

C H A P T E R - V

R.V.SABNIS WORK AFTER RETIREMENT FROM

DIWANSHIP 1926-1948

Sir R.V. Sabnis retired from the Kolhapur state Service since 2nd January 1926, but he stayed in the Kolhapur city itself. Fortunately Sabnis was associated with some important works during his retired period. He was fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Asiatic Society Bombay Branch.¹

He also assumed some important honorary posts of the state during this period.

In his capacity as Diwan of Kolhapur Sir Raghunathrao had served the Kolhapur state well and he wanted to leave a true retired life pursuing his hobbies like reading, gardening. But that was not to be. He was offered the Diwanship of Indore State, which he politely refused. But the Maharaja of Kolhapur and also the State people would not allow him to lead completely a retired life. The Maharaja appointed him as the Chairman of the newly created Ilakha Panchayat (District Local Board) and people elected him as the Chairman of the Bank of Kolhapur Ltd., The Kolhapur Sugar Mills Ltd., Besides he was president of the Governing Body of Vidyapeetha and Miss Clerke Boarding for Harijans. He was an ideal head of all

these Institutions. He exhibited completely democratic spirit in the administration of these Institutions on many occasion there were heated discussion in the meetings of these institutions when charges and counter charges were made. But Sir Raghunathrao would never loose the balance of his mind. He would not intervene when the above discussion going on. He would allow every body to express his opinion freely. He would give his weighty commentsd at the end in most dignified and constructive manner. And in this way his sane voice would prevail., His Philosophy of conducting meetings was like this. The man giving expressions to out bursts and using strong language never carries any weight. On the contrary the man who rarely speaks, but speaks at the most appreciate time in low. Calm voice in precise manner proves effective such a man is bound to triumph.²

R.V.SABNIS : CHAIRMAN OF DISTRICT ILAKHA PANCHAYAT :

Rajaram Maharaj introduced Ilakha Panchayat in his state on 14th April, 1927.³ This was a bold step under taken by Rajaram and the President of this body was R.V. Sabnis for same years. The administrative reports throws light on this new step and interesting to see in origion. It runs as follows :-

ADMINISTRTION OF THE ILAKHA PANCHAYAT :

(1) With the noble object of introducing representative institutions in the State, His Highness the Chhatrapati Maharajasaheb was gracious enough to inaugurate the Ilakha Panchayat on the 14th of April 1927, at the hands of His Excellency the Governor of Bombay. This momentous step in the direction of Local Self-Government was generously taken by His Highness without any public demand from the people of the state, and for this spontaneous act the people are full of gratitude towards His Highness the Maharajasaheb. The Panchayats have been divided into three classes :- the Ilakha Panchayat, the Taluka Panchayats and the Village Panchayats. The Ilakha Panchayat is at the head of this Panchayat system. The Ilakha Panchayat is not merely one institution, but a complete network of Self-Governing local institutions in the village in the State. The Ilakha Panchayat is the central authority which is charged not only with the duty of guiding its subordinate counterparts in the Talukas, but also of guiding the village Panchayats. The Panchayats have been introduced with the object of training the people in the administration of their civic affairs, through their elected representatives.

They will be trained in the habits of removing their local inconveniences out of the money raised by themselves. The Panchayats are faced with the duties of regulating health, sanitation, primary education, temple charities, roads, wells, and other works of public utility.

(2) The most notable point of difference between these Panchayats and the Local Boards in British India is that a provision has been made in the Ilakha Panchayat Act of Kolhapur to bestow civil and criminal rights to the Taluka and Village Panchayats, and it is hoped that, in due course of time these rights will be given to them. The Ilakha Panchayat is unique in as much as it is charged not only with the duty of controlling and advising the village Panchayats already established, but also of introducing new village Panchayats in all possible places.

(3) The management of village temples and charities, which properly belongs to the sphere of the Panchayats, is also placed in the hands of these Panchayats. For this purpose, separate Devasthan Mandalos have been created, the Devasthan Mandal of the Ilakha Panchayat being at the head of the Devasthan Mandals of the

Taluka Panchayats. The Devasthan Mandal has got its independent establishment and budget. Provisions is made in the Devasthan Rules under the Panchayat Act to secure due representation of every sect and community in these Mandals.

(4) The Panchayats will, thus, be self-Governing bodies in reality.

CONSTITUTION :

(5) The Ilakha Panchayat consists of 28 members of whom 14 are elected by the Taluka Panchayats and 14 are nominated by the Darbar. The Taluka Panchayats consist of 12 members of whom 6 are nominated by the Darbar and 6 are elected by the people in the Villages who are land-holders paying an assessment of Rs.16 and more per year. Except the Mulki Patil who is an ex-officio member and president of the village Panchayat all other members are elected by the village people who are land-holders paying a local fund of annas 3 or more per rupee of assessment or who pay a house-tax or land-rent of annas 8 or more per year to the village Panchayat. The number of members in village Panchayats varies from 5 to 11. The President of the Ilakha Panchayat is nominated, the Mamledars and

Mahalakaries of the Talukas and Mahale are the ex-officio members and President of the Taluka Panchayats.

