

CHAPTER XLII.

Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV.

Visit of Lord Irwin—Reduction of the Subsidy by Rs. 10½ lakhs—Silver Jubilee of the Maharaja.

Lord Irwin who succeeded Lord Reading as Viceroy in November 1925 visited with Lady Irwin the State from the 25th July to 1st August 1927. At the State Banquet held on the 29th July the Viceroy in replying to the toast proposed by the Maharaja, announced a reduction of Rs. 10½ lakhs in the subsidy of Rs. 35 lakhs paid by the State to the Government of India since the Rendition. In doing so, His Excellency said: "For many years we have watched and admired the maintenance of those high standards of administration; we have not forgotten the noble services you have rendered to the British Government when the need for service was the greatest, and we are not blind to what Your Highness has done to set an example of the fashion in which the government of a great State should be conducted..... Mysore has perhaps a longer tradition of progressive government than any other State in India, and the Government of India can feel assured that any relief which they may feel it in their power to give will inure to the benefit of the people of your State."

The University of Mysore took occasion to hold a special convocation and confer the honorary degree of D.Sc. on Lord Irwin.

On the 8th August 1927, Krishnaraja Wodeyar completed the 25th year of his rule. Ever since his assumption of power, His Highness had striven hard to promote the welfare of his subjects and to keep his State in the forefront, so that it became common to readily cite the name of Mysore whenever any reference was made to well-governed Native States. Long before the Jubilee arrived, considerable eagerness was manifested by the people of Mysore for the celebration of the day in a manner worthy of the high reputation of their Sovereign and in keeping with the benefits they had received from him.

On the 11th April 1927, a large and enthusiastic public meeting was held in the Lal Bagh at Bangalore to concert measures for the celebration of the Jubilee at which representatives from all the districts were present. The gathering consisted of both ladies and gentlemen and Sir Mirza Ismail the Dewan presided. The chairman in his speech began by saying that at that meeting there were no officials or non-officials, no critics or champions of policy and that the strongest and subtlest unifying power in the State was the personality of the Maharaja. "Those of us who have had the honour of knowing something of the personal life of His Highness," continued Sir Mirza, "know that he is essentially a man of simple taste, though not in the bald sense sometimes associated with that term. There is a simplicity without taste. But His Highness' simplicity includes the love of beauty and includes a very simple and strong desire that his people shall share in the beauty of culture and of nature that he loves. In fulfilment of this desire, he has bounteously inspired and helped every movement for beautifying the environment of his people. His Highness has penetrated deeply into the actual life of his people, not officially only, but often without announcement or recognition; and what he has not been able to do fully in the body, he has assiduously tried to do with the imagination, by keeping in close and constant touch with all that concerns the welfare of the State. His impartiality in the consideration of opposing details in affairs, his quick and sound judgment, the dignity and restraint which goes with him as a never-failing atmosphere are realised by all who know anything of his life and work. To us in Mysore, he stands as the centre of our social organisation and in personality. To India as a whole and to the large body of persons beyond India who are looking to India for fresh light and direction in the present time of world-crisis, he stands as the type of the true succession of Indian rulership. In the modern ruler a new tolerance and neutrality is called for and the broad-mindedness of His Highness has passed into a proverb. A religious devotee himself, he makes no distinctions on religious grounds. He follows his own faith and respects the sincere faith of others. But it is probably in the department of public affairs, in legislation and administration that His Highness has taken his

place as one of the most sagacious statesmen of our time. He has recognised, on the one hand, the increasing political importance of the individual citizen, and, on the other hand, he has felt the necessity and advantage of viewing Mysore as a vital member of the great entity called India, with whose destinies those of Mysore are interwoven. His Highness is ever alert to the indications of the growing spirit of humanity both within Mysore and India as a whole and ever eager to adapt the machinery of co-operative life to the behests of evolution.....”

On 13th June 1927 when the Birthday Session of the Representative Assembly began, the Dewan announced to the members that the proposal to celebrate the Silver Jubilee had evoked unparalleled enthusiasm throughout the State, that people everywhere were arranging to celebrate the Jubilee in a fitting manner and that a permanent memorial was also intended to be erected to serve to remind the future generations of the era of well-being and progress which the State had enjoyed under a benign and far-sighted ruler.

