

CHAPTER XLIII.

Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV.

Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV's views on some religious, social and other topics.

The decorous reserve and the studied stiffness which the Indian Princes of the olden days were accustomed to assume whenever they appeared in public no longer characterise the Princes who have received training under the modern methods of educational discipline. They have become frank in their manners and sociable in an enlarged degree when they are in company. They are freely to be seen gracing public gatherings and presiding over functions of various kinds, no longer deterred by any old-world sentiments of rank or dignity from giving expression to their views on public or other questions whenever circumstances call for them. Krishnaraja Wodeyar has freely availed himself of such opportunities, and the workings of his mind stand revealed to all those who wish to know them. These views of His Highness go to reveal that the mind behind them is a cultured mind not bound by any narrow limits, but bold and forward in its movements. A few typical views of His Highness expressed on various occasions will illustrate the truth of these remarks. These views are valuable not only for the immediate purpose they served but also for serving as beacon lights for the guidance of the people of the country and a model for his successors to follow.

In December 1902 on the occasion of a visit to Poona when the Gayana Samaj there presented him an address, His Highness in expressing his pleasure for the welcome offered to him said that he appreciated the compliment that in Mysore under the auspices of his revered parents this fine art had made much advancement. As a lover of music of both the East and the West, it pleased him, His Highness said, to renew his acquaintance with the Gayana Samaj and to assure the Samaj of his hearty interest in it and in its aims.

On the 22nd December 1903 when the Maharaja visited Madras to open the Industrial Exhibition organised there by the citizens of Madras, His Highness in reply to a welcome address said that his earnest desire was to uphold the great traditions of his State and to do what in him lay to maintain for Mysore that position in the Indian polity which had been assigned to it in the address. His Highness congratulated himself that thus early in his career he had been afforded an opportunity of meeting so many of the most enlightened citizens not only of Madras but of all parts of India and of taking his part with the people of India in a movement which had for its object the development of the industries of India, their great Motherland.

In January 1904 in addressing a deputation of Mysoreans resident in Madras, His Highness said that though for the administration and development of Mysore the best heads and hearts that the soil could produce were needed, he would be the last to discourage young men from seeking an honourable livelihood abroad. For it was certain that though absent for a while, they were not unmindful that Mysore was their home and would ever be eager when opportunity offered to devote the knowledge and breadth of mind acquired by residence amongst progressive communities to the service of their Motherland.

In reply to an address from the Lingayat Community presented on the 8th June 1906 on the occasion of the elevation of Mr. K. P. Puttanna Chetty (now Sir) as a Member of Council, the Maharaja gave expression to the view that the doors of education and of the Public Service lay open to all alike and in the appointment which had then been made they could find ample assurance that those who proved their fitness would not lack recognition from him or from his Government.

