

## CHAPTER I.

### Installation of Chamaraja Wodeyar X.

It was customary with the Mysore royal family that after the completion of the funeral ceremonies of a deceased Maharaja the coronation of his successor should take place without much interval of time. The ceremony of seating the young Prince on the throne should therefore have followed about the middle of April 1868. But beyond the proclamations published by the Commissioner no further action leading to the installation was taken. This inaction caused considerable anxiety not only to the Ranees in the Palace but also to the other relatives of the Maharaja as well as the general public. It was pressed on the attention of Bowring by the leading people of the country that the usual coronation ceremony should take place, so that at the ensuing Dasara His Highness might seat himself on the historic throne of Mysore and receive the homage due to his position from his subjects. It was also urged on the Commissioner that as the representative of Her Majesty's Government he should attend the installation ceremony which was to be marked with all the solemnity as was associated on the occasion of the installation of Krishnaraja Wodeyar in 1799.

Bowring, however, considered it advisable previously to consult the Government of India on the matter and accordingly applied on the 7th May 1868 for instructions. In doing so, he wrote that as the young Maharaja was a ward as well as a minor if he was placed on the throne at that time possibly future complications might arise as to the extent of his rights and jurisdiction which had been left undefined being subject to decision in the future. He also considered that there was no strict analogy between the proposed installation of the young Maharaja and the installation of 1799 and that the present Maharaja could not as a ward be permitted to be enthroned until the British Government was satisfied of his competency to discharge worthily the important duties that would devolve on him.

The Government of India on their part referred the question on the 12th June to the Secretary of State desiring to have

Meanwhile, there was considerable solicitude in the minds of the people of Mysore as to the value of the proclamation published relating to the recognition of the young Maharaja as successor to the throne of Mysore, so much so that there was danger of the proclamation being regarded as a mere scrap of paper. The Dasara festival also was not far distant when according to the family custom the Raja was to show himself to his subjects seated on his throne. On the 10th of August the two Ranees addressed a communication to the Commissioner pointing out in view of the approaching Dasara the urgent need of procuring a reply regarding the performance of the installation ceremony, so that there might be no break in that long observed custom. On the 19th September following Major Elliot, Superintendent of the Ashtagram Division and Officer in charge of palace duties, waited on the Ranees and announced to them the message he had received from the Commissioner conveying the consent of the British Government for the performance of the installation ceremony of the young Maharaja. The Government in England had read the situation more correctly than either the Government of India or the Commissioner of Mysore inasmuch as they considered that recognition by mere proclamation would be incomplete and that a formal ceremony of installation was needed to inspire confidence in the sincerity of the intentions of the British Government. The date on which this announcement was made corresponded to the 5th day of the Dasara festival and at once removed the gloom that had been felt every-where by the suspension of the public performance of this annual pageant. The news at once spread in the town and there were general rejoicings with a distribution of sugar to the people in all

and out of place." arranged, anything like a formal installation would be premature will be made over and the conditions of the new treaties are for Government and until the terms on which the administration that until the Maharaja attains his majority and is found qualified expressed in your despatch, dated 16th April 1867, it appears to us own opinion in these terms: "Having regard to the views In this communication the Government of India expressed their a pronouncement of the Home Government on the subject.