The 8th August 1927 was, as has been already stated, the day of the Silver Jubilee of His Highness' reign and it began at Mysore with a salute of 25 guns. The weather was delightfully mild and pleasant. Thousands of His Highness' loyal subjects had assembled to pay their homage to the Sovereign and all the proceedings were marked by much enthusiasm and devotion. At 9 a.m. His Highness proceeded from the Palace to the marriage pavilion in the Jagan Mohan Palace and took his seat in a chair of State. The pandits and Vaidiks were ranged in a semi-circle in front of His Highness. The Vaidiks chanted verses from the three Vedas invoking the blessings of the Almighty on their Sovereign. Sacramental rice was then showered on His Highness by the pandits. His Highness then stood up and made a speech in Sanskrit expressing his gratitude for their benedictions, coming as they did from such a scholarly body of representatives of ancient learning as he saw before him.

At 10 a.m. His Highness entered the Durbar Hall of the Palace and took his seat in a chair of State. The Yuvaraja

accompanied His Highness and took his seat on the dais to the left of his brother. There was a large gathering of invited persons from all parts of the State. The military forces had assembled in the courtyard and saluted. Obeisances were offered to the Maharaja which were duly acknowledged. A Sanskrit Pandit then recited a number of Sanskrit verses in appreciation of the many virtues of His Highness and of the benefits of his rule. Sir K. P. Puttanna Chetty then, with the permission of His Highness, made a speech in Kanada in which he referred to the numerous benefits which the people of Mysore had obtained during the 25 years of His Highness' reign and also spoke of the great qualities of head and heart which His Highness possessed. Urdu and Sanskrit versions of the speech were also read.

In reply His Highness made the following speech :—

“ My Beloved People,

“ It gives me the deepest pleasure to receive this address from you, and I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the sentiments of loyalty and devotion to my throne and person that you have so eloquently expressed.

“ I thank God who has blessed Mysore so abundantly in material ways that He has blessed her also with a sincere, modest, liberal-minded and industrious people; and I thank my people themselves, my Government and my officers that by their hearty co-operation for the good of Mysore they have earned for it the name of the Model State and the signal proof of appreciation which we have just received from the Supreme Government.

“ I pray that we may all be assisted in the years to come to work together in the spirit of brotherhood for the same good end, so that with an efficient administration, increased facilities for agriculture, industry and commerce and equal opportunities for all, we may devote our common energies to a level in keeping with the foremost countries of the world.

“It is my earnest desire that this spirit of brotherhood should be extended to the continuous improvement of the conditions of those who are less fortunate than ourselves, remembering that all the communities alike are members of my people and children of our country.

“I pray that a similar spirit may extend itself to the dumb creation, and that we may see animals, and especially those we hold sacred, treated with ever-increasing consideration for the feelings which they cannot express.

“And I appeal specially to the rising generation to hold before themselves always the ideal of brotherhood and good citizenship, so that when they come to fill our places, they may continue in all good ways to advance and increase the welfare of our beloved Motherland.

“Finally, I send my loving greetings to each one of my dear people, with a heart full of solicitude for their happiness. With increasing effort I shall, while life lasts, endeavour to promote their welfare and prosperity, and I pray that God may give me light and strength to achieve this, the supreme object of my life and rule.”

His Highness also issued the following message to his subjects :—

THE PALACE,
MYSORE,
8th August 1927.

On this day, when I complete the twenty-fifth year of my reign, I send my loving greetings to each one of my dear people, with a heart full of solicitude for their happiness. With unceasing effort I shall, while life lasts, endeavour to promote their welfare and prosperity, and I pray that God may give me light and strength to achieve this, the supreme object of my life and rule.

(Sd.) Krishnaraja Wodeyar.

Souvenirs containing a photo of His Highness and the message were distributed in the Durbar.

At 5 p.m. His Highness accompanied by the Yuvaraja drove in state to the Silver Jubilee Clock Tower. A shamiana had been put up and tastefully decorated. Her Highness the Maharani late Regent and all the Palace ladies were present in motor cars. Their Highnesses took their seats on a raised dais and thousands were able to pay their homage to the Maharaja. A pandit read some verses composed by Rajakavibhushana Mr. H. Lingaraj Urs. The Rajkumar C. Desaraj Urs, nephew of the Maharaja, then requested His Highness to switch the clock into action. His Highness accordingly complied and the bell of the clock struck 25 times. Its sonorous peal was heard above the acclamations of the multitude. This clock tower, it may be stated, was intended by all the employees of the Palace to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the reign of His Highness the Maharaja and an inscription to that effect was recorded on the tower. His Highness then drove in state to a public fete which had been organised in the grounds near the Government House and after witnessing the same, returned to his residence. The Fort Palace was illuminated in the evening.

