

## CHAPTER XVI.

### Chamaraja Wodeyar X—1881—1894.

**Growing prosperity of the country—First Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition in 1888—Special encouragement given to arecanut gardens—Agricultural Banks—Encouragement to Industries—Gold Mining—Trade and development of communications—Census of 1891.**

During the reign of Chamaraja Wodeyar there was owing to a variety of causes an increase in the agricultural prosperity of the country. Generally the seasons were favourable for agricultural operations and there was also an increase in the growth of population creating larger and larger demands for agricultural products. The census taken in 1891 showed an increase of nearly 10 lakhs of people as compared with the number in 1881. The opening up of the country by means of railways and roads and the extension of irrigation had also their due share of influence in producing this agricultural prosperity. Taking Raiyatwari lands alone, inams or rent-free lands being inconsiderable in extent in Mysore and not subject to any appreciable variation, the occupied area increased from 40,90,402 acres in 1881 bearing a land revenue assessment of Rs. 63,51,000 to 61,73,826 acres in 1894 bearing an assessment of Rs. 84,47,525. Out of the increase, nearly a third was due to the introduction of the Revenue Survey and Settlement into 31 taluks, while the remaining two-thirds was wholly due to the extension of cultivation. Taking the two together, the total increase in the occupied area was 51 per cent, while that in the assessment was 33 per cent. It is evident, therefore, that the individual ryot held more land in 1894 in which year Chamaraja Wodeyar died and paid proportionately less for it than in 1881, the average assessment per head showing a decline from Re. 1-8-10 to Re. 1-5-11.

Prior to 1886 the office of the Director of Agriculture was held along with the offices of the Inspector-General of Police and of Forests and Plantations. In that year a separate Director of

Agriculture and Statistics was appointed and he was also entrusted with the duties of collection of statistics relating to rainfall, cultivation, breeding of stock, promotion of experiments in agriculture, trade and manufacture. In October 1888 during the Dasara festivities an Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition was held for the first time in Mysore and was opened by the Maharaja on the 16th of the same month.

The aims of an Exhibition were stated by L. Ricketts the President of the Exhibition Committee to be to gauge the resources of the country, to stimulate agricultural and industrial pursuits by disseminating useful information, to create a healthy emulation and secure excellence in the quality of products and to enhance their value by increasing the demand for them. The educational importance of the Exhibition consisted, according to the President, in forming as it were a vast sample room where the best specimens of agricultural produce and a varied collection of arts and manufacture could be seen together. The Exhibition was held in the Gordon Park at Mysore, a prominent site having been selected midway between the New Public Offices and the Oriental Library. The exhibits were classified under the following heads :—

SECTION A. Horses and Ponies, Cattle, Sheep and Goats.

SECTION B. Field Produce, Garden, Plantation and Jungle Produce, Fibres, Spices and Condiments, Sugars, Dyes and colours, Miscellaneous Vegetables and fruits.

SECTION C. Machines, Implements and Tools.

SECTION D. Ploughing competition.

SECTION E. Fine Arts.

SECTION F. Industrial Arts: Hardware and Cutlery, Earthenware, Glassware, Furniture, Basketware, Textile Manufactures, Leather, Stationery.

SECTION G. Foliage Plants.

The Exhibition gave an opportunity to the members of the Representative Assembly as well as to the visitors in general for comparing the agricultural capabilities of their respective taluks with those of other places, for informing themselves of the success that had been attained in various parts of the country in improving the breed of cattle and for obtaining some practical idea of the extent to which manual labour could be saved by the employment of suitable machinery for lifting water for irrigation purposes as well as for other operations connected with agriculture. In 1890 the Dewan announced that an increased number of agricultural scholarships was to be given to the Mysore students proceeding to the Madras Agricultural College for study on condition of their carrying on agriculture on their own lands and farms after completing their course of instruction. It was thereby the hope of Government to create agricultural centres on improved principles in different parts and by that means to bring about a gradual and steady permeation through the community of information respecting improved methods of agriculture and other industries connected with it.

