

## CHAPTER LI.

### Retirement and death of Purnaiya.

Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar attained the age of sixteen years in the early part of the year 1810 and was considered to have reached the age of discretion to assume the government of the country under his management. Krishnaraja Wodeyar expressed his wish to do so to the British Resident the Hon'ble A. H. Cole and this officer considered the time opportune to enlist the young Raja's interest on the side of the British Government by complying with his wish. Cole believed that at a time when the Raja's mind was keenly alive to every impression and open to every friendly act, the moment was opportune for the British Resident and the Dewan to acquire the Raja's confidence to the exclusion of all evil advisers. Accordingly he gave a ready ear to the Raja's desire and conferred with Purnaiya on the matter who expressed his readiness to resign or to continue to serve the Raja as the Resident advised. Subsequently in an interview with the Raja at which the Resident was also present, Purnaiya expressed his readiness to submit all papers to the Raja and matters were considered to have been amicably settled. Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni's wise guiding hand no longer existed in the palace at this time, she having died in February 1810 and a party inimical to Purnaiya had formed itself and constant rumours came to be spread that the Dewanship was to be perpetuated in Purnaiya's family and that the Raja was to be treated as a mere figure-head. The Resident assured the Raja that there was no such intention on the part of the British Government and that, as a matter of fact, a permanent provision had been created for Purnaiya by the assignment of a jahagir to him in 1807. Purnaiya himself was at this time more than 65 years old and the incessant toil he had undergone in the service of the State had to some extent shattered his constitution and he had been given to fits of irritation now and then. His enemies took advantage of this disability and represented to the Raja trifling incidents which occurred at unguarded moments as acts of deliberate discourtesy and Cole had not penetration enough to grasp the situation in its true bearing. His mind invested unwary acts

of no significance with the seriousness of a political crisis and all sorts of rumours were brought to him when it was found that unlike his predecessors he accepted them at their face value. The only person that preserved perfect calmness of mind during this period was Krishnaraja Wodeyar himself who never lacked in his efforts to maintain friendly relations both with the Resident as well as with the Dewan.

Cole reported to the Madras Government the differences that had arisen between Purnaiya and the palace party and that Government after a silence of seven months advised the Resident to bring about a reconciliation. The Supreme Government, however, took strong objection to Cole's action and passed severe strictures on him. It was pointed out by the Government at Calcutta that the Resident's action was precipitate and that it was wrong on his part to have neglected to afford to the Dewan on the establishment of the new arrangements those compliments on the virtues of his administration and those assurances of the continued estimation and future favour due to him from the British Government. Further, they pointed out that no change should have taken place in the relative conditions of the Raja and his minister without the formal solemnity of a previous sanction obtained from the Madras Government. The Supreme Government also expressed the opinion that the conduct of the Raja as manifested during the whole of what no doubt was an unpleasant period was commendable and exhibited a maturity of judgment, a depth of understanding and a magnanimity of spirit which did honour to him and to those by whom he had been trained up.

The Supreme Government also expressed satisfaction on learning that the Raja had generously assigned to Purnaiya a life pension of 6000 canteroi pagodas per annum. The Madras Government at the suggestion of the Supreme Government sent a letter of congratulation to the Raja on his assumption of the administration of the State and a second letter to Purnaiya permitting him to retire and wishing him ease and comfort during the remainder of his life. Sir George Barlow, Governor of Madras, in the letter addressed to the Raja, dated the 23rd December 1811,

conveyed his congratulations in these terms:—"The British Resident at the court of your Highness having reported for my information that your Highness has assumed the management of the affairs of your Government, I have to express to your Highness my congratulations on this happy occasion. I have learnt with particular gratification of the prudence and ability which your Highness has so eminently displayed in the exercise of the important functions of your exalted station. Such proofs of sound judgment and understanding reflect the highest honour on your Highness and afford a happy presage of the continuance of those great and manifold advantages which have resulted from the connection which has subsisted between the British and Mysore Governments since your accession to the musnud of your ancestors."

In the letter addressed to Purnaiya, Sir George stated that it would have been extremely satisfactory to the British Government in India if he could have continued to serve His Highness in the same capacity of Dewan with the same cordiality, zeal and success which had so long distinguished his conduct, but that as the infirmities occasioned by his laborious exertions in the service of the State had induced him to express a wish to resign the office, the Supreme Government had permitted him to do so with all marks of honour and respect so justly due to his character and services. Rama Rao who had succeeded his uncle Bishtopunt on his death in 1808 as head of the cavalry branch was now appointed Dewan in place of Purnaiya on the recommendation of Cole.

Purnaiya did not long survive his retirement. He died on the night of the 27th March 1812 in his house at Seringapatam. The Maharaja on learning of the sad news at once placed his house there at the disposal of the late minister's family for the performance of the funeral ceremonies and manifested much sympathy in their bereavement. He also continued Purnaiya's pension of 500 canteroi pagodas a month to his eldest son.

No further appreciation of this great statesman's work is needed here than what were expressed by the illustrious men who

were his contemporaries and who had not only a personal knowledge of him but also close opportunities of witnessing his work. He was born of poor parents, as we know, and only by the aid of his intellect and his high moral principles he rose to distinction and used all his power and influence to advance with the utmost loyalty the interests of the rulers whom he served and the good of the people of the country who were placed under his care. While maintaining his loyalty to the memory of his Mahomedan masters, his political foresight told him that the cordial friendship with the British Government begun by Lakshmi Ammanni afforded the only bond of security for the maintenance of the Mysore State and he ever laboured to earn the goodwill of the successive British Residents who were associated with him during his period of office and thereby to further cement the friendly feelings that the British Government had shown in restoring the old Hindu royal family to its rightful place.