her sons afterwards.

"They would go to the place of their mother's inheritance; and inherit there," the Raja replied calmly. "My daughter's son from a Brahmin will rule here."

The second incident occurred when the party proceeding to the balcony of the palace, stood admiring the scenery, and watching some of the Kulangar ryots in the fields beneath: these suddenly and hastily—men and women alike—started to strip themselves to their waists. The Thakore Sahib was greatly puzzled to account for this unusual proceeding, and turned to the Raja, who had followed them, for an explanation.

"They must have seen me," said the Raja complacently. "This is a form of respect in these parts."

In Kathiawar, to be improperly dressed before a great person includes even the absence of one's head-gear. The Thakore Sahib had ample reason to reflect on the fact

MADHURA

that manners change not only with the times, but with places.

From Kulangar the party returned to Travancore, and thence went to Kumarika (Cape Comorin). The temple Kumarika (the Virgin) is an extremely large one, and overlooks the sea.

All the arrangements were made by the Travancore Darbar ; but the party were not allowed to worship at the inner shrine of the temple because of the Thakore Sahib's visit to England ; for any man who has crossed the ocean is ceremonially defiled. The Thakore Sahib, as a special favour, was allowed to stand about ten feet away from the idol.

The man appointed by the Maharaja of Travancore to look after the comforts of the Thakore Sahib was a fine-looking boy, another child of a Brahmin father and a Nair mother. In Upper and Central India no Brahmin can marry any other than a Brahmin, and the Nair law continually startled the orthodox of the party.

From Travancore the party went to Madhura to see the temple of the Minakshi Devi. This is one of the finest temples in Southern India. Its gate, Gopuram (the entrance of the cows), has fourteen stories, and a frontage of exquisite carving. From

SHRIRANGAM

Madhura the party went to Tanjore, to see the fine Tanjore library, with its rare manuscripts, and its temple with a Shiva-Linga twelve feet high. The priests who have to place unguents and pour water on the very top do so with the aid of a ladder.

From Tanjore the party went on to the Chidambarum temple, which has an emerald Shiva-Linga, about four or five inches in length; and from Chidambarum to see the famous rock-temple of Trichinoply. This rock is about fifty feet wide, and three to four hundred feet high, and the temple is on the very top.

The next place to be visited was Shrirangam, where there is a huge temple with the idol of Shri Rangaji in a reclining posture. The whole temple is very much blackened by camphor smoke, which detracts a good deal from its beauty. The temple proper is surrounded by seven forts, each with its own bazar, covering in some instances several acres of land. From here the party crossed the River Cauvery on a bridge of boats, seeing the river in its fullest beauty, almost at flood. In the centre of the river is a small island and a temple, both of which the Cauvery submerges yearly. The temple is always counted as lost; but every year, to

TWO SHIVA TEMPLES

the intense joy of its faithful worshippers, it reappears quite intact, and apparently none the worse for its yearly bath.

From Shrirangam the party went to Rameshwar, where there are two temples adjoining each other; both built, tradition says, by Ram Chandraji himself. Legend explains why there are two Shiva temples in such close proximity thus: after Ram had defeated Ravan in battle, to commemorate the victory Ram wished to build a temple in Shiva's honour; and for this purpose—an auspicious time being noted by the Brahmins—Hanumanji—the monkey god—was sent in all haste to bring a Shiva Linga from a certain place. The auspicious time was in danger of passing, and as Hanumanji had not yet returned, Ram himself moulded a “linga” of sea-sand which still, protected by a silver covering, remains, equally revered with the other “linga” which Hanumanji brought after all. The “lingas” are washed every day with fresh Ganges' water, which has been coming daily from time immemorial: in the olden days by special dak and chariot, and to-day by rail.

Near Rameshwar is Dhaneshkodi where, legend says, Ram built his famous bridge

TOOTH OF THE BUDDHA

from India to Ceylon ; and destroyed it after returning from his famous battle with Ravan. To prevent any ship or person crossing where his famous bridge went, Ram placed his discus over the spot ; which the people thereabouts say is why the water there still swirls in dangerous eddies. From Dhaneshkodi the party left for Ceylon by ferry steamer, landing at Talehminai, and reaching Columbo by train.

After sight-seeing at Columbo, the party went on to Kandy, and saw the large garden of spice trees and rare plants. Nutmegs lay in heaps under the trees, a temptation to one and all. The party visited the temple at Kandy, and saw the tooth of the Buddha in its little gold casket. The priests would not allow it out of their hands ; but it was allowed sufficiently near for a minute examination. It was about three-quarters of an inch in length, and slightly yellowed with age. The party visited many other old Buddha temples ; but none so important as the one with the famous relic.

Nurelia, the next place on the programme, was too cold for more than a passing visit, and this too was marred by an unpleasant incident : the hotel proprietor raised his charges to half as much again, with no other

SACRED CITIES

excuse than that his quotations were not meant for Indians. Returning to Kandy, the party went on to Anuradhpur, where, it is stated, a hundred Rajas had ruled successively. The place is now in ruins ; the numerous old temples and palaces pitiful evidence of its lost glory. All the temples are Buddha temples ; and one wonders why none of them was thought worthy of restoration by some devout Buddhist.

The party returned to Talehminai. On the shore tons of plantains, ready for shipment to India, were heaped. One bunch the Thakore Sahib counted had on it a hundred and fifty plantains ; and it was one of many. Returning to Dhaneshkodi, the Thakore Sahib revisited Rameshawar ; and then the party went on to Madras.

From Madras the Thakore Sahib and party visited the two famous temples Kanchi : one dedicated to Shiva and the other to Vishnu, each a few miles' distance from each other.