(6) The President of the Ilakha Panchayat is an ex-officio member and Chairman of the Standing Committee in addition to the five members. All the Taluka Panchayats had similar standing Committees, the number of members varying from 5 to 7.⁴

R.V.SABNIS AND HIS NOTES ON KOLHAPUR : (1928) :

Sir R.V. Sabnis right from studentship was a studious and he had mastery over English language. But unfortunately he did not produce or write any greef Literacy work. His only writting and book known to us is Notes on Kolhapur. Which he wrote at the instance of Kolhapur Darbar in 1928. Even though this was only one his work, he showed his scholarship knowledge of history in this book. The book runs in to 88 pages and it has two parts. The part first deals with, situation and Aspect, Early History of Kolhapur maury as, Andhras, Chalukyas, Yadavas, Bahamanis, Marathas, Shivaji the the great, 1674 to 1680 Sambhaji, Rajaram, Shivaji II, (1700 to 1712), Sambhaji II (1712 to 1760), Shivaji III, (1760-1812), Shambhu (1812 to 1821),

Shahaji, (1821 to 1837), Sshivaji IV (1837-66)
 Rajaram II (1866 to 1870), Shivaji V (1870-83) Shahu
 II (1874 to 1922) and minority period, Rajaram III,
 and in the part II, he narrated an account of Temples,
 Public Buildings and places of Interest. The Second
 part of this book is very important because it gives
 interesting information to the readers about, Ambabai
 Temple, ceiling of Navagraha-Mandap or Ashta-dikpal
 Temple, Vitoba Temple, Trymbuli, the memorial Temples,
 Temple of Kopeshwar (Khidrapore), Royal family of
 England, New Palace, Old Palace, Residency, Shri
 Radhabai Akka Sahib Maharaj buildings, The Twon Hall,
 Rajaram College, Kolhapur General Library, Ahilyabai
 Girls School, Jayshing Rao Ghatage Technical School,
 Albert Edward Hospital, Her Highness Shri Vijayamala
 Veterinary Hospital, Rajputwadi Paddock, Shri Shahu
 Chhatrapati spinning and weaving mills, Sir Leslie
 Wilson Road and Lady Wilson Bridge, Shri Rajaram Tank,
 Panch Ganga Pumping Installation, Kalamba Tank, Rankala
 Tank, Panhala.⁵ The Author R.V. Sabnis writes the need
 of such book as follows "A Handy Volume giving a concise
 upto date account of Kolhapur, and Chief institutions,
 temples and places of interest, has been a long felt want.
 The following pages are written with a view to meet it."⁶

For writing this book he studied and used the following sources.

- (1) Kolhapur by major Graham, Political superintendent in the early fifties of the last century.
- (2) Campbell's Gazetteer of Kolhapur.
- (3) Administration Reports of Kolhapur.
- (4) Rao Bahadur Latthe's memories of His Highness Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaja of Kolhapur.
- (5) Information kindly furnished by officers of the State and others.⁷

Besides 'Notes on Kolhapur' R.V. Sabnis wrote Forward and preface to many books. But that was his stray writings.

Sir R.V. Sabnis wrote one Marathi Article on Rajaram Maharaj which was published on 11th August, 1934 in 'Sevak'.⁷

Sabnis wrote this article on the occasion of Rajaram Maharaj on 37th Birthday in which he gave the account of the glorious period of Shri Shahu Chhatrapati as well as Rajaram's administration. This was a lengthy article in which he throw light on the social work

carried by Rajaram Maharaj who continued the social Policy adopted by Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati. This is a rare article, therefore we enclosed it in to appendix.⁸

R.V. SABNIS : CHAIRMAN OF 'THE BANK OF KOLHAPUR' :

In 1926 'The Bank of Kolhapur', was established in Kolhapur for meeting the needs of the people. Sabnis was a social worker and he became the Chairman of the Board of Directors of this bank right from its inception. He remained Chairman of this bank more than 10 years and the bank of Kolhapur achieved great success and financial stability under the Chairmanship of Sir R.V. Sabnis.⁹

Even today the Bank of Kolhapur is famous and working for the poor and common people.

