

CHAPTER LII.

Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV.

Visit of Lord Willingdon to Mysore—Abrogation of the Article 18 of the Treaty of 1913—Death of the Maharani, late Regent.

Lord Willingdon, the Governor-General, with Lady Willingdon visited the Mysore State in December 1933. Prior to this visit, he had visited Mysore on no less than five occasions when he was Governor of Madras and was therefore thoroughly well acquainted with the internal conditions and progress of the State. A State Banquet was given by the Maharaja on the 4th December and in proposing the health of his distinguished guest, His Highness referred to Lord Willingdon as being entitled to a warm welcome not only as the chief representative of the British Crown in India but also as an old and sincere friend of the State of Mysore. His Highness also referred to His Excellency's visit occurring at a time of much importance in the history of India, when all were looking forward to a great advance in the system of administration and meanwhile, were full of admiration for the success that had attended His Excellency's policy of firmness and conciliation. "There are no people in the world," continued His Highness, "who by nature and tradition are more peace-loving, contented and responsive than the people of India. There is no one who is more anxious to do all that is humanly possible for the furtherance of the well-being of the people committed to his charge than Your Excellency. Your utter sincerity, your earnest desire to do the best you can for the country you love regardless of all personal consequences are well recognised and deeply appreciated. And I feel sure that when the time comes for you to leave these shores, you will leave them amidst the applause of a grateful people and with the consciousness of having cemented those bonds of mutual esteem and interest which alone can hold your country and mine permanently together."

Lord Willingdon, in answering the toast after paying the usual compliments, proceeded to speak on political and other connected

matters.—“ Your Highness has remarked that my visit is made at a time of great importance in the history of India. Your Highness is also well aware that the goal which we have set before ourselves is not exactly approached by a road strewn with roses all the way. Nevertheless, the determination of His Majesty's Government and the Government of India to achieve that large advance to which Your Highness refers, remains and will remain unshaken. This great country has but recently passed through times as grave and fraught with anxiety as any in its long history,—times which are still not free from anxiety owing to the economic depression which still hangs over us. And although signs are not wanting that happier days are in sight, he would be a bold man who would prophesy that India is more than at the threshold of that period of peace which is so essential for her recovery and progress. But whatever troubles India may have had to face, she has had friends and supporters staunch and true, and none more constant in loyalty and devotion to the British Crown than Your Highness. The active co-operation of Your Highness' Government has been of material assistance to my Government and I am glad to have this opportunity of sincerely thanking Your Highness for the very real services which Mysore has rendered during the past troublous years.

“ The record of progress of your State since my last visit eleven years ago is certainly remarkable. Those years have not been happy ones in the histories of the nations and they have closed in an economic crisis of the first magnitude. It was impossible that Mysore should escape altogether the worldwide depression. That she should have been able, despite it, to continue to develop her industries and provide for the welfare of her people in the way she has done must compel the admiration of all observers..... Of the varied and interesting programme that you have prepared for me, there is no item that I look forward to with greater anticipation than my visit to the Krishnarajasagara..... I have good reason to know that it was entirely the friendly co-operation shown by Your Highness and your Government with the neighbouring Presidency of Madras that secured the successful development of the Mettur Project which by impounding ninety-thousand million

