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...
CHAPTER II

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MEADOWS TAYLOR:

HIS MILITARY, ADMINISTRATIVE AND DIPLOMATIC CAREER.
Biography:

A dynamic and brilliant Britisher Mr. Philip Meadows Taylor was born at Liverpool on 25th September 1808 in the family of a merchant. Without any higher education and as one who came to India to seek some career specially in business, he could rise up to the rank of a colonel and also a senior administrator in the service of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Finally, the Governor-General elevated him to the diplomatic position as the Resident of Shorapur. Being a pet son, his father Mr. Philip Meadows was anxious to make him a multi millionaire. Though his son tried to become a merchant but in practice he could not succeed as a trader. From his early age he displayed certain qualities of head and heart which were unusual to such a tender age. Taylor thought that his bright future should not only be for his monetary purpose, but also felt that he should embark upon a saga of adventure to see new land, new people and new environment. Because of this zeal he shifted from Liverpool to India and more precisely to the Muslim princely state of the Nizam of Hyderabad. At that time he was a lad of only few days less than sixteen years. All the British officials including his officers of the Nizam State were surprised to see this young
person. However, nobody ever imagined when he approached for a job that he would rise to such eminence.

Mr. Taylor, as a teenager was over ambitious, over enthusiastic and sharp too. As compared to his age, he looked strong, intellectually and physically and seemed to have been endowed with a strong sense of determination to achieve his goal.

Taylor started his career as a Lieutenant in the Cavalry regiment. Later on he was promoted as Captain and in recognition of his capability and dynamism and his proficiency in Urdu language, his superiors had entrusted him with the responsibility of court-martia’ling. Inspite of his military background, he proved his mettle as an administrator, dealing with the land problems, peasants’ question, irrigation, planning, road construction and other developmental activities for which he was very well rewarded by the British Government. Similarly he accepted on request, the administrative responsibility of maintaining law and order among the people and curb criminal activities by anti-social elements and on the whole conducted himself with ease and facility. During this period there was a general resentment—facilityx now—against the British for civil liberty. Rebellion became well organised and threatened the British rule,
and concomittantly a challenge to the Nizam's princely state. Under such circumstances, Taylor tried to identify himself with the masses by learning the local languages such as Urdu, Marathi, Telugu. Thus he established an effective rapport with the people of the region. He also acquainted himself with the customs, manners, fairs and festivals and religious traditions. For the effective implementation of his administrative system, he realised that the spread of education and close contact with the masses was of utmost importance. Being fully conversant with the local languages and with first hand information of the people, land, climate and crop potential, Taylor was looked upon as one among the masses.

Thus at the age of twenty, he was familiar with the geography of the region, conducted survey of the area by personally trikking the terrain and employed his own methods. Even as a magistrate on many occasions, his honesty and integrity were put to test. For example a dacoit, Narayan Rao nicknamed Raja of Karmokot at Ekali, who was a notorious, merciless, criminal, who killed his family members for his own interest was captured. In order to escape from punishment, he approached Taylor and offered him a bribe of twentyfour thousand rupees. But Taylor
angrily reacted that British officials never accept money as a bribe. Despite Taylor's resistance against bribe Narayan Rao repeatedly pressurised him to accept twice the amount offered earlier. Yet such temptations could not tempt him. There are countless examples in support of his integrity and a sense of personal involvement. That explains for his phenomenal rise from one position to another and from one department to another. Thus his services have been recognised in the fields of military, civil, judicial and even diplomacy.

Recognising Taylor's administrative capabilities, the Nizam of Hyderabad invited him to solve the financial crisis, wrong planning and mismanagement of the entire administrative machinery. Ever since he set his foot on Indian soil, he seem to have become conscious about his line of action. It is rightly said in the preface of Taylor's biography that "the stress of circumstances and the tenacity of his own character had already taught him all important lesson of self-reliance and independence."

Similarly, his thorough knowledge of southern languages such as Telugu, Kannada, Marathi as well as Hindustani 'was no doubt the foundation of his extraordinary influence over the natives of the country.' As a result he could develop an insight
into the motives and character of the people. These qualities of head and heart as found in Taylor which convinced the Nizam that a foreign officer was no less than a native administrator to govern the natives. Therefore, it is no wonder when the Nizam and his brother Mohriz-ud-daulah admired the services of Meadows Taylor.