the streets of Mysore. Later in the day the leading townspeople sought an interview with the young Maharaja and presented fruits and garlands. After this function was over, Bakshi Narasappa and other important officials of the Palace visited Major Elliot at his residence and presented him fruits and garlands as a token of thankfulness and joy on the part of the royal family for the happy message conveyed. On the 22nd September Bowring came to Mysore and on the next day corresponding to the 7th day of the Dasara at 12 noon the installation ceremony took place in a specially erected pandal in the inner quadrangle of the Palace. Even though the interval for making arrangements was very short, all the leading men were assembled with a number of Europeans also. After the religious ceremonies were finished, Bowring and Elliot holding the hands of the young Prince seated him on the throne when three volleys of musketry and a royal salute were fired. The Maharaja was pelted with a storm of flowers from every side and the large assembly testified by shouts and clapping of hands their satisfaction. The family priest next pronounced benedictory prayers and offered to His Highness water from several sacred streams with other consecrated articles. On these initiatory ceremonies being completed, the genealogy of the royal family was read out aloud and on its termination the spearmen rattled their spears, the band struck up, and the building resounded with the shouts and cheers of the people. Bowring then proceeded to present to the Maharaja on the part of the Viceroy a khillat of 21 trays fastening a piece of jewellery round His Highness's neck and a similar khillat was submitted through him for the Viceroy's acceptance. The Rajbindies and officials then each in turn presented their nazars and the ceremony concluded with the customary offering of pansupari and garlands of flowers. In the evening there was the usual durbar and continued daily during the whole of the Dasara festival.

In this connection the account given by Mrs. Bowring in a letter to a friend from the time she left Bangalore with her husband till she returned is so graphic and replete with interesting details that no apology is needed to reproduce it here, though somewhat long.

“ On Saturday, September 19, a telegram was received from Mysore that the installation of the young Raja must take place on the 23rd as the wise men and astrologers having consulted the stars found that that was the auspicious day, the hour to be between 11 and 12 o'clock. It was useless to remonstrate at this short notice, so L— said ‘ Fiat ’, and I grumbled and set Marie and two tailors to work and stitch their fingers off to get ready.

“ The Raja’s stables having been reduced from unlimited supplies of horses and carriages to ten pairs it was no longer possible to post royally along the road of eighty four miles in His Highness’ carriage as of old. So bullocks were laid and out of consideration for my bones the bullock coach was discarded and a pole adjusted to the office carriage which makes up into a bed.....

“ A pair of bullocks having been pressed into the service with many blows and shouts we set off at a famous trot, a Silledar curvetting in front and several more kicking up a dust behind, while a peon ran in front shouting to everybody to keep out of the way. Away we went, down through the native town, the people staring and salaaming, out into the wild rocky country beyond. As we passed through the different taluks or villages, the Amildar or Magistrate came out to meet us followed by the inhabitants and while we changed bullocks presented garlands of flowers and limes and chatted with my husband in Canarese of the coming event. “ After a time, the road became more rough—very bad indeed—and the bullocks had hard work to get along. The difficulty was overcome by a native, with only his loins girt, sitting on the shaft, shouting and twisting the tails of the poor beasts, while the driver lashed and the peons running on either side poked them with their sticks! Two wild-looking natives ran on ahead, as it grew dark, with torches, the smoke and smell of which were anything but agreeable. As we approached the village, a native with a curious horn announced our arrival by a cheerful blast. During the night in passing through the villages we saw the people asleep outside their huts rolled up in their blankets white or coloured looking like so many mummies. The great banyan trees looked so ghastly in

the moonlight with their gnarled branches and beardlike appendages.

“Once during the night we were awakened by loud cries and stopping found that the Silledar had given a whack to a pair of bullocks at the head of a train of carts which had resulted in the animals upsetting the cart into a ditch. The cries were so piteous that we concluded that the driver was under his cart and L— got out to render assistance but found the man unhurt sitting by the wayside weeping—I ought to say howling—and wringing his hands, Indian fashion, instead of setting to work to do anything.

“At the Maddur Station which was nice and clean I made myself tidy. We had a comfortable breakfast and being joined by Major C— started again at 6 o'clock in a comfortable carriage of the Raja's with good horses.

