CHAPTER IV
SOCIAL REFORMS AND SOCIAL WELFARE WORKS

The early twentieth century is also marked by the establishment of non-official organisations in Himachal Pradesh for the removal of social evils and redressal of people's grievances. Congress agitation in British India along with the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi on the national political scene over a period of time, impacted immensely on the State people's movement. In spite of the oppressive rule and the ruthless tyranny of the Indian princes, the hill people decided to stand on their own feet. They started their work by setting up Sewa Samitis, Hitkari Sabhas, Night Schools, Reading Rooms and Circulating Libraries. Every opportunity was availed of for creating public opinion against the oppressive laws and personal rule of the princes.

Among the most important social reform organisations, attention must be drawn to the Rajput and Brahmin Sabhas, Sanatan Dharam and Arya Samaj Sabhas, Sewak Sanghas, Sudhar Sammelans, Prem Sabhas and Sewa Samitis. These associations undertook the task of launching campaigns to eradicate such evil social practices as reet, untouchability, and child marriage to encourage widow remarriage.

Attempts were made by some of the Simla Hill States to end the custom of reet by legislation. The social reformers and
public associations did all they possibly could to carry on intensive campaigning against this custom. The Rajput Sthaniya Sabha, the Himalaya Vidya Prabhandini Sabha and the Hind Conference Simla brought this subject to the forefront of public attention and approached the highest authorities for its suppression.

To abolish these evils, social customs-cum-practices, the rulers of Simla Hill States, constituted under the Chairmanship of Baghat's Raja, an Executive Council. This council recommended a number of reforms in the Hill States against the evils referred to above.

**Widow Remarriage**

Widow remarriage was recognised in the upper Hill States by all classes. The widow remarriage ceremony was celebrated with as much pomp, pageantry and splendour as the first marriage. In almost all cases the second husband was ordinarily the younger brother of the first, but kanets also allowed a widow to marry her late husband's elder brother. When a widow's second husband was a stranger, it was usual for him to pay one or two rupees as reet to the first husband's family. This special reet was called nakhatal. Women who were to remarry or those who wished to, did so with heirs or relatives of their husbands. In Bashahr State especially, the custom of widow remarriage, left the women sole heir to all
entitled through her first husband. This condition was applicable to their son/sons as well.\textsuperscript{3}

Untouchability

Untouchability was also practised in the hills as in the plains. The relationship with lower castes was viewed taintedly as upper castes Rajputs, Brahmans and the high clan of Kanets shunned lower castes to the point of abhorrence. Scheduled castes were debarred from participating in the social and religious functions on an equal footing. Until quite recently (in so far as the period under discussion is concerned) they were not even allowed to enter the temples, the gods being viewed as the personal property of just the higher castes.\textsuperscript{4} The scheduled castes were even denied access to and usage of common water source. A man of this caste had to keep his head covered. He was also not allowed to sit on a cot with a swaran. If a Harijan by caste crossed a swarans path, he used to take off his shoes and bow in respect. In the houses of certain Rajput families, Kolis were not allowed to enter the compound, the less said, the better, with respect to the house. Their women were not permitted to wear gold ornaments.\textsuperscript{5}

But untouchability did not restrict all Harijans. Harijans also had their own hierarchy some lower, some higher.\textsuperscript{6} Scheduled Castes were previously not permitted to play the orchestra, nor could the bridegroom ride a horse. The changed
era has not left them untouched altogether. Scheduled castes are now becoming aware of their rights. Most are aware that untouchability has been banned under law.

**Sati Pratha**

We have no clear idea about the Sati system of Bushahr State. No evidence of Sati practice was found in the upper Simla Hill States. It flourished to some extent in the plains and Bushahr State. The condition of women was better in the upper Simla Hill States than in the other parts because, as stated earlier, she was free to remarry. Sati was a unique feature, however abhorrent, of the Rajput society. 'Sati' was performed by the Rajput widows. It was viewed as marking the unfailing devotion of a wife to her husband.

The rite of 'Jauhar' was performed when the Rajput women, wives as well as daughters burnt themselves to death to escape dishonour at the hands of invaders. The situation differed in Bushahr State as no one invaded and thus, Bushahr State never came under the rule of the other rulers, so there was no need for Hill State women to indulge in the practice of Sati and Jauhar. Rajput women performed a jauhar by flinging themselves into fiery flames when their menfolk left to face death.
Frazer (1811) has referred to a peculiar type of Sati practiced in Bushahr. He states that twenty-two people performed Sati with the Raja of Bushahr. This number included two ministers and one chobedar, besides three queens and twelve khawasis.

