

## **CHAPTER XLVII.**

### **Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV.**

#### **Various measures tending to the increase of material prosperity—1926—1936.**

##### **Gold Mining.**

It will be remembered that the Gold Mining leases were renewed in December 1901 for a period of 30 years commencing from 1910. The representatives of the Mining Companies applied in 1934 for a further renewal of the leases, so that they might know where they would stand in 1940 when the earliest lease was due to expire. Accordingly the question was taken up for consideration and fresh terms advantageous to the State were agreed upon for a further period of 30 years from 1940. According to the new terms, the State is to receive from the year 1940, in addition to the five per cent Royalty on all gold produced, a Royalty calculated on dividends varying from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to 40 per cent as the percentage of dividend increased. In the interval between 1934 and 1940 it was stipulated that the Mysore Government was entitled to receive a yearly Royalty on dividends calculated at two-thirds of the scale fixed for the new lease in lieu of the fixed  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent as settled in 1901. By this arrangement the State obtained the advantage of participating to an increasing extent in the profits of the Companies both during the interim between 1934-40 as well as in the future from the latter year, while the Companies were enabled to arrange their plans of working with a definite assurance of continuing in possession of the mines for a further period of 30 years. As a result of the new agreement concluded with the Companies and partly as the effect of increased production and partly as the effect of increased prices of gold, an increase under Royalty amounting to Rs. 9.80 lakhs accrued in 1935, besides an increase of income-tax amounting to Rs. 1.63 lakhs.

##### **The Bhadravathi Iron Works.**

The Bhadravathi Iron concern is now showing signs of improvement. At the time the operations were started at Bhadravathi, there was a general depression in the iron industry of the world.

The coal strike in England and the fall in the French and Belgian Exchange affected the sale of Mysore charcoal pig iron in England and on the continent. As some wrong impression prevailed regarding the working of the iron mines, a committee of visitors was appointed in 1928 from among the members of the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council with a view to their obtaining and disseminating first-hand information regarding these works. Sir M. Visvesvaraya who had been chairman of the Board of Management for 6½ years retired in 1929, his place being taken by Sir M. N. Krishna Rao, a Member of the State Council.

The market for lime acetate was considerably disturbed in November 1929 by financial troubles in America and the position was also subsequently rendered worse by the competition of synthetic acid. The iron industry in India was in a somewhat difficult position in 1930. The production was in excess of the country's demand for iron and the export markets hitherto available for the disposal of the surplus were rapidly contracting. But the importance of the industry for national well-being could hardly be over-estimated. A concern which manufactured only intermediate products or relied largely upon an outside market was always at a disadvantage. The Management therefore aimed at developing gradually the manufacture of finished articles which could find a ready market in the country.

In 1933 the position became worse by Japanese competition as regards cast iron pipes. A representation was made to the Government of India under the Anti-Dumping Law. The Iron and Steel Duties Act of 1934 of the Government of India extended protection to iron and steel products for seven years up to March 1941 and gave some relief for the time being.

To tide over these difficulties, a Steel Plant was installed and has been in operation from about the beginning of 1936. As a result, the operations have yielded a profit which for the year from July 1935 to the end of June 1936 are calculated to amount to about Rs. 2 lakhs. The open-hearth furnace in the Steel Plant was started on the 7th March 1936 and the Rolling Mills in the first week of April. About 3700 tons of steel ingots, 2000 tons of

billets and 1250 tons of finished sections were manufactured up to the end of August. Most of the troubles usually met with in the initial stages have now been overcome. The furnace is designed to give a daily output of 80 tons. The steel produced is found to be exceptionally pure on account of very low percentages of phosphorous and sulphur and is regarded as an ideal raw material for special and other alloy steels. The high tension line from Mysore to Bhadravathi supplies electric power to the plant for its working.

#### **Economic Depression.**

The economic activities, as we have seen, had received a check for some years past. In 1927, however, the Economic Superintendents were reappointed, one for each district. Statistics of trade were incomplete as the trade across the frontier by road was not taken into account, only figures relating to railborne trade being ascertainable. Arrangements were therefore made in 1929 to collect statistics of trade passing across the more important trade routes. But in 1931 it became necessary on account of general depression to suspend the work of the Economic Conference and to terminate the appointment of Economic Superintendents, the Revenue Sub-Division Officers being entrusted with the work of economic development in the districts.