Taylor's sense of devotion and sincerity of purpose in shown on many occasions. Once the Nizam's sister was under the clutches of a band of thugs at Kullauni (Kalyani) and there was no way for her to escape from their custody. At that time Meadows Taylor had shown uncommon bravery, and risking his own-personal safety he rescued her and safely escorted her upto the Nizam's palace. He was quick to grasp the religious system and the caste composition in India. Being one with the Indian ethos, he aspired for a secular society where an attitude of mutual tolerance was the only way out. His efforts for synthesising the Indian religious through inter-communal and international marriages are reflected in his literary works.

Meadows Taylor's belief in the validity and usefulness of mixed marriages sounds extremely relevant in the present day context when communal riots erupt so frequently and forces of disintegration are actively
at work. He seem to have been the first person to perceive the magnitude of the communal problem specially the Hindu and the Muslims, so strongly poised and so deeply rooted, culturally and politically in Indian soil. What followed almost a century after Meadows Taylor by way of partition of India on the same ground is a matter of later historical dictum. While the British officers were engaged in consolidating the political and economic gains of the largest colony, it is remarkable of Meadows Taylor to have shown deep concern about its people. He seem to have valued all good aspects of both Hinduism and Islam. He had the heart and imagination to appreciate the people. He recounted with a sense of nostalgia about his stay in the house of a Muslim Talukdar whose family members treated him with warmth and affection. The mementos they exchanged specially a sword with an embroidered belt for a gun and then the lady's gift of an elaborately painted quilt have further strengthened their bonds of friendship. In the beginning of the 19th century much before Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Lord Bentik Taylor was sympathetic towards the women problem specially their status in the society, widow remarriage and sati system.
Taylor was emotionally involved with the people whom he administered. He directed his energies towards the welfare of the people. Ultimately such endless labours on the part of Meadows Taylor which won the sympathies and love and affection of the people who lifted him to the pedestal of a legendary figure.  

He was gifted with certain qualities of hard work and perseverance. He believed in self-education and was prone to new ideas and accepted more challenging responsibilities. “But the stress of circumstances; says Henry Reeve, and the tenacity of his own character had already taught him the all important lesson of self-reliance and independence.” Meadows Taylor was quick to realise the basic necessity of knowing the native languages. Otherwise he may not know the people and possibly remain a stranger to them. That was the case with many British officers who held important positions in the Nizam's government. They generally functioned as civil and military officers. They had social interactions with their fellow officers and their families. Sometimes they mixed up with the native gentry but not with the masses. Ultimately his thorough knowledge of the languages greatly contributed for his lasting influence on the masses who identified him as one among them. It also helped in his quick rise and
and professional attainments. Given his preparation for a career in the far-fetched oriental colony and youthful and impressive personality, he proved his mettle in all testing and adventurous occasions. In 1836 he was called upon to act as an interpreter of the courts-marshall. Due to his discipline and integrity, he won the confidence of his superiors. Thus at eighteen years of age, he was assigned a confidential job as personal escort to the commander. Even as an young army officer, he led a daring expedition against the turbulent, Bhil tribals in Kannad area. It may be recalled that a full contingent of the British army in the Nizam's territory was engaged to suppress the Bhils who ravage the bordering areas of the kingdom. In fact this British contingent, while camping in the neighbourhood of Ajanta village, discovered the world famous Ajanta caves in the year 1819.

Major Sayer who is Taylor's officer incharge at Aurangabad appreciated his duty and sincerity and tried to encourage him in every respect. He used to hand over most important confidential job to him as a reliable army officer. He served in different
capacities at Mominabad, Gulbarga (1824), Tuljapur
(1825), Secunderabad (1830), Bolaram (1830), Hingolee
(1831), Goligaon (1833), Burhanpur (1837), Sorapur
(1841-1853) and Naldurg (1853). At every stage and
position, his sincerity and integrity were put to
test. He overcame every situation by sheer dint of
his presence of mind, tenacity of his character and
quick and firm decisions. He infused a spirit of
missionary zeal among his soldiers as well as civilian
officers. He had shown personal warmth and affection
to them. They rallied round him as their unquestioned
leader. 16 He tried to socialise the soldiers. He also
employed modern methods of warfare. As Henry Reeve
remarks that "By mere preservance and industry, he
carried on the work of self-education through life,
with very remarkable results and this chiefly, at
military stations in the interior of the Deccan, with
no advantages of books or European society."