These are two of the seven sacred cities (Puris) of India ; a slight description of which, with the four sacred lakes, will be dealt with later. Pilgrimage to these places is considered highly meritorious ; and enjoined on every devout Hindu of means, some time or other in his life. These seven puris

THE GOLAK

are Kashi (Benares), the two Kanchis, Mathura, Maya (Gaya), Aventikai (Ujjain), and Dwarapura (Dwarka).

The four lakes are Narayan Sarovar, in the middle of Cutch ; Bindu Sarovar, near Sidhpur, Gujarat ; Pampa Sarovar, and Alka Sarovar.

From the Kanchis the party went to Venkatagiri (Balaji), to see the temple of Balaji—Krishnaji—in his boy form. No footwear is allowed to be worn anywhere on the hill, and must be removed at the foot, actually six miles away from the summit.

The Thakore Sahib went up by "Dholi" (palanquin) and missed the hardship that this rule might entail. The track up, however, was fairly good going ; and there were no complaints amongst the party. In this temple is a hidden place called Golak ; so arranged that devout pilgrims may place their offerings in secret. The day the Thakore Sahib arrived was the opening of the Golak, which is sealed by Government ; and opened only in the presence of the trustees of the temple every three months.

The votive offerings that day were separated each in its own heap : copper with copper, silver with silver, gold coins with gold coins, and valuable ornaments, put in by women,

WOMEN WITH SHAVEN HEADS

of every description and value. The net value of the "Golak" that day totalled one lakh and seventy-five thousand rupees. From the "Golak" alone the temple derives an annual income of about five to six lakhs of rupees.

Another incident that surprised the Kathiawar Prince considerably was the multitude of women with shaven heads. In Kathiawar, Rajputana, and generally all over India, a shaven head is exclusively the sign of a widow. The Thakore Sahib wondered at this concourse of widows; but was told that these were not all widows. No woman was allowed to see Balaji, unless her head was shaven, so married or unmarried, bride or widow, all were forced to leave their tresses at Balaji. It was at Balaji the Thakore Sahib met the late Raja of Venkatgiri with his son. Both the Raja and his son were enthusiastic polo-players, and the Thakore Sahib saw them at polo. The friendship made here still exists.

From Venkatgiri the Thakore Sahib went to Bangalore, as the guest of the Maharaja of Mysore, taking there a much-needed rest. He visited the late Mr. and Mrs. Horace William Lavender, of Messrs. A. Lavender & Company, Bangalore. Messrs.

THE KOLAR GOLF-FIELDS

Lavender are probably the biggest exporters in the whole of India of the famous hand-made Bangalore carpets; but there was no time for the Thakore Sahib to visit their looms, and see the weavers at work, his programme being cut and dried; he was also now extremely anxious to return quickly to his capital.

From Bangalore the Thakore Sahib went to see the Kolar Gold-fields, going down the biggest mine of all—the Mysore mine. It was here the incident referred to on page 78 took place, when the Thakore Sahib's powers of keen observation, and his marvellous grasp of detail, won for him a good deal of admiration.

There were bars of gold weighing 2,500 tolas—1,000 ounces—each; and the management offered them to anyone who could carry them away. Everyone of course had a good try; but none succeeded in his attempt. The party lunched at Bowringpet; the arrangements made by the Maharaja of Mysore being excellent. One incident, however, typical of Indian carts and their drivers, might have had disastrous consequences.

The party was motoring back, when it met with a bullock-cart loaded with large planks of wood; the cart, in trying, carelessly, to

THE MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

get out of the way, turned, and one of the largest planks broke the hood of the car in which the Thakore Sahib was seated, slightly injuring a member of the party seated by the driver. The party returned to Bangalore, and then went to Mysore.

The Thakore Sahib stayed at the Palace in Mysore; and festivities were arranged by the Yuvaraj of Mysore in his honour. The present Diwan of Mysore, Sir Muhammed Ismail Mirza, an old school-fellow of the present Maharaja of Mysore, was then Private Secretary to the Maharaja: a man keen, tolerant, and clever. It was he who arranged the official visit to the Maharaja, who in his turn officially returned the Thakore Sahib's call; and thereafter visited him daily.

The two Princes spent several hours together, having several ideals in common. The Maharaja of Mysore is one of the most cultured men of his time; extremely kind and religious. The Thakore Sahib was surprised to know that there was not a single detail of the Maharaja's vast administration unknown to him; which possibly accounts for the fact that Mysore is one of the model States of India: a State that adds lustre to the princely order. The Maharaja is extremely

THE CAUVERY DAM

fond of horses, and keeps some famous stables, which he visits regularly, every morning.

The Thakore Sahib visited the famous Tambuda Goddess temple; and saw the once notorious chariot, which, till quite recently, on every Dusserah, in procession, crushed thousands of goats under its wheels; the sight being one of the most revolting and pitiable in the world. The Maharaja's prohibition of this cruel act has further endeared him to all humanitarians.

The Thakore Sahib saw the wonderful Cauvery Dam—one of the biggest in the world—which supplies electricity for a cable of seventy-two miles.

Sir Vishveshavar Aiyar, one of the most famous engineers of his time, was responsible for the building of this dam. The Thakore Sahib met Sir Vishveshavar Aiyar first in 1892, when he was Executive Engineer in Poona; he was introduced to the Thakore Sahib by Sir Vithaldas Damodar Thakersy. Sir Vishveshavar had won fame even then by his weir on the Karakvasla Lake, which opened automatically when the lake was at flood, and closed when the water was at its proper level: a novelty in those days.

The Thakore Sahib did some sight-seeing

JAGANNATH

in Mysore and Seringapatam ; then left for Limbdi, stopping *en route* at Sholapur and Bombay.

