PREFACE

'Paramountcy, Princes and Sardar Patel (1858-1947)' is the title of the present Ph.D. thesis which has been completed after digging out material in various libraries and a few Archives. It will be more appropriate if the justification and scope of the present work are briefly given here. As a political concept, Paramountcy that existed before the independence of India was a significant institution sui-gene-rips (Peculiar of its own type). This vague and flexible political concept enabled the British Government to regulate its relation with nearly 600 odd vastly disparate administrative units or states spread over the whole of India. These included states of the size of United Kingdom and Kashmir at one end of the scale, and states consisting of minute holdings of Kathiawar extending only to a few acres at the other end. The Indian states covered an area of 38.8% of the total country's land. So far its population was concerned it constituted 1/3 of the total population of country. The conditions and circumstances transpired that East Indian Company which came to India as a merchant company ultimately gave place to the British Crown, which ruled the country from 1858 to 15th August, 1947. The Queen's proclamation of 1858 was a watershed as well as a turning point in the British policy towards the Indian states. This proclamation declared "no extension of present territorial possessions..." In its operation the ingenuity of British statesmanship and diplomacy adjusted Paramountcy of what the Butler Committee described as "shifting necessities of the time."

British Paramountcy was not an international relationship. Of course, Sir Henry Maine had claimed for the Indian states quasi-international status, the truth that under Paramountcy, the states had no international life stood
well-established and consolidated. The period of administration under Lord Dalhousie was a period of great and special significance because during this period Paramountcy had reached its peak as well as gathered fullest strength. However, it did not know yet how to exert itself to best merit. Doubtlessly, the British Government had gained absolute hold over the Indian states with the passage of time. But the doctrine regulating and systematizing this hold had not yet been evolved.

The relationship of the paramount power i.e. the British with the Indian states was not only contractual relationship, resting on treaties made more than hundred years ago. It was a living, growing relationship shaped by the conditions, circumstances and British policy. It brought the Indian states under the hold and authority of the British Government. Hence, it established a link between British India and the states of India. Paramountcy welded India into an integrated country which was really a magnificent work of the British.

The story of the loss of power by the Indian Princes and Nawabs as well as their relationship with the British Government in India was a valuable part of British Indian History. The political and economic relationship between Indian states and the British India has been described by the term Paramountcy- which has given definition and which in its connotation has embraced several but different degrees of control by one and dependence as well as subordination of the others. The Paramountcy was paramount, was a clear definition of the indefinite still comprehensive supremacy and authority that the Government of India had exercised over the Princes and Nawabs as well as their states. The British Government could establish their absolute supremacy over the states and India through different kinds of treaties and sanads. These enabled British Government to
establish a military supremacy in the form of military protectorate. However, the arrival of Lord Irwin as the Governor General/Viceroy of India (1926-1931) was some kind of relaxation for the Indian rulers. Irwin agreed for submit on Paramountcy and the states relation's with British India. The competition between the British Government of India and the Princes kept on going till the declaration of the partition of India into two dominion states was made. Let it be stated, when the agreement was signed with the Indian Princes around the turn of the 20th century, i.e. on August 9, 1907 the Princes had almost become God-figures to their subjects as well as objects of reverence and veneration to several other Indians. Besides, by the start of 1940s, while still quite popular at home, they no longer commanded anything like the same influence abroad. After 1940s the Indian states could no longer be counted on as political safe heavens. This made their status and position strategically low.

During 1946 A.D., S. Vallabh Bhai Patel, then Home Minister of India, was also holding the charge of Indian states. With his sagacity, caliber, firmness and tactical approach, he managed to convince the rulers of the states for accepting the instruments of accession, stand still agreements.

Therefore, undoubtedly the scope of the present topic is very vast and a lot of research work was needed to be carried out in this field, before the topic was decided and finally approved for the Ph.D. thesis. The stick of 'Paramountcy' was used by the British rulers on the Princes to gain everything right from freedom to sovereignty and economic to financial rights. The integrated study of Paramountcy, the Princes and the merger of Indian states by the Union Government under the dynamic and intelligent leadership of iron man Sardar Patel had presented a different perspective in the field of social sciences. The whisper of the representative of the
Governor General (Resident of State) used to be a thunder for them and their states. The word of dissolution of Paramountcy after 15th of August, 1947 by the British Government was never fulfilled, because Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy/ Governor General, in league with the Home Minister, proposed the Indian Princes to sign the instrument of accession and the stand still agreements. He warned the Princes that the freedom struggle, in the British India and the *Praja Mandal* movements in the Indian states had already set the ball rolling for the restoration of democratic institutions in the states.