The unparalleled economic collapse which began in 1931 all over the world seriously dislocated the international trade. The fall in commodity prices raised in about two years the real burden of indebtedness by more than fifty per cent, falling with special severity on countries in which the chief occupation was agriculture and where primary commodities were largely raised for export. Consequent on the suspension of the gold standard by the Government in England, the downward trend in prices of commodities was checked for some time but it was shortlived. In 1931-32 the balance of railborne trade against Mysore was a little over Rs. 2 crores, exports being a little over 8 crores and imports a little over 10 crores of rupees. As Sir Mirza Ismail stated at the Birthday Session of the Representative Assembly of the above mentioned year, the causes were various for the phenomenal economic depression that overtook the world. There had been,

according to Sir Mirza's analysis, slumps before; but what distinguished the present slump was the extent and appalling rapidity of the fall resulting in world-wide embarrassment and inconvenience. No one could say definitely whether this world-wide depression was due to the paucity or the maladministration of the world's supply of gold, to over-production or under consumption, to the fall in the price of silver, to the multiplication of the tariff barriers since the German War especially in Europe, or to all these causes put together. Production and consumption had got out of step all the world over and people were faced with the paradox of hunger caused by too much plenty. "A policy of courage," concluded Sir Mirza, "is however the proper policy for Mysore, and it is not therefore proposed that we should shut down Bhadravathi or any of the other State industrial establishments or call a halt in our schemes for development. On the other hand, we have proposed that we should go ahead with the Irwin Canal, with the new Silk Factory and with the electrification of towns and similar schemes."

#### **Extension of Electric Power.**

In 1928 negotiations with the Madras Government were completed for the supply of electric power from Sivasamudram to Mettur at a cost of about Rs. 10½ lakhs and the work having been completed, power was supplied from the 23rd November 1928 till June 1934. The Automatic Telephone was introduced in the Bangalore and Mysore Cities and between them and opened to the public. Every facility was afforded to the ryots to instal power-driven pumps for irrigation purposes and the concessions allowed were utilised freely. Power was also supplied to various places for purposes of illumination. Arrangements were made early in November 1931 for the supply of power to Salem and Erode towns in the Madras Presidency from the power station at Mettur. In 1935 the Krishnarajasagara Hydro-Electric and Irrigation Works represented an investment of capital between Rs. 7 and Rs. 7½ crores. The introduction of electric power in rural parts has encouraged the growth of several industries by substituting mechanised power in place of manual labour. The ryot who used to bail the water from his well by bullocks has in many places now

begun to realise the advantages of an electric pump by the help of which he is able to pump water at the rate of about 2000 gallons per hour. With the advent of electricity in rural areas, other small power installations have also sprung up. The electric flour-mill, the electric decorticator, the electric power loom are now to be seen in several of the rural parts.

#### **Hand-Spinning.**

A great deal of enthusiasm was evoked in hand-spinning and a Spinners' Association was formed and spinning demonstrations and competitions were organised in many centres. The most notable work in hand-spinning done during the decade was at Badanval near Nanjangud, where an attempt was made to ascertain by intensive work the prospects of reviving the hand-spinning industry as a subsidiary occupation among poor agriculturists. The organisation showed healthy signs of growth within the period of its existence extending to about four years.

#### **Railways.**

The Nanjangud-Chamarajanagar railway having been completed, it was opened for traffic by the Maharaja on the 27th August 1926. In the year 1919 the construction of this line was first undertaken by Government, but after a time the work was suspended owing to financial stringency. The Government, however, was subsequently enabled to resume the work by the Mysore District Board undertaking to finance the construction of the line as a District Board Railway out of the proceeds of a debenture loan of Rs. 8 lakhs, to which was added a portion of the railway cess which was being levied.

His Highness on the occasion of opening this railway expressed regret that he was opening only a very small part of the railway, that between Nanjangud and Chamrajanagar. It was at one time intended to continue the line to Erode. But the conversion of the line from Erode to Trichnopoly from the metre gauge to the broad gauge rendered through connection by that route no longer desirable. It was however understood that it was intended to build metre gauge connections from Gopichettipalyam on the one hand to Satyamangalam and Mettupalyam, and on the other, via Tiruppur and

Dharapuram to Palni. These connections would give a through metre gauge link from Dharwar on the north to Madura on the south, or in other words, would bring lines which traverse the whole length of the Mysore State on to a direct route between Bombay and Colombo. The Government of Mysore, His Highness said, was ready to undertake the portion of this length that lay within the State, if the remaining portion was undertaken by the British Government.

His Highness also at this time gave expression to a new railway policy, namely, that of Government undertaking to build railways on behalf of District Boards to meet local requirements on the latter undertaking a guarantee against loss and interest charges. In such cases the railway cess where it was voted by the District Boards was to be treated as a fund out of which the amount so guaranteed was to be met.

During this period the construction of the Shimoga-Arasalu railway up to Ragihosahalli, a distance of 19 miles, was also resumed and completed up to Anantapur. A serious danger to railway traffic, especially passenger traffic, now began to show itself by automobile buses running parallel to railway lines. Excepting the small broad gauge line of 55 miles between Bangalore and Bisanantham, the whole of the railway system in the State built at a cost of Rs. 6 crores belonged to Mysore.