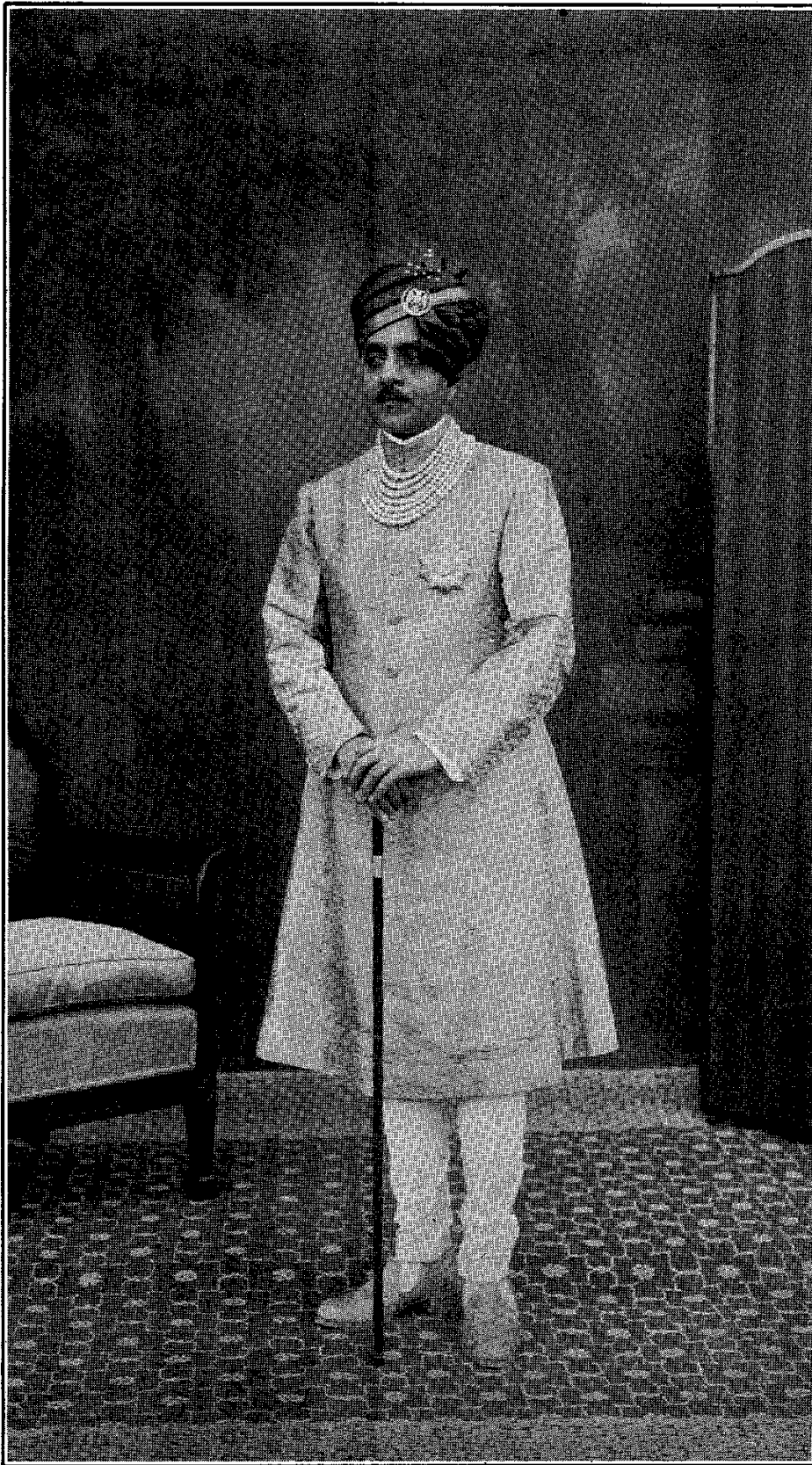
In reply to an address presented on the 28th August 1906 on the occasion of the opening of the Wesleyan Mission Hospital at Mysore, His Highness said that the Wesleyan Mission were old friends of all in Mysore and were the pioneers of modern education in the city and that their good work was well-known to every one.

This their latest enterprise was one that must appeal to the hearts of all. The provision of medical relief for the sick and suffering women and children was a question apart from all questions of caste, creed or nationality and there was no object to which those that were in a position to help could more worthily contribute.

In January 1907 the Maharaja visited Calcutta and in reply to an address presented by the members of the Association for the advancement of scientific and industrial education, His Highness said that there had been an awakening all over the Indian continent regarding the urgent need that existed for recovering the ground which had been lost in the matter of industries and commerce and that all those who took a true interest in the well-being of the country could not but rejoice at the signs of revival that were noticeable on all sides.

In reply to the address presented by the citizens of Mysore on 11th March 1907 congratulating the Maharaja on the title of G. C. S. I. conferred on him by His Majesty the King-Emperor, His Highness said :—" You allude in your address to the honour as being a fit recognition of my four years' personal rule. Though I appreciate the depth of feeling which has prompted you to express this opinion, yet I must candidly confess that I cannot altogether endorse it. I feel that I have only just begun my work of administration, that there is a very great deal to be done and that very little has yet been achieved. My responsibility is a heavy one, but I fully realise it. As it has pleased Providence to call upon me to discharge it, I can only submit to the Divine Will. It shall ever be my aim and ambition in life to do all that lies in me to promote the progress and prosperity of my beautiful State and the happiness of my beloved people. I can assure you that I shall not spare myself in my endeavours to accomplish this. Neither perseverance nor effort will, I trust, be ever found wanting in fulfilling that aim."

