

CHAPTER XV.

CHIKKADĒVARĀJA WODEYAR, 1673-1704—(contd.)

Chikkadevaraja's measures of war finance—Contemporary evidence of the Jesuit Fathers—Their account—Its bearings—Examination of same—Its limitations—Narratives of Wilks and Devachandra (19th century)—Wilks's account—Devachandra's version—Narratives of Wilks and Devachandra compared—Their basic assumptions and limitations—Wilks, Devachandra and the Jesuit Fathers, compared and contrasted—Final evaluation.

WE have reached a stage in the narration of the story of Chikkadēvarāja's reign, where we may conveniently pause a little to consider an episode in it, to which brief reference has been made in an earlier chapter.¹

This episode relates to the mode in which he is said to have raised money for carrying on his warfare. There are three definite reasons why we should consider this episode at some length. First, because it looms large in his life-history; secondly, it furnishes the key to his financial and administrative measures and the political motives underlying them; and thirdly and finally, it is necessary to evaluate the actual truth underlying it, as much in the interests of historical research as of the practical value attaching to it in the career of a great ruler.

There has come down to our times an account of what Chikkadēva did in order to meet the emergency created by war. This account is contained in the letters of the Jesuit Fathers of the time, and it is best to set down

1. *Ante* Ch. XI: see text of f.n. 116-118.

here what they sent home as the information gathered by them. Writing of what occurred between 1684-1686, they stated :²

“ Attacked in the heart of his kingdom by the armies of Sambogi [Sambhāji], the king of
 Their account. Mysore, to provide for the expenses of the war, resorted, in the eastern provinces of his dominions, to exactions and cruelties so revolting that his subjects rose in a body against him and all his ministers. Stimulated by the losses which weakened him on all sides, driven by the impulse of the present sufferings without any thought of what was to happen, destitute, moreover, of sentiments of patriotism and national grandeur, like all enslaved people, they chose as their generals two Brāhmans, chiefs of the sects of Vishṇu and Śiva, and formed two large armies. The one composed of seventy thousand men marched straight against the fortress of Mysore and besieged the king who shut himself up there ; the second composed of thirty thousand men burst on the province of Satyamangalam and the adjoining countries. . . . After discharging their first fury on the officers of the king and many magistrates, the two generals took advantage of the occasion to vent their hatred against our neophytes and destroy Christianity.” “ The king of Mysore,” it is further stated,³ “ incensed at their (his subjects’) insolence, sent an army against them to carry fire and sword everywhere, and toss the rebels on the point of the sword, without distinction of age or sex. These cruel orders were executed. The *pagodas* of Vishṇu and Śiva were destroyed, and their large revenues confiscated to the royal treasury. Those idolators who escaped the carnage fled to the mountains and forests, where they led a miserable life.”

2. See in *Nayaks of Madura*, p. 292 : Louis de Mello to Noyelle, 1686.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 194, quoting from Bertrand’s *La Mission Du Maduré* (iii. 380-381).

Though the above letters of the Jesuit Fathers seem partly to exaggerate and partly to mis-state what had actually occurred in Chikkadēvarāja's own kingdom, there is need to hark back a little and examine the conditions that prevailed in it during the period the war for supremacy was going on in the distant south (1680-1686). Chikkadēva's war, ostensibly in favour of the Nāyak of Madura, was really, as we have seen,⁴ for the assertion of his own right of overlordship over the entire south as the most powerful surviving Viceroy of the old Karnāṭaka province of the Vijayanagar Empire. Since the death of Śivāji there was evidently a stronger sentiment in his favour in the south, while his own martial prowess helped to substantiate, even better, his claim to the title. The wars waged by Chikkadēva should have entailed great expenditure, and the expenditure had to be met. The flow of men and money into Madura could not evidently be kept up in an uninterrupted fashion, especially as he had to provide for the defence of his home-lands attacked by Sambhāji. One result of this was that the dependents of the Madura Nāyak, who had joined him or acknowledged his overlordship, either began to desert him or went over to others who claimed to occupy the broken-up kingdom of Madura. In these circumstances, Chikkadēva appears to have made a supreme effort to find fresh resources for carrying the war to a successful issue. The exact measures he took and the actual persons whom he selected for giving effect to those measures are lost to us, perhaps, for ever, for, beyond the Jesuit letters above quoted from, we have only the accounts of Wilks, the historian, and of Dēvachandra, the Jain author, both of whom wrote from the traditionary tales current in their own period (19th century). Thus we have three versions to compare and contrast in this connection—the Jesuit

4. *Ante*, Ch. XI: see under *Mysore and the South*, 1680-1686.

version, the story as narrated by Wilks and the tradition as developed by Dēvachandra. It will be seen from the sequel that while the version of the Jesuit Fathers is not possible of belief because of its palpable improbabilities and the patently confused character of the news which it embodies, the stories given currency to by Wilks and Dēvachandra are to a large extent echoes of excesses committed neither by Chikkadēva nor by his agents but ascribed to them by tradition which fastens itself to "some prominent person whose memory is fading; who has been dead, that is to say, for about a hundred years or less, if the real facts have never been widely known."⁵ But, before we pursue further this aspect of the matter, we may examine here the three versions we have referred to above.

First, as to the version of the Jesuit Fathers so graphically set out in their letters. E x a m i n a t i o n of same. There is, it must be stated at once, no evidence so far on the Mysore side, confirmatory of what we find in them. No doubt the statements made are of a contemporary character, but news travelled slowly in those days and much of it was gossip or truth, largely, if not wholly, diluted by hearsay. Such "testimony," even though contemporary, has to be received with great caution, especially when there is no independent evidence of any reliable kind to corroborate at least its principal points. The following statements are specifically made in regard to Chikkadēva : (1) to meet the cost of the war, he resorted, in the eastern provinces of his dominions, to exactions and cruelties so revolting that his subjects rose in a body against him and all his ministers ; (2) taking advantage of his difficulties, his subjects chose two Brāhmins as their generals, one the head of the Vaishnavites and the other the head of the Śaivites ; (3) each of these

5. *Vide* Appendix VI—(4).