R.V. SABNIS AS A JUDGE OF THE SUPERME COURT

KOLHAPUR - 1931 :

On the anniversary of the Coronation day i.e. 31st May, 1931, there was a welcome charge in the administration of the Justice. His Highness Rajaram Maharaj was pleased to established an independent High Court consisting of three judges and the Supreme

Court of His Highness. This progress step is a clear indication of the solicitude and earnest desire which His Highness has for the welfare of his subject.¹⁰

Sabnis was appointed honourable judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature Kolhapur in 1931.¹¹

He was liked both by the Ruler and the people and his advice was sought for an important matters by Rajaram Maharaj to whom his loyal attachment was well known.¹²

Sabnis knew rules, laws of the Kolhapur state and well acquainted with law procedure also because for some time he was the student of LL.B. which he did not complete due to financial problems. But when he became Diwan of Kolhapur he studied State and British laws, revenue laws. Therefore, Rajaram Maharaj appointed him as a honorary judge of the supreme court which was established by Kolhapur Darbar in 1931. R.V.Sabnis discharged this duty honestly and disposed some cases impartially. He also gave sound advice to Rajaram Maharaj, when there was a Knotty case before them.

R.V. SABNIS AS A CHAIRMAN OF THE KOLHAPUR SUGAR MILLS LTD. KOLHAPUR : (1932) :

Sugar Cane was a major Crop produced in the Kolhapur state. The land was fertile on the banks of

rivers 'Panch Ganga' and others. Therefore to prepare a sugar from a sugar cane, Kolhapur Darbar started, The Kolhapur Sugar Mills Ltd., Kolhapur at Kasaba Bavada and R.V. Sabnis was the Chairman of Board of Directors.¹³

The Official records runs as follows :-

"The Kolhapur Sugar Mills were established and incorporated at Kolhapur under the Indian companies Act VII of 1931 as adopted by the Kolhapur Government and registered as a limited concern on 3rd October, 1932. The authorised capital is Rs. 10,00,000 as ordinary shares and Rs. 25,000 as deferred shares. The Capital called and subscribed is nearly 8 lakhs of Rupees."

"His Highness (Rajaram Maharaj) has taken keen interest in Making the factory a success and rendered every possible help both financially and otherwise. His Highness Government have purchased nearly half the number of shares and have also given loans from time to time for the working expenses of the factory."

R.V.SABNIS AND BHAKTISEVA VIDYAPITHA :

Chhatrapati Shahu had a good contract with Theosophical society had a good contact with in his Akabarian Zeal, Shahu had already tried to establish

contact with the Theosophical society, through his friend W.D. Tophkhane and had invited Dr. Annie Besant and other leaders to Kolhapur in 1915.

In 1915, he came in contact with Theosophist whom also he encouraged a great ideal. Mr. Tophkhane was now the recipient of very frequent patronage and his Vidyapeeth came into being by the side of his old Palace Mrs. Besant and her followers were invited to Kolhapur in 1915 and the Theosophical Society had thus had their day.¹⁵ Sir R.V. Sabnis was the friend of V.D. Tophkhane also who was the founder of Bhaktiseva Vidyapeeth. Sir R.V. Sabnis was also a Chairman of Vidyapeeth Society for same time and worked in the managing council of this society.

DEATH OF JANAKIBAI SABNIS (1942) :

Lady Janakibai was the wife of Raghunathrao Sabnis. She married with Raghunathrao in 1872 and became the life partner of Raghunathrao Sabnis. She was a pious lady and took all family responsibilities throughout her life. Therefore, R.V. Sabnis was free to look after Darbar work as well as social work in the Kolhapur state. Her elder son Rambhau received education upto B.A.,LL.B. and became legal adviser³ of Shahu Maharaj. This Rambhau

later on, appointed as the High Court Judge of the Kolhapur state. Their second son Gajananrao was also well educated and served as deputy educational inspector in the education department. Their third son Laxmanrao alias Baburao B.A. who was working in the revenue department as secretary to Sarsubhe.¹⁶ Thus all sons were educated and well stabilised. The family life of Janakibai and Sir R.V. Sabnis was complete happy. But the year 1942 was disturbing their family life due to the death of Janakibai on Friday 14th August, 1942.¹⁷

The Times of India (Bombay) wrote the following account about the death of lady Janakibai "The death occurred at Kolhapur on Friday evening of lady Janakibai Subnis, wife of Sir. R.V. Sabnis. Retired Diwan of Kolhapur after a brief illness. Lady Sabnis took great interest in the social uplift of women. She was 80 year old.

The funeral of lady Janakibai Sabnis wife of Sir R.V. Sabnis, former Diwan of Kolhapur was very largely attended. Her Highness Maharani Tarabai Saheba of Kolhapur paid a condolence visit to Sir R.V. Sabnis and several important persons including Lt. Colonel P. Gaisford, Resident for Kolhapur and the

Deccan States, Mr. E.W. Perry, Prime Minister of Kolhapur. The feudatory chiefs at Kagal (Jr.) and Torgal and Sir Govindrao Madgaonkar, judge of the Supreme Court, Kolhapur either sent condolence messages or paid visits to Sir R.V. Sabnis. Lady Sabnis who was held in high esteem in Kolhapur took keen interest in women's education and gave large donations for that purpose.

