

CHAPTER LIV.

Krishnaraja Wodeyar III—1811—1831.

Persons of influence at the court of the Maharaja.

During the twenty-one years that Krishnaraja Wodeyar was actively engaged in the government of his country he had a number of Dewans and other advisers. The Dewans in the order in which they held that office after Purnaiya were Bargir Bakshi Balaji Rao, Sowar Bakshi Rama Rao, Babu Rao, Siddaraj Urs, Lingaraj Urs and Venkataraj Urs.

Rama Rao was an officer of experience and distinction who had served under both the Mahomedan rulers of Mysore as commander of cavalry and under Purnaiya during the first part of his administration in a civil office and afterwards as Bakshi of the Sowar Cutcherry or commander of the cavalry. This latter office he continued to hold under Krishnaraja Wodeyar also, at the same time being one of the 'Huzur Moosahibs' or persons habitually consulted by the Raja on public affairs. Rama Rao virtually held the office of Dewan during the three years next after the administration of Purnaiya and adhered to the plans of his predecessor maintaining his system without any striking departure.

Rama Rao originally came from a place called Badami in the Mahratta country and was accompanied by two of his relations Bhima Rao of Annigere and Krishna Rao of Hanagal. He was appointed Foujdar of Nagar in 1799 by Purnaiya and held that office until 1805. By his influence the public situations next in importance to his own in that Foujdari became mostly filled with his relations and the members of the Annigere and Hanagal families, and a powerful party entirely in his interest was thus formed in this part of the State which maintained itself in strength till the commencement of the insurrection in 1830. Rama Rao's successors in the office of Foujdar from 1805 to 1825 with only an interruption of a few months were persons nearly allied to him by blood or marriage, namely, Survotham Rao twice Foujdar whose son was married to Rama Rao's niece, Pompiah, Rama Rao's

nephew, Balakrishna Rao his grand-nephew and Krishna Rao another nephew.

Babu Rao was a prominent Government officer both during the Mahomedan period as well as in that of the Raja. In Haidar's time from the year 1779 Babu Rao for seven years was Sheristadar in the Sowar Cutcherry of Kadapa Mir Sahib who had command of 6000 horse. After Mir Sahib was killed in an action fought by General Coote, Babu Rao became immediately attached to Haidar at the end of 1781-82. In December 1782 Haidar died and from that time till November 1786 Babu Rao was continued in the sheristadari, after which he received amanat or supernumerary pay for eight months and was then appointed Sheristadar of the Chela Cutcherry in which he remained till 1789. From the following year till 1799 he was Sheristadar in the Dewan's Cutcherry. In that year he accompanied Colonel Reade Munro to Bangalore. When Krishnaraja Wodeyar was placed on the throne, he entered the Raja's service and from that time forward remained in it. Under the Raja's administration Babu Rao was first Sheristadar in the Dewan's Cutcherry. In the year 1818 his son was appointed Sheristadar and Babu Rao was nominated to the Dewanship which he held for seven months. He then drew amanat pay until the year 1821, when he was again appointed Dewan and held that office for about a year. Again he reverted to amanat pay till the year 1825, when on the recommendation of Cole he was again appointed Dewan and held that post till the following year, when he was again placed on amanat pay and continued till May 1832, when the office of Dewan to the British Commission was conferred upon him.

The last Dewan Venkataraj Urs was first Amildar of Sira, then Foujdar and finally Dewan.

Of the Moosahibs or advisers to the Maharaja, Veene Venkatasubbiah who came to prominence from the year 1819 held the first rank and dominated over the rest by his shrewdness and ability, divested as they were of all moral scruples. His relations were amildars of seven taluks in the Nagar Division and one was a

customs officer at Kavaledoorg. Venkatasubbiah placed and displaced the officials as he liked in these seven taluks. There was a private understanding between him and Hanagal Krishna Rao that when any complaint was made against any amildar who was a protege of Venkatasubbiah or of Krishna Rao, he was to be removed to a taluk under the Foujdar and *vice versa*. Venkatasubbiah held no particular appointment and at one time it coming to the knowledge of Cole that he was an evil counsellor, he was removed from his place. Venkatasubbiah, however, managed to secure support in the Residency through Ramaswamy Mudliar, Jahagirdar of Sivasamudram, who had much influence with Cole at the time and got back to his place as Moosahib.

Chowdiah the Residency Sheristadar was originally a shanbogue or village accountant of Hirisave in the taluk of Kickery. Then he became a clerk in the taluk of Gudibande on a salary of three pagodas a month. Next he became a clerk to the Residency surgeon at Mysore. At the same time he paid court to Ramaswamy Mudliar and through the latter's influence with Casamaijor he was appointed Sheristadar in the Resident's Office. Chowdiah also succeeded in getting his relative Belavadi Subba Rao (Chowdiah's son's father-in-law) appointed as his colleague in the same office. Chowdiah by virtue of his appointment made himself an indispensable factotum of Casamaijor who succeeded Cole as Resident and he also became generally the medium of communication between the Resident and the Raja. Casamaijor under the semblance of non-interference is stated to have suffered his agent to meddle and dictate in everything, much to the latter's advantage. At this time Chowdiah came to be courted by Veene Venkatasubbiah and others who were supposed to be working in the interests of the State and this individual was thereby able to secure various lucrative appointments in the Mysore Service for his relatives and dependants.