The Supari or betel-nut garden owners of the Malnad were given special encouragement for the preservation of existing gardens as well as for the opening of new ones. The representative members from the Shimoga district had on several occasions placed before Government the hardships caused to the garden owners by the double levy of a heavy land assessment as well as a Sayer duty on the produce. In regard especially to the supari growers of Sagar and Nagar it was evident that they suffered not only from a comparatively high land assessment in addition to a Sayer duty on the produce but also from difficulty of procuring labour, from want of suitable markets within easy reach, and from a peculiar kind of rot known as *Koleroga* which affected the betel trees, for all of which remedial measures were necessary. In 1887 a set of Shraya rules was issued as a partial solution for the difficult problem of garden assessment in the Malnad. Bearing in mind the importance of maintaining uniformity in the system of assessment, the Durbar arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to retain in the hands of Government a special garden rate which had the

sanction of the usage of the country. As a first step the Shraya rules introduced gave formal effect to a system which had fallen into disuse on the introduction of the Revenue Survey. The rules issued offered liberal encouragement for the formation of new gardens by allowing in the Malnad a nominal assessment of 4 annas per annum for 12 years and for a progressive assessment during the next three years. In the case of all arecanut gardens situated elsewhere and all cocoanut gardens wherever situated the assessment was fixed at 4 annas per acre for the first 9 years, followed by a progressive assessment during the next three years. In 1891 Government made a concession to the ryots of the Malnad taluks by granting to them full rights in their *Soppinbettas* to such garden owners as had defined tracts to their gardens. Where no such allotment existed, a survey party was deputed for allotting such *Soppinbettas* to each survey number of the garden. The garden owners were free to cut in the Bettas assigned to them all kinds of trees except sandal and teak.

In 1894 a scheme of Agricultural Banks which was expected to yield very beneficent results was introduced and the Dewan's speech to the Representative Assembly of that year expounding the hopes and intentions of His Highness' Government is worth reproducing in full:—"Before concluding, I wish to make a few observations regarding the establishment of Agricultural Banks in this country which on more than one previous occasion was pressed on the attention of Government. The subject has now received that careful study and investigation which its vital importance demands and I am able to place in your hands the Kanada draft of a scheme whereunder banks for the special benefit of agriculturists can most readily be established in this country. The details of the scheme are set forth in full in the draft before you but I may in this place add a few remarks in explanation of its more salient features.

"On the one hand, we have large accumulations of unused capital in the country as evidenced by the balances in the Presidency and other Exchange Banks, the refusal of the former to receive any private deposits except as current ones carrying no interest and the

high premium which the Government of India  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent securities command. On the other hand, we have the agriculturist suffering from inability to raise the funds required for his *bona fide* purposes except at ruinous rates of interest. In our own State the balance of the Government Savings Banks deposits has risen from 4 lakhs in 1881 to 28 lakhs during the last year though the rate of interest was recently reduced to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  per cent, but the borrowing power of our ryot is as low as ever. The substantial agriculturist, especially the coffee planter and the grower of exportable produce, is able to obtain some credit from the foreign buyer on the security of his crops at 9 and 12 per cent interest. But the ordinary ryot is unable to get any credit except at usurious rates. To bridge over the wide gulf that thus separates capital from want is one of the most important problems of the day in this country and it is not without considerable diffidence that His Highness' Government approach its solution. But we derive the hope of eventual success from what has already been accomplished in some European countries where conditions very similar to ours have existed. These countries have tried various experiments for the reorganisation of land credit by interposing an intermediate body such as the Land Credit Banks of the continent between the capitalist and the agricultural borrower. These experiments have been attended with varying degrees of success according to the degree of identification attained of the interests of the intermediate body with those of the borrower. But the most successful system has proved to be that in which the agriculturists forming themselves into an association on strictly co-operative principles substituted their own credit for that of the intermediate body, thus securing for themselves the fullest return for their own credit as agriculturists and doing away with the profits of the middlemen.

“The existing conditions among us offer no insuperable obstacle in the way of the establishment and successful working of similar associations in this country under the designation of Agricultural Banks. Indeed, speaking of our State, the tracts in which the Suttige and crop-advance systems exist afford highly favourable conditions for their establishment.”

The essential principles underlying the constitution of these banks were:—

1. Every bank was to be an association of landholders formed on strictly co-operative principles and enlisted on the basis of mutual confidence arising from the mutual information of one another's character and resources, the object being the common benefit of cheap credit and not the earning of divisible profits.
2. The bank was to have no share capital, the funds required for the bank being obtained by means of loans raised or deposits received.
3. The members were to contribute their liability only.
4. The funds raised by the bank were to be lent only to its members at such moderate rates of interest as would leave the bank a small margin for the actual expenses of management and for the formation of a Reserve Fund.
5. The affairs of the bank were to be managed by a body elected from among the members themselves and giving their services gratuitously.
6. No loan was to be made except for an approved purpose such as some agricultural operation which with ordinary care could be expected to repay the loan and to leave some profit to the borrower.