In reply to the address of the Vokkaligara Sangha consisting of people mainly following the occupation of agriculture, His Highness said on the 17th October 1907 that any improvement that



H. H. Narasimharaja Wodeyar, G.C.I.E.

tended to the welfare of that community must command his warm support.

On the occasion of the Birthday Banquet to his European friends on the 27th June 1910, His Highness said:—"It is a renewed pleasure to me as the Mysore Birthday Week comes round year after year to welcome my English friends to the capital of my State, and this year that pleasure is intensified by the thought that the large and distinguished company who have been my guests on this occasion have come here not only to join in the celebrations of my birthday but to unite with my people in the universal rejoicing occasioned by the marriage of my brother. Mr. Fraser has alluded in feeling and eloquent terms to the strong bond of affection which unites my brother and myself, and I can assure you that it is a source of great pride and gratification to me to realise what a high place my brother has secured in your regard. My mother too will, I know, appreciate very deeply the congratulations on the happy event in our family which Mr. Fraser has so gracefully offered her..... I also appreciate very much the complimentary words in which Mr. Fraser has alluded to the military rank recently conferred on me by His Majesty the King-Emperor. Not only do I feel proud to belong to the British army as my father did before me, but I regard it as an honour to be associated with such a fine regiment as the 26th Cavalry..... It is difficult for me to give an adequate response to the warm and friendly words in which Mr. Fraser has referred to his many years of close association with my family and his personal relations with myself, and I can only acknowledge the deep debt of gratitude which I owe him for the care and devotion which he displayed during my boyhood and early manhood and to which I mainly owe any small measure of success that I may have attained in my work of administration."

In laying the corner-stone of the Y. M. C. A. building at Bangalore on the 14th April 1912, His Highness welcomed the extension of the Association's work to the State as he felt that its influence religious, moral and educational would be all for the good, not only of its Christian members but also of the young men belonging to other religions who would pass their leisure hours

within its walls. The people of India, His Highness further said, owed a deep obligation to the Missionary Schools and Colleges which had done so much not only to spread education but to impart a high moral character to the vast number of Indian pupils who had come under their influence..... There could be no more valuable training for a young man than that which made him fear his God and do good to his neighbour, or in other words, which taught him to believe in his own religion, to be a good citizen and to render social service.

On the occasion of the opening on the 11th April 1913 of the Vani Vilas Ursu Girls' School which is said to have come into existence mainly through the instrumentality of His Highness' cousin the late H. Nanjundaraj Urs, the Maharaja said that it was a trite saying that no community could expect to advance when half of its members were illiterate and ignorant..... The education of the future mothers of children could not with impunity be neglected and it was therefore none too soon that they had awakened to the true needs of such an education.

In reply to an address presented to him at Davangere on the 19th December 1914 by the people of the place on the occasion of his provincial tour, His Highness referring to the German War which had begun a few months before, said that though it might be admitted that the war had affected the business of the producers and exporters of cotton and oil seeds, still it was to be understood that distress of that kind was inevitable and could not easily be remedied by administrative measures. Whatever might be the effect of the war on their trade, they were to remember that ties of gratitude and friendship bound them to the British Government and that they were to submit cheerfully to some sacrifice in support of the righteous cause for which Great Britain and her allies had taken up arms.

On the occasion of the opening on the 6th July 1915 of the Seringapatam Memorial Mantap built on the site where Krishnaraja Wodeyar III was born, His Highness said—"There are few places more closely associated with Mysore history than the island and fortress of Seringapatam, and it is a source of peculiar satisfaction to

me that this site should be chosen for a memorial to my illustrious grandfather whose name will long be remembered not only in connection with the restoration of our ancient dynasty after the fall of Seringapatam but with its second restoration after 50 years of British administration. It may be truly said that we owe that signal act of generosity and justice—the Rendition of Mysore in 1881—to the recognition by the British Government of the high personal character of my grandfather, of his patience and fortitude, and of his unswerving loyalty to the British Government during many years of adversity..... I grieve to see as I look around me the ruin and decay which have fallen on this once flourishing city and no one can sympathise more deeply than I do with the earnest wish of its inhabitants to see something of its former prosperity restored.....

“As I stand on this historical battle-ground, my thoughts naturally go back to the terrible war now raging in Europe in which our Indian soldiers are fighting side by side with their British comrades in defence of a righteous cause. May we all unite in a constant prayer for victory to the British arms and for an honourable and lasting peace.”