Condolence meetings were held and resolutions in connection with the death of Lady Janakibai Sabnis were passed by the Bank of Kolhapur, the Sugar Mills, The Arya Samaj, the Jain Shravika Association the Kolhapur Journalist Association, the Chandra Seniya Kayastha Prabhu Samaj, the Kshatra Vaidic Institution and several of the institutions in Kolhapur."

R.V. SABNIS : LAST FIVE YEARS, CHARACTER, HABITS :

He was not an orator but his reasoning was impressive. In those days there were no loudspeakers. But vast multitudes of people would be able to hear him clearly. Because whenever he would rise to speak, people would listen him in pindrop silence. His speech could be heard even in the majestic wrestling Arena anywhere by every man.



He admired Dr. Annie Besant and Sarojini Naidu for their oratory. Dr. Annie Besant visited Kolhapur in 1916 and delivered a series of lectures in Vidyapeetha. Sir Raghunathrao would attend every lecture without fail. But he admired Sarojini Naidu more. "I could not imagine an Indian and that too an Indian woman could master English Language so perfectly," he would say. Sarojini Naidu was president of the Indian National Congress held in 1925 at Cawnpore. Sir Raghunathrao out of admiration and curiosity showed her presidential address to the then Resident of Kolhapur, and asked his opinion. "Even very few Englishman have mastery over English as Mrs. Naidu has," Commented the Resident."

He did not believe in astrology, but lover of Astronomy. He used to spend nights after rights in watching the planets and starts. His knowledge of plants was amazing. He know hundred of plants both Indian and foreign by name. Once to test the knowledge of one of his relatige, he asked the name of certain plant.

The relative gave a wrong answer. Sir Raghunathrao rebuked him mildly and said, "That means you don't know either of the plants. When you do not know anything definitely, it is better to admit it frankly than to give wrong answer."

He believed in God, but was against iċol-worship. He used to visit famous temples, whenever he got a chance. But that was out of love for art and sculpture. He would survey the work of art minutely and appreciate it.

He was lover of good literature. He had read Shakespeare. He had a collection of all the dr3amas by Shakespeare. Charles Dickens was another his favourite writer. Especially his pickwick papers appealed to him. He would quote extensively from pickwick papers.

He had read many amodern writers, Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, Somerset Maugham. He liked Maugham summing up very much.

He admired Mahatma Ganċhi and Jawaharlal Nehru very much.

In this connection Sir Raghunathrao mentioned how he once travelled with Vithalbai Patel from Bombay to Delhi in class, may be in 1927. Vithalbai whc was then Speaker of Legislative Assemblies session, while Sir Raghunathrao was going to Delhi preside over Assembly session, while Sir Raghunathrao was going there as he was called by Rajaram Maharaj for some urgent consultation. On reaching Delhi, Vithalbai Patel said to Sir

Raghunathrao "You gentleman, you did not open your mouth throughout the whole journey. I did the talking, "Sir Raghunathrao replied, "How it was possible to open my mouth, when the lion was roaring ?" Vithalbhai roared with laughter.

The author F.W. Bain was personally known to Sir Raghunathrao very well. Sir Raghunathrao was a socially forward looking man. He was great admirer of Agarkar. He persuaded Shahu Maharaj to extend economic help to Agarkar's Sudharak weekly. Shahu Maharaj was dubbed as antibrahmin, but that was not a fact. Shahu Maharaj always appreciated the work of Agarkar, Gokhale, Karve. He even accepted, the presidentship of Deccan Education Society. He was against Brahminism, but not against Brahmins. On the contrary he encourage those Brahmins whose approach was liberal and progressive.

Karve's movement for imanicipation of women and his work for women's was also greatly appreciated by Sir Raghunathrao. He wanted the women of India to take rightful place in society. In 1944, Rajaji addressed a women's meeting in Rajaram College. Sir Raghunathrao attended the meeting as a special invitee.

Never before so many women had assembled in a meeting. "I have never seen so many women at one place," he told Rajaji. While addressing the meeting Rajaji mentioned this and said, "The grand old man of Kolhapur says that for the first time women have gathered in such a big number for a meeting. By assembling in such a big number, you have given him a pleasant shock. Also you have shown, how far you have marched in your emancipation struggle. When this Grand Old man was born, why even when I was born, women were suffering a lot. They were victims of social customs. They were confined to the kitchen and to the cradle. But thanks to the pioneering work done by great reformers right from Raja Rammohan Roy and especially due to Gandhiji's call to women to come forward and take their rightful part in the national movement, the women are asserting their right and taking their rightful place in the society as equal partners.