While the credit of the bank was in the process of growth, the Government were prepared, assured the Dewan, to help the bank with deposits of money at favourable rates of interest. Further, exemptions were also to be granted from stamp and other duties to provide for the special registration of loans and their ready recovery, for the custody of funds in public treasuries and for the periodical audit of accounts. The co-operative spirit on which the association was based was, of course, to come from the people themselves. "I have no doubt," concluded Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, "such a spirit is to be found in most parts of the State, at least to

the extent of enabling us to make a small beginning. Small beginnings and early struggles are the necessary conditions of vigorous life and I indulge in the hope that the scheme if carefully worked on a moderate scale and in places where the conditions are most favourable will soon be the means of establishing a system of agricultural banks throughout the country. They will be a great education to the people in thrift and co-operation and they will be the means of creating a wholesome public opinion against unproductive expenditure and extravagance of all kinds."

The importance of industrial development was equally realised by the Maharaja's Government. In 1881 Rangacharlu in his address to the Representative Assembly in explaining the fall in land revenue drew pointed attention to the loss of a million of the population of the country and the consequent reduction in demand for food grains leading to a fall in their prices and deterring the ryots from bringing more lands under the plough, indicating thereby how much the success of agriculture was dependent on the flourishing condition of the manufacturing industries. The old idea, said Rangacharlu, that India must confine itself to the growth of agricultural produce was giving way to the more correct theory that no country could prosper unless its agricultural and manufacturing industries were equally fostered. In 1890 Sir K. Seshadri Iyer in explaining to the Representative Assembly certain concessions granted to a private capitalist for the establishment of a large scale iron industry in the Malavalli taluk, which however did not materialise, announced that it was to indigenous industries that they should look for the growth of capital and wealth in the country and real progress in other directions also. With the general poverty of the people on the one hand and their growing intelligence on the other, the great want of the people was doubtless the establishment of suitable industries on a scale calculated to afford a variety of remunerative occupations to large numbers and thus to obviate profitless competition within narrow spheres. Under such circumstances, the Dewan further said, it behoved the Government to do everything in their power not only to foster existing local industries but also to establish new ones wherever possible and recognising the principle that a far more powerful

agency in the matter than Government was the enterprise and intelligence of the people themselves, it was always the policy of Government to give every reasonable encouragement for the growth of new industries.

An outstanding industry that grew up during the reign of Chamaraja Wodeyar was that of Gold Mining. Mysore has now acquired a definite place among the gold producing countries of the world. The existence of old workings in the tract of country adjacent to Bowringpet in the Kolar District had long been known. But it was not till 1873 that any special attention was directed to them. In that year, one M. F. Lavelle, a resident of Bangalore who possessed some knowledge of Geology retired from the army and applied to the Government of Mysore for the exclusive privilege of mining in the Kolar District. His request was granted, one of the conditions being that a Royalty of 10 per cent was to be paid on all ores raised. Lavelle commenced operations by sinking a shaft in 1875 near Oorgaum. But finding that large capital was required for carrying out the work, he next year with the approval of the Government transferred all his rights and concessions to a military officer by name Beresford. This officer with some friends formed a syndicate known as the Kolar Concessionaires who took up the matter in earnest, at the same time obtaining a reduction in the rate of Royalty from 10 to 5 per cent. On these terms twenty square miles forming the Kolar Gold Fields were from time to time taken up by the Concessionaires and the Royalty and rent claimed by Government were further optionally allowed to be commuted by an immediate payment of Rs. 55,000 per square mile. By 1881 the Concessionaires secured the aid of Messrs. John Taylor & Sons, a firm of mining engineers in London. A general rush was now made for gold and rules for grant of mining-leases in other parts of the State were drawn up on similar terms. In 1886, finding that the Kolar Concessionaires were realising vast sums by sale of land containing gold, a fine of one-tenth of the consideration for every assignment of the lease was levied by Government.

The Government in 1886 also considered it necessary to have the country generally surveyed with reference to auriferous tracts



and Lavelle accordingly made a rough survey which was then gone over by Bruce Foote of the Geological Survey of India and duly mapped out. On information thus obtained, the existing rules were modified by providing for the grant of prospecting licences and making the grant of a lease conditional on a Company being formed within two years with paid-up working capital of £ 5000 per square mile and by reserving to Government the right to limit the total area to be leased for the time being and to dispose of mining leases for such areas by public competition. Under these conditions about ninety-seven square miles in all were leased out up to 1891, the land being situated in every district except Bangalore which was not within the auriferous zone.

In 1894 the Dewan stated in the Representative Assembly that under a system of prospecting licences and mining leases on favourable terms British capital and enterprise were attracted to the State and the mineral resources of the country had been so far developed that the anticipations of the past had been more than realised and the position of Mysore as a gold-producing country had become assured. The time therefore had arrived to organise and carry out a systematic survey of the State. At the end of 1894 a regular Geological Department was established under Bruce Foote whose services were borrowed from the British Government. The work of this department was to include a thorough investigation and record of the mineral resources of the country, the collection in a special museum of objects of geological and mining interest, maintenance of a laboratory for the purpose of making assays and analyses of minerals, and the training of young men for the work of the department in all its branches. Geology was also added to the curriculum of the Central College as an optional subject for the University Course.