Some of Meadows Taylor's daring military expeditions
are worth recounting. In 1833, he led a military expedi-
tion from Hingoli (Parbhani district) against a
rebel, Jaluji Naik of Goligaon. He had rebelled
against the Government. Jaluji Naik was quite powerful
and his fort was very strong. There was a constant
firing from the fort. A direct assault of the fort
was almost inevitable. Accordingly a strategy was chalked out to launch an attack on the following day. Surprisingly the rebel leader surrendered before the appointed hour. Even then the fort was completely ransacked and pillaged. The grains and other stores were sold publically. Jaluji Naik's atrocities were dreadful. He had the persons suspended with their heads down from the fort walls. He also got the ears of the people filled with gun powder and then ignited it.

On yet other occasion, Meadows Taylor risked his life in his pursuit of a notorious character by name Narayan Rao of Karamkot. When the gates of the fort were opened to let the cattle go, Taylor and his men entered the fort inspite of the fact that men had taken positions on top of the fort. It was a daring move. Finally he managed to take Narayan Rao as a prisoner by sheer presence of mind and bold action. It is at a later stage that the culprit reacted that his men should have closed in the Feringhi. All possible threats and show of power were employed even at Chincholi when he was moved there, but to no avail. Next day Narayan Rao confessed his crimes and atrocities. When he was to be shifted to Hyderabad, Narayan Rao offered a huge sum as bribe for his release. There
was no escape for him. He was taken to Hyderabad and seem to have been imprisoned. His confrontation with the Rohillas, Bhillas, Arabs on many occasions and his posting at Golconda fort are some other daring ventures of Meadows Taylor.

**Administrator**:

Meadows Taylor was a gifted person of head and heart, a human genius who comprehended every aspect of human activity. Ever since he set his heart on India, he realised that he should know everything about the country where his future depended. He set forth to learn the vernacular languages of the Deccan. In the course of his stay in the Nizam territories, he also studied the geology and geography of the region. He quickly realised that the natives should be treated with sympathy for they represent the most ancient and the richest civilization. While the physical features determined the character of the people Taylor was convinced the country means the people. By sheer hard work and perseverance and through self-education, he developed a genuine love and respect and as a result his works reflect about the people and their places, religious practices, temples and mosques, forts and palaces dispersed spatially and temporally. His love for Indian people was something spontaneous and
inherent. He writes that "I can only write about the people, among whom I lived and whom I love and shall always love." 19

Taylor could have proved his worth at any place and at all times. But he seem to have a different opinion about himself. "In England, he writes, "there appeared to be no chance of distinction except by a life-long struggle." Be that as it may, he rose to eminence as a proven administrator and left an indelible mark on the people who called him as 'Mahadev Baba' and recited his name every evening while lighting their oil lamps. 20 Strictly speaking Taylor was never in the civil service of the East India Company or the Crown. He was also not an officer in the British Indian army. He spent his entire career under the Nizam of Hyderabad. However, as a protected territory, the Nizam's government attuned to the administrative policy of the company.

Having equipped in language, customs and manners of the Deccan people, Taylor applied the English "intelligence, integrity and foresight" to effect the required results. At the age of 18, he was appointed as Assistant Superintendent of police of a District with a population of about 5 lakhs. As soon as he assumed the charge as police officer at Sadaseopet,
he tried to acquaint himself with the entire area of his jurisdiction. He took over the charge of the borders along the eastern banks of river Manjra which made it possible to seal the depredations.

In the course of his periodic tours he halted at Homnabad which was a very important commercial centre at that time. There, it was brought to his notice about the malpractices adopted by the merchants especially the underweight sale of flour. When Meadows Taylor apprehended and fined them, the merchants boycotted the sale of commodities but he did not lose his nerve and got a bazzar set up from his own men though he had to explain the actual position to the resident on the complaints made by the grain dealers. It is interesting to note that the young British officer conducted himself as per his training and dictates of common sense. Unlike the greedy minister, Chundoo Lal who felt sorry that in such a situation he could have collected "a lakh out of them." Thus he brought the merchants to books and hence forward the Dean of guilds and Town Council were made responsible for the malpractices adopted by the merchants. Also Meadows Taylor asserted the police authority to inspect the shops, examine the weights and measures from time to time.
While he was camping at Tuljapur he felt aghast when it was brought to his notice about the dishonest flour sellers. It seems the local merchants not only sold underweighed flour but also adulterated it with sand and the weary sufferers happened to be the pious pilgrims. After verifying the position, he sent his men and arranged to buy flour separately from each shop. After testing the sample he detected lot of sand adulteration. He summoned the flour sellers and made them to eat that stuff. They realized that Taylor was pretty serious about it and some of them did eat and finally all of them begged his pardon. Since then such malpractices were put to a stop.21