Your presence in such a big number here is symbolic of how far you have marched in your struggle for emancipation. In that meeting Smt. Urmilabai Sabnis made a short speech in Hindi. It was another pleasant surprise for Sir Raghunathrao. He said, "I never imagined that my daughter-in-law would come forward and make a speech before such a vast audience."

Sir Raghunathrao's catholicity and broad-mindedness was proverbial. Once of his grand-daughter Shakhikala (Now Mrs. Pant) joined Navjivan Sangh (A group believing in Marxism), a step presented by all the member of the household. But Sir Raghunathrao was not perturbed by her action. He believed anybody has the right to behave according to his conscience. At the same time he gave a very valuable advice to Shashikala. He said, "I do not see anything wrong in joining any party a person believes. But such person must display high moral character in every aspect of life." His concept of morality was all pervading.

When Shashikala decided to marry a youth outside her community, there was again opposition from her parents. Against Sir Raghunathrao advised them to allow Shashikala to marry the youth selected by her.

He never spoke in derogatory terms about behind his back, nor he encouraged anybody to talk in that way. If anybody tried to talk in that way, he would quietly try to change the subject. But if person doggedly persisted in such a talk, he would listen to him with uneasy silence. He never tried to enter in to

any argument with him. At the same time he would keep the derogatory talk a guarded secret. His was not the way to encourage personal jealousies. In this anybody could safely rely on him. His another marvelous truth was that he rarely got angry in the course of conversation. Once a gentleman asked him "Diwansahib, how is that you did not get angry with Mr.....though he was speaking nonsense ? He even offended you, but did not get angry. "His reply was typical. He said, "I do not allow anybody to provoke me into anger. I always consider that anger as a sort of defeat."

He was very much articulate in his correspondence. He saw that every letter soliciting a reply was replied. He used to read or get read every letter and dictated a reply. He was always ready to help the needy. He donated generously. Some donations were made silently without any publicity. Besides he had helped hundred of students with small amounts. He was aware of the trials he had to go for education. Naturally he was very sympathetic to the students who were eager to take education.

He was a man of etiquettes. He hardly committed any mistake in etiquettes. But his idea of etiquettes

was not narrow. His etiquettes were broadbased. Once he wrote to one of his relatives. "One may drink tea in a cup or sauser according to his convenience, the question of etiquette does not arise there. We also know that different countries havee different etiquettes. An etiquette must be an outward expression of inner culture. A man must be decent in behavious. He should avoid rudeness and crudeness while behaving with fellow men. "And he did behave according to this motto throughout his life. He never offended anybody by his behaviour. No matter wheather a man was big or small, he gave him patient hearing and courteous treatment. He had a good command over Sanskrit and he could write very good Marathi, but in English his extraordinary talent was most evident. Really he was master of English. He could write chaste English or what was better known as King's English. While writing English he strictly observed the five rules of King's English.

- (1) Prefer familiar word to the farfetched;
- (2) Prefer the concrete word to the abstract;
- (3) Prefer the single word to the circumlocution;
- (4) Prefer the short word to the long;
- (5) Prefer the saxon word to the Roman word.

His language was straight, simple and where every word has definite meaning. He avoided writing evolved language. He know original source of hundreds of English - words. While writing he would occassionally use some phrases other than English and enhance the grace and beauty of his language. Because of his love for straight, simple and unevolved language, he liked Gandhiji's writing in English.

Reading weekly Harijan had been a part of his routine. Though he held many important positions in the state administration, the school master in him persisted to the end of his life.

He was very regular in his habits. He went through his daily routines with the clock-like precision. He took some sort of exercise till his last serious illness. His diet was balanced. Of course, while he was working as Diwan, on many a occasion he could not keep this regularity. He had once contacted Diabetes. But by strict control of diet and resolute will he overcame this pernicious disease. Once an insurance company had refused to insure him. Reason the doctor who had examined him, deal ared that he was suffering from heart-trouble. The doctor advised him complete rest. He believed that doctor and decided to carry his instructions. Shahu Maharaj was told that his Diwan

was suffering from heart trouble. Shahu Maharaj visited him. Shahu Maharaj first showed some mock sympathy to him and then laughed heartily. He said, "This doctor must be a first class idiot. I suggest a better remedy for your heart trouble. Let us go for a horse-ride. You will be completely cured."

So Sir Raghunathrao began his routine as usual and there was no trace of heart-trouble. When he was in his sixties another doctor suggested to him that he might be suffering from heart ailment. Sir Raghunathrao heard him. But he was not disturbed by the doctor's diagnosis. It was strange irony of fate that the doctor himself, in a few days, died of heart-ailment.

Sir Raghunathrao was a picture of good health till last serious illness. When asked about the secret of his sound health, he said, "Two famous doctors always attend me. Their names are Dr. Diet and Dr. Quiet."

Sir Raghunathrao was a practical educationalist. He was not in the habit of sitting in an ivory tower and giving lengthy sermons education. But he had some concrete ideas about education.