generals, collecting a large army, discharged their fury first on the officers of the king and many of his magistrates and then attacked the Christian neophytes with a view to destroy their religion; (4) the king, in his anger, sent an army against his subjects, which carried fire and sword everywhere and tossed the rebels on the point of the sword, without distinction of age or sex; and (5) he also destroyed the temples dedicated to Vishṇu and Śiva and confiscated their treasures to the royal treasury. The first of these statements is evidently an echo of the administrative and fiscal reforms undertaken by Chikkadēvarāja. The further statement that these were restricted to the "eastern provinces" is not correct, as we know his financial zeal and reforms, such as they were, extended to his whole kingdom. It is possible that they gave rise to some misunderstanding but the suggestion that they were intended specially as a lever to raise the cost of the war or were pressed through in an oppressive manner seems far from the truth. Much less can the suggestion that his measures led him into "exactions and cruelties so revolting" as to make his subjects rise in a body against him and all his ministers carry conviction. What makes it more incredible are the statements that his subjects chose two "Brāhmans" as their "generals," one of the "Vaishṇava" and the other of the "Śaiva" persuasion, that each of these collected an immense army and that they jointly discharged their fury first on the officers of the king, then on his magistrates and then on the Christian neophytes with a view to destroy the Christian religion! The story of the selection of the two "Brāhman generals" and their insurrection apart—wholly uncorroborated by any other evidence as it is—the concluding suggestion that they took hold of the occasion "to vent their hatred against the Christian neophytes and destroy Christianity," shows both the bias of the writer of the letter and the

petty character of some of the rioting that should have occurred in some restricted area. There is no independent evidence to believe that there was a widespread rebellion of the kind, alluded to, during Chikkadēvarāja's reign ; nor is there any evidence that Christianity had by then so far advanced in this region as to invite such wholesale destruction at the hands of rebels whose grievances, if any, were primarily against the king and his ministers rather than against the poor Christian neophytes who were probably confined to the poorest classes at the time and who could not have occupied a territory so large as to include the whole of the "eastern provinces."⁶ There is manifestly not only some exaggeration here but also some religious bias against the king, in whose dominions such destruction of Christianity came to be canvassed. What follows is even more impossible of belief. It is said that the popular insurrection raised the ire of the king, that he sent an army against his subjects "to carry fire and sword everywhere and toss the rebels on the point of the sword, without distinction of age or sex," and that "these cruel orders were executed." The cruel punishment referred to here is the one of impaling people on the point of the sword (*Kazhuvikkēttaradu*), which, tradition says, a Pāṇḍyan king of Madura resorted to in that town in the case of the Jains after his own reconversion from Jainism to the Śaivite faith.⁷ There is a festival that is annually celebrated in Madura in memory of this event in the great Śiva temple there, and the story is current far and

6. The Franciscans found their way to Mysore from Goa about 1587. When the Jesuits arrived in the 16th century, they found Catholics in the Mysore territory, and a flourishing congregation at Seringapatam. Father Cinnami made Seringapatam the head-quarters of the Jesuit Kanarese Mission (*Mys. Gaz.*, New edition, I. 342). The eastern dominions of Chikkadēva extended to the Satyamangalam area, where the Portuguese Jesuits had founded the Kanarese Mission and had a centre of their own. Though there was a flourishing congregation in Satyamangalam, the rural parts had presumably not yet been invaded.

7. *Vide* Appendix VI—(5).

wide in Southern India. Evidently those responsible for transmitting the news of distant happenings to the Jesuit Fathers transferred the story of the supposed royal iniquities of a past period to Chikkadēvarāja, and the Jesuit Fathers—themselves probably familiar with the story in the Madura country—passed it on in their letters to their superiors at home. There is here a complete transference of old memories of alleged cruelties practised by a certain king to another king of a later date, which is just what sometimes happens when news—especially political news—is transmitted by word of mouth through long distances and through widely differing individuals. What makes the whole story even more difficult of credence is the further statement that the king destroyed all the temples of Vishṇu and Śiva and confiscated all their revenues to the royal treasury. All that we know of Chikkadēva independently makes us pause and reflect whether, even if he were the cruel king he is described to be in these letters, he would have ever perpetrated such sacrilegious acts as these, however much he might have been offended at his subjects.

That those who conveyed news of the happenings in the eastern dominions of Chikkadēva to the Jesuit Fathers in the Madura kingdom believed in the truth of those happenings or that the Fathers themselves believed in them cannot be held to be a proof of their having actually occurred.⁸ But the fact that such news was conveyed

8. Often our eyes see things which are not actually in existence and our ears hear things which have no physical basis. This self-deception—or rather the capacity for self-deception—is well illustrated by a story told of Mr. George Bernard Shaw, commonly known as *G. B. S.* “Those letters *G. B. S.* recall to my mind,” writes Mr. J. S. Collis, the well-known publicist, “a certain incident which has always seemed to me perfect as an illustration of the popular view of Shaw as well as a perfect symbol of the ways of eye-witnesses all the world over. The following conversation took place in Dublin city whose inhabitants have never cared much about Shaw.” “I was talking,” Mr. Collis continues, “with a friend about Bernard Shaw. My companion inveighed against the man’s colossal

may be taken to be a pointer. We need not try to make history out of such news—news which probably was itself secondhand or hearsay—but we would be right in

conceit. 'I saw him at a hotel the other day,' he said. 'His car was outside on the drive and, believe it or not, just above the index number he had actually put a plate on which were inscribed in large letters—'G. B. S.!' "My friend," adds Mr. Collis, "had seen 'G. B.,' the letters that cars from Great Britain carry abroad. But he had expected to see, he had wished to see, 'G. B. S.' And so—like a true eye-witness—he saw it."

In this connection, Samuel Johnson's observation is worth noting: "He who has not made the experiment, or who is not accustomed to require rigorous accuracy from himself, will scarcely believe how much a few hours take from certainty of knowledge and distinctness of imagery . . . To this dilatory notation must be imputed the false relations of travellers, where there is no imaginable motive to deceive. They trusted to memory what cannot be trusted safely but to the eye, and told by guess what a few hours before they had known with certainty."—Johnson's *Works*, IX. 144, quoted by G. B. Hill in *Boswell's Life of Johnson* (Clarendon Press, Oxford), II. 217, f.n. 4. Johnson advised Boswell to keep a journal of his life and in doing so, said: "The great thing to be recorded (said he) is the state of your own mind; and you should write down everything that you remember, for you cannot judge at first what is good or bad; and write immediately while the impression is fresh, for it will not be the same a week afterwards."—*Ibid.*, II. 217. In a letter to Dr. Burney, Johnson wrote: "Of the caution necessary in adjusting narratives, there is no end. Some tell what they do not know, that they may not seem ignorant, and others from mere indifference to truth. All truth is not, indeed, of equal importance, but if little violations are allowed, every violation will in time be thought little; and a writer should keep himself vigilantly on his guard against the first temptations to negligence or supineness."—*Ibid.*, IV. 361. Johnson insisted on a "superiority of understanding" on the part of a narrator of a story. *Apropos* of this, Boswell sets down the following conversation: "He told me that he had been in the company of a gentleman (Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller) whose extraordinary travels had been much the subject of conversation. But I found that he had not listened to him with that full confidence, without which there is little satisfaction in the society of travellers. I was curious to hear what opinion so able a judge as Johnson had formed of his abilities, and I asked if he was not a man of sense. *Johnson*. 'Why, Sir, he is not a distinct relater; and I should say, he is neither abounding nor deficient in sense. I did not perceive any superiority of understanding.' *Boswell*. 'But will you not allow him a nobleness of resolution, in penetrating into distant regions?' *Johnson*. 'That, Sir, is not to the present purpose. We are talking of his sense. A fighting cock has a nobleness of resolution.'"—*Ibid.*, II. 333-334.