cubic feet of water will, it is hoped, bring prosperity hitherto undreamed of to the ryots in that part of the Presidency of Madras. Your Highness has not failed to realise the necessity of providing facilities for rapid transport and there are, I am told, 450 miles of railway worked by the State. I can well appreciate Your Highness' anxiety to link by railway the southern portion of Mysore with the adjoining districts of the Madras Presidency, but as Your Highness knows well, there are certain difficulties in this connection which have so far prevented Your Highness from realising this long-cherished and most admirable ambition. But I trust that in the future when circumstances are more favourable, a means of surmounting these difficulties may be found. The industries of Mysore are so numerous that I can do no more than express my admiration for the energy and skill with which in the face of economic depression they have been and are still being developed. One such outstanding instance is the Sugar Factory now nearing completion at Mandya. It is my sincere hope that the labours of the Tariff Board which are even now engaging the serious attention of my Government will result in restoring prosperity to your silk and iron industries..... In 1923 Lord Reading referred to the charter which inaugurated great constitutional changes in your State. The confidence which Your Highness has reposed in your subjects has been more than justified by the passing of the years. The maintenance of that standard of administration which was handed over to your revered father in 1881 has been a matter of satisfaction to the successive Viceroys, and I am glad to be able to give signal proof of the recognition of this high standard by the British Government by announcing that in response to Your Highness' wishes the restrictions imposed by Article 18 of the Treaty of 1913 on legislation by Your Highness' Government have now been removed.

“Your Highness has referred to the remission of those portions of Mysore revenues that now form a contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. It will be remembered that the Davidson Committee who visited your State in February 1932 have recommended that all such contributions should as soon as possible be abolished. A

reference to those recommendations will be found in paragraph 61 of the Introduction to the White Paper. The question is, in fact, among those which are now engaging the attention of His Majesty's Government and I can assure Your Highness that my Government will not cease to give the matter its earnest and sympathetic consideration. As Your Highness is aware, the position is complicated by the economic depression which has affected the rest of India no less than Mysore. I can only express the hope that before long the general financial situation will materially improve and that Your Highness may be relieved of your anxieties over this matter.

“The question of the retrocession of a portion of the Civil and Military Station of Bangalore to which Your Highness has referred is under examination by the officers of my Government, and I hope that by patience and goodwill it may be settled to the satisfaction alike of my Government and of Your Highness.

“Federation is a word that is on everybody's lips to-day. That it will come I am confident, that it will come and I look to see Mysore play a leading part in the destinies of the new India—a part she is well qualified to play by her traditions and her long and distinguished history, no less than by her capacity for administration and by the fact that she has as her Ruler one of the most enlightened and broad-minded Princes in India.”

Death of the Maharani, late Regent.

This sad event occurred on the 8th July 1934 and there was a spontaneous outburst of grief throughout the State and even abroad. She was held in high esteem and affectionate reverence by all classes of people for her great devotion, both during the period of her Regency and ever afterwards, to every cause that was in the interests of the people. At the Dasara Session of the Representative Assembly held on the 19th October 1934 the Dewan Sir Mirza Ismail, referred to the demise of Her Highness in these words: “In addressing you this afternoon it is my sad duty in the first place, to refer to the great loss which His Highness the Maharaja and the State have sustained in the death in July last c

His Highness' revered mother, Her Highness Sri Vani Vilas Sannidhana, who passed away before completing the allotted span of years. On the death of His late Highness at the early age of thirty-one, the responsibility for the guidance of the State during the minority of her son devolved upon Her Highness and she conducted the affairs of the State as Regent for nearly eight years with much success and to the great admiration of all. To the end of her life she took the keenest interest in all that concerned the welfare of Mysore, and especially of its women. Her Highness was distinguished, not by any desire to enter into public affairs, but by her kindness, generosity and womanly sympathy with all classes, poor and rich,—and these qualities endeared her to all her people. I know I am voicing the sentiment of all Hon'ble Members in giving expression to our sense of the irreparable loss suffered by His Highness the Maharaja and his people and in conveying to Their Highnesses the Maharaja and the Yuvaraja the loyal and sincere condolences of this House." It need not be stated that the members of the Assembly all joined the Dewan in mourning for the loss of so notable a figure as the late Maharani-Regent.

The Sri Vani Vilas Hospital for Women and Children in Bangalore opened by His Highness the Maharaja in March 1935 and the Sri Vani Vilas Bridge across the Kapini opened by the Hon'ble Sir Frank Noyce in November 1935 form fitting additions to the many monuments already existing throughout the State perpetuating her honoured name.