The eastern pilgrimage took place in 1917 ; the Thakore Sahib making it on his return from his visit to Burmah, where he and his zenana had gone on the occasion of Mr. Jamal's son's marriage. The late Mr. Jamal (afterwards Sir A. K. Jamal) was an old Jamnagar acquaintance who owed most of his success in business—and at one time he was a very successful multi-millionaire—to the Thakore Sahib's advice, which Sir Abdul Karim, in the beginning, invariably followed.

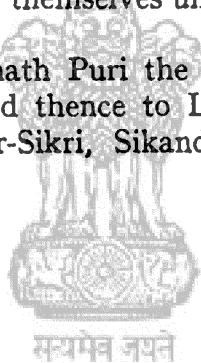
Jagannath Puri is on the seashore. A magnificent house was arranged for the Thakore Sahib and his party ; but it overlooked the salt-fisheries, and the smell of the fish being salted was so unpleasant as to oblige the party to remain in their respective saloons.

The idols of Jagannath are made of wood ; and it is said that when one or more of the idols require renovating, a special log of wood floats in by itself from the sea. This log is then taken in procession by the priests of the temple, cut into new idols, repainted, and the old and discarded idols returned to the sea.

THE CAR

The idols are painted in an extremely in-artistic manner ; and the priests of Jagannath are very arrogant. The world-known Jagannath car still goes out in procession ; and though the Government has sternly proscribed the self-immolation of victims under its giant wheels, there are not wanting, even to-day, credulous, devoted people, who in their hope of a certain heaven, wait their chance and fling themselves under its gigantic wheels.

From Jagannath Puri the party returned to Calcutta, and thence to Limbdi, visiting Agra, Fatehpur-Sikri, Sikandar, and Delhi *en route*.



CHAPTER XIII

WHEN the Thakore Sahib did the northern pilgrimage on 20th April, 1922—Badri Kedarnath, high up in the beautiful Himalayas—he issued a proclamation, inviting any devout Hindu to accompany the party. This tempting offer, with all its facilities of camp and food arrangements, made the party a fairly large one. It was Thakore Sahib's own forethought, scrupulous care for the pilgrims' comforts and his stern prohibitions as regards indiscriminate drinking of water *en route*, that ensured good health to his party. No pilgrim of it died on the journey, which was unusual; for generally this pilgrimage exacts a larger toll of life than any other in India. Clear sparkling water to tired pilgrims conveys no hint that it has run through the roots of poisonous herbs; and badly cooked, stale food, tempting to weary people who want only sleep, are the chief pit-falls wherein death or sickness lies waiting. The Thakore Sahib had two relays of kitchens: one always ahead with hot

PILGRIMAGE OF SHIVA

fresh food; the water was always boiled, and no pilgrim was allowed to indulge in wayside drinking. The Thakore Sahib's third son, K. S. Ghanshyam Singh, was always ahead of the main party with hot tea ready, for all and sundry, half-way to the next camp.

The pilgrimage proper started at Hardwar (Har-Ma-Dvar), literally the entrance to the place of Hara (Shiva), i.e. Nirvana. Hardwar is a dirty place on the Ganges, made still dirtier by its annual inrush of pilgrims who bathe in the sacred river.

The party motored from Hardwar to Rishi-Kesh. Here all final arrangements for the journey were made. "Dandies" (a kind of palanquin) and "Kandies" (baskets) were held in readiness for those of the party too old or too tired to walk. Labourers were hired for the luggage, each man carrying about four maunds. There is a very large toll-gate, three miles past Tehri territory, where the luggage is most carefully weighed, and the least inaccuracy checked.

From Rishi-Kesh, in easy stages,¹ the party reached Deva Prayag, where the two rivers Alakananda and Bhagarathi meet. The place

¹ Mohan Chatti, Vandara Chatti, Mahadeva Chatti, Vyar Chatti.

BHIL NATH

of their meeting is a place specially sacred to the Hindus, who perform ceremonies here for their dead. Vows to be kept during the pilgrimage are also taken at this spot. These vary according to the pilgrims: some vowing to eat once a day, to fast on certain days: others again not to cut their hair till they return, or drink intoxicating liquors.

From Deva Prayag the party went to Bhil Nath. The reader may remember the story in the Mahabharata where Arjuna fought with a Bhil of unusual prowess who proved to be the Great Shiva. Bhil Nath is supposed to be the very place where the memorable fight occurred.

The next place of interest was Shrinagar, the old capital of Garhwal Tehri. In the Gurkha War the British helped the Maharaja of Tehri; and the cost of the British expeditionary force being beyond the means of the Maharaja—so he said—he was obliged to part with Shrinagar, and nearly half his territory as well.

From Shrinagar the party went by easy stages¹ to Jotir Math, one of the four seats

¹ Kakara Chatti, Rudra Prayag, Shiva Chatti, Karana Prayag, Sonila Chatti, Lal Sanga, Pippala Koti, Gulab Chatti.

A MYSTERIOUS "POOJA"

of Shri Shankaracharya. When Badri Nath lies covered in snow, it is at Jotir Math that the priests reside, bringing down all the portable idols of Badri Nath. During these winter months, there is not a sign of Badri Nath, so deeply is it buried under the snow. It is believed that Shankaracharya wrote his famous commentaries of the Vedas and Upanishads in a cave at Jotir Math. From Jotir Math, to Pandu Kisha Chatti, the party proceeded to Badri Nath. The Thakore Sahib had specially timed his arrival to be present at the opening of the Badri Nath Temple, after its six months of apparent oblivion.

It is stated by the priests of that temple that for six months of the year, when the temple is under snow, the "Pooja" of the temple goes on as usual, performed by inhabitants of another world; and that when the temple is opened traces of this "Pooja" are visible.