“We soon crossed the Kaveri the first Indian river I had seen. The country was very green with rice crops and mulberry trees and is irrigated by the water channels of the Kaveri at this season of the year. We now got along at a great pace and soon came in sight of Seringapatam peeing out amongst the luxuriant vegetation. There was the mosque, the fort, the tomb of Tippu Sultan, the house and garden occupied by the Duke of Wellington and the lofty monument erected to the memory of the officers who perished at the storming of the fort. In crossing an arm of the Kaveri we had a beautiful view at the Raja's bathing-place beneath a very picturesque bridge. Great flights of steps lead down to the water and women in bright clothes were filling their brass vessels with the water and walking away with them on their heads. The river looked so deliciously cool that it is not very strange that these poor Indians should worship it when it is the source of such blessings to their country.

“The next stage seemed very short and we were joined by a regiment of Silledars who look very well in a body with their gold and scarlet dresses and turbans. The native saddles also are very handsome, whilst the horses adorned with coloured ropes and tassels round their necks add greatly to the general good effect. They

certainly consider themselves fine fellows and show off and kick up no end of dust. I was nearly choked.

“Next we came upon a man with his horn; then a temple with all the dancing girls outside in their best, with their priests and their everlasting tomtoms. A little farther on was a deputation of all the merchants of the city with a congratulatory speech with a stout burly gentleman with much gesticulation, which had we not been obliged to listen to it almost uncomfortably in the glare of the sun would have amused me greatly. Then garlands and bouquets were thrown into the carriage. I was indeed rejoiced to reach the Residency and get into the cool house.

“On Wednesday at 11 o'clock we were all dressed and assembled at the Residency which was formerly a palace of the Raja and has in it one of the finest rooms in India. All the company at last arrived and we went off in carriages preceded by the Silledars, while natives ran on each side bearing very long lances with scarlet streamers and gold cords and tassels. These lances they shake and clang in a peculiar manner and to my mind most musically. In the procession were carried some curious batons and mitres, insignia of royalty.

“All the people were thronging about and when we turned under the gates of the fort within which is the Palace and arrived at the great square in front of it, the noise was such that it was impossible to make any one hear. It was all dumb show. God save the Queen! Native music! Tomtoms! A great mass of human beings in the square and every individual shouting. Had I not been told what to expect, I should have been frightened.

“Upon driving up in front of the Palace, one of the princes came forward. I salaamed, he salaamed and extended his two hands upon which I placed one of mine and he led me up the steps surging with people into the inner court of the Palace to the chair on which sat the young Raja to whom I salaamed and with whom I then shook hands.

“My husband and Major Elliot following did the same and then they took the little man by the hand and leading him up the

silver steps lifted him on to his throne. Then you should have heard the row! The lances were clanged, the English hurrahed, the natives shouted and the bands and tomtoms played. I never was in such a din, and the crowd surged up, and there came a perfect shower of flowers. We were pelted on all sides and L— had to protect the little Raja with his cocked hat, while Major C— did his best for me; but it was hopeless and there was nothing for it but to endure. My dress was ruined at once, all the flowers being soaked in attar of roses! I looked up expecting to see the little Raja terrified and in tears, but like a high-born oriental he sat as cool as a cucumber.

“I must describe the little fellow to you and his throne. Chamaraja Wodeyar, Maharaja of Mysore, is going on for seven years of age. He is not dark but of a rich olive complexion, with most splendid eyes. He has bare feet, coat and trousers of gold and a beautiful turban hung round with great drops of emeralds and diamonds. Major E— had the State rings and bangles made to fit his small feet and fingers. The throne is like what one reads of in a fairy tale, of solid gold, very ancient, and exquisitely chased and carved. From the arms hang ropes of real pearls. The umbrella above it is surmounted by a peacock in emeralds and diamonds. Two attendants stood behind waving feathers tipped with diamonds and two others waved in the air in a peculiar way Kashmere shawls or what looked to me like them.

“After a time, order was established and we all sat down, the English on the left, the royal princes on the right. The little king looked about him with astonishing coolness and began chewing a betel-nut! Had he cried, the people would have thought it a bad omen. As it was, he was a born king and they were all delighted.