Before leaving the subject of communications, reference may be made to the new policy of co-operation inaugurated in 1929 between the Government of India and the Indian States in certain matters, especially in the matter of road development and to which Sir Frank Noyce, Industries and Commerce Member of the Government of India, alluded in his speech on the 8th November 1935 on the occasion of the opening of the Vani Vilas Bridge across the Kapini near T-Narsipur. This bridge cost about Rs. 3½ lakhs, one half of which was met from the reserve of the Government of India in the Road Account. The Kaveri Bridge close by which was built entirely at the cost of the Mysore State opened a direct route to Sivasamudram, while the Kapini bridge

connected the same road with Kollegal and other important places in the Madras Presidency. This co-operation between the British Government and the Governments of the Indian States was the outcome of a recommendation made by the Indian Road Development Committee. This Committee proposed the creation of a Road Fund by the levy of an additional duty of customs on excise and petrol. The Committee also urged on the Government of India that they should not stand on narrow legal grounds excluding Indian States from the benefits of the fund. The Mysore State accordingly came to share, in common with the other large States, in the fund on the basis of the petrol consumed within her borders and was eligible to receive grants from the reserve for specially selected projects and for schemes of research and experiments. From the year 1930 the Mysore State received over Rs. 12 lakhs from this fund as its ordinary share.

#### **Irrigation.**

The extension of irrigation received vigorous attention in this period. Detailed plans and estimates for the excavation of the High Level Canal, subsequently named Irwin Canal in order to perpetuate the memory of the visit to Mysore of Lord Irwin the Viceroy of India, were the first to come under examination. A committee presided over by Sir M. Visvesvaraya appointed to investigate this problem in all its aspects unanimously approved an estimate of Rs. 180 lakhs for the work and recommended that the work should be started without delay. The Government accepted this recommendation and sanctioned the construction of the High Level Canal at a cost of Rs. 222 lakhs which was expected to bring under irrigation 1,20,000 acres in the taluks of Mandya, Malavalli and T-Narsipur. In the excavation of this canal, there was need to bore a tunnel to a total length of 9183 feet. The borings from the several sides exactly coincided and the whole work relating to the tunnel, including the lining of masonry, was completed in the early part of 1931. The waste weir gates were prepared at the Bhadravathi Iron Works.

The Irwin Canal supplies water to an area hitherto practically dry. The Krishnarajasagara Works constitute a combined

hydro-electrical and irrigational project of great magnitude costing nearly Rs. 5 crores. The Krishnarajasagara Dam was practically complete by about the end of 1932. It was the largest engineering work undertaken in the State and a standing monument to the talent, skill and resources of the engineers of the Mysore Public Works Department, of whom Rajasevasaktha Dewan Bahadur Mr. K. R. Seshachar was the most prominent.

#### **Establishment of a Sugar Factory.**

It was anticipated that when irrigation was fully developed in the Irwin Canal area about 40,000 acres of land would be annually cultivated with sugarcane. For the economic handling and disposal of this considerable volume of sugarcane, a sugar factory was needed even from the beginning. The sugar industry in India was protected by a duty on imported sugar. The committee appointed to work out the details connected with the use of the water of Krishnarajasagara presided over by the late C. S. Balasundaram Iyer who was then Member of Council, had provided in their scheme for the introduction of the sugarcane crop which was more profitable than rice. In 1933 a scheme for an enquiry into the cost of production of sugarcane was sanctioned by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research for a period of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years and the experiment of growing thick varieties of sugarcane was carried on in certain selected villages. It was, however, a long step from growing sugarcane to organising production on a scale suitable for factory use. New varieties had to be produced, new methods of cultivation and irrigation tried out and put into practice and a satisfactory rotation arrived at. It had also to be arranged that the cane crop came forward to the factory in such quantities on each day that the factory could handle and was not choked with cane at one period and stopped for want of it at another. The credit of overcoming the initial difficulties was due to Dr. L. C. Coleman who was then Director of Agriculture in Mysore and the factory commenced work from the 15th January 1934 under the management of a company known as the Mysore Sugar Company, the Government possessing the largest number of shares in this company. In order to avoid waste in respect of the



bye-products, it was decided to utilise the molasses produced in the factory for the distillation of alcohol, both potable and industrial, and with this view the Central Distillery was shifted from Bangalore to Mandya where the sugar factory existed and the contract for the manufacture of country spirits was entrusted to the Mysore Sugar Company which managed the factory. The Sugar Factory which finished its first complete year of working on the 30th September 1934 returned a profit of 10 per cent on its shares.