It was on account of the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy that the practice of Sati was declared illegal during the time of William Bentick.

**Begar System**

*Begar* was a practice in the Simla Hills whereby forced labour was taken from a subject by the ruler of the State or Landlord.\(^8\) *Begar* is a Persian word which means unpaid exploitation of labour.\(^9\) In the Hill States, wheeled vehicles did not exist, so import and export of essential goods were carried by camel and mule. A particular class of porters as well earned subsistence by carrying loads, for ordinary purposes. However, for transport of travellers' luggage only human labour was available. Cultivators of the soil, as a condition of tenure, were bound to part with a portion of such labour to the State whenever required.

Artisans and other non-agricultural residents holding garden plots which actually belonged to the Raja, were bound to serve him in entirety.\(^{10}\) Other regular land holders were also
liable to provide service of this kind, including military menial work.

The *begar* system suited well the conditions of the Hill States as the currency was limited and the resources of the people slender. \(^{11}\)

*Begar* system was prevalent throughout the hill area between the rivers Yamuna and Sutlej. *Begar* system evolved not only from land and its ownership, but also from the topography of the Hill States, local conditions, and the needs of the people. The villages were located quite high upon the slopes with narrow and dangerous paths where even carriage of daily needs and other essentials by mules and ponies was impossible. Therefore, the only means of transport was human labour. \(^{12}\)

The rulers of the Hill States also felt the need, from time to time, to build and repair palaces and forts essential to exercise control over their territory necessitating permanent labour, which the peasantry was being obliged to render free service both to the State and Landlord in the form of land revenue as well as normal revenue. \(^{13}\)

As time passed, such forced labour became a permanent feature, taking the name of *beth* and *begar*. Moreover, due to this long standing imposition, the people regarded such as one of the normal conditions of existence. As long as *begar* was within tolerable and legitimate limits, people were content to
render it. Certain classes were exempted, the major burden falling strictly upon agriculture classes.

But the meanest and the most burdensome forced labour was to carry heavy loads. In 1815, after the Gurkha war, the area between Yamuna and Sutlej, by virtue of conquest, came under the East India Company. The British Government later returned the territories to the respective rulers but in the form of sanads. Under the sanad, the hill chiefs had to provide certain obligations such as allowing free passage to British merchants and their goods and to provide a certain number of begaris as well as construct roads in their respective territories with their help.

Soldiers of the largest State, like Bushahr were bound to join British forces with armed retainers and hill porters during war time as and when required.

After the Gurkha war, the British Government kept Kotkhai, Lolgarh, Simla and Bharoli as British posts for military purposes. They discontinued begar except for roads and bridges. Lt. Col. E.G. Wace, who conducted the first regular settlement of Simla district, mentions:

"All the residents will help in the repair of roads, especially as the Government had not assessed on the tracts any roadcess. As to the labour (begar) required for the post and Government camps, the residents were liable to furnish that also. The deputy Commissioner
could excuse an individual from petty demands of labour, but for the Government or a military camp, or building of large bridge or any other great work everyone had to help whether ordinarily exempted or not."16

*Begar*, though originally a personal obligation, later became associated with land possession, its form becoming part and parcel of the revenue system, which represented the ruler's claim to personal service." The system of *begar* or unpaid forced labour logically extended the theory of partnership in all assets extant, including the physical power of the people. Man's physical strength was considered to belong to the Raja as much as to its owners. It was obligatory for every household to provide a healthy man for State labour, yet this had to be limited to one individual per household. The burden was so severe that large households and joint families were encouraged and partition discouraged.18

People of the agricultural sector were financially poor on the whole and even opportunities to earn cash from labour other than *begar* were inadequate. Thus, they found the system suited them well at the time. But due to this unsound economic policy, revenue and other miscellaneous dues essential for administration could not be realised from the masses in cash. As such, nominal cash revenue was levied and the remainder remaining in the form of labour. So, *begar* was the only alternative for administrative purposes. Without it, the States
customary ceremonies, of marriage, funerals, and the like, could not be performed.  

By the beginning of the 19th century, begar was widespread in India, with some exceptions, where British Thanas of the Police had been established. The British Government gave official recognition to this arbitrary practice. After the Gurkha war, the British Government availed the facility of begar for individual officials and troops in the Hill States.