Ramaswamy Mudliar held at first a small appointment in the private service of Major Wilks when he was Resident in Mysore. After Wilks left Mysore, he became Dubash to Cole and subsequently through Cole's support he became Anche Bakshi or

Postmaster-General under the Raja's Government. Shortly after, the Company conferred on him the jahagir of Sivasamudram as a reward for the construction of a bridge over the Kaveri at that place. During Casamaijor's time Ramaswamy Mudliar though holding no office made himself very popular by his lavish entertainments and acquired very considerable property also. This friendship with Casamaijor secured for him easy access to the Raja's presence and through that influence he secured appointments as amildars for a number of people who managed to find a place in his favour.

There were also others who may be regarded as secondary lights as contrasted with the above persons. One such was Motikhane Narasinga Rao. He was the son of Arunachalapunt who had held important situations during the days of Haidar and Tippu and was Foujdar of Manjarabad in the days of Purnaiya. Arunachalapunt had eight sons and Purnaiya out of regard for the father gave an amildari to every one of these sons. Narasinga Rao who was the cleverest of the number secured the support of Veene Venkatasubbiah and was appointed Bakshi of the Motikhane or the palace Store Department.

Gangadhara Rao was another lesser light. He was the son of Butché Rao, a man of note and considerable influence in the days of Tippu Sultan and subsequently deputy of Purnaiya. Gangadhara Rao after his father's death became a Moosahib to the Raja, besides being in charge of the Tosheekhane Branch. He did not interfere in matters outside to him and conducted himself with great propriety.

Vyas Rao another adviser filled the situation of Bakshi in the Adalat Court. When the Raja took the government into his own hands, as Vyas Rao had become old he was made a Moosahib or councillor. He was required to be in attendance on all occasions when the Raja gave a hearing to the petitioners who resorted to his presence to represent their grievances. Vyas Rao's duty also consisted in laying before the Maharaja the substance of all the complaints received with proper answers which after approval

by His Highness were transmitted under His Highness' signature to the respective parties. Vyas Rao in the time of Haidar Ali was for five years in the Barr Cutcherry. Next for nearly eighteen years he was in the service of Tippu Sultan, fifteen years in the Motikhane and Mir Miran Cutcherries and three years in his household service. Under Purnaiya he was an Amildar for two years and was afterwards Bakshi of the Shagird Pasha (Department of subordinates and menials) and Adalat Cutcherries for ten years in which situation he remained under the Raja's administration, until from old age he was relieved by his son.

Tosheekhane Nanjappa another officer immediately connected with His Highness' court was not a man of any noticeable ability or of respectable heredity. It was mainly through Venkatasubbiah's influence that Nanjappa obtained his position. The object of Venkatasubbiah was to use Nanjappa as an informant of what occurred during his absence from the palace.

Anoo Rama Rao who was also attached to the palace was at first in the household of Butché Rao. During the reign of the Raja he became head clerk in the military office. Then through the influence of Venkatasubbiah he became one of the Moosahibs or confidential advisers.

Chowdiah and Veene Venkatasubbiah were in league and often did not scruple, it is said, to fabricate communications between the Maharaja and the Resident to serve their own ends. They also prevented proper information reaching the ears of the Maharaja or of Casamaijor.

Venkataraj Urs the last Dewan was not a very competent man and he made himself a mere tool in the hands of Venkatasubbiah, so that the Maharaja could not look to him for help in finding safe and satisfactory solutions for several of the knotty questions which frequently engaged His Highness' attention. Venkataraj Urs however was supported by Casamaijor till the latter obtained a real knowledge of him after the insurrection broke out.

The Maharaja was considerably handicapped during the whole period of his direct rule by the absence of capable and honest ministers by his side. While Purnaiya, experienced as he was, was subject to the supervision of the Resident in all his administrative acts, the Maharaja when still a youth was left to himself. The Madras Government expressed strong objection to the Resident's interference in what they regarded as exclusively the Maharaja's concern.

There were only two Residents during the period of Krishnaraja Wodeyar's direct rule A. H. Cole and J. A. Casamaijor. Cole continued as Resident for the long period of more than fourteen years after power became vested in Krishnaraja Wodeyar. He was the fourth son of the Earl of Enniskillen and entered the Madras Civil Service in 1800 and retired in 1824. His successor James Casamaijor was also a member of the Madras Civil Service. After Cole's departure from Mysore, he took his place as Resident first temporarily and then in 1827 permanently. Prior to his appointment as Resident, Casamaijor had held different appointments at Seringapatam and had also filled several positions in the Residency. Between Cole and Casamaijor one marked contrast became immediately perceptible. While Cole was Resident, though in 1814 the Madras Government had forbidden him to interfere in the internal management of the country at a time when the Raja was only 19 years old, yet as there was considerable friendship between Krishnaraja Wodeyar and Cole the latter's good offices and advice were always accepted with alacrity by His Highness. Cole made full enquiry into all the representations that reached him whether from the taluks, the Silledars, the Barr or any other quarter and furnished his opinions to the Raja which were of great help to His Highness. On Casamaijor succeeding Cole, whenever any representations were made to him he contented himself by saying to those who made such representations that the Raja was their sovereign and that they must seek remedy in that quarter.