The Jesuit Fathers saw in the news conveyed to them what they had heard about *Kazhwikkettaradu* and believed that Chikkađevārāja had practised it in his own kingdom!! Troublesome problems arise only from an inadequate description of events that occur in the world by means of a faulty language.

assuming that beneath even such news, wrongly conveyed or wrongly understood, there lurks something worthy of careful investigation. Indeed the laborious task of consulting all possible evidence and weighing conflicting accounts is necessary, if we are not to be misled into wrong conclusions. The Jesuit Fathers passed on what they heard or imagined they had heard and as they understood it. They were not writing the story of their own times with sober judgments formed on a review of all the known facts. They seldom had the means to test their sources when dealing with what they heard and recorded in their letters. Contradictions are often set down without the writer noticing them: like the narratives of mediæval writers in Europe, their letters cannot be relied upon unless we can verify them by collateral evidence. They never pretended to be historians of the scientific type and it would be wholly wrong to expect them, in the circumstances they were placed, to have been scientific in their method; and possibly they would have been so, if they had had our appliances for comparison. Their writings cannot be treated as history in the truest sense. What is even more remarkable is that their narrative fails wherever we could test it from facts independently known. Furthermore, even "traditions" current in the very country where these "cruel" deeds are said to have been perpetrated do not countenance the carrying out of such barbarous acts as we find given currency to in the letters of the Jesuit Fathers. These "traditions" are referred to by Wilks and by Dēvachandra. A narration of them will show how widely different they are from the versions sent home by the Jesuit Fathers.

Of these two, Wilks is the earlier, writing as he did about 1810. Though he does not specifically state his sources of information, he frankly admits that what

Narratives of Wilks
and Dēvachandra
(19th century).

he gives is the "traditionary account" which, he says, "has been traced through several channels to sources of the most respectable information." Writing more than a hundred years after the events, he had, in the absence of authentic information, necessarily to depend on "tradition" which had its own modes of transmuted facts. Certain similarities between his own version and that of Dēvachandra suggest a common source to both. It is possible that Wilks based his account on the oral information available both to himself and to Dēvachandra at the time, they being contemporaries. Lt. Col. Mackenzie, who carried out his Survey of Mysore in 1804, was a friend of Wilks and possibly knew Dēvachandra. Dēvachandra himself, a Jain Brāhman of Kanakagiri (Maleyūr), actually completed his work *Rājāvalī-Kathā* in 1838. In this work, he treats of the kings of the Karnāṭaka country (including those of Mysore) from the earliest times down to the nineteenth century. He writes, however, not as a critical historian but as a gatherer and chronicler of current tradition. Added to it, he was a full-blooded Jain and wrote with all the fervour of a good partisan who believed in the greatness of his own religion. Wilks's story is found detailed in different parts of his work. It is brought together here and presented in one conspectus, so that a complete idea may be formed of the "tradition" as Wilks received it.

"One of the earliest measures of this Raja's reign," writes Wilks of Chikkadēva,⁹ "had been to compel the dependant Wodeyars and Poligars, who, like his own ancestors, had commenced the career of ambition by affecting in their respective districts to be addressed by the title of Raja, publicly to renounce that assumption of independence, to disclaim the local prerogatives of punishment

9. *Wilks*, I. 219-222.

and confiscation without previous authority from the Raja, and to revert to their original character of obedient officers of the government. This object was aided by first inviting, and then compelling them to fix their residence at Seringapatam; by assigning to them offices of honour about the Raja's person, and gradually converting them from rebellious chieftains to obsequious courtiers. The insurgents in the districts were left, in consequence, destitute of the direction of their accustomed leaders, and the Jungum priests, deprived of their local importance, and much of their pecuniary receipts, by the removal of these mock courts from the provinces, were foremost in expressing their detestation of this new and unheard-of measure of finance, and in exhorting their disciples to resistance. Everywhere the inverted plough, suspended from the tree at the gate of the village, whose shade forms the coffee-house or the exchange of its inhabitants, announced a state of insurrection. Having determined not to till the land, the husbandmen deserted their villages, and assembled in some places like fugitives seeking a distant settlement; in others, as rebels breathing revenge. Chick Deo-Raj, however, was too prompt in his measures to admit of any very formidable combination. Before proceeding to measures of open violence, he adopted a plan of perfidy and horror, yielding in infamy to nothing which we find recorded in the annals of the most sanguinary people. An invitation was sent to all the priests of the Jungum to meet the Raja at the great temple of Nunjendgode, about fourteen miles south of Mysoor, ostensibly to converse with him on the subject of the refractory conduct of their followers. Treachery was apprehended, and the number which assembled was estimated at about four hundred only. A large pit had been previously prepared in a walled inclosure, connected by a series of squares composed of tent walls, with the canopy of audience, at which they

were successively received one at a time, and after making their obeisance were desired to retire to a place, where, according to custom, they expected to find refreshments prepared at the expence of the Raja. Expert executioners were in waiting in the square, and every individual in succession was so skilfully beheaded, and tumbled into the pit, as to give no alarm to those who followed, and the business of the public audience went on without interruption or suspicion. Circular orders had been sent for the destruction, on the same day, of all the Jungum *muts* (places of residence and worship) in his dominions; and the number reported to have been in consequence destroyed was upwards of seven hundred. The disappearance of the four hundred Jungum priests was the only intimation of their fate received by their mournful disciples; but the traditionary account which I have above delivered has been traced through several channels to sources of the most respectable information, and I profess my entire belief in the reality of the fact. This notable achievement was followed by the operations of the troops, which had also been previously combined. Wherever a mob had assembled, a detachment of troops, chiefly cavalry, was collected in the neighbourhood, and prepared to act on one and the same day. The orders were distinct and simple; to charge without parley into the midst of the mob; to cut down in the first selection every man wearing an orange-coloured robe (the peculiar garb of the Jungum priests); and not to cease acting until the crowds had everywhere dispersed. It may be concluded that the effects of this system of terror left no material difficulties to the final establishment of the new system of revenue; and there is a tradition which I have not been able to authenticate, that the Raja exacted from every village a written renunciation, ostensibly voluntary, of private property in the land, and an acknowledgment that it was the right of the state.

If such documents ever existed, they were probably destroyed in 1786."

"The sixth was," says Wilks in another part of his work,¹⁰ "the lawful share of the crop for which the Raja received his equivalent in money; and, from previous reasoning and subsequent fact, we have every cause to believe that he was unwilling to risk the odium of increasing this proportion in a direct manner. He therefore had recourse to the law of the Sasters, which authorized him, by no very forced construction, to attack the husbandman by a variety of vexatious taxes, which should compel him to seek relief by desiring to compound for their abolition by a voluntary increase of the landed assessment: and this is the arrangement which generally ensued; although, from the great discontent excited by the taxes, the compromise was generally made on the condition of excepting some one or more of the most offensive, and proportionally increasing those which remained; but the Raja, with that profound knowledge of human nature which distinguished all his measures, exempted from these new imposts all the lands which were allotted to the provincial soldiery in lieu of pay, according to the ordinary practice of the smaller Hindoo states, and thus neutralised, in some degree, the opposition to the measure, and ensured the means of eventual compulsion. Those who may be desirous of comparing the ingenuity of an eastern and a western financier, may examine the subjoined detail of these taxes. The whole system is stated to have been at once unfolded, with intimation that it would be gradually introduced according to circumstances; but the commotions which it produced by leading to measures of extreme severity, precipitated its total and abrupt introduction."