The Thakore Sahib was anxious to ascertain, personally, if this were true. He was present at the opening of the four doors; and all seals were broken in his presence, and the presence of the trustees of the temple. The doors are sealed yearly, not only by the Government, but by the Tehri Durbar as

AN UNCERTAIN IDOL

well as the head " Poojari " (priest). All the seals broken, the inner door was opened ; but there were no traces, whatsoever, of any " Pooja ; " there was, however, the " Ghee " light, in its huge receptacle, still burning. How and where it found sufficient oxygen for its need, buried beneath snow for six months, is a problem. This light, burning so steadily during those six months, is possibly the cause of the legend of the other world. Badri Nath is now claimed as an idol of Vishnu. But it is much more probably an old Buddha idol. The large canopy above the Buddha's head has been eaten away by age, leaving portions that the devotees of Vishnu have fashioned into arms ; claiming it as a four-armed Vishnu.

The route up to Badri Nath is now under the jurisdiction of the Government of India. At one time it was under Tehri. There are hot springs at Badri Nath, and the pilgrims had easy facilities for bathing ; for the cold at Badri Nath was so intense as to have made bathing, in the absence of those hot springs, not only a real hardship, but almost a menace to life. The source of one of the tributaries of the River Ganges is here, and peculiar merit is attached to bathing at this particular place.

RESULT OF DISOBEDIENCE

The Thakore Sahib had, however, sternly forbade his followers to take this cold bath, fearing lest anyone of them become ill. Indeed, in the case of the death of any of them, there was not even sufficient wood for the burning of the corpse ; and to be partially burnt after death is considered by every Hindu a specially dire calamity. But the hankering after easily won merit is so strong in the breast of the simple Hindu ryot that one of the cultivators of Majada (under Limbdi), who was with the party, broke the order, and bathed. He soon had a temperature of 103° , and was seriously ill for three days.

The tragic part of the story lies in the fact that he had to be liberally dosed with brandy ; which, according to his fellow-pilgrims' belief, removed every vestige of religious merit, not only that which accrued to the bathing in the forbidden stream, but of the whole pilgrimage.

The Thakore Sahib has built a " Dharamshala " at Badri Nath : more especially for the convenience of those pilgrims from Kathiawar. The " Dharamshala " bears the name of the late Rani Sahib.

The party left Badri Nath for Kedar Nath, branching off the original route at

H O M A

Lalsangha. The original route followed the River Bhagarthi ; and so noisy was the river in her tumultuous descent to the plains, that she kept most of the party awake, till tired Nature asserted itself, and habit gradually dulled the faculties of hearing in this respect. Sometimes the Bhagarthi was out of sight, when they encamped in the isolated inns called " chatties ; " but the sound of the river was never lost. The party reached Kedar Nath after nine days.

En route they performed " Homa " (a kind of fire-sacrifice), at Trijugi Narayan, four and a half miles off the main-road, where the original fire-place (" Khund ") is shown to pilgrims ; and it is said that the fire kindled at the marriage of Shiva with Parvati has never been allowed to die out. It is imperative on every good pilgrim to put in oil-seeds, ghee, and fire-wood.

At Gauri Khund, a stage below Kedar Nath, there are hot springs ; and the priests of Kedar Nath come down to Gauri Khund, even as the priests of Badri Nath descend to Jotir Math in the winter.

It was at this place that a Nepali Princess, meeting the party, and hearing that the Thakore Sahib proposed to go on to Gangotri and Janmotri (the sources of the Ganges and

BAD ROADS

Jamna) from Kedar Nath, sent for the "Ghor" (head priest) of the Thakore Sahib to implore him not to make the proposed visit. The road was so bad, she said, that she, a woman of rank who had never touched a strange man in her life, had been forced to leave her palanquin, and allow herself to be carried on a man's shoulders to safety.

The Thakore Sahib wired to the Maharaja of Tehri for his advice in the matter, feeling, naturally enough, that the Maharaja would have the fullest information as regards the accessibility of the roads under his jurisdiction. The Maharaja wired that the Thakore Sahib should come straight to Tehri from Kedar Nath; and necessary arrangements would be made as regards the roads. It was from here that a friendship started that was to end in an alliance between Tehri and Limbdi eight years later.

From Gauri Khund the party climbed up to Ram Vala, stayed there overnight, and visited Kedar Nath early the following morning. Fortunately, there had been no recent snow at Kedar Nath, and the party were able to stay there two days and two nights.

The temple of Kedar Nath is very high, and ten times larger than that of Badri Nath. Inside there is a Shiva "Linga" that

resembles a buffalo in a sitting posture. The worshippers here do rather an unusual thing in addition to the customary “ Pooja ” : they liberally apply ghee to the “ Linga,” and then embrace it, besmearing themselves with the pasted ghee : this part of the worship is imperative.

Round Kedar Nath there are pools of water, all considered sacred, with strange properties. The repetition of the sacred mantra “ Om ” over the water makes it bubble up as if in response. There is also a pool of quick-silver, ten feet deep, with the same faculty of bubbling up at the sound of “ Om.” To the north-east of Kedar Nath runs the Sargardhan road, supposed to be the very road traversed by the Pandava brothers in their ascent to heaven. It was on this road that all except Yudhisthira melted into snow.

The Thakore Sahib and his party made no attempt to go to Gangotri or Janmotri from here, returning straight to Shrinagar, where they were met by a deputation from Tehri.

Two miles off the main road, on the other side of the River Ganges, the territory of the Tehri Maharaja commenced ; and the party started by easy stages for Tehri. At every halting-place (“ Mukum ”), special dak ar-

DURBAR AT TEHRI

rangements from Mussoorie brought fresh fruits of every description, and at least forty "Dalis" (trays) of fruits, nuts, and sweets were placed every day before the Thakore Sahib.