#### **Agreement with the Madras Government.**

A dispute between the Madras and Mysore Governments arose regarding the interpretation of certain rules of the agreement of 1924. According to that agreement, the minimum flow of the Kaveri that had to be ensured at the upper anekatt in the Madras territory before any water was impounded in the Krishnarajasagara had been fixed on the basis of certain gauge readings at the Kaveri Dam and it had been agreed that the discharge connoted by the gauge readings should be finally fixed on the basis of the gaugings of the 10 years ending 1926. Later however, the Mysore Government demurred to this arrangement on the ground that the floods of 1924 had brought about a state of affairs not foreseen at the time of the agreement. The Durbar therefore proposed that the period taken as the basis for calculating the discharges should be the 7½ years preceding the floods of 1924. The Madras Government were not agreeable to accept this proposal and as attempts to reconcile the divergent views of the two Governments in a manner acceptable to both were unsuccessful, the good offices of the Government of India were sought for and recourse was had to arbitration. Sir A. Page, Judge of the Calcutta High Court, was appointed arbitrator with two expert assessors nominated by the two Governments, one each. As a result of this arbitration, an agreement was finally arrived at and accepted by the two Governments.

Under the 1924 agreement with Madras, besides the 1,25,000 acres under the Krishnarajasagara, Mysore was entitled to irrigate 1,10,000 acres more by constructing additional reservoirs in the Kaveri valley and its tributaries. Investigations made showed that under the Kapini 40,000 acres could be secured for irrigation

and the remaining area in the Hemavathi and Lakshmanathirtha valleys. Mysore was also at liberty to extend irrigation by improvement of duty under each of the existing channels in the Kaveri valley by  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent of the area irrigated in 1910 remaining unsubmerged.

The Krishnarajasagara Dam is  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles long and is intended to store up water to a depth of 124 feet at full reservoir level. At the entrance to the Dam, an ornamental gate-way has been built from which a concrete road leads onwards over the Dam. Below the Dam is situated the "BRINDAVANA" (Terrace Gardens) laid out on both sides of the river. At the entrance to the garden on the south side, in a niche built in the face of the Dam is located a beautiful image of the goddess Kaveri with a bowl in her hand from which a continuous stream of water flows indicative of continuous prosperity and benevolence. On the eastern side is an orange grove with a plant nursery for ornamental, shady and economical trees supplying plants to different parts of the State. At another place is a Government experimental orchard where all varieties of fruits are grown. The variegated colours of the beds with a large number of ever-playing fountains great and small arranged all over, with the subdued roar of the cascades from the pavilions give the whole place the appearance of a wonder land. At night a string of electric lights adorn the full length of the Dam and mildly illuminate the flowery landscape below. The Kaveri image is illumined with a stream of small lights. These with the coloured illumination of the fountains present an appearance which is marvellous and enchanting to a degree. The fountains play day and night and people in a position to judge have declared these as one of the finest gardens in the world unequalled for their beauty and grandeur.

Another irrigation project completed in the middle of 1936 was the Anjanapur Reservoir in the Shimoga district. The people of the Shikarpur taluk were repeatedly urging on the Government during a period of nearly 50 years the desirability of constructing a reservoir across the river Kumudvathi and providing them with irrigational facilities. The scheme had at one time been investigated but given up for want of a suitable site for the weir.

In the year 1927 when the Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail, toured in Shimoga district, the people of the taluk again made a representation to him for the construction of the reservoir and agreed also to pay an acreage contribution of Rs. 50 and assessment at Rs. 10 per acre. Further investigation of the project was immediately ordered and a masonry dam across a narrow gorge with two channels therefrom was at first thought of, but due to the unsatisfactory condition of the rocky substrate so essential for a masonry dam, that project was given up. Later, further surveys were undertaken and an earthen bund at an other site was decided upon. An estimate costing nearly about Rs. 18 lakhs was sanctioned in November 1927. Work was started early in 1928 and it took eight years to complete the reservoir.

On the 3rd September 1936 Rajamantrapravina Mr. Rajagopalachar, Member of the State Council in charge of the Dewan's duties, performed the opening ceremony and during the course of his speech said that the development of a virile and prosperous peasantry which would give strength to any country was to be welcomed and should be the main aim of any Government worth the name. The construction of this reservoir, he further said, bore a fresh testimony to the fact that in Mysore both the people and Government took a live interest in promoting agricultural prosperity.

The earthen bund is 5000 feet long and at the deepest portion of the reservoir the height of the bund is 66 feet and the foundation is 20 feet below the bed of the river. The width of the bund at the bottom is 352 feet. The waste weir is 885 feet long. Two channels, one on the right  $18\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and another on the left  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles long to irrigate 7812 and 1832 acres respectively, have been provided for. The right bank channel when completed is also expected to provide water supply to the Shikarpur town which during the summer months at present suffers badly for want of adequate supply of drinking-water.