

## CHAPTER XVII.

### Chamaraja Wodeyar X—1881—1894.

**Progress of education in general—Special encouragement to women's education—Oriental Library—Archæology—Encouragement to Kanada drama—Chamaraja Wodeyar's catholicity of mind.**

During the reign of Chamaraja Wodeyar both branches of education general and special received considerable encouragement. In 1881 the number of schools was only 866 and in 1894 the closing year of the Maharaja's reign, the number of schools increased to 1797 and the expenditure on them from Rs. 3,15,000 to Rs. 8,20,000. The increase in the number of boys was from 39,413 to 83,398 and in that of girls from 3000 to 12,000. Eight hundred primary vernacular schools, fifty English Middle Schools, five Industrial Schools, two Normal Schools, thirty Sanskrit schools, one first grade English College and three Oriental Colleges were newly established. Taking the census figures of 1891 it was found that in a period of 10 years from 1881 the total number of educated males among the population of the State had increased from 2,34,698 to 2,61,508 or 11.4 per cent and of educated females from 9082 to 17,885 or 96.3 per cent.

The financial exigencies of the early period of the Maharaja's rule necessitated the abolition of a separate departmental head for education and his designation of Director of Public Instruction was in 1883 changed to that of Education Secretary to the Dewan and with these duties were combined the duties of Police Secretary to the Dewan as well those of the Census Superintendent. In August 1884 Archæology was substituted for police duties and in April 1890 Education was separated from Archæology and was entrusted to Dr. H. J. Bhabha, a Parsi gentleman of ability who was principal of the Maharaja's College at the time.

On the occasion of the prize distribution on the 24th March 1882 to the students of the Maharaja's College at which Chamaraja

Wodeyar presided, Rangacharlu on behalf of His Highness' Government stated that the requirements of an advancing age did not permit of education being left to the chances of individual philanthropy as in former days but that it was necessary that Government should undertake the maintenance of public schools and colleges, care being however taken not to allow them to degenerate into a mere Government Department worked on mere routine and on considerations of monetary gain. Further, if educational institutions were to attain their highest success, emphasised Rangacharlu, they needed to be characterised by public spirit, purity of intentions and devoted attachment between masters and pupils which belonged to the older schools. No nation could thrive without a highly educated class at its head and the system of Government schools would never be complete without the colleges. So long as these colleges were attended by all classes of people and a well-devised system of scholarships placed them within the reach of the more gifted students of the poorer classes, it might fairly be accepted that it was the national and not individual interests that were served. Education was but a means to an end and a desire for it could only spring among the people by political ambition, or any religious movement, or great industrial changes. What was really required at the time, concluded Rangacharlu, was to stimulate a desire for education among the large agricultural classes. If this was accomplished, Government would no more be called upon to pay for their education than are required to feed them.

Till the year 1886 however, education did not receive much support from Government funds on account of various other urgent demands on its revenue. In that year Sir K. Seshadri Iyer was in a position to announce in the Representative Assembly the educational policy of Government for the future. It would be the aim of Government, he said, to maintain unimpaired and in thorough efficiency all the means of elementary and secondary education and to bring them within the reach of all classes both by direct agency and by assisting private efforts, to promote a scholarly study of the local vernacular and of the Sanskrit language, to elevate and extend female education and to conduct it on a system strictly national so as to enlist popular

sympathy in its progress and to encourage higher education and train young men for the professions of medicine and engineering.

The most notable advance during the period of Chamaraja Wodeyar's rule was that made in women's education. There existed in the days of the British Commission a few schools for girls managed by religious bodies. But these were not generally popular as they paid little regard to the religious beliefs and social habits of the people. As a consequence, the attendance in these schools was very limited and the girls attending mostly belonged to the lower strata of society. As far as the Mahomedan population was concerned, no girls belonging to that community attended any school. In the very first year of Chamaraja Wodeyar's accession to power this defect was recognised and a school at Mysore was started under the designation of the Maharani's Girls' School where caste prejudices were consulted and teachers drawn from respectable communities were appointed. This school later developed into the far-famed Maharani's College. At the end of the first year of the existence of the school, Rangacharlu presided at a prize distribution and his views on women's education are interesting. "I attach great importance," he said, "to getting up among our leading families numbers of young ladies with a high English education who could feel for the advancement of their sex and take up the same position in regard to them as that occupied by educated men in relation to their brethren. We cannot altogether trust in the legislation of men for the softer sex any more than in the legislation of one class for another. Such legislation is as much apt to err on the side of extravagance as on that of despotism, indulging in imaginary ideas of women's rights and other extravagant notions. The happy mean will be arrived at if we leave to women all that concerns themselves to be judged and determined by the standard of their feelings and ideas on the subject." By the course adopted, the orthodox sentiments of the people were conciliated and several other girls' schools also subsequently started gained in popularity. A school was later opened at the important pilgrimage centre of Melkote and another was established at Tumkur to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887, both mainly maintained from private funds. By the year 1889 women's education

came to be regarded as an object of general approval and the Maharani's Girls' School was always looked up to as a guide. An English lady of good literary attainments was at this time deemed necessary to be appointed as Lady Superintendent at its head.

An important change was made in the system of supervision over girls' schools throughout the State. To enable the local people directly interested in the success of women's education to watch over the growth of the system and so direct it that every step taken might enlist in advance the sympathy and support of the native community at large, Government placed in 1890 every girls' school maintained from State funds under the immediate supervision of a local committee. The committees were given large powers of management and the initiative was generally allowed to rest in almost all cases with them. Women's education, the Government considered, could not become firmly established in the country until the people began to look upon the education of their girls, whether children or adults, as necessary and as obligatory as that of their boys.