With the completion of the Simla–Tibet road and the growth of Simla as a hill station under the British government, the visits of officials and non-officials in the interior of the Hill States for trips and sports, further increased the burden of the begar system on the peasantry of Hill States. They were permitted to make use of the begar of the hillman and even the Englishmen settled in the hills began to avail of the self-same privilege. The visiting officials paid for everything they received at the dak bungalow during their stay, but did not pay the poor hillman for his services.

In addition to the pervasive begar in general, there were specific categories of begar described below.
Kinds of begar

1) Athwar Begar: It was a personal begar to the ruler under which compulsory unpaid labour could be taken from any person for any purpose. Usually it was used for supplying firewood to the darbar, for the ruler and his family and grass for their cattle and horses. It was mainly used for the cultivation of the ruler's basa lands.

2) Batrawal Begar: This was taken for public works carriage of building materials and resultant construction or repair of the State buildings and bridges, etc., one begari from each house chosen. Jagirdars were not allowed to exercise this form of begar as they had earlier misused the privilege given to them by Bushahr State. Instead of taking one begari from each household, they had exploited the cultivators by taking two and sometimes even three begaris from a single house.

3) Jaddi-Badi (Hela-Mela): Jaddi Baddi was an occasional begar, a custom under which all the subjects were to be present at the darbar for bringing grass, fuel, and performing other labour on the occasion of marriages and deaths in the rulers' families and in the crowning of the new rulers. Jaddi Baddi, however, was equitable and everyone including Brahmins were treated alike and those present were given Rations. Jadi-Baddi
was taken into account during the assessment of the revenue which was remitted to some extent in proportion to the labour rendered. This custom reflected the personal respect of the State subjects to their ruler and was obligatory for zamindars, lambardars, and other officials too.

4) Begar for the chief when touring the State

During the visit of the chief and his family within the State territory the begar consisted in providing begaris for carrying camp and other paraphernalia loads not only for the chief, but also for the entire family in the course of the entire tour.

5) Begar for political officers and high officials

The begar services for political officers and high officials was similar to that provided to the chief and his family while traveling within the State. The begar involved carrying loads and the camps of political and high officials during the tour. Records show that "when the Deputy Commissioner or Political Officer goes on tour, everyone with them expects to be treated as a Deputy Commissioner." The above shows that the poor begaris had to serve several masters instead of one.
6) **Begar for State guests** : Whenever any powerful chief visited the States as a guest, he was provided with begar labour to carry luggage and cater to his other requirements as well. The people of the pargana through which he passed, had to make every arrangement for his tour and camp.

7) **Gaonsar Begar** : It consisted in villagers carrying the bundles, etc. of Tehsil, Police and other State and Government officials from village to village on their tours. This type of begar prevailed not only in Simla Hills but everywhere in India.  

8) **Road Begar** : Road begar also a form of gaonsar begar involved maintenance of bridle tracks and roads built in their respective territories by the begaris.

9) **Shikar Begar** : This consisted in furnishing begar to high officials or friends of the Ruler who went to the forests to hunt game. However, on occasions when the Viceroy went out for shooting, he distributed bakshish to the beaters which was roughly equivalent to their daily wage.
10) **Mule begar**: Shopkeepers and others kept mules in many States for trade purposes. However, they had to supply mules to the State free of charge - a requirement.

11) **Religious Begar**: Religious *begar* consisted of labour involved in ceremonies and celebration of festivals of the local deities. Such ceremonies formed part of religion of the people and, therefore, the people had to contribute on such occasions. Perhaps, in the strict sense, such *begar* would not be considered important due to willing participation in great number.

**Beth System**

Beth was an obligation to render personal service in return for certain cultivation rights. The Serfs, like cattle, were transferred from one owner to another and were locally called *bethus.*

The *bethus* received meals from their master twice or thrice a day, a suit of cloth once a year, a house to live and a few bighas of land to cultivate for their own profit. In return they cultivated the entire fields of their master and rendered menial services to him.

The *bethus* consisted of following three classes.
Beth system was closely associated with the begar system as it also involved land tenure. In this system the bethu tilled the land that belonged to the Raja and a portion of it for his existence.

The bethu was exempt from revenue yet the profits were received by the Raja. In addition to tilling, the bethu was also responsible for carrying loads.31

Bethus were also kept by Zamindars for whom they tilled their lands and performed other services. These were as follows:

(1) The first class of bethus constituted those who cultivated the basa land, which included all the processes of cultivation of basa land, but the produce belonged to the Ruler. This class of bethu were directly under him.