As Superintendent of Bazzars at Bolaram Cantonment of the Nizam's troops, Taylor brought order among the merchants. He supervised the quality of meat and regulated the prices of grains and ghee. He also established a free market of vegetables whereby he ensured free availability of them in plenty at all times. All types of disputes were arbitrated by him. Thus he won the good will of the sepoys.22

While he was working in the Districts, he paid special attention on each and every problem. His familiarity and personal acquaintance with the people encouraged them to acquaint him with all their routine
problems. Taylor was conscious about his limitations which impelled him to express his deep anguish for the sorry state of affairs. The age-old feudalistic system in which the private landlords, the Arabs and the jagirdars exploited the masses. Naturally they resented the interference by the Nizam's executive authority. Yet Taylor was dauntless in exposing many illegal practices. He did it with a missionary zeal and a sense of personal love to the people. On one occasion a curious but at the same time a knotty case of disputed inheritance was reported to him. The case in question was about a piece of land claimed by two families on the basis of a grant issued by king Adil Shah (1480 A.D.). Though both the papers were identical, he found one of them was written on a paper from Portuguese Goa, whose history goes back only up to 1510 A.D.²³

Taylor's keen and penetrating eye did not miss any incident or human activity in the region. He is remembered for ever by the posterity for highlighting the cruel and blood chilling acts of the Thugs. He has recorded their nefarious activities in his famous novel, "The Confessions of a Thug". He devoted his valuable time in recording the confessions of the Thugs. In fact, he should have got the entire credit of unearthing the Thuggee activities in Central India and the Deccan, but for the earlier publication of Sleeman's report.²⁴
Meadows Taylor applied the same method, the
same untiring energy and meticulous detail in civil
administration. He was deeply interested in the rural
upliftment for which he prepared blue-prints in the
field of social, educational and cultural development.25
Often times, he was pained and appalled to notice
the merciless exploitation of the rural poor by the
nobles and Nawabs who owned private estates. They
evaded the executive orders. The Nizam's agents and
the Arabs used to commit serious criminal offences
such as decoity, forceful exactions and shared the
booty. Murders and other offences went unnoticed.
These feudal lords cultivated with the high official
in the court and sometimes they influenced the Nizam
with costly nazarana. Naturally those powerful feudals
resented any interference by the British civilian
officers. But fortunately Taylor got an opportunity
during the transfer of Osmanabad province from the
Nizam to the company to remedy the evil practices.
He effected the expulsion of the Arabs without blood-
shed. He instilled confidence among the masses.

Meadows Taylor, after the transfer of
Osmanabad province from the Nizam to the British,
was put incharge of the area. Initially he applied
himself to settle the boundaries of the District.
Then he utilised the opportunity to introduce a series
of developmental activities which helped in improving the general lot of the rural masses. He felt the primary need of making the people literate for which he encouraged the vernacular schools to be started. He was also appalled by the poor state of health. Therefore he opened hospitals to treat for ordinary ailments. It may be remembered that Meadows Taylor initiated the reforms much before Macaulay, Lord Dalhouse and before any uniform administration was introduced by the British government.

Taylor will be remembered forever as a great innovator as well as an enlightened administrator. He had an uncommon eye for minute details and unbounded urge for details. He perceived the problems at gross-root level and worked out practicable solutions. In fact some of the reforms initiated by Meadows Taylor have been continued by the succeeding generations of civil administrators, including those who were I.C.S. Officers, until modern times. His reforms touched the very core of the rural populace, without which developmental programmes could be farcical and unrewarding.

Taylor acquainted himself with the general topography, river systems, and the soil conditions of the newly acquired province. He also found that
the people were hard working, sincere, practical and
gentle who laboured in dry farming. Naturally he felt
that any facilities by way of irrigation and better
communication system would improve the produce and
uncommittantly their living standards.

