

CHAPTER L.

Other important matters relating to Purnaiya's administration—(continued)—Mutiny of the British troops.

Bridge across the north bank of the Kaveri.

The great stone bridge across the northern branch of the Kaveri at Seringapatam constructed by Purnaiya at a cost of 1,40,000 canteroi pagodas and dedicated to Marquis Wellesley after whom the bridge is even now known as the Wellesley bridge was a work of great usefulness. The site for the bridge was fixed by General Wellesley. Purnaiya informed on the 20th June 1804 Lord William Bentinck, Governor of Madras, on the completion of the bridge that the people were gratified with the facilities the bridge gave both for the passage of goods and for pedestrian travellers. It was constructed, he said, in the strongest manner and was calculated to endure for ages without decay.

Temporary transfer of control to Supreme Government.

We have known what opinion General Wellesley held regarding the members of the Madras Government and the advice he privately conveyed to his brother Marquis Wellesley as to the need of placing Mysore under the Supreme Government if its political integrity as a State was to be preserved. How far this opinion of General Wellesley influenced the Governor-General in the conclusion he arrived at later, it is difficult to know. Anyhow on the 5th October 1804 the Governor-General issued instructions to Lord William Bentinck intimating to him the transfer of the control over Mysore to the Supreme Government. It will be remembered that in 1799 the Governor-General had thought it advisable to place Mysore in its political relations under the Madras Government with the reservation that the Supreme Government was at all times to be free to hold communications direct with the British Resident at the court of Mysore. Marquis Wellesley now thought that on account of the changed political conditions that had been established after the recent Mahratta War, the time had arrived to place Mysore on the same footing as that of Hyderabad directly under the Supreme

Government. This decision however was later reversed by the Court of Directors in England in December 1806 after Marquis Wellesley's departure from India and Mysore reverted to its old political relationship with the Madras Government.

Introduction of vaccination.

For the first time in Mysore and probably in India vaccination was introduced in 1806, there having been no remedy against the terrible scourge of small-pox prior to that period. Rani Lakshmi Ammanni wished to celebrate the marriage of the young Raja but the bride not having had the small-pox the ceremony had been deferred. On Major Wilks the British Resident being apprised of the cause, he communicated to Purnaiya the operation known as vaccination which had lately been introduced in England and which alleviated the violence of that pernicious disease. The operation was accordingly performed by the Resident's surgeon and in consequence six mild pustules appeared on the young bride who soon recovered. The Rani is stated to have expressed extreme astonishment at a remedy so easy and surprising for a malady so deliterious. The Government of Madras on knowing this result published a notification in July 1806 commending the example of the Mysore royal family to the general public.

A supplementary treaty with the Company's Government in 1807.

A supplementary treaty was concluded on the 29th January 1807 when Sir George Barlow was Governor-General. The third article of the Subsidiary Treaty of 1799 had imposed on the Mysore Government an indefinite obligation of making a pecuniary contribution according to its resources to the Company's Government whenever hostilities broke out between that Government and another State. By the modification introduced now this obligation was made specific by the removal of pecuniary contribution and the substitution in its place of the maintenance of 4000 cavalry at all times both in peace and war. This treaty was signed on behalf of the Governor-General by Major Wilks the British Resident and on behalf of Mysore by Lakshmi Ammanni and Purnaiya.

Yelandur granted to Purnaiya as jahagir in December 1807.

In 1806 Purnaiya expressed a wish that his office should be made hereditary. The Supreme Government considered the proposition inadmissible but at the same time acknowledged that that ambition could not be considered illaudable. The emoluments of Purnaiya from his office amounted to 6000 canteroi pagodas a year with a commission of one per cent on the revenues, amounting on an average to 19000 pagodas per annum or a total of 25000 canteroi pagodas or 80000 rupees. It was also acknowledged that the necessary expenses of the Dewan in holding an office of such onerous duties should necessarily absorb nearly the whole of that amount, and even if it was true that he had accumulated a large surplus it should be regarded as not of that species of provision which should certainly be annexed to an office of that importance. Independently of these considerations, it was also regarded that the extraordinary merits of Purnaiya entitled him to some distinguished reward. Accordingly the taluk of Yelandur was given as jahagir to Purnaiya and sannads in Persian, English and Kanada were presented to him signed both by the Resident Lt.-Col. John Malcolm on behalf of the Company's Government and by the Raja on behalf of the State at a public durbar.