It need scarcely be said that there was always much risk and uncertainty inherent in the mining industry and the success of even the Kolar Gold Mines was for a considerable time far from assured. In February 1881 one Captain B. D. Plummer, a miner of great experience, was appointed manager of the Nandidoorg Mine and he commenced operations there. These were continued till April

1883, when work was stopped for want of funds. Captain Plummer, however, from the crushings found that the prospects were encouraging and urged the shareholders to continue the work. But the shareholders had not the courage to venture more money. Meanwhile, another of the Companies the Mysore Mine had also come nearly to the end of its resources. A balance of only £ 13,000 remained and it was a question whether to divide this among the shareholders or to risk it on the mine. The strong advice of John Taylor prevailed and Captain Plummer was sent in December 1883 to do the best he could with the amount available. What actually occurred afterwards has now become a matter of history. The Champion Load was discovered by Captain Plummer and by 1885 the success of the Kolar Gold Fields became established. The £ 1 shares of the Mysore Mine which was as low as 10 pence were soon quoted £ 7-10-0 and it paid in 1886 a Royalty of Rs. 33,368 to Government. This was the first sum of Royalty received by the Mysore Government and in succeeding years it went on increasing till in 1894-95 it was Rs. 7,33,527. In 1894-95 there were 13 Companies at work representing a capital of £ 35,00,000 with a labour population including women and children, of 400 Europeans and 11,700 Indians. The annual payments on the spot in wages and otherwise exceeded 60 lakhs of rupees. In an area which was a few years ago a desolate waste sprung up a large and flourishing town humming with life and activity. A branch railway, as has been already stated, was opened in 1893 running from the Bowringpet junction of the Jalarpet-Bangalore line through most of the principal mining areas proving an immense convenience. In 1886-87 the total output of gold was 16,325 ounces valued at Rs. 8,88,606 and in 1894-95 the total production was 2,34,859 ounces valued at £ 8,44,271. The total quantity of gold produced during a period of about 10 years was 10,56,941 ounces valued at Rs. 2,34,39,352 plus £ 23,45,915. The total amount of Royalty received by the Mysore Government at 5 per cent on the gross income was Rs. 31,68,872. These figures showed the magnitude of the interests created. But although the country was naturally benefited greatly thereby, the principal transactions all took place in England where all the capital had been

raised and whither all the gold was conveyed. The dealings in shares took place on the London Stock Exchange and except some shares held by the Mysore Government very few shares were held by the people of the country. The Captains and other officials were English but the labour employed as far as Europeans were concerned consisted principally of Italian miners, and the native miners were at one time largely Moplabs from the Western Coast but in course of time others also were attracted by the liberal wages given.

Next turning to the textile trade, Bangalore became one of the most important distributing centres for this trade in Southern India. The first mill started in the Mysore State at Bangalore was in the year 1884 now known as the Mysore Spinning and Manufacturing Mills. The next mill started was in 1887 under the designation of the Bangalore Woollen, Cotton and Silk Mills. These Mills were started with local capital and large concessions were given by the Government in the shape of suitable sites and facilities for water supply. The Durbar also subscribed towards the share capital. These mills though now in a prosperous condition had a very chequered career in the earlier years and came to be largely financed with outside capital and the management also passed into the hands of outside agencies.

During the reign of Chamaraja Wodeyar considerable impetus was given to the trade of the country both by the extension of railways and by connecting them with those in British India as well as by the increase of the mileage of good roads. In the first ten years of this reign 471 miles of entirely new roads were opened out and 218 miles of roads which were incomplete at the time of the Rendition were fully completed. Some of these roads were reckoned as important railway feeders on which the development of the railway traffic mainly depended. The road from Avinhalli and that from Talguppa were designed and carried out via the Ninne Ghat to Gersoppa so as to afford a much needed outlet for the supari of the western Malnad. The construction of bridges over the Thunga at Hariharpur and the Bhadra at Balehonnur materially

removed the great obstacles that existed to the trade of Mysore with the Western Coast.

In February 1891 the usual decennial census was taken of the entire State on the system adopted in British India. The population of the whole State including that of C. & M. Station, Bangalore, was found to be nearly  $49\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs as compared with nearly 42 lakhs in 1881, the increase being nearly 18.08 per cent. To reach the figures of 1871 when the first census was taken and when the population was a little over  $50\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs, there still existed a gap of over one lakh which had to be made up.