"The religious principles of the Raja," remarks Wilks in a different part of his work,¹¹ "seem to have been

10. *Ibid.*, 217-219.

11. *Ibid.*, 214.

sufficiently flexible to adapt themselves without difficulty to the circumstances of the times. There is little doubt that he was educated in the principles of the Jungum; but he openly conformed to the ceremonial of the Vishnoo, which was the ruling religion. His early and long intimacy with Visha Lacsha, the Jain Pundit, whom on his elevation he had appointed his first minister, created a general belief that he was secretly converted to that persuasion, and an expectation that he would openly profess it; and this circumstance was supposed chiefly to have influenced the Jungum to assassinate that minister. When Tremalayangar, a Vishnavite, became afterwards the confidential minister, the Raja evinced as strong an attachment to that persuasion: but political considerations alone would have rendered him the decided enemy of the religion in which he was supposed to have been educated. . . . The hostility and hatred of the Raja was farther increased by the opposition which the Jungum incited against his financial measures."

"The first fourteen years of this reign," Wilks writes elsewhere in his work,¹² "were occupied in these financial measures, interior reforms, and minor conquests; but these reforms had rendered so unpopular the administration of the Jain Pundit, to whom they were chiefly attributed, that a plan was secretly concerted for his assassination. Chick Deo Raj had, without doubt, in the early part of his life, been educated in the doctrines of the Jungum, which was the religion of his ancestors: he had hitherto, since his accession to the throne, shewn no very marked attachment to any form of worship, but was supposed, from particular habits which he had adopted, and from the great influence of the Jain Pundit, to have conceived the intention of reviving the doctrines of that ancient sect. The Pundit was attacked and mortally wounded, while returning at night, in the usual

12. *Ibid.*, 107-108.

manner, from court to his own dwelling (1686);¹³ and as, in addition to religious motives, the Jungum had a deep account of revenge to retaliate, for the murder of their priests, . . . the suspicion of this assassination fell chiefly upon that people, and tended to confirm the alienation of the Raja's mind from the doctrines of their sect. He was much affected at the intelligence of this event, and immediately proceeded to the house of the minister to console him in his last moments, and to receive his advice regarding the choice of a successor. The advice was entirely unprejudiced, and he recommended, as the most able and honourable man of the court, a person of adverse religion, namely, Tremalayangar, a bramin of the sect of Vishnoo. To him the Raja gave his whole confidence; and, in conformity to his advice, soon afterwards made an open profession of the doctrines of that prevailing religion. In other respects, the new administration was conducted on the same principles as the preceding, and with an equal degree of prudence and vigour."

Such, in the words of Wilks, is his version of the "tradition" as he received it, a "tradition" he believed in. We may now turn to Dēvachandra who wrote some twenty-eight years later than Wilks, though probably, as remarked above, he was one of those who, as an active gatherer and chronicler of tradition current during his period, was possibly also one of its oral disseminators, and as such one of those on whom Wilks himself was

13. Wilks (I. 107) places Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit's death roughly in 1686, *i.e.*, in the fourteenth year of Chikkadēvarāja's reign. Dēvachandra, however, does not specify the exact date of death, though from the extracts from his work, noticed in the sequel, we have to fix the event in 1686, allowing an interval of about two years for the course of affairs leading to it from the first outbreak of the Jangama agitation (October 1684). The latest available reference to Viśālāksha is in a lithic record dated January 24, 1685 [see *E. C.*, III (1) Nj. 41, cited also in Ch. XIII, f.n. 79]. In the light of this document and the Jesuit letter of 1686 (cited in f.n. 2 *supra*), the death of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit must be held to have occurred not earlier than July 1686. Compare the *Editorial Introduction* (p. 2) to the *C. Vam.*, *C. Vi.* and *A. V. C.* referring to the Paṇḍit's demise in 1684, for which there is no evidence.

probably dependent to some extent. However this may be, Chikkadēvarāja was, according to Dēvachandra,¹⁴ governing the kingdom he had inherited, since February 1673 (*i.e.*, from about three months after his accession), with the counsel (*mantrālōchaneyim*) of his minister Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit.

Dēvachandra's
version.

Chikkadēva's first administrative measure, aiming at the public weal, was the introduction of a land survey and settlement. A fixed assessment (*siddāya*) of six *haṇas* per 100 measures (*kamba*) was introduced on lands of the first class, four on those of the middle class and two on inferior ones, exemptions being granted in respect of benevolences and compulsory dues therefrom (*kāṇike*, *kaḍḍāya*). While he was thus ruling his subjects and attending to his conquests, the Jangamas, being the proud possessors of many *maths*, houses and rent-free lands all over the country, had become exceedingly powerful, and, fortified in the belief that the title *Wodeyar* was applicable to them alone and none else, began to consider themselves as virtual rulers of the kingdom. In October 1684 (*Raktākshi*, *Āśvija*), they, having come together, assembled a huge crowd of people, numbering nearly a lakh, on an extensive field near Tāyūr. Fencing the area with a thorny hedge and pitching up their camp within it, they appointed three from among themselves as their principal leaders, designating them as king, minister and commander-in-chief respectively. They then expelled the king's officials—who were enriching themselves in local parts—asserting their own claims to rule. The Jangama annoyance soon became unbearable. They stopped payment of revenue dues and organized armed opposition to established authority in the local parts. To Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar, their reduction by ordinary means seemed well nigh impossible. At length, however,

14. *Rāj. Kath.*, XII. 477, 482-485, 487-488, also XI. 387, 389, 391-392, 394-395.