The bethus also worked for the Jagirdars under the same arrangement.32

(2) This second class of bethus were, however, better placed than their counterparts employed by the State because they were in direct contact with their masters whereas the latter had indirect contact with their masters through a host of intermediate State servants.

3) The third class of bethus were indebted due to loan-interest (from their master). As such, they were required to supply goods. This class unfortunately, to our shame is still
present and prevalent – bonded labour in India. This class was hereditary, and the servitude passed on from father to son as long as cultivation was helpful and of sufficient production. *Bethus* rendered satisfactory services to their masters. Such *bethus* were treated like beasts.

In addition to collection and carriage of wood and grass for the darbar, to working in the fields, they had to perform other miscellaneous duties in addition and chores too for their masters.

**Abolition of Begar System**

Prior to the arrival of the British, the *begar* system was common and widespread. During the British regime in the hill region, efforts were made to reduce the *begar* burden legally but proved greatly arduous due to geographical locale, and terrain, social customs and societal difficult conditions in general. So it was not possible to enforce the anti-*begar* laws effectively.

The *begar* system was an evil beyond dispute. All the settlement officers condemned *begar*, particularly athwara, as an unmitigated evil oppressive of the people adversely affecting and seriously interfering with their cultivation.

The cruel custom of *begar* came to the notice of the British authorities during the visit of General Ochterlony in the
cis-Sutlej area. Wherever he went, he received a lot of complaints against the practice of begar. He thought of abolishing the evil. He ordered the commanding officers to stop the use of begar labour for the carriage of the luggage of the troops, and that adequate alternative arrangements be made in its place. To prevent any delays in an army on the march, the chiefs who lived along the road were asked to furnish every required assistance, while British troops were to pay for whatever assistance they received. 

The burden of begar of Hill Chiefs, imposed by the treaty of 1815, was relaxed partially by commuting it into cash. Initially, begaris were provided touring British officers and officials but with the opening of the Hindustan-Tibet road, the hill chiefs were forced to extend the services to British visitors too as a result of which the burden of begar on the people remained the same even after concessions were granted to the chiefs.

Abolition of the begar system proved extremely difficult as it affected not only the economy and the revenue system, but also the capacity to pay for such free long-existent services.

With respect to begar, many States had several settlements between 1884 and 1932. People suffered heavy losses as the system interfered with the working of peasants during their crop season. In the light of the above, Athwara (duty at the darbar for six months in a year) a form of begar
existent prior to these settlements was completely abolished in many States and commuted on the basis of land revenue. It was 10% in Nalagarh and Mahlog, 12.5% in Kumarsain, Bhajji and Kunihar, 11% in Baghal and Beja, 10% in Dhami, 13% in Khaneti and 20% in Koti States and 14% in Keonthal State.\textsuperscript{36}

In other States the duty under Athwara form of \textit{begar} was reduced to one month per annum without cess. As per the settlement of 1914-1915 the period was reduced from one month to 15 days with cess 1/4th of the existing commutation fee.\textsuperscript{37}

During the fourth decade of the 20th century, the athwara \textit{begar} was totally abolished in Jubbal, Baghat and Kuthar. Athwara was neither abolished nor commuted in Balson, Mangal, Darkoti, Tharoch, Delath, Ratesh, Rawingarh and Dhodi as a result of which the Crown Representative considered it desirable to frame a general policy to deal with hardship caused by \textit{begar} and \textit{bethu}.

A political agent was appointed for purposes of enquiring about \textit{begar} for its total abolition as well as that of \textit{bethu} and send his suggestions to the Crown Representative. Then, on the basis of these enquiries and suggestions, a "Model Policy" was framed.\textsuperscript{38}

A meeting with the representative rulers and Diwans of the Hill States was convened on 24th August, 1943, under the
Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Resident of Punjab Hill States and thus a policy was adopted by each Hill State.  

With respect to begar, all forms of unpaid labour were abolished and certain States which were bound to provide free forced labour under their sanads, were relinquished by the Crown without commutation and where the abolition of unpaid labour was not practicable, it was to be paid in cash at minimum rates published by authority.  

With effect from May 1948, begar, paid or unpaid, was prohibited within the territory of Himachal Pradesh.  

Due to increase in political consciousness among the people of Hill States by organisation of Praja Mandals and increase in facilities of education, means of communication and transport development in the Hill States, the begar system which had heavily suppressed the people for generations came to an end.  