On the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the Daly Memorial Hall for the location of the Mythic Society on 31st August 1916, His Highness referred to the two objects of the memorial building, namely, to provide a local habitation to the Mythic Society and to honour the memory of Col. Sir Hugh Daly who was till recently the British Resident in the State. Sir Hugh Daly's active interest in the progress of the State and his geniality won for him a warm place in the hearts of the people of Mysore. His Highness also said that if the objects of the Mythic Society came to be better understood—to conduct researches connected with history and archæology—he hoped that the people of Mysore, not the learned few only, would feel pride and interest in its work. Much of the credit for the building was due to Father Tabard who was its founder and mainstay..... The building would serve to recall to the memory of the future generations the name of a high-minded British officer who was a sincere friend of

Mysore and its people. It would bring together Europeans and Indians to work on a common platform for an object which appealed to the higher intellectual tastes of civilised life.

On the occasion of the opening of the Science Congress presided over by Sir Alfred Bourne, Director of Tata Institute, on 10th January 1917 His Highness said :—" The last half of a century has witnessed a marvellous progress in the application of science to the needs of man. Inventions and improvements have been pouring in with bewildering rapidity. Transport by land, water and air has been quickened and cheapened. The uses of science for alleviating sickness have been multiplied. That fever can be defeated by science can be demonstrated by what has been done on the Panama Canal.

"Meeting as we do here in an atmosphere of peace and sunshine, our thoughts cannot but turn to the Great War and to the terrible scenes of death and destruction which are being enacted in Central Europe. One cannot help feeling it a tragedy that science to which the world so largely owes its progress and civilisation is being, as it were, debased in this war and used for the purpose of destroying human life..... May we not look forward to a time when science will be hailed not only as a beacon light of civilisation but as the world's peace-maker.....

"Scientific education in India is in its infancy and her industrial output per head of population is as yet a negligible quantity. India at the rate her population is growing cannot long maintain herself by merely growing raw produce. Science has soon to come to the aid of her agriculture and industry to maintain her population."

In reply to the address of the Chamarajanagar Municipal Council on 8th December 1917, His Highness appealed to the people to develop the spirit of co-operation with Government, for Government by its unaided efforts could achieve very little and that any real progress must depend on the initiative and the public spirit of the people themselves, that they must not

look to Government or its officers to do everything for them, but must learn to be self-reliant and to develop the resources of the country by their own independent efforts also.

In reply to an address by a Non-Brahmin deputation at Karikal Thotti on 24th June 1918 His Highness said :—“ It has always been my earnest desire to see all classes of my subjects represented in just proportion in the Public Service. The preponderance of the Brahmins in the Government Service is due to inevitable causes and I feel convinced that time and the spread of education and enlightenment will gradually remove the inequality of which you rightly complain. At the same time, I must tell you that it is far from my desire that any community should in any way be penalised on account of its caste, simply because it has worked hard and utilised fully the opportunities for advancement which are open to all my subjects. For, I believe I have in the Brahmin community subjects as loyal as any among my people. Nor can I for a moment forget the eminent services rendered in the past and are still being rendered to my House and State by the representatives of that gifted community. My ambition is to pursue a righteous policy as between various castes and communities in the State, neither unduly favouring nor suppressing any community but trying to uplift them all for the permanent good of the State.

“ My Government is using its utmost endeavours to encourage backward classes in the State and you may rest assured that this policy of affording special facilities and encouragement to all communities who are lagging behind in the race of progress will be readily pursued in future even more than it has been in the past.”