This durbar was held on the 27th December 1807 at which all the officers from Seringapatam and a great concourse of inhabitants attended. The Raja gave the sannad to the Dewan with his own hands, at the same time vesting him with a rich khillat. When the ceremony was over, Lt.-Col. Malcolm rose and mentioned to the Raja the causes which had led the British Government to recommend to His Highness a measure which was as honourable to him as to that valuable servant. Turning next to Purnaiya, Malcolm while congratulating him on the noble and solid mark of approbation which he had received from his sovereign expressed to him the sense which the British Government entertained of his character and how completely all the expectations which had been formed of the benefits resulting from his appointment had been realised. The Resident finally concluded by giving Purnaiya in the name of the Company a present of an elephant, a horse, and a rich khillat. Purnaiya in reply stated that on the first day of his

nomination he resolved on making every effort to do justice to the wise and great policy of that statesman Lord Wellesley by whom the Hindu Government of Mysore had been re-established and by whom he had been elevated to the position he held at the time. The support of that nobleman and his successors, Purnaiya further said, and the kindness and friendship of the several gentlemen who had filled the post of Resident at Mysore had not only enabled him to discharge the duties of his office to the satisfaction of those to whom he was responsible but in a manner considered worthy to receive the magnificent reward that had been bestowed on him that day.

In connection with the grant of a jahagir to Purnaiya the Supreme Government laid down a principle which may be quoted here.—“We deem it highly advisable on this occasion to fix the principle on which any future grants of a similar nature should be made. If the Mysore Government were quite at liberty on this point, a weak, bigoted, designing Prince or minister might assign grants to an extent which might seriously affect the stability of that State to perform its engagements to the British Government, while on the other hand it would seem foreign to a wise and liberal policy to deprive it altogether of the exercise of a power so essential to a Government as that of efficiently rewarding great and distinguished services. In our judgment the best rule that could be prescribed would be that no grant of land above a certain value should be made from the territories of Mysore either for life of an individual or as a hereditary tenure without the acquiescence of the Company's Government.”

Survey of Mysore.

Under the orders of Marquis Wellesley, Lt.-Col. Colin Mackenzie whose name is connected with the collection of ‘Mackenzie manuscripts’ began a survey of Mysore in 1799 and completed the same in 1800 and the first accurate map of Mysore was laid down by him in 1808.

Fresh Co-operation of Mysore with the British Troops.

Prior to the Mahratta campaign, the Nairs of Waynad rose in rebellion against the British authorities and committed much havoc.

A body of Mysore cavalry was sent along with the British troops which proceeded from Seringapatam for the suppression of this rebellion which was soon quelled. The Mysore State besides sending troops also helped materially in the organisation of the commissariat under Purnaiya.

In 1809 an occasion again arose for the Mysore troops to co-operate with the British troops under somewhat strange circumstances. In this year a mutiny broke out among the European troops under the Madras Government on account of the abolition of a monthly allowance known as tentage granted to the officers of the army and various acts of disobedience to the orders of the Madras Government were openly committed by the officers concerned. In order to ascertain who among the Company's officers could be depended on, it was resolved to apply a test in the form of a document, copies of which were sent to the commanders of stations with instructions to require the signatures of all to it. When an attempt was made to obtain the signatures of the European officers of the garrison at Seringapatam to this document, they rebelled at once. After driving the King's troops out of the fort, they seized the treasury, drew up the bridges, loaded the guns, formed a committee of safety and sent out a detachment which captured a sum of 30000 pagodas on its way to the paymaster. The mutinous officers also summoned to their assistance two battalions from Chitaldrug and Bednore. The troops which on the 9th July were ordered by the Madras Government to march from Seringapatam to Bangalore delayed their movements until the 20th and then refused to leave the place.