With respect to beth, rendering personal services in lieu of land tenure opposed public conscience as an element of slavery. The hardships of employed bethus were removed and beth was completely abolished with the exception of palki service, for ladies of ruling families. This service too was to be paid for. Bethus who had tilled the land for three generations were given occupancy rights. The land revenue for occupancy rights was double the normal land revenue plus if the dwellings of tenants were too close to those of the rulers, the latter had
the right to exchange such land with land further off. The bethus who didn't have possession of land for three generations were then made to pay rent in the form of cash.

Under the Punjab Tenancy Act 1887, if a bethu went to the court, the court would never decree in favour of the personal service rendered as it was legally enforceable. So forced labour, by this time, was not abolished in totality had a form of bethus employed by Zamindars, actual status but any hardship arising therefrom was to be considered in the next settlement.

The model policies on beth and begar were forwarded to the rulers of Simla Hill States in October, 1944 after the approval of the Crown Representative.

The rulers had to furnish a half yearly report (i.e. on 15th December and 15th of June every year) regarding the progress achieved after implementation of the policy. With the adoption of the policy, unpaid forced labour was abolished but paid forced labour existed for various purposes.

By the extra Provincial Jurisdiction Act of 1947 the Central Government conferred the occupancy rights specified in Punjab Tenancy Act 1887, on all bethus who had been in cultivatory possession of land in Hill States for three generations on payment of rent equal to 1/4 that of the land revenue and cess chargeable on land by payment of a sum
equal to 10 times the land revenue and cess assessed on such lands; the proprietary rights were then granted to such *bethus*.

**Social Welfare Work**

The education, health and economic conditions are considered as the major measurements for determining the standard of socio-economic life of the general population of the Simla Hill States. In considering the contribution of education, therefore, it would be worthwhile to begin by recalling the main system of education in the former princely States and area under the British till 1947.

Before the advent of British rule, the system of instruction was mostly connected with religious institutions. The main emphasis in ancient India, however, was on moral, religious and spiritual education. This was provided in Pathshalas, in temples by the Hindus. Like Hindus, the Muslims too had deep respect for learning and revered learned men.

**Education after the coming of Britishers**

On the conclusion of Gurkha war in 1815 A.D., the Hill States lying between Yamuna and Sutlej rivers came under the protection of the British Government in India. They granted
the sanads to the hill chiefs and urged them to work for the welfare of their subjects. They paid their attention to the education of the masses. Dr. J.G. Gerard of 1st Nusseeree Battalion submitted a detailed report on education in the Hill States to Captain C. P. Kennedy, Assistant Deputy Superintendent, Hill States.

The credit for modern education goes to the British and various Christian missionaries. The first British house in the hills was built by Captain C.P. Kennedy in 1822 in Simla. Thereafter, many British army men and civilians started visiting Simla and built houses there. Lord Amherst, the Governor General, came to Simla in 1827 and held a durbar of Simla Hill States rulers.

The British Government started a Government High School at Simla. With the growth of the Hill States, the population of the main city began increasing. The first High School in the hills was opened in Simla in 1848 to provide teaching up to matriculation standard. After some time two primary schools, one in Boileauganj and another on the cart road were established. These branches imparted education up to lower primary standard. There was a boarding house in the main school building which had a capacity to accommodate 35 students. Thereafter, many convent and public schools, one after the another, came into being in and around Simla.
The school system was taken over by the Government of India in 1857. The oldest public school 'Bishop Cotton School' was founded by Bishop Cotton on 28th July, 1859 as a "Thanks giving to Almighty God for the preservation of British people doing the mutiny of 1857."  

In the later nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the following schools were founded one after another in Simla

(1) Christ Church School for boys.
(2) St. Michael's Day School for boys.
(3) St. Joseph's Day School for girls.
(5) Loretto Convent (Tara Hall) School for girls (1895).
(6) Auckland School for girls (1866).
(7) The Park's Boys School.
(9) Mayo Orphange School for girls (1869).
(10) Ayrefl School for girls (1877).
(11) Union Church School.
(12) St. Edward School for boys (1925).
(13) Convent of Jesus and Mary School for girls (1864).
(14) Baptist Mission School for boys.
These are the schools that used to exist in the Hill States and some of them still do.

With the establishment of so many English and vernacular schools in Simla, some, but not all, Hill Chiefs started sending their children to the schools in Simla, and encouraged others who could afford to do likewise, the schools being located at Simla, Kotkhai, Subathu for the natives. Some public school educated princes encouraged such modern education. The bigger States like Bashahr, Jubbal, Bilaspur, Baghat, etc., took keen interest as these were bigger in area, population and had a good source of revenue. The other States were small in area, population and their incomes were very meagre.