The present study has also laid emphasis on the role of Conrad Corfield the King's representative, who was supporting and promoting the cause of Princes for attaining liberation. Corfield was against the idea of transferring Paramountcy to the two dominions. With his tacit support a few of the states such as Travancore and Hyderabad had started playing on different tunes. Moreover, the present study has also taken up the role and contributions of Sardar Patel, who motivated and made the Indian Princes; understand the prevailing situation where at on hand nationalist movement had gained momentum and the independence of India were on cards. On the other hand the states were under the threat of agitation of Praja Mandal’s and their existence was in peril (danger). His constant goading and support to Lord Mountbatten, the Viceroy finally convinced the Indian princes to sign the agreements.

Here, it is pertinent to state that analysis of the existing literature clearly tells that a number of studies have been made on the different aspects of Paramountcy, but not the subject under study. Ian Copland in his work 'The Princes of India in the Endgame of Empire: 1917-1947", published from Cambridge, 1999, examined that the Princes were not simply puppets
in the hands of the British; rather they played an important role in the inter-
war period. This writing of Copland adds a new dimension to the political
history of late colonial India. Another important work, 'The Chamber of
Princes' by Surinder Mohan Verma, published from New Delhi in 1990 is a
detailed study of the constitution and composition of the Chamber of
Princes. It discusses the constitutional myth of Paramountcy and its
relationship with the Indian states. Let it be admitted that the present work
has been taken due to the inspiration that I got from this very work of Dr.
Verma, which is of great value and importance.

Philip Zeigler, (ed.) in 'The Personal Diary of Admiral the Lord Louis
Mountbatten', published from London, in 1988 gives a graphic picture of
Louis Mountbatten's times, that he spent in India as a Viceroy. It indeed
throws ample light on his close and intimate relationship with the Indian
Princes and their views about the states. Hari Sharma's book, 'Princes and
Paramountcy', published from New Delhi, 1978, has explored and estimated
that Paramountcy of the British Crown over the princely states and the
princely order itself are at present a part of modern history of India i.e. one
lapsed with the withdrawal of British power from India and the other
became extinct in the wake of Indian freedom. The author was the member
of the Major States Negotiating Committee. Thus he had the opportunity of
burring closely related with important parleys and deliberations and
following the transfer of power, which determined the further fate of Indian
Princes and their states. Maharaja Yadvendra Singh of Patiala was Pro-
Chancellor and acting Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. He played a
prominent role in giving the lead to the princes at a crucial phase in Indian
history.
Penderal Moon (ed.) in the book 'Wavell-The Viceroy Journal', published from London, 1973, kept a regular record of his activities and impressions throughout his term as a Viceroy. A number of entries regarding the general problems of the princely states had been curtailed and references to happenings in individual states that had serious repercussions in the rest of India.

Terence Creagh Coen in his book, The Indian Political Service' published from Delhi, 1971, studied the working of political officers in the states and problems affecting certain states only, for example, those arising from the death of a ruler.

Urmila Phandis's, 'Towards the Integration of Indian states (1919-1947)' published from Delhi, 1968, explored the problem that were encountered by the Indian union during 1947. The welding of large political structure of the Union with six hundred and odd princely states scattered all over only a mater of controversy. For distinct existence these states claimed a right of continuance in the political reorganization that followed the transfer of power. In three years time since independence there was merging of these Indian states with the union.

S. Gopal in his book, 'British Policy in India: 1858-1905' published from Cambridge, 1965, studied the first phase of British rule in India under the crown. His work is primarily concerned with British policy and not with the Indian attitudes and reactions. Dr. Gopal also studied the development in India during the British rule. He explored that after the suppression of the revolt of 1857 in India, the British Government decided to assume responsibility for the administration of the country. The rebels had failed to uproot British rule in India but they had succeeded in drawing attention to the anomaly of the East Indian Company Governing the empire.
S.N. Prasad's book 'Paramountcy under Dalhousie' published from Delhi, 1964, regarded Lord Dalhousie administration as a period of special significance during which Paramountcy had reached at its peak and absolute strength. The British Government had gained and absolute control over the Indian states. However, the doctrine regulating and systematizing this central control had not then been evolved. Leonard Mosley in his book, 'The Last days of the British Raj, published from London, 1963, explored that what were the circumstances which impelled Attlee as British Prime Minister to change horses midstream and sent Mountbatten to expedite the withdraw and what endeavors were to be made to evolve the friendly policy.

V.P. Menon's 'The Story of Integration of the Indian States' published from Madras, 1956, concerned with the events leading to the transfer of power and the other dealing with the integration of the Indian states. Menon regards the toils and anxieties that had to be undergone till, step by step the edifice of the consolidated India was enshrined in the constitution of the Indian states as described how the British built up the framework of princely India, third plan declaring the lapse of Paramountcy, Junagarh state acceded to Pakistan and consolidation of the states on a regional basis. K.M. Panikkar's The Indian States and Governments of India, published from Delhi, 1932, presents only the viewpoint and reaction of princes and Nawabs.

