

CHAPTER V.

Marriage of Chamaraja Wodeyar—Tours in the State— Finishing touches to his education.

In February 1878 the Maharaja completed his 15th year and it was considered time to marry him to a suitable bride. The bride selected was named Kempananjammanniavaru and was 12 years of age at the time of marriage. She was the daughter of Narse Urs of the Kalale family who was a descendant in the female line of Immadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar who ruled the country before the government passed into the hands of Haidar. The bride had received fairly good education in English, Kanada and Sanskrit.

On the morning of the 26th May Chamaraja Wodeyar seated on an elephant with his two brothers Gopala Raj Urs and Subramanyaraj Urs one on either side passed in procession in the four main streets of the fort at Mysore with all the paraphernalia usual on such occasions and arrived in front of the Palace where he was received on behalf of the bride's party by Bakshi Basappaji Urs the brother-in-law of the Maharaja and conducted to the marriage pavilion. Here the marriage ceremony was performed according to Hindu rituals in the midst of the rejoicings of all the assembled people. At the time of the tying of the Thali or the marriage symbol the Chief Commissioner and a number of European officers were present. When the Thali was tied and the contracting parties became formally united, a royal salute of 21 guns was fired from the ramparts of the fort. The Chief Commissioner then went up to the screen behind which the surviving Dowager Maharani of Seetha Vilas was seated and intimated to her the contents of a telegram received from the Viceroy conveying the congratulations of Lady Lytton and himself on the happy occasion and in return the Maharani desired her thanks to be conveyed for the honour done to her House. The Chief Commissioner then delivered a tray of presents from the Viceroy consisting of a fine diamond ring for the Dowager Maharani and a diamond necklace for the bridegroom which was fastened round his neck by the Secretary to Government. A pearl necklace and a golden waist-belt set with precious

stones were presented to the bride. At this time an imperial salute of 31 guns was fired. On behalf of the Dowager Maharani 31 trays containing valuable cloths and jewels were delivered to the Chief Commissioner as the representative of the Viceroy for the latter's acceptance.

Various sports and entertainments were arranged for the Indian visitors and assembled guests during all the days of the festivities. A banquet for the European guests took place on the 3rd June in the Jagan Mohan Palace. At the conclusion of the dinner, the Maharaja with some of his relations and leading officials joined the party. After the toast of Her Majesty was proposed by the Maharaja, J. D. Gordon who had become Chief Commissioner by this time in acknowledging the toast expressed the hope that His Highness would live to rule his State with justice and benevolence.

On the night of the next day a grand procession took place. His Highness was seated in a gold ambari or howdah on a magnificent elephant and was attended on foot by his relations and native gentlemen. Elephants richly caparisoned and surmounted with howdahs and carrying the State flag led the procession. These were followed by troops of Silledar horses and these again by a company of Barr sepoy, behind whom walked the bearers of insignias and other paraphernalia of State accompanied by the English band and other music. The rear of the procession was similarly brought up by bodies of Silledar horses and elephants. The whole length of the cavalcade was lined on both sides by Silledar horses and Bahlé peons carrying long spears mounted with flags which had a picturesque effect in the torch light with which the procession was profusely illuminated. The procession after leaving the fort proceeded through the main street of the town under arches and pandals erected by the townspeople for the occasion. There was also a general illumination of the town. The procession passed on its return through the camp of the English guests at the Residency where His Highness was loudly cheered and reached the Palace at about 1 a.m.

W. A. Porter took charge of the Maharaja's education in the beginning of July 1878 and at the very outset introduced a few

salutary changes. Instead of teaching the Maharaja in the class along with others Porter acted mainly as his private tutor, thereby allowing His Highness to have all his lessons by himself. The subject in which the royal pupil took the most interest was Physics and he showed great patience and handiness in working with the instruments and his interest in the experiments was always fresh. Except sometimes on a hunting morning when the run had been an unusually long one, Porter never found the Maharaja attending his class late or absenting himself. His cheerful and ready application to all his lessons even to those for which he had no great liking or aptitude was as great as his regularity. He was never sullen or ill-tempered under difficulty but always did his best with a cheerful temper. One of the teachers A. Narasimha Iyengar assisted the Maharaja in the preparation of his lessons and was in a considerable degree his attendant companion. The Maharaja also took a deep interest in games and athletic exercises. He hunted twice a week during the hunting season and had the character of a forward rider. On most other mornings he rode out for exercise. His afternoon amusements were lawn tennis, cricket and driving. He also played polo one evening in the week.