Viśālāksha Paṇḍit's counsel prevailed. In accordance with it, Paridullā Khān (Faridullā Khān), an officer commanding 200 horse, was entrusted with the task of quelling the rebellion. He proceeded against the rebels, with his men fully equipped, and soon secured entrance to the camp of the leaders, feigning submission to them ostensibly as an adventurer in search of pasture (*charāyi*) below the Passes. The leaders were occupying their seats on an elevated ground. Believing in Paridullā Khān's words, they dictated their ultimatum (namely, the extinction of all legitimate rule and the establishment of their own sovereignty within three days) and tried to win him over to their own side. This led to an altercation, in the course of which Paridullā Khān pushed his opponents aside and instantly knocked them down with the aid of his arrows. Thereupon, a hue and cry followed in the camp; and the assembled crowds began to disperse in abject terror. On receipt of this news, the king (Chikkadēvarāja) ordered the demolition of the *maths* and houses of the Jangamas in the rural parts, and the confiscation of their rent-free lands. The Jangamas began to evade the issue by concealing themselves. A regular search for them was instituted by the king's officers. Gurikār Nanje-Gauḍa of Kamaravalli offered his services in the work of tracing out the rebels. He went about the country with his followers and succeeded in capturing a thousand Jangamas, most of whom were found plying the agricultural profession in disguise. These were brought in before the king who, in great wrath, had them all put to death (*arasam kōpisi yallaram pariharisidanu*). Further, on all those subjects who had made common cause with the disloyal Jangamas, he levied an enhanced revenue assessment. Thus, for every *varaha* of the original assessment, they were now required to pay an additional tax of 5 *haṇa-aḍḍa* under four items, namely, benevolences (*bēḍige*), currency

discount (*nānya-votta*), fee for grazing rights (*hullu-sarati*) and for observance of local usage or custom (*vyavaharane-bage*). Side by side, eighteen departments (*chāvāḍi*) for the administration of *sunka*, *pommu* and other items of taxes levied were established, and officials posted to supervise the revenue collections. All this added to the distress of the subjects. Meantime, the remaining Vira-Śaivas became thoroughly irritated with Viśālāksha-*Paṇḍit*. "This Jain alone," they deliberated, "is the main cause for the slaughter of the Jangamas, our preceptors, and for the uprooting of all our dwellings, *maths* and rent-free estates. Therefore he should be done away with." Accordingly they prevailed upon an individual by name Nāgaṇṇa, who had practised at arms. Nāgaṇṇa made friends with the followers of the *Paṇḍit*. One day, as the *Paṇḍit* was proceeding to the Palace seated in a palanquin (*śibigeyanēri*), the hireling flung himself at him and pierced him through leaving him unconscious, in which state he was conveyed home. At this intelligence, king Chikkadēva proceeded in person to see the *Paṇḍit*: he felt immensely grieved that all his power was lost. The *Paṇḍit*, in his last moments, recommended Tirumalārya (Tirumalaiyangār) as his successor in office, and passed away. In commemoration of the minister's services, the king issued a lithic grant, bestowing on Bommarasa, son of the *Paṇḍit*, the village of Yēchiganahaḷli as a *rakta-koḍige*. From hence, Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar began to rule the kingdom with the advice of Tirumalārya. On one occasion, Chikkadēvarāja, having entrusted the general management of affairs to an influential person by name Doḍḍa-Dēvaiya in Seringapatam (*sarvādhikāradolīrisi*), proceeded on an expedition in the north. At this opportune moment, the Vira-Śaivas, having assembled, apprised Doḍḍa-Dēvaiya thus; "Formerly, Viśālāksha-*Paṇḍit*, as the foremost man in power, brought about the

destruction of our *maths* and houses. Now is your chance. Being a Vīra-Śaiva, you have to do away with all the Jain temples in the kingdom." Accordingly, in September 1698 (§. 1620, *Bahudhānya*, *Bhādrapada*), Doḍḍa-Dēvaiya, with the help of 10,000 labourers, demolished about 1,700 *bastis* situated in the neighbourhood of Mysore. Hearing this, the king ordered the stoppage of further molestation. Doḍḍa-Dēvaiya died in prison some time later.

In the early part of his reign, we are further told by Dēvachandra,¹⁵ king Chikkadēva, having inquired about the fundamentals of all religions, became convinced that Jainism was the most sublime of all and the Jaina mode of living (*Jaināchāra*) the purest. Accordingly, he enjoined on the inmates of his household to bring in water only after filtering it clean of all insects. Further, he would not accept certain things known to be obnoxious (*kelavu dōsha-vastugaḷam kollāde*). Being kindly disposed towards living creatures (*jīvadayā-paranāgi*), he laid down that in lieu of the countless animals like sheep, etc., that were being slaughtered by vile persons to propitiate or appease the deities, only cocoanuts should be used. Following the advice of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit, he also directed the construction of a *Chaityālaya* to Vardhamāna-Tīrthankara, near the Purāṇa-Basti in Seringapatam, setting up therein the images of the 24 Jinas; and further got sanctioned the performance of the *Mastakābhishēka* in Śravaṇa-Beḷagoḷa twice or thrice. In the latter part of Chikkadēva's reign, however, Tirumalārya, continues Dēvachandra,¹⁶ brought home to the king's mind the greatness of the Śrī-Vaiṣṇava faith, and secured concessions and benefactions, grants of titles and insignias of office to individual adherents of that religion, making it not only pure and sacred but also great in the popular eye.

15. *Ibid.*, XII. 479-480, also XI. 387-389. 16. *Ibid.*, XII. 487, also XI. 393-394.

Many were converted into Vīra-Vaiṣṇavas in this manner. The scholar Chikkanna-Paṇḍita (Chikkaiya-Paṇḍita), Bommarasa-Paṇḍita and Dēvarasa, who were all Jaina Brāhmins, accepted, with a view to ingratiate themselves into the king's favour, the Śrī-Vaiṣṇava *mudrā* and put on the *ṭīkā*, the Śrī-Vaiṣṇava mark; and thus became avowed enemies of the Jaina faith. In short, Tirumalārya glorified Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism and carried on a vigorous propaganda of proselytism, putting the *ṭīkā* on several people, impressing the *mudrā* on them and making the individual *Dāsas* strong in their professions of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism.

Both Wilks and Dēvachandra, in the above extracts, speak of the administration of Chikka-
Narratives of Wilks
and Dēvachandra
compared. dēvarāja Wodeyar as having been attended with some trouble during the early part of his reign. Each, however, has his own version regarding its origin, development and suppression. According to Wilks, the trouble originated from the discontent brought about by the curbing of the independence of the Wodeyars (including Jangama priests) and Pālegārs, and by the levy of "a variety of vexatious taxes" on the husbandman, in addition to the lawful share ($\frac{1}{6}$) of the government dues, by Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar; under the working policy of his minister Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit, it assumed the shape of open resistance to authority, though the promptness of the king prevented a formidable combination on the part of the insurgents; it was suppressed by the treacherous massacre of 400 Jangamas, leaders of the revolt, at the temple of Nanjangūḍ, followed by the demolition of more than 700 *maths* of the Jangamas, the dispersion of the mob by the military and the forced renunciation of private property; and finally it ended in the revengeful and retaliatory murder of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit by the Vīra-Śaivas (1686). According to Dēvachandra, on the other

hand, the government of Chikkadēvarāja Woḍeyar, during the early years of his reign, was beneficent; trouble arose however, about the middle of Chikkadēvarāja's reign, when the Jangamas having become exceedingly powerful, began to assert themselves and incited the people to revolt; it assumed the shape of an organized rebellion against established authority, the insurgents stopping payment of revenue dues and expelling the unpopular officials; it was suppressed by the slaughter of the ringleaders, followed by the dispersion of the mob by the military, the destruction of *maths* and houses and the confiscation of the rent-free estates of the Jangamas, the search for the fugitive Jangamas, the massacre of a thousand of them under the orders of the king and the levy of an enhanced assessment on the disaffected subjects; it ended in the retaliatory murder of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit by the Vīra-Śaivas (1686), and later by the demolition of the Jain *bastis* by them (in 1698).¹⁷ The religion of Chikkadēvarāja Woḍeyar was, according to Wilks, flexible. In the early part of his reign, he was a Vīra-Śaiva ("Jungum") though openly conforming to the cult of Viṣṇu, while the Vīra-Śaivas, from his intimacy with Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit, believed and suspected him to have been secretly converted to Jainism, expecting him to publicly adopt the latter faith, a circumstance which, it is suggested, influenced them (Vīra-Śaivas) to murder the Paṇḍit. Consequently, in the latter part of his reign, Chikkadēvarāja was definitely alienated from the doctrines of Vīra-Śaivism and openly professed [Śrī] Vaishṇavism under the advice and influence of Tirumalaiyangār.