Colonel Davis under instructions from the Government of Madras proceeded from Mysore to Seringapatam and found the garrison in a state of ferment and agitation. The officers of the garrison came to know that Colonel Davis had arrived to remove the recalcitrant officers and thereupon he was required to confine himself with his staff to the house in which they had been lodged but ultimately was allowed to return to Mysore.

These acts of violence and outrage induced the acting Resident A. H. Cole to apply to Purnaiya for assistance and to advise him

to adopt such precautions as might be necessary to prevent an attempt on the part of the mutineers to seize the fort of Mysore and the person of His Highness the Raja. Purnaiya immediately directed a body of 3000 silledar horse to proceed to Seringapatam, to invest the fort and cut off all supplies going to it. A detachment consisting of 1500 Mysore infantry and 3000 silledar horse was consequently sent to impede the progress of the battalions proceeding from Chitaldrug and Bednore for the aid of the mutineers.

On the 6th August Lt.-Col. Bell commander of the Seringapatam garrison intimated to Col. Davis that the fortress of Seringapatam was in danger of being attacked by the Mysore Government and that he had determined not to deliver it up. At the same time Col. Bell despatched a letter to the Dewan complaining of his preventing provisions from passing into the fort of Seringapatam, accusing him of having broken the treaty with the British Government and threatening him with vengeance if he persevered in his operations against the garrison. In answer to this letter Purnaiya with great propriety referred him to the Resident as the proper channel of communication with the Mysore Government. This answer led to the placing of a guard over the Dewan's house in the fort in which the whole of his private property was deposited.

The body of Mysore troops despatched to intercept the Chitaldrug and Bednore battalions was under the command of Bakshi Rama Rao, an able and spirited officer, nephew of Bishtopunt being his brother's son. Rama Rao met the troops from Chitaldrug near Nagamangala at a distance of about 30 miles from Seringapatam. Captain Mackintosh the commander asked for a conference and Rama Rao himself chose to visit him and informed the officer of his orders to intercept him and his troops. Captain Mackintosh informed Rama Rao that he was at liberty to act as he might judge proper but that he was determined not to draw his sword or adopt any offensive measures. Thereupon Rama Rao applied for instructions and Col. Davis intimated to him that he should use every endeavour to prevent Captain Mackintosh from proceeding further until the expected help from Bangalore should arrive.

In the meanwhile, the detachment of King's troops under Lt.-Col. Gibbs intended for the help of Col. Davis marched from Bangalore and arrived within three miles from Seringapatam on the 10th August. No collision took place that day and Captain Mackintosh resumed his march at 10 o'clock the same night, and next morning when about 10 miles from Seringapatam the rear-guard was attacked by the Mysore Horse, a few men were wounded and the baggage taken. When the troops in front arrived at their destination, they were simultaneously attacked by the troops which had arrived from Bangalore and by the Mysore Horse. The place where this engagement took place being not far from Webbes' Monument previously referred to, this monument has since come incongruously to be known among the people of the country as "Rana Kamba" or war pillar.

Abandonment of Seringapatam as a military station.

Seringapatam from the beginning had proved unhealthy to the British troops. In 1805 there was a proposal to destroy the fortifications and remove the garrison to Bangalore which had a salubrious climate. Major-General Wellesley was strongly opposed to this measure and wrote a memorandum in which he reviewed the military situation of the peninsular part of India in the light of the events of the war with the French in Europe and strongly opposed both the removal of the garrison from Seringapatam as well as the destruction of the fortifications. Notwithstanding this powerful plea to leave things as they were, its unhealthiness proved a very strong reason against the continuance of the British troops and they were finally removed to Bangalore in 1809 where a cantonment for the purpose was established. The glory of Seringapatam as the capital city of an empire had departed when Tippu was overthrown and the Hindu Raja's capital was fixed at Mysore. Now when the garrison was withdrawn from that place, its decline was further accentuated.