

CHAPTER LXII.

Final Suppression of the Insurrection.

We have now approached a period in the history of Mysore when an event occurred which fully confirmed the gloomy forebodings of the Duke of Wellington regarding the effect of the political connection of Mysore with Madras and which was not only to test the presence of mind of Krishnaraja Wodeyar but also to illustrate the weakness of even overwhelming political power when confronted by an undaunted mind backed with a righteous cause. Hardly had Lushington returned to Madras, when rumours regarding the annexation of Mysore began to appear there and calculations began to be made on the number of new civil appointments that would become available in the pleasant climate of Bangalore. It seemed clear to the Madras officials that the Raja had brought himself into a scrape, that his treasury was empty, that he had no credit and that these afforded a sufficient plea for assuming the management of the country.

Colonel Briggs who subsequently became the first Commissioner on the assumption of the administration by the Company and who was consulted by Bentinck prior to the assumption as to the form of administration most suited for Mysore recommended the Satara model of 1818, according to which the British Resident with two English assistants conducted all the business of the State, all orders however being issued in the Raja's name and the Raja's seal being affixed to all public documents.

Prior to his departure to Mysore, Lushington had written to Bentinck on the 12th April 1831 that the payments of the subsidy had been delayed beyond the appointed period and that consequently the troops and establishments were ready to mutiny for want of subsistence, although the Accountant-General's books later showed that no failure in the monthly payments had ever occurred. On the 8th June the Governor-General intimated to the Governor of Madras that though he would wait for the promised report of the Governor before issuing final instructions, his views as they then

were led him to agree to the necessity of taking over the management of the Raja's country into British hands and to govern it by a commission of British officers. On the 4th July the Governor in a minute recorded by him recommended to the Governor-General a recurrence to the system prevailing in Purnaiya's time of a minister appointed by the British Government and having its confidence, exercising full authority in concert with the Resident. To this plan Bentinck was strongly opposed and on the 6th September 1831 he wrote to the Governor expressing his complete dissent from the latter's plan and communicating his own resolution to vest the Government in the hands of two commissioners, the senior to be nominated by the Governor-General and the junior by the Madras Government, the new Government being made subordinate to the Madras Government. This scheme of the Governor-General is stated to have caused great disappointment to the Governor as he had assumed that the conduct of Mysore affairs, the patronage and the credit of any success would as directly fall into his own hands as in the case of any district in the Presidency and on the 27th September he again recorded a minute urging the advisability of adopting the plan he had proposed. Bentinck had also mentioned the name of Colonel Briggs as the Senior Commissioner and it was believed at the time that Lushington as an old Madras Civilian with an elder brother in the Court of Directors and a younger in the Madras Civil Service to whom he had allotted the sole administration of Mysore took an aversion to the intrusion of a military officer.

On the 7th September 1831 the Governor-General addressed a letter to the Maharaja which he called a formal and final notice under Articles IV and V of the Subsidiary Treaty for the transfer of the Mysore territory to the management of the Company and sent this letter to the Governor of Madras for delivery to the Raja. A few extracts from this letter will indicate its character:—"The subsidy due to the British Government has not been paid monthly according to the treaty of 6th July 1799. The troops and soldiers of the State are unpaid and are compelled for their subsistence to live at free-quarters upon the ryots. The debt is represented to be greater than ever..... From the time your Highness assumed

the management of the affairs of Mysore every symptom of maladministration and misgovernment began to appear. The collection of the revenues has failed through the choice of improper and incapable officers for the charge of districts; alienations have been made of villages and public lands to a great extent, not in reward for public services but to favourites and companions of Your Highness, so that the resources of the State have been greatly diminished. As a means of raising funds for temporary purposes, to the neglect of future prospects and of the good of the country, State offices of all descriptions have been sold and privileges of exclusive trade whereby the ryots and subjects of the State were made over to needy and greedy adventurers. This mismanagement and the tyranny and oppression that resulted came at length to such a pass as to be no longer bearable by the inhabitants of the territory of Your Highness and for the past year the half of Your Highness' entire dominions have been in insurrection in consequence. The troops of Your Highness were first sent to bring the insurgents under subjection, the greatest excesses were committed and unparalleled cruelties were inflicted by Your Highness' officers, but the insurrection was not quelled. It became necessary to detach a part of the armies of the British Government to restore tranquillity and to take part against the insurgents. Tranquillity has for the present been restored but the British Government cannot permit its name or its power to be identified with these acts of Your Highness' misrule; and while it cannot escape from the necessity of putting an end to the insurrection, although justifiable, which should lead to general anarchy and confusion, it is imperiously called upon to supply an immediate and complete remedy and to vindicate its own character for justice. I have in consequence felt it to be indispensable as well with reference to the stipulations of the treaty as from a regard to the obligations of the protective character which the British Government holds towards the State of Mysore to interfere for its preservation and to save the various interests at stake from further ruin. It has seemed to me that in order to do this effectually it will be necessary to transfer the entire administration of the country into the hands of British officers and

I have accordingly determined to nominate two commissioners for the purpose who will proceed immediately to Mysore..... I beg of Your Highness, therefore, to issue the requisite orders and proclamations to the officers and authorities of Mysore within ten days from the date when this letter may be delivered to Your Highness for giving effect to the transfer of the territory and investing the British Commissioners with full authority in all departments so as to enable them to proceed to take charge and carry on affairs as they have been ordered or may be hereafter instructed.....”