17. The destruction of Jangama *maths* in the first instance and then of Jain *bastis* by way of reprisal appears to be an invention strangely reminiscent of happenings of an earlier period. In the *Basava-Purāna* (1369) of Bhīma-Kavi, we are told that in the reign of Bijjaḷa (1156-1167), Jain temples were destroyed by the Jangamas headed by Ēkānta-Rāmaiya. The story of the destruction of Jangama *maths* and houses during Chikkadēva's reign seems a sort of counterblast to this ancient exhibition of wrath on the part of Jangamas against the Jains.

According to Dēvachandra, on the contrary, Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar was, in the early years of his reign, a confirmed Jaina, adhering to the tenets of that faith and encouraging the Jains under the advice of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit. Even in the latter part of his reign, Dēvachandra would make it appear, Chikkadēvarāja continued his predilections for Jainism despite the proselytizing tendencies of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism at his court under the influence of Tirumalārya (Tirumalaiyangār), the new minister.

Wilks's account starts with his assumption that from the beginning Chikkadēvarāja's administration was based on the idea of all regal power being concentrated in himself, which led, in his opinion, ultimately to a public revolt. His view-point of the fiscal measures and policy of Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar is wholly opposed to the administrative traditions current in the country and does not take adequate notice of the actual conditions under which Chikkadēvarāja worked. He believes in, and exaggerates, the story of the massacre of the Jangamas, while his conception of the evolution of Chikkadēvarāja's personal religion is governed more by political and economic considerations than by the probabilities of historical fact. Dēvachandra being himself a Jaina, his account is throughout characterized by bias in favour of Jainism as the religion of Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar. His picture of the sudden rise and revolt of the Jangamas under ideal conditions is rather inconsistent. His attribution of the massacre of the Jangamas directly to Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar is, again, a sheer exaggeration, if not a travesty of facts: it is both improbable and impossible and it contradicts his own statement that Chikkadēvarāja, as a staunch follower of Jainism, was kind to all living creatures. Further, his chronology is, as usual, vague and unreliable. He allows an interval of

twelve years to lapse between the murder of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit (1686) and the demolition of the Jain *bastis* by the Vira-Śaivas (1698), which is incredible. Both these writers, as we shall further see below, differ also between themselves on certain points of detail connected with the Jangama agitation. These limitations apart, an examination of the accounts of Wilks and Dēvachandra in the light of other sources would go to show that there was some public disturbance in Mysore during 1684-1686, *i.e.*, about the middle of Chikkadēvarāja's reign:¹⁸ it appears to have been due not so much to religious persecution or political aggrandizement on the part of Chikkadēva as to fear engendered in the rural classes as to the effect of the fiscal measures introduced by him, which was fanned into flame by those who would be most affected by them, especially at just the time when Chikkadēvarāja was straining every nerve to maintain his foothold in the Madura country as against the Mahrattas. The disturbance that followed was quelled with a strong hand; the ringleaders were put to death; respect for order and authority was enforced without fear or favour by Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit, the Prime Minister of Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar, which eventually brought about his own downfall; and a system of checks and counter-checks introduced, by which the possibility of further disturbances was minimised. Neither the allegation that Chikkadēvarāja attacked the husbandman with "a variety of vexatious taxes" nor the story relating to *his* alleged participation in the sanguinary massacre of the Jangamas has so far been substantiated.¹⁹ There is not even a whisper of the

18. *Vide* Chs. XI and XII of this work, for references to the issue in its contemporary bearings.

19. Among modern writers, Rice accepts Wilks's account (see *Mys. Gaz.*, Old edition, I. 366-367); S. K. Aiyangar (*Ancient India*, pp. 300-301) interprets the fiscal position as a "revision of taxes which cost the life of the Jain Paṇḍit, the responsible author of the revision," and speaks of "a wholesale massacre of the fanatical Jungam priests" after the murder of the Paṇḍit, for which there is equally no evidence. The

latter incident, nor even a passing reference to it, in earlier Jaina works like the *Belgoḷada-Gommaṭēśvara-Charitre* (c. 1780) and the *Munivamsābhyudaya* (c. 1700), while the taxes levied by Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar were no inventions of his but, in substance, a revival of the old ones to suit the changing conditions of the times.²⁰ Again, the trend of available evidence goes to show that Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar was, from the beginning of his reign, if not from the early years of his life, a devout Śrī-Vaiṣṇava by faith and by profession, tolerant towards all sects and creeds, a just administrator aiming always at the happiness of his subjects, and an intensely humane personality.²¹ The accounts of Wilks and Dēvachandra being later writings, based on "tradition," coloured by political bias and religious prejudice, cannot prove acceptable in the absence of independent corroborative evidence. They are accordingly to be used with caution as authorities for this part of the history of Chikkadēvarāja's reign.

Nor are the differences between the accounts of Wilks and Dēvachandra on the one side and the Jesuit Fathers on the other less negligible. The Jesuit account represents the "exactions" as it stigmatizes the fiscal measures of Chikkadēva as the result of his military policy, and suggests that the people rose against him because of his "exactions" and the "cruelties" practised. Whether the "cruelties" were the result of

Wilks, Dēvachandra and the Jesuit Fathers, compared and contrasted.

Mys. Gaz. (New edition, II. iv. 2462-2463) doubts the accuracy of Wilks in regard to (1) levy of "vexatious taxes" by Chikkadēvarāja, and (2) the story of the latter's participation in the Jangama massacre; and views with a greater degree of probability the question of Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit being responsible in the main for the troubles which ensued during the reign.

20. *Vide* Ch. XII, for details about the taxes levied by Chikkadēvarāja. For particulars about taxation in ancient Karnāṭak, see *E. C.*, III (1) TN. 27 (1290), II. 45-50, MI. 95 (1506), II. 21-25, IV (2) Gu. 67 (1505), II. 16-20, etc. (Texts in the originals).