He introduced a series of reforms in this
direction. Obviously he availed his past experience
at Sorapur. First of all he regulated the revenue
collection (malguzari). It took quite some time for
him to rationalise the utter state of confusion prevail-
ing in the Nizam's territories. He employed checks on
wrong payment of revenue for which he introduced day
book and a ledger in the treasury which were neatly
and correctly maintained. Such improvised methods
of revenue collection resulted into the increased
income by way of revenue.

Taylor turned his attention towards the
construction of reservoirs for irrigational purposes.
It may be noted here that uniformly dry farming area
like Osmanabad district required such permanent and
assured irrigational facilities. He embarked upon
such activities inspite of the fact that he did not
have any assured funds from the Resident, but the
tenacity and preservance of him were the main factors
to forge ahead with such impossible, laborious schemes.
He also turned his attention towards the prevailing laws of justice both civil and criminal. It is evident that there was no law in the Nizam territories. The executive agents and the Arab administered from the most serious criminal offences to the ordinary dacoits. Murders went undetected and the culprits were rarely brought to books. Sometimes they joined hands with the dacoits to share the booty. In the absence of fixed law codes, naturally the law of jungle prevailed. Taylor viewed this state of affairs very seriously. On his own he introduced a system of judicial procedure and tried the cases within the frame work of the procedure. In fact the results have been quite rewarding. It is gratifying to note that Taylor himself undertook the survey work. He surveyed the dam sites and also the proposed roads. It seems that his experiments, not based on any scientific knowledge nor on the basis of any existing models have been by and large practicable and were approved by the later engineers.

During his tenure as Deputy Commissioner of Osmanabad District, Taylor was faced with the problem of famine relief work as famines were common in the northern districts of the Nizam's kingdom. He came out with constructive schemes some of which have been implemented even in modern times. He provided
employment for the agricultural workers. He undertook, as a famine relief work, the construction of irrigation reservoirs and the laying of new roads. He opened dole houses for the old and the infirm. Then he opened hospitals to treat the patients for common ailments.

It is because of such enlightened and benevolent reforms that he brought about, the people of Osmanabad remembered him forever. In fact they found in him a true friend and philosopher. They could go to him any time and seek his advice. Taylor acquired proficiency in Marathi as well as in Urdu. Therefore, the illiterate masses did not find any barrier between themselves and their administrator.\textsuperscript{31} The memorandum that the subordinates and the gentry of this region submitted to Meadows Taylor at the time of his departure to take up a new assignment in Berar province is so moving and would speak volumes about his work in Osmanabad province (\textsuperscript{4}. \textsuperscript{33}).

"Since your arrival in this country we have all been happy and prosperous. Now an order has come from government that you are to go to Berar and government has no doubt directed this because of your qualifications, and fitness, and ability for that duty. As it is a higher office than this, it will be a source of pleasure to you; and we all pray to God that He will be pleased
to protect so kind and merciful an officer, and we shall be very grateful, so God will hear our prayers.

"But now we are to be separated from you, and are hereby fallen into a sea of grief. We shall never be able to give sufficient praise to you for the manner in which you have protected the people hitherto - how you have created means of prosperity - and for your various good qualities. Still we have it in our hearts to address you in some sort, and you are to be pleased to accept it in order to gratify all.

"In the year 1853 you came to this district as Deputy Commissioner, and, considering its circumstances then and now, there is a very great difference in its condition, of which you are the sole cause. When you came, there were no good roads in Nalpur, all the village streets and paths were filthy and useless, and even men travelled with difficulty. But you, with much personal exertion, have made proper arrangements for the good comfort of all. We all know this, and it has all come of your kindness.

'There was an immense quantity of waste land in the district. This has been cultivated since you came, and is now inhabited; and by provision of water and other circumstances in the country, hamlets, villages, and market towns have been founded and built, and
trade has very greatly increased, by which all obtain a livelihood, and there is no distress of any kind.

'Before, in this district, dacoits and gang-robbers and plunderers who openly committed murder, used to go about in force, and the inhabitants were much afflicted by them. But you established police, and settled everything and so entirely extirpated these people that not even a trace of them remains. From this protection of life and property, one of the principal benefits which result from the British Government was secured to this district.