This letter was placed in Krishnaraja Wodeyar's hands when the national festival of the Dasara was being celebrated. The Maharaja maintained perfect calmness of mind and complied with the mandate he had received without any complaint and from the 19th October 1831 the administration passed into the hands of the British Commission. The two commissioners appointed were Colonel John Briggs whose name we have already known and who was nominated by the Governor-General as Senior Commissioner and C. M. Lushington of the Madras Civil Service who was a brother of the Governor nominated by the Madras Government as the Junior Commissioner. The latter entered upon his duties towards the end of October and the former in the last week of December 1831.

Colonel Briggs on his arrival at once adopted fresh measures for the suppression of the insurrection which even the British troops employed earlier had not been able to quell. Briggs found that the pategars concerned in the insurrection were still at large with a considerable number of followers levying money and supplies from the people and sheltering themselves in the hills. Briggs now considered it advisable that he himself should proceed to the Nagar country to persuade the malcontents to peacefully return to their homes. In February 1832 he promulgated a proclamation warning the rebels against further depredations and advising them to return to peaceful avocations.

The Tarikere pategar was the only person that sent a letter of submission in response to the proclamation, specifying however

certain terms which Briggs found inexpedient to grant. In spite of the warnings contained in the proclamation, gang robberies still continued to be perpetrated by needy adventurers who had swarmed into the country from the adjoining Company's territories. On the 23rd April the sanction of the Governor was received to accept the submission of the Tarikere palegar. A number of members of the palegar's family who had been captured by the Mysore troops were in confinement at Seringapatam and they were now sent to Tarikere where it was expected that the palegar himself would arrive. Briggs also reached that place about the end of May 1832 and found that no reply had been received from the palegar to his communication intimating the release of his family. On the evening of the second day after his arrival at Tarikere, Briggs received about 40 headmen of the villages all eager to save themselves from further sufferings and obtained a ready promise from them to co-operate with him towards the establishment of peace. In the meanwhile, cholera having broken out severely in his camp, Briggs proceeded to Shimoga.

While at Shimoga, Briggs received intelligence from one of the members of the palegar's family Nanjappa Naik by name that he had arrived within a few miles of Shimoga but that Annappa had carried off his horse and he was ashamed to enter the town like a common man on foot. Immediately the Commissioner sent a horse to him and on the palegar's arrival the next day presented the animal to him and also a khillat in open assembly. Nanjappa Naik on meeting the Commissioner requested to know what terms would be offered and in reply he was informed that unless all the members of the family surrendered there could be no talk on that subject. With Nanjappa Naik came also two other members of the family Kengappa Naik and his son Hanumappa Naik. But Surjappa Naik another member was still at large. Nanjappa Naik helped the Commissioner considerably in arresting gang robbers and putting down their outrages and also made a promise to bring in Surjappa Naik within a month.

On the 11th July Surjappa Naik arrived at Shimoga with a large cortege wishing to make a display and the interview with the

Commissioner was fixed for the next day. During the night however, Nanjappa Naik was attacked with cholera and suddenly died. The next day the Commissioner sent a sum of money to Surjappa Naik for distribution in charity. After the funeral ceremony was over, Surjappa Naik visited the Commissioner on the afternoon of the 19th July. He was received by Briggs with cold formality but with every demonstration of respect. After some negotiations, it was agreed that he was to receive a State pension of 30 pagodas per mensem and should return home, the past being forgotten on both sides. On the 25th July a memorandum of the terms was delivered in an open durbar before a very large assemblage of the people of the country. Presents of cloth were also given to him and to the other members of the family and a handsome horse also was placed ready as a present for Surjappa Naik to convey him home when he took leave of the Commissioner. On the same day the followers of the palegar were called before the Commissioner and to each was given a sufficient sum of money to return home without any molestation. Some of the principal leaders who were not in the public service when they joined the palegars were enlisted in the Kandachar and they pledged themselves to become responsible for the conduct of those who had been allowed to return to their homes. The leaders belonging to the Kormar caste were restored to their customary privileges and were allotted to various villages for their internal protection. Krishnappa Naik another member of the Tarikere family who had taken shelter in the Nizam's dominions also returned and tendered his submission. Surjappa Naik, however, subsequently finding a favourable opportunity raised a second revolt and remained in open hostility till the early part of 1834, when he was seized and hanged.

During the whole period of the insurrection the Pretender to the Nagar Gadi was by far the most formidable individual in the field. Considerable sums of money were contributed to enable him to raise troops and he was from the beginning the favourite of the people, several of whom had not forgotten the glorious days of the Nagar family. Briggs however refused to accept the solicitations made on his behalf for a free pardon and the result was that spasmodic disorders continued even after the Commissioner left

that part of the country. In January 1833 an attempt was made by the Pretender's adherents to stir up a fresh revolt but it proved ineffectual. From this period nothing more was heard either of the Pretender or of his pretensions to the Nagar Raj.