In vain did the Thakore Sahib protest to the Tehri deputation: these were the orders of the hospitable Maharaja of Tehri, and there was to be no alteration of them in the slightest respect.

The party reached Tehri on the 5th day, and the Thakore Sahib stayed in the guest-house, a mile and a half out of the city proper. The Maharaja, who was at his summer residence in Pratapgarh, had come down for the Thakore Sahib's visit. A Garhwali guard of honour was at the guest-house, and the salutes that were fired with the hand-grenades and fireworks shook the very hills. The Maharaja, an extremely pleasant, cultured man of frank manners, has an unusually charming disposition.

A Darbar was held the next day, and all the principal officers of the State were presented to the Thakore Sahib. The Maharaja also presented him with 101 gold mohurs; 200 trays of finest "pushmina," musk, saffron, fruits of every description, and two horses. The Thakore Sahib saw the beautiful

A LANDSHIP

little children of the Maharaja : one of whom was to be affianced, eight years later, to the Thakore Sahib's little grandson. Strangely enough, in this connection, the Thakore Sahib wrote to his daughter, the Maharani of Porbandar, who was then looking after the little Tikka Sahib¹ : " Tell Tikka that when I told him in fun that I should find him a Tikkarani, I little thought that I should actually do this ; but to my surprise I have really found one whom I should like to be Tikkarani."

News came into Tehri that the road to Gangotri and Janmotri was blocked by a land-slip ; and it was indeed fortunate that the party had taken the advice of the Nepali Princess, for the news ran that the road would not be clear within fourteen days.

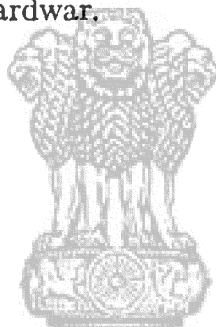
There was a consultation among the pilgrims with an amusing sequel : votes were taken as regards whether the party should wait at Tehri, and finally go on to Gangotri and Janmotri, or return home. All those who had the privilege of a permanent palanquin expressed a desire to continue the pilgrimage, whilst those who had not that privilege were not at all keen. It was suggested that the

¹ The Tikka Sahib is second in direct succession to the " Gadi " of Limbdi.

A COMPROMISE

palanquin pilgrims might walk an hour a day ; and after that suggestion the " nays " won easily.

The party spent a very happy time in Tehri ; and then went to Mussoorie, putting up in one of the Maharaja's many palaces ; and taking a much-needed rest. All had grown beards, and presented an unusual appearance. The party then returned to Limbdi via Hardwar.



सत्यमेव जयते

CHAPTER XIV

THE Thakore Sahib made the western pilgrimage to Dwarka in 1923 with his zenana. This was his second visit to Dwarka. The party left by special. On its arrival at Dwarka the Thakore Sahib was put up in a palace, specially lent by Seth Pushrattam Vishram, called "Dariya Lahar" (the Joy of the Ocean), and the zenana in a bungalow kindly vacated for them by Kumar Shri Raj Singh of Sirmoor, the then Commissioner of Baroda.

The Jagadish temple of Dwarka faces west, unlike other Hindu temples, that invariably face east; and a very pretty story is told in this connection that Vaishnavas (followers of Vishnu), orthodox to an extraordinary degree, might well take to heart in a more practical way.

A "Ded" (untouchable) was devoted to Shri Krishna, and every morning it was part of the untouchable's routine to come to the temple, and at a distance salute the Deity as represented by the idol. A priest saw him,

A DEVOTED "UNTOUCHABLE"

and forbade him to come again, as the mere sight of a "Ded" was pollution to the temple. The untouchable could not bear the enforced absence from his favourite temple, and the next morning he was there as usual. This so irritated the Brahmin priest that he had the poor "Ded" severely beaten before driving him away a second time. The morning afterwards the "Ded," all aches and pains, crawled to the temple—but at the back of it out of sight—and wept because he had been denied the sight of his beloved Krishna ; and prayed that it might again be his fortune to have the privilege of seeing Krishna. Whilst he prayed, the temple suddenly turned, and before the "Ded's" astonished and adoring eyes there was the door, and within it Shri Krishna smiled.

The Brahmins relate that the temple remained from that day facing west. It is this temple that boasts the beautiful story of Mira, the Rathod Princess—wife of Rana Sanga of Mewar—who is said to have disappeared in full view of her husband into the idol. She was much harassed by him on account of her mad devotion to Shri Krishna, so when the Rana found her in the temple and would have killed her, the legend says, she implored protection from the idol, which

A CURIOUS PROCEDURE

bent, and gathered her to itself, leaving no other trace of Mira, to her husband's astonishment, beyond a piece of her head-covering ("Chundli"), which is still worshipped in Mewar. The idol is a very artistic Shri Krishna with four arms.

From Dwarka the party went by rail to Oka port, and after a three hours' journey in a steam-launch reached Bet (Island) Shankodar. Here a curious procedure takes place daily. Vishnu has his temple here with the four temples of his principal queens: Lakshmi, Radhikaji, Jambhuvantji, and Salbhamaji. All the necessary things that a Raja might need come to Vishnu from the four temples of his queens, and nothing is given to his temple direct. Each queen has her own income, and keeps up a large establishment. There are four headmen called Adhikarijis, and four assistants called Bhramascharijis to each temple; and each of these goes in due turn to do the "Pooja" of the Vishnu temple. Trays of rich food also are taken according to the Queens' days as befitting good and devoted wives, each in her turn from their respective temples, for the "Bhagvan's" meals.