In 1915 when the Benares Hindu University was founded, the Maharaja was elected as the first Chancellor of the University. On the first convocation of the University on 17th January 1919, His Highness gave utterance to these sentiments :—“ Of the many important measures which distinguish the viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge, not the least in its beneficent and far-reaching effects is the Benares Hindu University Act of 1915 by which the Govern-

ment of India, under his inspiration and guidance, set the seal of its approval upon one of the greatest popular educational movements of the times..... After many vicissitudes and many years of toil, we are assembled here to-day to gather the first fruits of our labours, and this important event in the history of our University comes happily at a time when the most terrible war that the world has ever seen is at an end. We rejoice on such an occasion to congratulate His Majesty the King-Emperor and the British nation on the decisive victory of the British Empire and its Allies. The war has demonstrated the greatness of the British character, no less than the deep-rooted loyalty of the Princes and people of India to the British connection. May we hope that the outlook of the human race is changing and a new era is dawning on a world saddened by the tears and sacrifices of many nations—an era of the reign of right as opposed to might, of principle as opposed to expediency, and of peace as opposed to aggression..... Centres of culture like this University have a noble purpose to serve and can contribute materially to the enlargement of human ideals and to the promotion of interracial and international fellowship. But they can achieve this end only if their outlook is as wide as humanity itself.....

“Especially should we Hindus with our glorious past beware of the temptation to confuse patriotism with blind adoration of ancient days, coupled with a repugnance for everything modern and foreign. No nation is impoverished by commerce with other nations; no civilisation can suffer by intercourse with other nations and by an intelligent appreciation of the principles, ideas and practices that have proved to be beneficial to other peoples and countries..... I understand that in America where the problem of fusing a variety of peoples into a common nationality is as urgent, though perhaps not so difficult, as in India, education in citizenship, patriotism and loyalty to the constitution have been included amongst the objectives of the school system. The cultivation of the ethics of citizenship and patriotism is specially needed in India where clan, tribe and caste have had a deplorable tendency to produce communal exclusiveness and differences.

“The country needs something more than the accomplished gentleman. It needs men of enthusiasm even more than refined intellectuals pursuing the easy path of worldly wisdom, worldly compromise and worldly success. It needs men of stout hearts and strong hands who will not allow their conscience to be drugged by sophistry of any kind, or their nerve to be paralysed by the fear of unpopularity, but will oppose wrong wherever found and fight unflinchingly the battle of social justice and emancipation on behalf of the weak and down-trodden.”

At the opening on the 14th April 1922 of the mosque at the Body Guard Lines at Mysore constructed at the Maharaja's cost and presented to the Mahomedan community, His Highness made a speech in Urdu and said that it was one of the striking features of Islam that it laid special emphasis on the inestimable value of prayer, and that it would give him great pleasure if the Mussalman community made full use of the mosque and if they constantly resorted to it for prayer and meditation..... The Almighty God could confer no greater blessing on a Ruler, further said the Maharaja, than the happiness and well-being of his people be they Hindus, Mahomedans or Christians in whose welfare, spiritual as well as material, he is deeply interested.

On the occasion of the celebration on the 3rd September 1923 of the Janma Ashtami of Sri Krishna by the members of the Sanatana Dharma Pratap Sabha of Srinagar, His Highness who happened to be in Kashmir at the time gave utterance to these elevated sentiments:—“On this auspicious day our thoughts naturally turn to the holy nativity and life of Sri Krishna and our minds piously dwell on the meditations of His Divine virtue. We may not attain to the same level of perfection as He; it would indeed be presumptuous on our part even to dream of achieving it, but we may at least strive to follow his footsteps, to understand the words of wisdom contained in the songs of that Celestial Bard, to emulate his example and to gain that personal holiness without which no man can come up to true knowledge of God..... The sacred Hindu religion is the priceless heirtage handed down to us by our forefathers and it is, believe me, God's best gift to us.”

On the occasion of the All-India Jain Conference held at Sravanabelagola on the 14th March 1925, His Highness said :—
 “In welcoming this all-India gathering of Jains to the land of Mysore, I cannot forget that this land is to them a land of pilgrimage, consecrated by some of the holiest traditions and the tenderest memories of their faith. This picturesque rock on an elevated table-land was, as a thousand year old tradition has it, the scene where the venerable Bhagavan Srutakevali Bhadrabahu leading the first migration of the Jains to the Southern Peninsula broke his journey through the jungles and took up his abode, and tradition still points to the cave in which years after he passed away in Sallekhana leaving his foot-prints on the rock..... This is also the sacred spot to the Muniswara Gomata..... For a thousand years has the Muniswara's colossal statue carved, it may be, out of a huge boulder on the rock and visible for miles around ruled over this scene, unsurpassed in massive grandeur and sublimity of spiritual power by anything that the Egyptian or Assyrian monuments can show..... What is unique in Jainism among Indian religious and philosophical systems is that it has sought an emancipation in an upward movement of the spirit towards the realm of infinitude and transcendence and that it has made power, will, character, in one word charitra, an integral element of perfection, side by side with knowledge and faith.