Sir William Le Warner's 'Protected Princes of India', published from Delhi, 1894 and C.L. Tupper's Our Indian Protectorate published from Calcutta, 1893, represent at best only official viewpoint. The information that has been yielded by them is also inadequate and incomplete. In fact, it could not be otherwise, for their scope is confined to give a general survey of British relations with all and therefore only important, native states. C.L.
Tupper's *Indian Political Practice*, published from Calcutta, 1895 in three volumes is however, more valuable. This work is a vast elaboration almost beyond recognition of H.M. Durand's *Reading cases* (1875). It is a collection of significant cases and precedent from native scales of all the regions and give 'summaries' about the general principles of the British policy. However, it is only a completion work and does not give a systematic account of the British policy. It simply reviews selected cases from various states. Indeed there are a few more important works related of course indirectly to the subject under review, such as *Sardar Vallab Bhai Patel, A Recollection* by Dr. Ravinder Kumar; 'The Native States of India' by Dr. Sir William Lee-Warner; *Towards the Integration of Indian States, 1919-1947*; *Vallabh Bhai Patel, a Biography of his Vision and Ideas* by Verinder Grover; etc. Besides lot of books and articles have been published on the said theme, yet the integrated study of the present topic required more research which has been carried out during the last four years period.

To make thing easier to understand the importance of the topic, it is worth mentioning that attempt has been made to study and define the concept of Paramountcy; secondly how the Government of India re-asserted their sovereignty on the Princes and their territories. Through the instrument of Paramountcy, how they interfered in their internal, fiscal and political matters; the struggle of princes through the Chamber of Princes for the restoration of their honor and dignity and with the declaration of Mountbatten plan, how Sardar Vallab Bhai Patel managed to convince the Princes for signing the instrument of accession have been discussed in this work keeping in mind several other related questions. It will also help us to understand the significance of the present study if we discuss here the chapters given in it. First of all, there is a chapter of historical survey in
which British policy towards Indian states and the transformation in British Policy after the upsurge of 1857; Paramountcy, its concept and implications constitutes the second chapter whereas the socio economic, dignity and foreign relation have been discussed in the third chapter-'Paramountcy and its application in the internal affairs of princes'; the fourth chapter 'Paramountcy and the Federal Solution' deals with the proposed federation under the Government of Indian Act of 1935 and its failure, whereas the Fifth chapter 'Princes and the War Period (1939-44)' highlights the rule of Princes in the said war period. Dissolution of Paramountcy deals with the condition and circumstances responsible for it forms the Sixth chapter. 'Indian states and Sardar Patel' constitutes the seventh chapter which deal with the latter's policy towards the Indian states and their ultimate inclusion with in the Indian union. Then there is a chapter of conclusion based on the facts yielded by the primary and contemporary writings. Let it be stated that this hypothetical study intend to prove that the idea of collaborator theory does not hold good. The alliance that came up after 1858 with odd more than 560 states, at critical juncture displayed their loyalty to the British. On occasions they supported the Crown with men, material and money as well. For instance in 1914, 1939 and then Quit Indian movement, princely money, forces lent vital support to the imperial cause. The Indian Princes were considered as 'Sheet anchor in India'. Even the treaties and sanads gave an appearance of rock-like solidity. However, appearances were deceptive. The present study proves that those alliances were good as long as the British used them. They were one sided when the British left India in 1947, they severed all ties with the Princes leaving the states to make the best bargains they could have with the successive Congress Government. Within short span, the Princes were
toppled; they were made to sign the instruments of accession and standstill as well as got integrated with the Indian Union. In this regard Pt. Nehru remarked that the Indian states were irrevocably doomed by virtue of their monarchial politics. The states were bound to buckle in under the irresistible pressure of revolutionary and nationalist forces. The opportunist surrender of the Paramountcy to the successive Congress Government brought an end of the princely India.

Lastly, it will not be out of place if it is cited that the present study has been based largely on primary and contemporary sources as they are available in large number in the National Archives of India; Nehru Memorial Museum library, New Delhi; in the Archives of contemporary History of India, J.N.U., New Delhi; National Library, Alipur, Calcutta, etc. The evidences have been analyzed textually and contextually; they have been serialized to make a meaningful coherent study. In other words the historical facts and causes have been grouped. The presentation of the historical facts is the most important component of the research methodology that has remained the basis of the present study. The complete study has been conducted and presented without any preconceived idea or biased stance. Indeed, the collective information has been substantiated and authenticated from the available valuable primary, contemporary and secondary records and works. The use of as many sources as possible has been made in an analytical manner. Such a methodology and technique have permitted an in depth analysis and enhanced the insight with which generalization of the facts have been drawn.

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