On the occasion of a visit to the famous Kaveri waterfalls at Sivasamudram, Porter recorded the following notes:—"The interest shown in the Maharaja all along the route was in fact very remarkable and in many cases touching and impressive. Though the journey was perfectly private, the arrangements requisite for conveying so large a party necessarily made the fact known at the chief places along the route and the interest of the people was shown in a way which was evidently wholly spontaneous. On the part of the simple villagers the feeling manifested had something in it of almost religious veneration. Away on the outskirts of the crowd, too far away to receive any notice or recognition or serve any object except to gratify his feeling of reverence, a poor ryot would drop on the ground and this simple act of devotion over would rise and stare with all his eyes, or a woman equally far away from the scene with a child in her arms would put it down at full length with its face to the ground and then drop

beside it. Any one could see by unmistakable signs that loyalty to the ancient dynasty of Mysore is still a living and powerful feeling. All I have since noticed in every journey made with the Maharaja confirms my first opinion. Whenever he travels, it seems to be a holiday along the route and the faces of the crowd as evincing the intensity of their feelings are subjects of unfailing interest."

In April 1878 Saunders retired and Gordon was made Chief Commissioner combining the duties of the Guardian also and on him devolved the responsibility of giving the finishing touches to the training of the Maharaja for the proper administration of his country. Luckily, Chamaraja Wodeyar was found to be of a tractable disposition and all the efforts made by Gordon and Porter to train up their young ward for his future responsibility bore happy fruit. In November 1879 the young Maharaja was taken on a tour through the State accompanied by the Chief Commissioner J. D. Gordon, General Secretary W. J. Cunningham, tutor W. A. Porter, Revenue Secretary Rangacharlu and Chief Engineer Colonel Johnson. In the course of the tour as well as on other occasions the system of administration and various administrative details as they affected the people in their homes were explained to the Maharaja. His Highness wherever he went was welcomed enthusiastically by his subjects by means of addresses and other demonstrations. Gordon spent much time with the Maharaja at Mysore, at Bangalore and at Ootacamund and availed himself of these opportunities to converse with him on various subjects and to draw out his mind.

In the latter half of the year 1880 the Maharaja was again taken out on a tour of six weeks. During this period His Highness travelled through most of the districts in the State, visiting not only the headquarters of districts but also many other places of interest and importance. The loyalty and devotion displayed by all classes of people during this tour were, as the Chief Commissioner himself bore testimony, most remarkable. "At every station," wrote Gordon, "the Maharaja was greeted by an immense concourse of the population who had flocked from all parts of the Province to see him. At every turn of the road it may almost be said there were

eager crowds from the neighbouring villages gathered to welcome him. Triumphant arches, illuminations and other joyful demonstrations were everywhere spontaneously and enthusiastically made in honour of the occasion, so that the whole tour may be described as one continuous procession. The principal officials and the leading members of the local communities were at each place introduced to His Highness. He visited and inspected with me schools and all other institutions as well as important public works, roads, bridges and tanks. At all these places every opportunity was taken to impress on his mind what was important and to direct his attention to it. The effect has been, on the whole, most beneficial both in opening his mind and in awakening in him a kindly interest in the welfare of the people with whom he has thus early been brought in contact." After this tour was completed, Porter led His Highness over a somewhat higher range of subjects embracing the leading facts of constitutional history and the elementary principles of political economy. The practical details of the administration were imparted by the Chief Commissioner himself or by Colonel A. C. Hay, Commissioner of the Ashtagram Division, stationed at Mysore. At the period at which we have now arrived the Maharaja's education and political training may be said to have been practically concluded and, in the meanwhile, arrangements for the investiture of His Highness with ruling powers also went on apace as will be seen in the next chapter.