The next day in the morning in honour of the Silver Jubilee, the Boys and Girls of Mysore organised a meeting in the Jagan Mohan Palace Pavilion, at which His Highness the Yuvaraja presided. Prince Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, the eldest son of the Yuvaraja, was also present at this meeting. A message of congratulation and loyalty was sent by the Boys and Girls to the Maharaja. The message was carried to the Palace by a relay of Boy Scouts and the following reply was received from His Highness: "I am deeply touched by the message of the Boys and Girls of Mysore. I cannot wish them anything better in reply than that they be all their lives good Mysoreans and good Scouts and Guides."

In the evening of the same day, the Pinjrapole Society organised a tree-planting ceremony to commemorate the Silver

Jubilee at the Pinjrapole grounds. His Highness the Yuvaraja arrived on the grounds at 5 p.m. and was received by Sir Charles Todhunter, Private Secretary to the Maharaja, and other members of the Committee. In response to the request of Sir Charles Todhunter, His Highness planted the first tree in the Mysore Jubilee tope which was one of the many that were planted all over the State that day. The Yuvaraja, in a short concluding speech, expressed a wish that the trees planted that day might flourish exceedingly, and that the Pinjrapole Society and the animals entrusted to its care might flourish with them and that as the trees spread out their branches, so the Society might spread its interests, bringing more and more of the suffering dumb creation under its sheltering care.

The citizens of Bangalore expressed a strong wish that the Maharaja should visit their city and that there should be some demonstration of the joy that the celebration of the Jubilee had given them. In compliance with these wishes, a procession took place on the 7th September 1927 in the Bangalore City. On the evening of that day, His Highness drove in a carriage and four with escort from the Bangalore Palace to the Cubbon Park, accompanied by the Yuvaraja, the Dewan and Sirdar Lakshmikantharaj Urs. Their Highnesses were received by the President, the Commissioner and members of the Municipality. An address was then read by the President and it was presented to the Maharaja in a beautiful casket. Among other matters, the address stated that they were highly grateful for the opportunity given to the citizens of Bangalore to demonstrate their deep love and reverence to their Sovereign, that that day had been looked forward to with unbounded pleasure by all classes and communities in the city, and that the occasion would stand as a memorable landmark in the history of the corporation. His Highness made a suitable reply and said that he would watch with pleasure and sympathy the various improvements which they were carrying out to enhance its beauty and healthfulness and at the same time, impressed upon them the extreme importance of paying a due share of their attention to the less favoured parts of the city and of doing all that

lay in their power to brighten the lives and surroundings of the poorer classes, so that they too might enjoy the benefits of a healthy and enlightened life. After a short interval, Their Highnesses mounted an elephant which was kept ready and the procession started from the Seshadri Memorial Hall. On the procession reaching the City market-square, His Highness alighted at a specially erected pavilion and the members of the Municipality who were introduced to His Highness paid their respects. His Highness remounted the elephant and the procession continued. Fireworks were displayed in the grounds of the District Offices as the procession passed. The procession came to a close at the new Krishnarajendra Circle.

It took some time to decide the form of the memorial and in 1929 an announcement was made that it would take the form of a Technological Institute at Bangalore. The Maharaja laid the foundation of this institute near the Krishnarajendra Circle, Bangalore, on 8th March 1933. Before performing the ceremony, His Highness made a speech in which he referred to the multitude of events startling in their own way occurring in the first quarter of the 20th century which coincided with his own reign. "My greatest hope for the future of this Technological Institute is," said His Highness, "that it will form an abiding link between the purely literary education to which we have so largely devoted ourselves in the past and the practical adaptation of new inventions and discoveries which must, whether we like it or not, form so great a part of our life in the future."

A third part of the subscriptions raised was made available to the district, taluk and other committees who established memorials suitable to their own local needs. These local memorials have been generally in the form of public utilities such as Orphanages, Hospitals, Maternity Wards, Poor Houses, Public Halls, Recreation Grounds, Reading Rooms, Libraries and other like institutions.