Strangely enough, though Krishna invariably "*sleeps*" at night in the temple of

PECULIAR WATER

Lakshmi, he will not "*wake up*" in the morning until his morning necessities ("datan")¹ are sent to him from his favourite Radhikaji's temple.

Many devout Hindu princes give money and even land to the queens of Krishna ; and till recently the biggest "Jagir" enjoyed by the temples was the one given by the old Jamnagar rulers. This "Jagir" is, however, no longer in the possession of the temple.

The Thakore Sahib and the party returned to Dwarka after visiting Vishnu's and his queens' temples, and from Dwarka the Thakore Sahib went to Pindara by motor. Pindara is in Jamnagar, and boasts a famous tank, whose water has a peculiar attribute. Ceremonies for the dead ("Shradha") are performed at this tank, and the sweet balls ("Pinda") offered to the dead are placed in the water. These sweet balls do not sink but float, evidently, bulk for bulk, lighter than the water ; not only the "Pindas" do not sink, but even stones. A Brahmin boy, sent into the water for the purpose of watching him float, lay happily on the surface of the water with a large stone on his chest.

The party returned to Limbdi. The pilgrimage to the seven Kanchis and four lakes was done at various intervals. The

SACRED LAKES

one of Benares is too well known for more than a passing mention ; and the others, the two Kanchis and Dwarka, are included in the larger pilgrimages of the south and west.

The Shiva and Vishnu Kanchis boast huge temples. Gaya has a privilege that few of the Western readers know : the last " Pinda " for the dead father, if placed at Gaya, ensures salvation to his soul ; and for the mother, the sweet ball must be placed at Bindu Sarovar (one of the sacred lakes), in Sidhpur. The Narayan Sarovar is about 100 feet by 100 feet of clear, sparkling water, and is in the middle of a large temple. Pampa Sarovar and Alka Sarovar are the remaining two sacred lakes, of no very large importance beyond the fact that their inclusion in the four sacred lakes makes a visit to them imperative, if one would receive the full amount of merit due to a pilgrimage of this sort.

CONCLUSION

THE Thakore Sahib to-day, though sixty-two years of age, is still young in appearance, of middle height, and inclined to be stout, though his body retains the hardness of the old muscular soldier. No portrait can do real justice to the Thakore Sahib, paint the fire of his deep-set brown eyes, or the healthy glow on his clear golden skin. At best it can depict the benevolence of the smiling face, framed by its thick dark hair, whitened above the temples.

The Thakore Sahib leads a very regular, simple, quiet life. He is a non-smoker, and an abstainer from alcohol and meat. He has no real meal after the midday breakfast, but sometimes a frugal supper, or milk and fruit.

He rises in all climates at 3 a.m., when he bathes, and retires to his meditation room for prayers. He spends at least five hours daily at his prayers, and it is in order to avoid encroachment on his other duties that makes him rise so early.

THE THAKORE SAHIB TO-DAY

He spends on an average a daily three hours at his Secretariat. His daily routine is so that anyone in Limbdi knows at a given time where the Thakore Sahib is and his occupation.

His popularity amongst his friends and his people is unquestioned. So deeply do his people love him, so engrained is their faith engendered by long experience of his purity of heart and clean chaste way of living, that the simple people make "vows" to his person. And strange stories are told: by one who had his eyesight restored, another who lost his black leprosy, another whose fever left as if by magic. Truly simple faith works miracles!

The Jains, especially, apart from the Thakore Sahib's other virtues, are deeply attached to him for respecting their religious sentiments. But the Thakore Sahib, apart from the respecting of the sentiment of his people, is a humanitarian at heart: a man whose life is spent in good deeds and bringing happiness to others.

His own wants are very small. No Prince in India spends less on his own person. He dresses always in simple, spotless, white muslin, with simple muslin head-dress. The rest of his attire is equally simple and un-

A BEAUTIFUL PERSONALITY

ostentatious. His charity too is unostentatious : the extent and the lavishness of it, and the methods by which he ensures secrecy, are known, in full, only to the holder of his privy purse, and a few of his personal entourage. The greater part of the Thakore Sahib's private income goes, entirely, in charity.

In an age when enjoyment to the full, even to satiety, of worldly pleasures is part of the heritage of an Indian Prince, this Prince, who might easily have eaten freely of the gifts the gods suddenly gave him, stands, somewhat apart, a very beautiful God-fearing personality, receiving in unstinted measure, from his fellow-Princes, the greatest of respect and love.

सत्यमेव जयते

INDEX

A

- Aga Khan, H.H. the, prestige of, among his followers, 91-92
Aiyar, Sir Vishveshavar, Engineer of the Cauvery Dam, 159
Ali Shah, Lady, mother of the Aga Khan, 92
Australia, Federation of, enthusiastic reception of Indian troops
at opening ceremony of, 69-71

B

- Bhav Singhji, Rana Sahib of Porbandar, his friendship for
Daulat Singh (Dadbha), 55-57
appoints Daulat Singh as his Commander-in-Chief, 85
follows his advice closely, 87
attains full powers of government, 88-89
illness of, 96-97
unremitting care of, by Daulat Singh, 97-98
death of, 128
marriage of his daughter to the son of the Thakore Sahib
of Limbdi (Daulat Singh), 128-129
Bilado, mystery of the breaking of the marble chair at, 24-25

C

- Campbell, Captain, his overbearing treatment of Indian officers,
65, 66-67, 72
Chisholm, Colonel, commanding the 5th Royal Irish Lancers
his tribute to Dadbha, 54-55, 102
Connaught, H.R.H. the Duke of, inaugurates the Chamber of
Princes, 129
Cox, Captain, afterwards General Sir H. V., suggests that Dadbha
should attend musketry course at Meerut, 51-52
meets the Thakore Sahib (Dadbha) at the Delhi Durbar
121-122