“The conference is, I understand, a purely religious and social one. It will have nothing to do with politics. I commend the wisdom of the promoters on this limitation. Let me not, however, be misunderstood in this commendation as putting politics outside the pale of your consideration as something to be dreaded or ignored. On the contrary, I feel that every intelligent person should take an earnest and intelligent interest in the political questions of the day and contribute his and I ought, perhaps, to add her share towards the solution of the problems that must inevitably arise from the necessity of adapting the organisation of humanity to the needs of its expanding consciousness.....

“In the sphere of politics whether concerning India or any of the areas of which it is composed, you are Indians first and Jains

afterwards. As Jains you command the sympathetic interest of everyone looking at the problems of your community from your particular standpoint. As Indians, your political point of view as well as of every other religious community in India should, in my opinion, be that of India as a whole.

“So long as the thousand and one different communities into which our country is split up bear this doctrine in mind and act towards one another in a true spirit of brotherhood, we need have no misgivings as to her future. It is when the purely religious and social questions invade politics that vast difficulties arise, difficulties which must inevitably retard the progress of the country. Within the religious and social sphere of each community there can be no improvement which does not exercise a beneficial effect on the general progress of the country. We must, therefore, wish every community all possible success in its endeavour to advance itself religiously, socially and educationally. At the same time, we must realise that if there is to be real progress in the country at large, it must be all along the line; it must embrace every community. And I personally consider it the sacred duty of the more advanced communities not only to have earnest regard for their own progress, but also to extend a helping hand to less fortunate communities which from some remediable cause are lagging behind in the path of human evolution.”

On the occasion of the celebration of the Jubilee of the Maharaja's Sanskrit College at Mysore on the 20th October 1926, His Highness said:—“Started in 1876 at the express desire of my grandfather, its importance cannot be judged by numerical standards alone. For, this institution stands for ancient culture. It is the centre of Sanskrit learning from which a knowledge of the rich store of our ancient heritage has radiated to all parts of the State and even outside. It has, in fact, preserved for the use of future generations the essence of those traditions and characteristics on which the structure of our Indian civilisation was built in the past. This college is thus rendering a national service of no mean order to the country. That this is not an unduly large claim will be clear if we remember that in any reconstruction of our social,

political and religious polity, we could not and should not cut ourselves off from our historic past and that our future must have its roots in the past.

"Besides, Sanskrit learning embodies a culture, a discipline, a type of humanism which few other learning, old or new, dead or living, can present to our age."

The mosque known as the Jumma Musjid Mosque at Mysore was reconstructed at a cost of Rs. 38,000 by the State engineers at the command of the Maharaja and was handed over on the 6th April 1927 to the Mahomedan community for use. When the seat of Government was transferred from Seringapatam after the events of 1799, there was no Jumma Musjid in the city and the Mahomedan inhabitants who had migrated from Seringapatam prayed that one might be constructed. This prayer for a mosque was not only acceded to by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, grandfather of the present Maharaja, but he also attached a suitable cash grant for the maintenance of the institution and for the relief of poor travellers at a Langarkhana. The present Maharaja in declaring the new mosque open wished that the building might endure for many generations as a source of inspiration, as a place of goodwill, as a centre of all that is best and noblest in the Mahomedan religion.

On the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of Saint Philomena's Church at Mysore on 28th October 1933, His Highness said:—"I believe with deep conviction that religion is fundamental to the richest and strongest life of the nation. There are diverse religions in this land of ours and frequently there exists a most irreligious hostility between them. But we have been gradually coming to understand that the unity is much deeper than the differences, that while in creed and custom we are far enough apart, in worship and in aspiration we are one. This being so, the creed and custom of each religion among us is surely worthy of reverent study by the followers of every other.

"You have reminded me that your present church was built by my grandfather of revered memory ninety years ago..... To

you, My Lord Bishop, and to your clergy, the State and City of Mysore are indebted for countless deeds of charity and goodwill and for endless effort for the enlightenment and uplift of the people."