- He believed in work oriented education.
- He believed that the then education turned out only clerks.

- He believed that vocational training must be a part of the curriculum.
- He believed that the education must equip people for practical life in the modern world.
- He believed in science and scientific progress.
- He was a staunch supporter of women's education.

He was not enamoured by foreign education. His eldest son Ramchandrarao alias Rambhau wanted to go England for Bar-at-Law. It was not impossible for Sir Raghunathrao to send him to England. Shahu Maharaj would have given him a scholarship. But Sir Raghunathrao was not keen to send him to England. "It is not necessary to be a Barrister-at-Law to shine in legal profession. Even a High Court Pleader can be an eminent lawyer." When he said this, he quoted the example of Dadasahib Karandikar, who was not more than a High Court Pleader.

Once Shahu Maharaj and Sir Raghunathrao were discussing about the youths in Kolhapur State. They decided to send four youths to America to test their capability to shine independently in a distant foreign country. The youths were to be provided with an amount to cover the fair of the voyage by steamship and to cover minimum expenses in America for a few days. Sir Raghunathrao, who was entrusted with the responsi-

bility of selecting the youth selected Shamrao Parasni, Gupte, Chavrekar and Chinchlikar. The first world war had then entered into its second grim year (1915). The youths after a very risky and adventurous journey reached America. Out of four youths Chinchalikar could not adjust to the life in America and returned to India very soon. Gupte died in America accidentally, Chavare by hard labour and patient work rose to be an Engineer in Ford Motor Company. When Soviet Russia launched her second five year plan in 1973, America under President Franklin Roosevelt extended to her technical co-operation. America sent some eminent technicians to Russia to help to erect some factories, and Chavare was one of the technicians sent to Soviet Russia. Shamrao Parasnis tried his hand at many professions, became an American citizen and settled in America.

In 1934 Parasnis visited India. At that time he presented to Sir Raghunathrao a very precious gift, a big natural pearl in a shell. Sir Raghunathrao said that it was princely gift worthy to be presented to a prince. Shamrao replied, "You are my prince and, therefore, I am presenting this gift to you."

Sir Raghunathrao was a lover of music especially classic music. He and Alladiyakhan, whom Dr.M.R.Jayakar

once described as Mt. Everest of Indian Music, admired each other, Ambika Dhurandhar renowned artist daughter of famous artist Dhurandhar narrated me an interesting anecdote about Sir Raghunathrao. Whenever Dhurandhar with his daughter Ambika visited Kolhapur, he stayed with Kumbhojkar, once Khasgi Karbhari of the Maharaj. Sir Raghunathrao while returning from his morning walk would step in at Kumbhojkar for a chat. On every such occasion, he would ask Ambika, who was well versed in classical music, to sing and she would willingly respond. Sir Raghunathrao would greatly appreciate her music. She said, "At such time a feeling of delight would lit his calm face. He would look Prasanna Chitta." On the death of Dhurandhar, Sir Raghunathrao Ambika Dhurandhar a highly appreciative letter about his art. Two lines from that letter are worth quoting here :

"Raobahadur had very high talents with almost superlative modesty. As a bright exponent of pictorial art, Kolhapur has always felt proud of him."

Sir Raghunathrao lived to see India emerging as an independant nation, soon after India became independant, Mr. C. C. Desai, who was sent to wind up the Residential Officer there called on Sir Raghunathrao as a matter of courtesy. The conversation between them at that time was somewhat as follows :-

Desai : Sirsahib, you have spent all your life in the service of a State, what is your reaction now ?

Sir Raghunathrao : My reaction is favourable. It is a proud day in my life. We people never imagined that the British steel frame would be broken, but what seemed impossible has happened.

Desai : But independent India is wedded to democracy, while you were Prime Minister of a State under a ruler who was all in all.

Sir Raghunathrao : Yes. But if a ruler is benevolent the State prospers. Unfortunately there were very few benevolent rulers like Shahu Maharaj, Sayajirao Maharaj, Madhavrao Scindia Maharaj. Almost others were despots. In democracy people breathe freely.

Mr. Desai left the conversation there and left after a prolonged chat.

Sir Raghunathrao always slept by 10 p.m. But on 14th August, 1947 he remained awake till midnight. He heard with rapt attention Nehru's tryst with destiny speech delivered in the special session of Constituent Assembly.

Next day in the morning he asked us to remove the photos of King George V and Queen Elizabeth in her hall and put in their place the photos of Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru.

On the following days also he would listen attentively a speeches of different leaders broadcast by All India Radio.

He exclaimed, "Ho, Ho", (his usual way of exhibiting delight) when he heard on 15th August, 1947, Sarojini Naidu opening her speech with these memorable words : "Oh, world of free nations, on this day of our freedom, we greet you. Oh, world of nations not yet free, on the day of our freedom we pray for your freedom in the future." (Speech broadcast by All India Radio).