The Maharani's Girls' School, Mysore, Arya Balika Pathasala in Bangalore and the Empress Girls' School at Tumkur which had been started and worked as aided private institutions were later converted into Government institutions on account of their size and importance and were also placed under the supervision of committees. The Maharani's Girls' School underwent a thorough revision of its system of studies and management at the hands of the influential committee appointed to supervise it. Five Brahmin ladies trained in the school were appointed teachers in the same institution and subsequently the number was raised to 16 as lady teachers became available. So many as 59 girl pupils above the age of 12 attended the Maharani's School showing strong indications of the disillusion of social prejudices against women's education. A training class consisting of ten pupils was also for the first time opened and a graduate of Newnham College, Cambridge, was appointed Lady Superintendent. Before leaving this subject, it may be stated that in its early years women's education owed its progress to the zealous services of Rai Bahadur A. Narasimha

lyengar whom we have already met as tutor to Chamaraja Wodeyar and who subsequently as Durbar Bakshi to His Highness used all the influence he possessed for the wider spread of knowledge among women, not to speak of the large sums he spent from his own purse in behalf of a cause of which he was an earnest advocate.

Various other measures of improvement in education were also introduced during this reign. An Industrial School was opened at Mysore in February 1892 with arrangements for imparting instruction in carpentry, blacksmiths' work, masonry, pottery, rattan work and free-hand drawing. The pupils of this school were drawn from all classes—Hindus of all castes, Mahomedans, Native Christians and Eurasians. The Maharaja's College affiliated to the Madras University was raised to the first grade and came to occupy the same status as the other first grade college in the State, namely, the Central College at Bangalore. A number of Government scholarships was instituted for the benefit of the Mysore students to study the subjects of Engineering, Medicine, Veterinary Science, Arts and Forestry in the British Indian Colleges at Poona, Madras, Bombay and Dehra Dun. In 1888 the Maharaja instituted a system of special scholarships for the benefit of the palegar pensionaries of the State and for the Mahomedans. The former were designed as inducements to the principal palegar houses to put the younger members of their families under suitable courses of instruction to qualify them for the public service. It was found that the Mahomedans had not come forward readily to avail themselves of the benefits of higher education and the scholarships now provided for them were intended as an encouragement to march alongside of the other communities. The fees payable by Mahomedan pupils were also reduced to half of the usual rates so as to give special impetus to the spread of education among them.

Government aid was also extended to a large number of private schools, among which were included many giving instruction in Sanskrit. The promotion of the study of Sanskrit in conjunction with that of Kanada was calculated to raise the general standard of education in the country. An examination known as

the Mysore Local Examination for vernacular candidates was instituted in 1886, while the Middle School Examination afforded a similar goal to the pupils of English Schools. The Mysore Local Examination was also later recognised as a qualifying test for some of the subordinate grades of the public service.

His Highness was a great patron of Sanskrit and Kanada learning. The Sanskrit college which had been started some years before was greatly improved and examinations in all branches of that learning open to scholars from all parts of India were instituted and liberal rewards were given to them at the durbar during the Dasara festival, along with the certificates of merit. To encourage Kanada learning and literature a Sabha was started under the name of 'Karnataka Bhashojjivini Sabha' and a pathasala was also established in connection with it. Pandits Seetharama Sastry, Kasturi Rangachar, Vyakarana Shamachar and Sundara Sastrigal were noted Sanskrit Pandits at the time. Basavappa Sastry was a Kanada scholar of great merit who wrote not only original works but also brought out apt translations into Kanada of Kalidasa's 'Sakuntala' and other dramas in Sanskrit. Among the Mahomedans was Moulvi Shabudin, a well-known scholar both in Urdu and Persian. To mark the appreciation of His Highness for great learning or extraordinary public services, various titles were instituted and were conferred on deserving men. Prior to the period of Chamaraja Wodeyar there were no regularly constituted theatres in Mysore of the modern type. His Highness established one and attached it to the Palace and gave considerable encouragement to those connected with it. The catholicity of the Maharaja's mind may be understood from the fact that he was the first Hindu Ruler who gave material encouragement to Swami Vivekananda and enabled him to proceed to Chicago to attend the Parliament of Religions held there.

In 1887 on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria advantage was taken to found an institute at Mysore as a memorial of the occasion, in which it was proposed to make as complete a collection as possible of ancient manuscripts both Sanskrit and Kanada and to provide facilities for scholars for

consulting and obtaining copies of the works. This Oriental Library was opened to scholars for the first time in October 1891. In the last year of His Highness' reign there were in all in this library 1653 printed works and 1358 manuscripts in Kanada and Sanskrit.

In 1890 it was found that a more vigorous and systematic effort was needed for the completion of the archæological survey of the State. In the neighbouring Madras and Bombay Presidencies regular archæological survey had already been established and it was found that Mysore by occupying an intermediate position often contained the key or connecting link to much that was being discovered in those Presidencies. Accordingly this work was separated from that of the Education Secretary and B. L. Rice was put in sole charge of it, as he was by his high scholarly attainments and varied researches in Indian antiquities regarded as specially qualified to take charge of the work. The most important of the inscriptions found in Mysore were the edicts of Asoka in the Molakalmuru taluk of the Chitaldrug district. These edicts subsequently formed the subject of learned papers published in Paris, Vienna and London. At the end of each of the inscriptions were a few letters which were later deciphered by Professor Buhler of Vienna as the word 'Lipikarena' indicating the profession of the engraver in Kharoshtri or Baktrian-Pali characters which were written from left to right.