D

- Daulat Singh (Dadbha), Sir, Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, birth
and childhood of, 19-20
education, 20-21

INDEX

- Daulat Singh (Dadbha), Sir—*continued***
 his adventurous journey to Bombay, 21-23
 his adventures at Bilado, 24-25
 marriage of, 29
 reliance placed on him by his family, 29-30
 joins the police force at Jamnagar, 38-39
 accepts the command of the Jamnagar Imperial Lancers,
 39
 visits Poona for equitation course, 39
 arranges settlement of the dispute concerning Bellara
 village with the then Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, 40-41
 forced to attend functions at his uncle's court at Jamnagar,
 47-48
 his military training, 49-50
 beginning of his friendship with Mr. Fitzgerald, 50-51
 one of those chosen to represent the Meerut Musketry
 Class at Lord Elgin's Durbar, 52
 his adventure at Harni Padi, 52-53
 congratulated by Queen Victoria on efficiency of the
 Jamnagar Imperial Lancers, 54
 attached to 5th Royal Irish Lancers for equitation course,
 54-55
 birth of his eldest son, now Yuvaraj of Limbdi, 55
 attends manœuvres under General Hogg at Deesa, 55
 his friendship for the Rana Sahib Bhav Singhji of Porbandar,
 55-57
 his power of endurance in the saddle, 57, 60
 his encounter with dacoits, 57-59
 correctly predicts the great famine of 1901 and makes
 preparations accordingly, 60-63
 his unostentatious generosity, 63-64
 presented to Lord Curzon, 65
 chosen to represent Kathiawar at the opening ceremony of
 the Federation of Australia, 65
 discomforts of his voyage to Australia, 66-69
 his experiences in Australia, 70-73, 77-80
 his trip to New Zealand, 73-77
 powers of observation of, 78-79
 on manœuvres as galloper to General Mason, 82
 stays in the camp of Sir Jaswant Singh, Thakore Sahib of
 Limbdi, for Lord Curzon's Durbar, 83
 publicly acknowledged by Sir Jaswant Singh as his heir,
 83-84
 resigns his command of the Jamnagar Lancers owing to
 intrigue, 84-85
 goes to Porbandar as Commander-in-Chief, 85
 assists the Rana Sahib of Porbandar to attain full powers,
 88-89
 is instrumental in Porbandar becoming a free port, 90-91

INDEX

- Daulat Singh (Dadbha), Sir—*continued***
 his friendship for the Aga Khan and the late Nawab Sahib of Palanpur, 91, 92
 accompanies the Rana Sahib of Porbandar to Bombay to meet H.R.H. the Prince of Wales (now H.M. King George), 94
 his meeting with Nawab Rasul Khanji of Junagadh, 94-95
 his unremitting care of the Rana Sahib of Porbandar during his illness, 97-98
 accepted by the Government of India as Thakore Sahib of Limbdi in accordance with the wishes of the late Thakore Sahib, 99
 erects memorials to Sir Jaswant Singh, 99
 installed as Thakore Sahib of Limbdi by Mr. Fitzgerald, 100
 makes pilgrimage to Benares with his relations, 106
 visits his sons at Rajkumar College, Rajkot, 106-107
 betrothal and marriage of his eldest son, 107-108
 his religious reforms, 110-111
 attends the Coronation Durbar of the King Emperor at Delhi, 112
 his audience of the King Emperor at the Delhi Durbar, 119-121
 his love for the King Emperor, 121
 meets General Cox at the Delhi Durbar, 121-122
 visits England to enter his son for Eton, 123
 his interview with Lord Morley, 123-124
 tours Europe with his son, 124-125
 returns to India, 125
 his horror at the attempt on Lord Hardinge's life, 125-127
 marriage of his eldest daughter to the Maharaja Rana of Porbandar, 128-129
 receives the honour of knighthood, 129
 his reforms in Limbdi, 134-144
 arranges for a reliable water supply to Limbdi, 140-141
 description of his Southern Pilgrimage, 145-160
 his Eastern Pilgrimage, 160-161
 his arrangements for the health of his party on the Northern Pilgrimage, 162-163
 description of the Northern Pilgrimage, 163-173
 allusion to the betrothal of his grandson to the granddaughter of the Maharaja of Tehri, 172
 characteristics and habits of, 179-181
Dwarka, stories connected with the Temple of, 174-176

F

- Fergusson, Sir James, Governor of Bombay, his letter offering seat on the Legislative Council to Sir Jaswant Singh, 43**
 visits Limbdi, 128

INDEX

- Fitzgerald, Mr., C. S. I., his first meeting with Dadbha, 50-51
his negotiations with Daulat Singh (Dadbha) on the freedom
of the Port of Porbandar, 90-91
his speech at the installation of Daulat Singh as Thakore
Sahib of Limbdi, 100-104
Forbes, Captain, recruiting officer for Jamnagar Imperial
Lancers, 38, 54

G

- Gandhi, Dewan at Porbandar, 17
George V, H.M. King Emperor, visits India for the Coronation
Durbar, 112, 118-122

H

- Hardinge, Viscount, Viceroy of India, attempt on his life, 125-
126
Haribhi, Commander-in-Chief of the Gondal Army, 4
his military exploits, 5, 6-7
death of, 7-8
Hay, Dr. John, his kindness to Dadbha when in Australia, 71,
79-80
Hill, Mr. afterwards Sir Claude, Political Secretary to the
Governor of Bombay, 89, 142
Hogg, General, his praise of Dadbha's soldierly qualities, 55
Hopetown, Lord, first Governor General of Australia, 70

I

- Irwin, Lord, Viceroy of India, attempt on his life, 127 note.