A few days after India won independence, Dinkarrao Surve, one of the top Military Officer came to see him. Sir Raghunathrao asked him, how he felt about India's independence. He was astonished to hear from Surve that Indian Military personnel would really be very happy at this event. He explained, "In army we were never treated on par with British Officers. The British Officers were a privileged class, another thing, we could never rise under British Administration to top positions in the army. But now anybody of us

could aspire to be the Chief of Staff in the Indian Army. All avenues in the army are now open to Indians.

He went so far to tell Sir Raghunathrao that of all the persons, the Indians in the army would be most happy at Indian Independence.

Sir Raghunathrao had a few friends and many admirers. Among his friends were Shankar Pandurang Pandit a scholar and social reformer, Sir M. Vishweshwar Ayya, Principal Woodhouse Madhav Narayan Pandit of Rajkot an eminent social worker, Hon. Panditrao, Hon. B.V. Jadhav, Dr. Balkrishna. Among his admirers were Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil, Dr. Sitaram, late vice-Principal of Rajaram College and Prof. A.C. Bose, whenever Bhaurao Patil called on him he always reverently touched his feet. Dr. Sitaram was so touched by Sir Raghunathrao's modesty that he spontaneously took the responsibility of collecting material for Sir Raghunathrao's book Notes on Kolhapur.

I have begun this note with a quotation by G.K. Gokhale about Mahadeo Govind Ranade. I will end this note with a quotation by Dr. Raghunath Purushottam Paranjpe about Maharshi Dhondokeshav alias Annasahib Karve.

"Many great men appear great only from a distance but they do not appear so to those who have intimate contacts with them. I cannot say that about Anna. He belongs to that rare type of men who inspire even greater respect and affection as intimacy with them grow and continue. The capacity so to inspire the younger generation as to command only their love and respect is, I believe, one of the rarest virtues that have made Anna great."

This quotation can appropriately be attributed to Sir Raghunathrao.

HIS DEATH :

Ultimately Sir R.V. Sabnis breathed his last on Friday 17th Sept. 1948 at midnight 00.15 due to old age. He lived for 91 years, 5 months and 15 days, i.e. about 92 years. Sir R.V. Sabnis saw the reign of Babasaheb alias Shivaji III (1838-1866), Rajaram I (1866-1870), Shivaji IV, (1870-1883), Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj (1884-1922), Rajaram II (1922-1940) period of Regioncy council (1940 to 1945) and lastly Shahaji Chhatrapati. R.V. Sabnis was an eyewitness of many important events which took place in Kolhapur history. His funeral procession was took place of Friday 17th August 1948 at 12.00 noon. This procession was

attended by Kolhapur state Parafenelia (State Officers, Saradars, Inamdars, Important Citizens and large number of people also. All the officers and schools and Colleges were remained colsed on account of Sir R.V. abnis death.¹⁹

'Balasaheb Patil' the editor of Satyawadi wrote editorial and writes that R.V. Sabnis was grand old man and Dadabhai Nauroji of Kolhapur. He adds that with the death of R.V. Sabnis the Maharshi of Kolhapur, was passed awaysfrom the earth. R.V. Sabnis was a great and visionary link between history (Past) and present.²⁰

Rajaram College was a prrmier institution in the Bombay presidency a condelance meeting was held on Friday 17th September 1948 in Rajaram College under the Chairman ship of Prof. A.G. Pawar (future Director of Education and founder, vice Chancellor, of Shivaji University) and in this meeting Prof.Kokil, Prof. Pangu, Prof. Huparikar and Prof. Pawar spoke about the grandness and work of R.V. Sabnis.²¹

The ruling Chhatrapati Shahaji Maharaj (1948) said about R.V. Sabnis on his deaththat "He deserves it, he deserves it. He has rendered distinguished service to the Gadi and the House."²²

Sir S.M. Freaser Senior Officer and European tutor and friend of Shahu Maharaj Writes about R.V. Sabnis as follow.

" Equally fortunate, it is here appropriate to mention was the Maharaj of Kolhapur to find in his tutor, Mr. R.V. Sabnis (Now Rao Bahadur R.V. Sabnis, C.I.E.) an officer who served him as Diwan for twenty four years. Loyal, able and upright, it is most gratifying to know that Mr. Sabnis still holds the same responsible office under H.H. Rajaram Chhatrapati Maharaj, the son of his old pupil, friend and master."²³

Rajaram Maharaj in one speech (1924) speaks very high about the work of R.V. Sabnis in the following words before Governor of Bombay who arrived in Kolhapur.