21. *Vide* Chs. XII, XIII and XVI, for details.

the reaction caused by the "exactions" is not clear, though they were presumably so. One of the Jesuit letters, at the same time, suggests that the people should have responded to the call of the king; it indeed charges them with a lack "of the sentiments of patriotism and national grandeur" and almost goes to show that their revolt was not justified from that point of view. It even seems to reiterate that they should have seconded the efforts of the king in his conquest for supremacy over the South. What follows in regard to the choosing of Brāhman generals—one of the Vaishṇava and another of the Śaiva faith—and the manner in which their large armies vent their fury on the officers of the king and his representatives and the poor Christian neophytes in the Satyamangalam area is not reflected in the accounts of either Wilks or Dēvachandra. What makes this more than incredible is that the king was a staunch Vaishṇava with undoubted good-will towards the Śaivas and Jangamas, as we know from other sources.²² Nor is the other statement that the king himself was besieged in his own fortress at Mysore confirmed by either of these authorities. As a matter of fact, between 1684-1686, the king, as we have seen,²³ was actually residing in Seringapatam. It will also be observed that "Brāhman" generals are made to take the leading part in the Jesuit account, while in the accounts of Wilks and Dēvachandra it is the Jangamas that figure prominently. Remembering the mutual animosities existing between the Jangamas and Jains, there is ground at least for the belief that the later version is an attempt on the part of Dēvachandra and his sect at making the Jangamas get the worst of it. Wilks's narration reflects evidently a version entirely different from that of the Jesuit Fathers, whose account unfortunately appears to have been based on wrong information or information which had been

22. See Ch. XIII, for details.

23. *Ante*, Chs. XI-XIV.

badly mutilated in transmission to them from Mysore to Madura, from which latter place they wrote. The suggestion of the particular kind of cruelty practised on Chikkadēva's subjects shows, if anything further at all were needed, how exaggerated should have been the news that reached them. There is not even a whisper of this horrible cruelty in either Wilks or Dēvachandra, though, as a good Jain and an ardent chronicler of wrongs done to Jains, Dēvachandra would have been the first to mention it, if it had been adopted against any set of them, and more so against the Jangama leaders or those whom the latter (Jangama leaders) misled into rebellion. Nor, again, is there any the smallest suggestion in either Wilks or Dēvachandra that the king indulged in the cruel order for the demolition of the " pagodas of Vishṇu and Śiva " or in the further statement that they " were destroyed " and " their large revenues were confiscated to the royal treasury." Nor, finally, is there anything in the accounts of Wilks and Dēvachandra that there was such a general massacre of the " subjects " of the king—as is mentioned in the Jesuit letters—as would necessitate their " escaping their carnage " and fleeing to " the mountains and forests " there to live " a miserable life." Wilks makes the whole thing an insurrection of the peasantry who hated the new financial measures of the king and who, having lost their national leaders, the Pāḷegārs, they having been compelled to live at the capital by the king, had fallen an easy prey to the Jangama priests who had, at the same time, lost their pecuniary receipts owing to the absence of the Pāḷegārs. There is not a word of all this in the Jesuit letters. Nor is there anything in them to suggest that the king was aiming at obtaining from his subjects a voluntary renunciation of their " private property in land " and an acknowledgment that " it was the right of the State." Dēvachandra also makes the Jangamas the fomenters of the insurrection in the

rural areas and he and Wilks agree when they state that troops were employed to put the insurrection down. The story of the employment of Faridullā Khān for the purpose, mentioned by Dēvachandra, though omitted by Wilks, is probably true; it is one of the few points on which Wilks agrees with him when he says that troops of cavalry were employed to disperse assemblages of mobs and cut down without parley "every man wearing an orange-coloured robe (the peculiar garb of the Jungum priests)." Dēvachandra, on the other hand, makes the Jangamas the worst offenders—not merely leaders of the peasantry in the insurrection, but the very authors of the revolt. According to him, the annoyance caused by them soon became unbearable. Even the king's officials were not safe at their hands. He represents the king as ordering the demolition of their *maths* and houses, the confiscation of their rent-free lands and, finally, the forfeiture of their very lives! The story is thus found full-fledged in Dēvachandra. Absolutely absent in the Jesuit letters, we find it as small as a man's hand in Wilks, but in Dēvachandra, the persecution of the Jangamas takes its final shape in a manner which shows how Jaina tradition worked up the whole story in such a form as would fully bear out its traditional hatred towards its hated oppressor, the Jangama priest. Nothing more seems necessary to show that the entire account of the Jangamas leading the revolt or of their being put to death in thousands—and that at the instance of Chikkadēvarāja himself, whatever his financial needs or political ambitions—is a product of the fertile imagination of Dēvachandra without the least basis for it. It is unnecessary to deny for this purpose that the Jangamas suffered like the rest of the peasantry; it may also be conceded that they were in sympathy with those who suffered with them as the result of the financial measures—if these did so suffer in fact; and it may also be granted that the king took

certain measures to carry through his fiscal schemes. It is possible too that certain of the Jangamas suffered heavily in the conflict that followed. But to say that the king ordered a general hunting down of the disguised and craven Jangamas, as Dēvachandra puts it, or ordered their massacre at Nanjangūd at the hands of expert executioners, as detailed by Wilks, is to ask posterity to believe in a story which does not figure even in a cryptic form in the contemporary account of the Jesuit Fathers; nor in the accounts of earlier Jain writers; nor in any of the many inscriptions of the period; nor even in the other writers of the time, who, belonging to other religious persuasions, might be expected to have made a point of it in their favour. It is a story too which is incredible from the point of view of what is known of Chikka-dēvarāja Wodeyar from other sources, easily verifiable and absolutely untainted by sectarian animosities and religious or political prejudices of any kind. Finally it has to be remarked that the "tradition" which came to be thus worked up within about a hundred years after the death of Chikkadēvarāja bears on its very face the impress of successive additions until it reaches its finally evolved form in Dēvachandra. What in the Jesuit letters appears as a measure of finance for meeting the exigencies of war becomes a purely fiscal measure in Wilks, while in Dēvachandra there is no mention either of a financial or a fiscal measure as the cause of the insurrection. What again appears in the Jesuit letters as a general revolt of the people of the "eastern provinces" comes out as an insurrection of the peasantry led by the Jangamas in Wilks, and solely by the Jangamas themselves in Dēvachandra; and finally the objects of destruction, according to the Jesuit Fathers, are the Vaishṇava and Śaiva temples, while in Wilks they are 400 Jangama priests and more than 700 Jangama *maths*, and in Dēvachandra they are 1,000 Jangama

priests and all their houses and *maths* all over the rural parts. It is also worthy of note that while Wilks makes the fiscal measures the root cause of the insurrection, in Dēvachandra the enhancement of the assessment comes off as an after-effect, as the consequence, of the Jangama agitation, by way of punishing the agitationists for their disloyalty. It is thus clear that the "tradition" on which Wilks worked up his account of Chikkadēva's fiscal measures and the results that followed their introduction is one that has undergone much development during the course of a century and more that had elapsed since the events connected with them actually took place. "Tradition" has a tendency to grow, to transmute facts, and even to displace events by hundreds of years. If the treatment said to have been meted out to the Jains by an ancient Pāṇḍyan king can be transplanted in the 17th century to Chikkadēvarāja, why should not "tradition," a hundred years later, get itself busy especially in the hands of a writer of the poetic, not to say sectarian, type of Dēvachandra, and look like an actual "fact" of history in the setting in which it is made to appear by him? The truth is that traditional narrative—of which epic poetry is the highest form—deals with ritual drama, and not with historical fact. The real facts of a career, like all historical facts, have been, and could only be, ascertained, as has been authoritatively declared, from contemporary written records, interpreting the word "written" here in the larger sense as including inscriptions, etc.²⁴