“Then followed the ceremonies. First came the Brahmins, with incantations and prayers, sprinkling the child with the waters of the sacred rivers of India. Secondly, his pedigree from the gods down to the present day was read out. We gave him three cheers and there was a great row. Thirdly, presentation of the fruits of the earth carried in on trays, the Raja laying his tiny hand on

everything with great dignity. Fourthly, presentation of 21 trays of presents and a very handsome necklace from our Government, and my husband fastened the ornament round the little fellow's neck. Fifthly, descending from his throne the Raja presented 21 trays to L— and fastened a splendid necklace of pearls, diamonds and rubies round his neck, a shawl embroidered in green and gold being thrown over his shoulders. Then the Raja placed wreaths of flowers over L's neck and mine, but he could not get them over my bonnet which seemed to amuse him greatly. Then he presented each with a rose, and a gold tray being handed in he scented the roses with attar and gave each of us a betel-nut, after which he was again placed on his throne.

“Then followed the homage of all his relatives who advanced one by one and bowing down placed their heads on the throne, each offering a present which the Raja just touched. Then all the English officers salaamed and shook hands and were handed out to the carriages as before amidst renewed shoutings, the bands playing ‘God save the Queen.’

“I must tell you that the floor of the raised platform was carpeted with cloth of gold which was soon inches deep in flowers.

“In the afternoon of the same day we went a second time to the Palace for a durbar. Inside the Palace is a great room looking on and opening into the square but upstairs and the throne had been placed in the balcony so that all the public might see it.

“First came the Brahmins and the child had actually to worship his throne walking round it three times and throwing lotus flowers at the foot of it, prayers being meanwhile recited. Then L— put him on his throne, while the mob below closed in and there was another storm of flowers, L— protecting the Raja's face with my fan!

“Then there were wrestlers below fighting, then sword-dancing and behold the State elephant painted and done up for the occasion in his best. He was led up to the front of the balcony and saluted with his trunk in the air. He was followed by the State horse



magnificently caparisoned and lastly came the sacred cow worshipped as an impersonation of the Deity covered with pearls and cloth of gold. Finally all ended with fireworks and 'Good Night.'

"On returning to the Residency we had just time to dress for the grand dinner given to all the European officers. After dinner, we drank the health of the Queen, L— made a short speech, and then we drank the Raja's health. After dinner, we had music and we got up some Christy Minstrel's songs. In fact, everything went off well.

"On the following day L— and I drove round the town of Mysore and had a very picturesque view of the old walls of the fort, an avenue of trees, and a large tank a lake-like sheet of water, with Chamundi rising beyond, on the summit of which is a house and a temple dedicated to the tutelary deity of the Mysore dynasty. On returning we all went to the stables to see the horses and feed the pigeons, great beauties, and formerly special pets of the late Raja.

"After breakfast, we went to the Palace and saw all over it. It is a most curious and interesting place. We went first into the inner courtyard where the installation took place the day before and then took a squint down a long dirty-looking passage to the kitchen, which Major Elliot advised us not to visit. Passing up an open staircase into a low wide gallery we saw to the left the ladies apartments and turned to the right into a small ante-room lighted from above, in the centre of which was a square place railed off and slightly sunk in which are kept the sacred cow and her calf. The former was evidently viciously disposed towards us and made a thrust at the railing to get at us ringing a silver bell. Her daughter however was more amiable and allowed us to pat her. They were both as sleek as horses and had each an attendant watching to administer to their wants.

"We then went into the inner durbar-room. In the centre the ceiling was hung with long chains of coloured glass beads and as the sun shone upon them the effect was very pretty. The doors

were of massive silver carved all over with hideous gods and goddesses..... In the Raja's proper bedroom we were shown a pearl necklace composed of 2400 pearls.

"We then went to another part of the Palace to pay our visit to the queens. The gentlemen had to speak to them through a curtain, but I was allowed to pass behind with a lady interpreter. On going in, I found all the six ladies seated on chairs. I salaamed to each and shook hands. A chair was then placed for me before the first queen and I was asked to sit down.