"Ladies and Gentlement" I can not how weven leave this subject unless I take this oppportunityof expressing my grantitude tomy Diwan Rao Bahadur R.V. Sabnis. He has all a long been s staunch and loyel friend of my family, but since the deathof my father he has been more than a friend to me. Ordinarily his long and meritorious services would have entitled him to a rest both long and happy, but I know that is is his love towards me that has inspired him to stay by me side in

this rather difficult period my life and Gentlemen, as days pass, I have learnt to value his counsel more and more."

His Excellency Lt. Col. the Right Hon'ble Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, P.C., G.E.C.I.E., C.M.G., D.S.O. Governor of Bombay accompanied by his staff visited Kolhapur in April 1924 on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the memorial of His Highness Sir Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaja. On this occasion Governor spoke about R.V. Sabnis as follows :-

"You are indeed fortunate in having at your side two of the most trusted of your fathers, counsellors, your uncle, Sir Pirajirao Bapusaheb Ghatage, to whom you have referred in terms of well merited affection and Rao Bahadur Sabnis whose loyalty to your State and family has been proved by years of devoted service."²⁵

Prof. A.B. Latthe who succeeded R.V. Sabnis as a Diwan of Kolhapur in 1926 writes about the help and co-operation received from R.V. Sabnis while Latthe was writing biography of Shahu Chhatrapati in the following way.

"The advice and help of Rao Bahadur R.V. Sabnis C.I.E., was simply indispensable to me. If the choice had been left to me, I would certainly have pointed out to

him as the fittest person, to write a biography of the late Chhatrapati Maharaja. Failing his writing it himself. I had a right to claim his assistance at every step, and I am glad to find that he was always ready to give it to me in full measure I think him very sincerely.

Lastly we conclude with the opinion expressed by Shahu Chhatrapati regarding the greatness of R.V. Sabnis "on February 11, 1922, he wrote to H. Thompson member of the vice roy's Executive Council, that Bapusaheb was his brother and was a great help to him in all the administrative branches of his state and he had been also very fortunate in having a Diwan like Sabnis. Had it not been for Sabnis, Shahu said, he did not know if his state would have been as state and secure as it was in his days. I consider myself" he concluded "very fortunate indeed in having such a brother and a Diwan."²⁷

Thus Sir R.V. Sabnis occupied an important place in the history of modern Kolhapur. He was the friend of down trodden and depressed classes. He was chief adviser, guide, philosopher and life long friend of Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati. He was Dadabhai Nawroji or Kolhapur. He was very loyal to the house of Chhatrapaties of Kolhapur. His name remained immortal in the history of modern Maharashtra by his work alone.

REFERENCES

- (1) Who's who In India : (1939) P.455.
- (2) Family Record.
- (3) Administrative Report of the Kolhapur State
for the year 1927-28 P.1.
- (4) Administrative Report of Kolhapur for the year
1927-28.
- (5) R.V. Sabnis : Notes on Kolhapur 1928 Contents.
- (6) R.V. Sabnis : Notes on Kolhapur Prefatory Note.
- (7) Editor, G.g. Jadhav : The Serak Kolhapur,
Dated 11th August, 1934 (First Issue).
- (8) Ibid - (Please See Appendix No.
- (9) Balasaheb Patil (Editor)
Satyavadi : June 1940 Satyawadi Daxin - Sansthan
Issue, P.34.
- (10) The Kolhapur Administrative Report for the year
1930-31 P.61.
- (11) Who's who In India 1936.
- (12) Administrative Report of Kolhapur State for the
year 1930-31 P.61-62.

- (13) Balasaheb Patil (Editor) Satyavadi Dated 17 August, 1948.
- (14) Administrative Report of the Kolhapur State 1934-35 P.91.
- (15) A.B. Latthe : Op.Cit, P.490, and V.D.Tophakhane's Shahu Chhatrapatis Antrang, P.43.
- (16) Jamble, Ramchandra Pralahad : 'The Biography of Lady Janakibai (Marathi) P.12.
- (17) Ibid P. 18.
- (18) Ibid P. 21-22.
- (19) Editor Balasaheb Patil : Daily Satyawadi, Kolhapur, Dated 17th September, 1948. P.1.
- (20) Balasaheb Patil (Editor) : Daily Satyawadi Dated 17th September, 1948.
- (21) Ibid.
- (22) S.B. Bhosale (Editor) : Special Issue, Loksevak, Kolhapur, dated 8-4-1957. P.5.
- (23) A.B. Latthe : Memories of Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaja of Kolhapur Val. II, Personal reminiscences, P. 624.

- (24) Kolhapur Administrative Report for the year
1923-24 P.16.
- (25) Kolhapur Administrative Report for the year
1923-24. P.17.
- (26) A.B. Latthe : Memories of Shri Shahu Chhatrapati
Vol. I, Authors prefatory Note, P.2.
- (27) D.Keer : Shahu Chhatrapati : A Royal
Revolutionary, P. 491-92.