Bashahr State was the largest State of Simla Hill States. Raja Shamsher Singh was a learned man. He encouraged a modern system of education in the State and opened many schools in the State. At the turn of this century, there were three schools in the State—an Anglo-Vernacular Middle School with 112 scholars and Hindi school for religious instruction with 32 scholars in Rampur, the capital, and a primary school with 27 scholars in Rohru. 

Jubbal: Among the Simla Hill States, some were of considerable size and importance, particularly Jubbal. Rana Karam Chand succeeded to gaddi in 1849 and reigned upto
1877. He was a lover of Hindi and Urdu and had encouraged the reading and writing of these languages.

The successive rulers paid sufficient attention towards the spread of education. In 1909 a middle school was set up at Deohra which later on was rechristened as Anglo Vernacular Middle School. English was made a compulsory subject.\(^\text{41}\)

In Keonthal State no satisfactory information on the education system of Keonthal is available, but at the turn of the century, when Raja Bijai Sen (1901-1916) was the chief, vernacular primary schools were maintained at Junga, Fagu, Matiana, Rawin and Punar.\(^\text{52}\)

Baghal State had one Anglo-vernacular middle school at Arki with 145 pupils. It had a boarding house. There was also a girls school at Arki with 36 pupils.

Baghat State Raja Dalip Singh (1860-1911) was well educated, popular and public spirited and the State was well administered during his region. There was one Anglo-vernacular middle school at Solan with a staff of four teachers and an average attendance of 80 boys.\(^\text{43}\) Dalip Singh's son, Raja Durga Singh, paid special attention towards the education of his subjects.

**Bhajji State**: Till the reign of Rana Durga Singh (1875-1913), there was no school in the State. Rana Bir Pal Singh, son of Rana Durga Singh, opened an Anglo-vernacular middle school
at Suni in which during the year 1934 there were seven teachers and about 100 students.

**Koti State**: There was no school in Koti State and boys from the State used to attend school at Simla. 

**Dhami State**: Dhami State had a primary school at Halog, Simla. As Simla and Jutogh were close by, some boys from the State used to attend school at these two particular places.

**Theog State**: The Arya Samaj of Simla maintained a boy's school at Shali, established in 1916 to defray the expenses of the State grants.

The other States of Simla Hills, e.g. Kaneti, Delath, Madhan, Ghund, Ratesh, Rawingarh, Dhadi, Mahlog, Balson, Kuthar, Kumharsain, Beja, Darkoti, Tharoch and Sangri were very small in area and population. Their income was very meagre. They were in no position to provide even a primary school to their subjects.

The rulers of the Hill States gave priority to education. A college by the name of S.D. College was opened by Shri Rana Padam Chand of the State of Jubbal. Raja Bhag Chand of Jubbal contributed the bulk of finances towards the setting up of the college and was also aided by Raja Durga Singh of Baghat. Resultantly, no fee was charged from the students of Jubbal and Baghat State in the S.D. College. In addition to remittance of fee, Raja Jubbal set up and provided
scholarships to brilliant students from his State. A student who passed the eighth class was given a scholarship of Rupees ten; a student studying in intermediate, Rupees twenty; and a student getting a B.A. Rupees thirty. The State bore the entire expense of the brilliant students who chose professional education in medicine or engineering.

Rai Bahadur Jodhamal also opened a college in Summer Hill, Simla.

Public Work

Simla was under the charge of Simla provincial division of the public works departments with an Executive Engineer leading, along with two or more Assistant Engineers. The division was in charge of the Kalka–Simla cart road (58 miles), Hindustan Tibet Road (199.5 miles), Narkanada-Luri-Kumarsain road (13 miles) and Mashobra-Luni road (25 miles). All public offices and the residence of His Excellency (the Commander-in-Chief), His Honor (the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab), and of the members of his executive council, were under the maintenance of the public works department.56

The Simla municipality also managed its own public works except sewerage and sludge, which fell under the general public works department. A separate Executive Engineer was incharge of public works, i.e., they later on being put under the
Simla Municipality. The water supply was obtained from four zones. The upper Gravity Zone was in Koti Ilaqa from where the water was first brought to Dhalli and then to Sanjauli. The lower Gravity Zone had a pumping station at Cherot, commissioned in 1893. Then there was chair pumping zone supply and, lastly, the Guma pumping zone, with its water pumping plan at the highest elevation in the world at the time.