"As to their costume, as they were all in mourning no jewels were worn and all had plain clothes excepting the first queen who had on a very magnificent green and gold shawl. She was a nice-looking old lady with refined features and after shaking hands with me rarely spoke during my visit. Next to her sat No. 2, a jolly, good-natured, portly old lady who talked all the time as fast as her tongue would go. She began by drawing my chair close to her and seizing and squeezing both my hands in hers said she was delighted to see me and we had the following conversation.

Mrs. B.—'I hope you were not all much fatigued by yesterday's ceremonies?'

2nd Queen (tears rolling down her fat cheeks).—'My two eyes were not big enough to look at it all! But you must intercede that it may not be all show but real!'

Mrs. B.—'There is no further need of intercession. The boy is crowned and the British Government will protect his rights!'

3rd Queen.—'We are overcome with gratitude to Mr. Bowring. We know that all the joy we feel is owing to him!'

Mrs. B.—'I should like to see the mother of the young Raja!'

1st Queen.—'We will send for her!'

"Then the second began talking to my husband in Canarese through the curtain and in a few minutes in came the young Raja and his mother, a very nice-looking young woman with splendid

eyes like her son's. She salaamed down to the ground and then with all her heart in her eyes she took up the little fellow and put him on my lap saying 'I give my child to you. He is not mine any longer and you must protect him and intercede for him.' Then women servants came in with a silver dish with a garland of flowers which the child took and put round my neck and then placed a rose in my hand scented by him from a gold scent-bottle with attar. Finally he handed me a betel-nut, all which I, of course, accepted with a salaam.

"The little boy was superbly dressed and had on such a necklace!

1st Queen—'Do you admire the necklace?'

Mrs. B—'It is most beautiful but the child is far handsomer than the jewels.'

"At which pretty speech great satisfaction was evinced by all the ladies.

3rd Queen—'I see by your face that you love children. Have you any of your own?'

Upon which an explanation followed of the loss of my baby.

2nd Queen—'You have travelled a long way. Do you like India?'

1st Queen—'We will show you our jewels!'

Mrs. B— could not speak for looking at them!

2nd Queen—'You speak more kindly to us than any English lady we have seen. We like you better than any one we have seen.'

"But here a message came that I had remained long enough and that I must come away. So I shook hands with them all, the second queen begging me to ask L— to send them to Benares that they may finish their religious duties for their husband's soul. The little Raja gave me his two hands and conducted me out with astonishing self-possession and gravity.

“When I got out, the gentlemen began laughing at me for staying so long but I found they were, nevertheless, all curiosity to know what the queens were like and what they had said.

“We next visited the library. The books are all written on palm leaves strung together and compressed between wood, ivory or silver plates. Poems and fairy tales comprise the literature of the country and some of the books were illuminated.

“We then visited the armoury, a most curious collection, but some of the weapons were terribly cruel and made me shudder! We then passed into a great durbar-room full now of boxes of treasures. We had one box opened and looked till we were tired at ladies' clothes made of cloth of gold worth Rs. 1000 each. We saw shawls by the dozen and our eyes ached with looking. Some of the boxes were marked outside with the name of the queen whose particular treasure they contained.

“I was attacked by a violent cold and could not go to the evening durbar but was told that the little Raja complained of the great weight of his turban and begged he might have a lighter one, which I think shows him to be a very sensible child.

“On returning to Bangalore we travelled at different hours and I was glad to see something of the country we had before passed in the dark, parts of which are strikingly picturesque. We entered Bangalore in the evening and as we drove through the pettah or native town we came in for the procession at the close of the Dasara. All the gods and goddesses were being carried on cars with shoutings and tomtoms, the people being painted and got up in most extraordinary costumes, so that it really was a very singular sight but I was so sleepy and tired that I could hardly take it all in. Thus ended our visit to Mysore which I thoroughly enjoyed notwithstanding the fatigue and my cold.”