"In the year 1855 there was a very heavy famine in this land, and it was difficult even for such people to support themselves. In that hard time many poor people were at the point of death; many could get no food and in their straits even abandoned their children. We all saw this. Then you made great exertions to save these poor people, and began with large establishments to clear the fort, and to make roads - as well to the advantage of government as to the people; and thus you maintained the poor who had no other means of subsistence. Of those who were not able to labour, you, from your own private funds, supported thousands, so if we seek for benevolent and useful people like you, we find few of them.
From the tanks which you strove to get constructed, this district will be greatly benefitted and from this your name will be sung with praise when our women grind at their mills. But if we now say all we have to say it would only fatigue you, and take up much time; therefore we will be concise, and close this with what is due to your good qualities.

But what shall we say? You were as father and mother to ryots. You heard the complaints of the poor and protected them. In your durbar, as flies to honey, all classes and degrees of persons gathered and mingled together without apprehension: but we never saw yet that you ever used harsh expressions to anyone. Your perfect knowledge of our language assured complaints, for they knew they were understood and were contented and never, on any occasion, have we seen that any one was treated with indignity or affronted in your durbar.

We, who are the servants of government in this district, as also all the ryots, well know what your conduct has been, and know also that your kindness to us has never decreased. You have taken care of us as of our children. Were we to relate how you have exerted yourself for us, we should never make an end of it. It will be difficult for us, we should never make an end of it. It will be difficult for us to
obtain another superior like you and we considered it good fortune, when we obtained service with you. Now you are going from us and our misfortune is apparent to us. Be it so. Wherever you go, may God prosper you, and may our country be prosperous through you. So we entreat God. Our hearts are full and we can say no more. So also, before you came here you were at Shorapur, and there, too you made all happy, and made that district prosperous. Such praise have we heard from many persons who came from thence.

"Now our last request is this; that as you have bestowed on us so many obligations and so much love upon us, we, to show our gratitude to you, have signed this address, which all assembled have agreed on, and we pray you will be pleased to accept it. This is our unanimous representation, which you are to be pleased to accede to."

Signed

Jewanji Rustomji
Shankar Rao Ruggonath,
extra-Assistant Commissioners,

And 1, 123, Zemindars, pateis and other respectable inhabitants. 32

Diplomatic career:

Meadows Taylor seem to have been equally good as a diplomat. He got an opportunity to prove his talents through the appointment as a Regent of Sorapur. In fact
Taylor thanked General Fraser for his sympathetic consideration of the latter for this sensitive post which Fraser's special favour towards Taylor was undoubted, the former seem to have been selfish in offering this challenging position to the latter.

The Sorapur state was, of late reduced to the position of a small fiefdom attached to the Nizam as per the Treaty of 1800 signed between the British government and the Nizam. The problems of this state became more complicated because of the unreasonable exactions on some pretext or the other by the Nizam of Hyderabad. It was not easy for this backward state to raise the required amount. Naturally the British government due to its responsibilities provided in the Treaty of 1800 had to intervene to help both the states out of such complicated situation. The death of Krishnappa Naik led to more serious problems. This was mainly due to the machinations of the Rani. Captain Gresely, the then Resident of Sorapur arranged for a smooth change over by recommending Pid Naik, the late Raja's younger brother to act as a Regent, until the young prince grew of age. This was torpedoed by her. She vehemently opposed Pid Naik and the British Government. Under such circumstances Captain Gresley asked for the help of the army. However, General Fraser was not in favour
of armed action. But the real position was different. At that time the problems in Punjab and the North West frontier warranted the retention of troops in that area.

In the absence of the support of the troops Captain Gresley could not do anything. He feared that the Rani's troops, supported by the Arabs and Rohillas would endanger the position particularly those of the British. In that helpless position Captain Gresley resigned and sought immediate relief. Against this background, Meadows Taylor was inducted to this delicate position. Now onwards the tactful but at the same time bold and courageous meneavours of Taylor started. Some of his friends and admirers knew the hidden talents and one of them seem to have written thus "If Taylor settles this matter without troops, he will be a cleverer fellow than I take him for." 34

As soon as Meadows Taylor settled at Surapur he addressed himself to his main business. He carried a letter from general Fraser, which he read out to the members of Rani's family and warned them of the same fate that was met many Princely States in the country who opposed the government. On the next occasion he spoke to the Beydurs who were supporting the Rani and her parmour. At every stage Meadows Taylor's resourcefulness as a diplomat and a clever operator could be seen. He knew fully
well that he was handling the situation at a great risk. In fact he was told of the imminent plans of doing away with his life and occasional threats of turning him out of Sorapur.