If the view of Wilks were held to be true, then the history of Chikkadēvarāja's reign would be nothing more than a chapter of crimes and misadventures. But that would be plainly distorting the whole of his life-story

24. See Appendix VI—(4), on "What is Tradition?" for a just appreciation of the historicity of tradition.

and what he did for his country and what he attempted to do in the direction of a settled and orderly form of government for Southern India as a whole. Nobody has yet accepted the remark of Horace Walpole that the history of the Yorkists and Lancastrians, and many others besides, is like reading the history of "highway robbers." The saner opinion has been that even amid the bloodied records of a king's life—to-day we may even justifiably say, a nation's life—we find jewels of culture, ornaments of wit and treasures of useful invention. It is these that redeem our faith in man and it is these again that restore our hope in his future. We have to remember thus much at least if we are to read history aright or to purpose. In the case of Chikkadēvarāja, there is reason to believe that neither his policy nor his actions ever reached that extreme point which landed him in or necessitated the perpetration of dark deeds even for the purpose of gaining selfish ends. Granting for the sake of argument that the version of Wilks is true and that it is founded in truthful tradition, the utmost that would have to be said would be that he was served by a minister who possibly exceeded his instructions or went beyond the limits of what might be called ministerial responsibility. We know that Chikkadēva came to the throne quite peaceably. He was king of the whole country and all its people. Amongst his own people, he knew neither friend nor foe, for he came from Hangaḷa to succeed to the throne and had held aloof from every one connected with his predecessor. To bring peace and order into the land, to gain for it the supremacy that belonged to it as the rightful successor to Vijayanagar claims in the South, and to rule the country justly and well, were his objects. These would have been difficult of achievement even to a wise and experienced ruler during the period his life was cast in; and to Chikkadēva, who was only twenty-eight years old when he ascended

the throne, they should have been well nigh impossible. But he seems to have known by instinct how to govern and make laws, how to choose his ministers wisely, and how to get the best out of them. With these good qualities he had the pertinacity to keep steadily to what he distinctly aimed at; this was to strengthen and bind together the country he ruled over and the additions he was constantly endeavouring to make to it, so that his kingship might extend over the whole of the south of India. To this end, he made himself the centre of all power. He mapped out his plans; he chose the men to carry them out; he remembered everything, he thought of everything, and he cared for everything. When busy with his wars in the distant south or the equally distant north-west, he found time to think of reforms in the administrative and social structure, not excluding even his Palace household. Nothing, indeed, seemed to escape his eye or his hand and that is possibly the main reason why his reign seems so full of action. Nor did he forget his Maker or his responsibility to Him. He was deeply religious, though religion with him did not mean mere bigotry or superstition.

Everything that is known of Chikkadēvarāja Wodeyar from the reliable sources pertaining to his period shows him to have been a popular king and a king too who was interested in his work. He might not have succeeded in all that he strove for or attempted. It is given to no human being to achieve everything he aims at. That Chikkadēvarāja failed in some of his objectives only shows that he was but a human being. Perfection cannot be, and is not, claimed for him. A man below or above humanity is rightly termed a monstrosity and Chikkadēva was neither. He loved his people, his country and his kind. In his work—of administration and reform—he was helped by his minister Viśālāksha-Paṇḍit, evidently a man of ready wit, who had been his colleague-at-studies

and whom, when he became king, he had made his Minister-in-chief. Evidently Chikkadēvarāja had grown to like him and begun to trust him as only an intimate friend would. Between the two—aided by the rest of the cabinet—they seem to have managed the business of the country. The nearest parallel we can think of in English History to the relationship that existed between them is that of Henry II and Thomas Becket. If Becket met his fate at the hands of assassins, so did Viśālāksha. Henry's outburst in the one case led to the murder of Becket in the cathedral; but in the case of Viśālāksha, it was the minister's own unpopularity that led to his death in the streets of Seringapatam. If Henry's remorse was genuine, Chikkadēva's sorrow was sincere, for he knew the extent of the loss he had sustained. All that we know of Chikkadēva makes us doubt whether the causes that led to Viśālāksha's death can be set down to his master. We now know that the reforms—fiscal and administrative—were themselves not of a kind to raise the ire of the people against the king. If that be so, then the manner of giving effect to them—purely an executive act—must have been such as to render the minister not only unpopular but also hated. There must have been something in the *modus operandi* of the minister, that rendered the scheme itself unwelcome, if not odious, in the popular eye. This should have helped to transfer the responsibility for pushing them through from the minister, whose duty it was to give effect to it, to the king who was, perhaps, neither aware of the exact methods employed nor of the extent to which punitive steps had descended for giving effect to them. The minister was by religion a Jain and that was enough to suspect his *bona fides*. When the measure affected the local peasantry who were more or less in the hands of priests, whose relationship with the Jains as a class was something other than cordial, all the

conditions necessary for an insurrection were evidently present. What followed may be inferred from the letters of the Jesuit Fathers, though there is reason to believe that there was evident exaggeration in the manner in which the recalcitrants were dealt with. It may be conceded that the minister crushed the insurrection with measures which were harsh even for his times and the harshness, as a matter of course, came to be attached to his sovereign as the probable person who should have sanctioned it. The sequel shows that this should have been so. The minister died and the whole incident closed. The king chose as his minister the person recommended by Viśālāksha, but then too there was no evidence of popular discontent. The king had nothing to fear from his people, and there was no danger of a rising against him. The people were true to him and to his new minister, though the latter was a person of the choice of the hated Viśālāksha himself. The people indeed—at least the chief malcontents—had no common cause against him, and they were silenced by the turn that events had taken. Viśālāksha's choice of his successor was excellent and the king's approval of it proved evidently magical in its effects. It might be that the king, immediately order was restored, beat down one by one the remaining leaders of the agitation and thus put down quietly what would, in less capable hands, have given occasion for further trouble. Though Chikkadēva, moderate in his use of victory, spared the masses who had been misled, he did not evidently let go his grip over the leaders whom he so weakened that they could do nothing against him. After this insurrection, the Pāḷegārs and religious leaders lost still more of their power, and the king's ascendancy over the whole kingdom became nearly absolute. But the memory of the insurrection and the hatred conceived by the populace against the minister, whom the country

held responsible for the whole trouble—the manner of his death is witness to this—long survived the event, and in due course tradition built round it a tale that has puzzled as much historians of the period as the veracious seeker after the truth, wherever it might be.