The Simla municipality was the oldest in Punjab with that at Bhiwani. It was constituted in 1851 and consisted of only government officials but in 1855 an element of election was introduced, but the franchise limited only to the house owners. In 1871 the municipality was raised to the status of a first class municipality.

The Committee was licensed to generate electricity from Chaba power station at Simla. The committee looked after the town hall, the municipal market and the shops of Edward Ganj Grain Market. It also maintained two parks on the Mall and 49.00 miles of Road length, both metalled (23 miles) and unmetalled (26 miles). The fire brigade was maintained by the Committee, both the Union and State Governments contributing. The committee also maintained its own food laboratory under its health officers.

The Bashahr State in 1914-15 had a budget of Rs. 4900/- for public works. A tehsil building and dispensary were
completed during the year at Chini and various minor works were carried out in different parts of the State.

Some irrigation projects were also carried out and started. The Sangla Kuhl in the Bespa valley (the channel laid from Bespa river) was built along the side of the valley for irrigation of the existing fields adjacent to the village of Sangla and Kamroo. The channel had an approximate length of 4 miles and irrigated fields on the way along most of its length. The construction of Tharaj kuhl in Rohru tehsil and Nirsu kuhl were started.\(^5^8\)

The project of Nirsu kuhl running from Taklech in the Nagligad to water the land lying about the Sutlej and Nirsu between Nirath and Rampur was completed on the budget of the public works department in the following two years. The channel had a span of 13 miles and the State was assisted by the Executive Engineer, Simla District, for construction of the same (Nirsu kuhl).\(^5^9\)

The Baghat State Public Department was under the control of State Officers who constructed the water storage tank and they were made operational in December, 1941. Fortunately, they are still functioning satisfactorily.

The Development Board, Solan, which functioned on the lines of a Municipal Committee, continued its activities with satisfactory results, supplying water and maintaining sanitation
and road along with the vital issue of public health concurrently.\textsuperscript{60}

Medical

The medical care of District Simla was in the hands of a Civil Surgeon assisted by a Joint Civil Surgeon. There were two Civil Surgeons at Simla, between both of them jointly in charge of medical services in a divided manner.

A charitable dispensary established in 1844, was the only medical institution in Simla situated in an ill constructed building at Lower Bazar. It could only accommodate twenty patients, seventeen males and three females.\textsuperscript{61}

There was a Leper Asylum at Sabathu and a Lock Hospital at Kasauli under the cantonment Magistrate. Incidentally, Samuel Stock first served as a Christian Minister at this Leper Asylum in Subathu. The two Lock Hospitals in Simla, one at Kasauli and another at Sabathu, were founded in 1870 and 1872 respectively.

In 1885, Ripon Hospital opened at Simla, where both European and native patients were treated. The Ripon Hospital had accommodation for sixty six beds. Afterwards, in commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the female ward of Ripon Hospital was converted into "The Lady Dufferein Hospital" under the charge of a qualified female
doctor. The Ripon Hospital was a Municipal Institution founded by Municipal funds and a Government grant of Rs. 1,500/- per annum.

In May, 1902, the Walker Hospital was opened by Sir James Walker for Europeans. It had a staff of House Surgeons, a Lady Superintendent and six nurses. A military Assistant Surgeon was provided free by the Government who acted as a House Surgeon.

There was also a smallpox Hospital on the south side of Jakhoo below the Mall. There was a Government dispensary at Kotkhai, a dispensary of Ludhiana Mission at Sabathu and Kakarhati and a dispensary of the Church Mission at Kotgarh.a

A hospital existed in Rampur under the charge of Doctor N. J. Rodrigues. A Sub-Assistant Surgeon was deputed from Punjab who practised and was in the habit of conducting an itinerary dispensary in Rohru tehsil till the State built a proper dispensary.

In Chini Tehsil, medical work was carried on by the Salvation Army till the State built a dispensary. The dispensary was the property of the State, but medical work was carried on by the Salvation Army on behalf of the State. The Forest Department maintained a Sub-Assistant Surgeon with a dispensary at Kilba for the staff of the Department who also offered medical services to the villagers, whenever the need arose. The Moravian Mission maintained a dispensary at Poo
towards which the State made an annual contribution of Rs.100.