Next day he called on the Rani, and cleverly impressed upon her the complications and a strange situation created due to her own overdoings. He succeeded in getting her consent on the conditions that he put forth. They are:

1) to settle the revenue account of the last three years;

2) to get the raja's seal of office,

3) to entrust the state's troops to Pid Naik. Meadows Taylor was adamant till the Rani gave in to his demands. On the next day Taylor encountered a large number of troops. He started suspecting the intentions of the Rani who was trying to go back from her promises. At one stage Taylor felt that the situation would go out of control because of the presence of the troops.

However, he tactfully dealt with the situation. He paid off the arrears of the soldiers and also made them sign a pledge in favour of the British and the Nizam. He cleverly put Channabassapa under his custody till the Rani paid the promised dues. In course of time another serious situation cropped up. The Rani and her paramour were secretly menaoung to get
rid of Taylor especially with the help of the troops who were loyal to the Rani. Once again Taylor acted swiftly. He shifted Channabassappa to Lingaugur.\textsuperscript{37} By doing this he averted a serious situation.

Meadows Taylor was meticulous in all his official dealings. He acquainted the Resident at Hyderabad who conveyed his total and unreserved approval of the former's action. To quote, "These despatches demand from me nothing further than the expression of my entire approbation of the temper, judgement, and firmness which you are now exhibiting in the discharge of the duty intrusted to you; and it will be very gratifying to me to state to the supreme government, that under your judicious management the affairs of the Shorapur state may be arranged in a satisfactory manner and without the necessity of having recourse to arms ... Nothing remains to me but to transmit to you my entire and unqualified approbation of all your proceedings."

(Signed)

J.S. FRASER,
Resident.

Capt. Gresley also wrote thus: you have managed admirably and deserve very great credit. I could never have done the thing so well. General Fraser ought to be much obliged to you.\textsuperscript{38}
The Resident went to the extent of complimenting Taylor's diplomatic ventures to Mrs. Taylor. He drew her attention to the despatches received from the charge d'affairs. Taylors diplomatic move in bringing the Rani around by his sheer presence of temper, tact and judgement.

While dealing with Sorapur's affairs, Taylor was not blind to the realities. He realised that the Nizam Government was illegally extracting more and more money year after year from the Sorapur state. On the other hand the resources of the state were totally depleted and the general lot of the people was pitiable. Therefore after normalising the condition he took up the Sorapur's issue with the Nizam through the Resident and it is gratifying to note that he succeeded to get the annual payment reduced to Rs. 60 thousand. Thus Taylor displayed the instincts of a true British officer while discharging his duties. In this way the integrity and uprightness of a British individual has been focussed.

It will be seen that Meadows Taylor applied himself assiduously to bring in a great transformation in the economic life of the people. He also introduced major changes in the prevailing legal procedures. So much so that the Sorapur state recorded a surplus
economy in its treasury and the people were contented and became more hard working in their fields, where the cultivable land has been more than doubled.

It is evident that Meadows Taylor kept himself fully abreast with the happenings in the rest of the British India. This was possibly due to his appointment as a correspondent to the London times. It is partly due to his inherent urge to know all about the happenings around him.

He also maintained very good public relations with the collectors of Sholapur and Ahmednagar during his tenure as a Deputy Commissioner of the newly acquired province of Osmanabad. Here too he was constantly engrossed with the problems of border settlements, the acquisition of the Arab garrisons stationed in some forts and the welfare activities. In the same way he conducted himself admirably in Berar. In fact due to his active association with the neighbouring districts and close rapport with the army officers of Central India. In view of the above it may be concluded that a close contact of the officers with their subjects in this part of India averted any sort of personal hatred and enmity between the administrators and the army officers and the people which is in sharp contrast with the conditions which resulted into the General Uprising of the Princely States in the rest of the country during 1857.
REFERENCES:

8. Ibid., p. 847. Also see G.S. Mansukhani, Op. Cit., p. 86.
10. Ibid., p. 99.
14. Ibid., p. 64.
15. Ibid., p. 63.
17. Ibid., pp. 81-82.
18. Ibid., pp. 60-61.
19. Ibid., p. 469.
   *Ibid.*, No.634. All the same Taylor took trouble of sending surveys level sections and specifications, for these.