संयोजन जपने

- Jasaji, Jam, dominated by his advisers, 12-14
Jaswant Singh, Maharaja of Jodhpur, 25-27
Jaswant Singh, Sir, Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, his friendship
with Dadbha, 40-41
his settlement of the dispute concerning the village of
Bellara, 40-41
career of, 41-42
visits England, 42
accepts the offer of a seat on the Legislative Council, 43
elected one of the representatives to attend the Queen's
Jubilee, 44-45
visits Canada and the U.S.A., 45
chooses Dadbha as his successor, 46
attends Lord Curzon's Durbar, 83
publicly acknowledges Daulat Singh as his heir, 83-84
illness and death of, 97, 98-99

INDEX

K

- Kennedy, Colonel, ~~Assistant~~ the Governor at Rajkot, 56, 60, 62, 63, 88
Khandwa, cattle fair at, 23-24
Khavases, the, 9
Kitchener, Lord, Commander-in-Chief in India, 50, 82-83
Kulangar, the Raja of, the Thakore Sahib pays a state visit to, 148-150

L

- Lakhobhi, Rana, grandfather of Sir Daulat Singh, ancestry of, 8, 18
anecdotes concerning, 30-35
Limbdī, geographical position of the state of, vii
early history of, 1-5
the "gadi" of the two sects of the Jains, 109-110
comes into direct relationship with the Government of India, 129-131
the capital of, rebuilt by the Thakore Sahib, 134-135
educational reforms in, 135-138
prosperity of, 138-140, 142-144
water supply given to, 140-141
Lloyd, Sir George, afterwards Lord, Governor of Bombay, 130
Lyons, Sir William, Premier of Sydney, his kindness to Dadbha while in Australia, 70-71

M

- MacLaren, Mr., engineer in Jamnagar, 38
MacNaughton, Mr., Principal of the Rajkumar College of Rajkot, accompanies Sir Jaswant Singh, Thakore Sahib of Limbdī on his first visit to England, 42
Manilal, Mr., Personal Assistant to Colonel Kennedy, 62
his policy as Dewan of Porbandar, 86-88
Mason, General, his praise of Dadbha, 82
Meru, first Khavas Vazir of Jamnagar, 9-14
his loyalty, 13
Montague-Chelmsford Report, allusions to, 130, 133
Mulshanker, Mr., Assistant Superintendent of Police, 59
Muluji, Rana Shri, father of the Thakore Sahib of Limbdī, character of, 19
his visit to Jodhpur, 21-26
Mysore, the Maharaja of, character of, 158-159

N

- Natwar Singh, Maharaja Rana of Porbandar, his marriage to the eldest daughter of the Thakore Sahib of Limbdī, 128-129

INDEX

O

- O'Connor, Mr., Superintendent of Police in Jamnagar, 38
Oodeypore, Maharana of, insists on taking precedence over the
representative of Hyderabad, 112-114.
Oodeypore, stories of, illustrating Rajput chivalry, 115-118

P

- Pacham, struggle for the possession of, 1-3
restored to Limbdi, 5
Paton, Colonel, 65, 71, 72, 73
Pofart, Captain of the "Dalhousie," 66-67, 80
Pratap Singh, Sir, Maharaja of Idar, his gratitude to England, 26
ability of, 27
pride of, 27-28
proposes a marriage between the Thakore Sahib of Limbdi's
heir and Nandkunverba, daughter of the late Maharaja
Keshari Singh of Idar, 107

R

- Ranmalji, Jam, cruelty of, 14-17
gives village of Bodi to his brother-in-law Lakhobhi, 18
Reading, Earl of, Viceroy of India, his visit to Kathiawar, 131
Reay, Lord, letter from, to Sir Jaswant Singh, on his retirement
from the Legislative Council, 44
visits Limbdi, 128

संयोजन

- Sher Muhammed Khan, late Nawab Sahib of Palanpur, his
affection for Daulat Singh, 92

T

- Talsana, his claim to the "gadi" of Limbdi rejected by Govern-
ment, 105-106
Tehri, the Maharaja of, his hospitality to the Thakore Sahib,
169, 170-172
allusion to the betrothal of his granddaughter to the
grandson of the Thakore Sahib, 172
Thakore Sahib of Limbdi, *see* Daulat Singh.
Times of India, for August 28th, 1928, allusion to article in, 136
Travancore, the late Maharaja of, his meeting with the Thakore
Sahib, 147-148

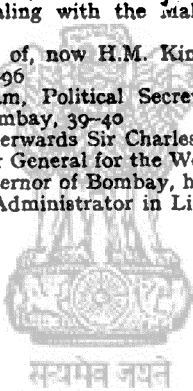
INDEX

V

- Vibhaji, Jam Sahib of Jamnagar, fifth son of Ranmalji, 16
character of, 35
account of his Khavas Vazirs, 35-37
his difficulties over the succession, 48-49
congratulated by Queen Victoria on the efficiency of the
Jamnagar Imperial Lancers, 54
death of, 55
Victoria, Queen Empress, congratulates the Jam Sahib on
efficiency of Jamnagar Imperial Lancers, 54

W

- Wales, H.R.H. Prince of, afterwards H.M. King Edward VII,
his tact in dealing with the Maharaja of Oodeypore,
112-114
Wales, H.R.H. Prince of, now H.M. King George V, his visit
to Bombay, 94-96
le Warner, Sir William, Political Secretary to Lord Harris,
Governor of Bombay, 39-40
Watson, Mr. C. C. afterwards Sir Charles, becomes first Agent
to the Governor General for the Western States, 129
Willingdon, Lord, Governor of Bombay, his visit to Limbdi, 128
Wodehouse, Colonel, Administrator in Limbdi, 99



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