In 1916 Dr. N.J. Rodrigues left the services of the State on being offered the charge of the Salt Department Hospital at Sambar Lake in Rajputana. His departure proved a great loss for the medical amenities of the State. On 3rd July, 1916, the dispensary at Rohru was closed and the Assistant Surgeon from Punjab, Mr. L. Chranji Lal was shifted to Rampur.

Due to numerous people constantly applying for medicines to touring officers, a compounder trained by Dr. Rodrigues was sent along with the Manager to treat the patients at various villages during the summer tour of the Manager. The compounder was supplied with a series of basic medicines and simple remedies from the Rampur Hospital. What is amazing is that he treated more than six hundred patients in the five months tour every year. The Moravian Mission at Poo continued to receive the annual grant from the State as usual.63

In 1911, a dispensary was opened at Chaupal.64 In 1946, a regular proper Hospital was constructed which could accommodate 25 patients. A large stock of medicines as well as all kinds of necessary equipment were supplied to this hospital.65 Some of the common diseases in the State were dysentery, diarrhea, hook worm, flu, pneumonia, venereal
diseases, goitre, cholera, plague and small pox. There was no cure for diseases like cholera and smallpox.\textsuperscript{66}

In the next three decades, the health services did not make any significant strides, progress was rather very slow. From the administration reports, it is revealed that in 1945-46, there were two hospitals in the State, one at Rampur and the other at Rohru, both of them in the charge of medical graduates. Besides, there were two allopathic dispensaries, one at Sarahan and another at Chini. There were also four Ayurvedic dispensaries at Sangla, Tikkari, Sholi and Rampur. These were managed by trained and experiences Vaids.\textsuperscript{67}

**Baghat State**

During 1943-44 there was, in addition to the State hospital, one rural dispensary, at Deothi. In 1944-45, a well equipped Ayurvedic dispensary was set up in Solan, operational at the beginning of the year. The dispensary was named Shri Umed Ayurvedic dispensary in memory of the late Shri Ram Umed Singh

**Baghat State Vidya Devi Hospital for Women**

The opening ceremony of this Hospital was performed by Shri Raja Sahib Bahadur on 26th March, 1945.
For the welfare of the travellers in the Hill State the rulers and the chiefs constructed various services and maintained various natural resources of water. Raja Bhagat of Jubbal established a Sarai at Sanjauli in the name of his mother and also one at his State. Rai Jodhamal built a Sarai in Choordhar and provided water supply at Rohru.

From 1870 to 1945, it is important to highlight the fact that the British Government established eight nearly full fledged hospitals and only one modest one was established by the Raja of Baghat. The British also established eleven dispensaries; Raja Baghat; only one Ayurvedic Dispensary. Such spectacular contribution on the part of the British is to be lauded. Why the other Rajas of Bashahr, Jubbal Keonthal did not show this concern for the people is somewhat baffling. It is disappointing, to say the least, because these Rajas definitely contributed more money to the exchequer and were more affluent than the Raja of Baghat.

The foregoing survey in the chapter titled Social Reforms and Social Welfare Works clearly demonstrates, that with the passage of time paramount power helped the weaker inhabitants. It became aware of certain horrendous problems such as begar and bethu. The chapter shows, through the catalogue technique, the various categories of begar which flourished in Simla Hills. Begar was Khar Patwar, i.e., a pernicious weed growing under the soil and degrading it beyond repair. The British Government was well aware of the
inequity in the begar system, especially General Ochterlony in an individual capacity. In due course, the rulers wily-nily had to fall in line. A protest movement took shape. Incidentally Samuel Stokes who was rechristened Satyananda Stokes, also campaigned for it. It is important to draw attention to this fact, though no reference was made to it earlier. The exploitation inheritance in the bethu system was much more iniquitous than begar, because begar was a permanent component, bethus being more like serfs always at the beck and call of their masters for minor chores in addition to cultivating their respective masters' lands. So granting the bethus proprietary rights over their lands which they had tilled for three generations was a revolutionary step forward. Finally the legal abolition of begar and bethudom imparted a sense of dignity to the poor Himachalies, making them realise that they were not draft animals, but human beings with the same flesh and blood as the people of privilege and status and in no way tainted. In addition to removal of these ugly ulcers on the fair face of Simla Hills, rapid strides were made in the area of education and health care and public works. In the area of education, the ruling house of Jubbal must be commended for also starting S.D. College now Government College for Women. Rightly T.S. Eliot, Nobel Laureate poet of England says in "The Four Quartets" that history is "illusion free contemplation verily, and history is not the life-time of one man only, but of old stones that cannot be deciphered".
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