CHAPTER III

A BRIEF LIFE SKETCH OF RAJA KESAVA DAS

“Raman Kesavan or Kesva Pillai”\(^1\), popularly called Raja Kesava Das, was born at Kunnathur, a small village in South Travancore, 25 miles from Trivandrum\(^2\). This fortunate youth, whose name was Ramen Kasavan or Kasava Pillay gradually grew up under His Highness Bala Rama Varma paternal care and support and became a most intelligent and deserving man.\(^3\)

Parents

The parents of Raja Kesava Das were very poor. His mother was a maid-servant at the Maharaja’s palace and his father a poor astrologer\(^4\).

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2 Abraham, M.V., *A Concise History of Travancore*, Tiruvalla, 1941, p. 28. South Travancore was a part of the erstwhile State of Travancore-cochin. It was formed out of the four Tamil speaking taluks of Agasteeswaram, Thovalai, Kalkulam and Vilavancode.
Education

Kesava Das was sent to a pial-school at the age of five. He had scarcely picked up a smattering knowledge of the three R’s in the school. He was particularly quick in arithmetic and gave promise of a bright future. The teacher was so pleased with his intelligence that he taught him free.

Accountant under a Mohammedan

At twelve years of age, the poverty of Raja Kesava Das compelled him to seek service somewhere. Therefore he left his home. At Puvar, a Mohammedan merchant appointed him as his accountant on a small salary. The merchant was pleased with the boy’s truthfulness and capacity. When once the merchant went to Trivandrum to pay his respects to the Maharaja, he took the boy with him. The interview lasted till late in the night. The boy fell asleep in the antechamber. He was left there by the merchant when he came away. The first sight of the Maharaja saw early next morning was this half-naked boy. The Maharaja was so disgusted that the boy was ordered to be placed under restraint. But, within an hour good news reached the Maharaja that a ship laden with rich merchandise had

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5 Parameswaran Pillai, *History of Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1944, p.31
arrived at his port. The boy was immediately released and enrolled as a servant in the palace\textsuperscript{7}.

An interesting anecdote exists about the boy’s having slept in the antechamber. Early next morning the first sight that greeted the Maharajah’s eyes, it is said, was this half-naked boy whose poor appearance disgusted the Maharajah, for according to the orthodox Hindu notion the fortunes of the day more or less depend on the first object one sees in the morning. For Manu says the King ought to keep in his palace elephants, monkeys, cows etc., on which only he should cast his eyes, when he rises from bed in the early dawn. A half-famished beggarly looking boy is not according to the Shastras an object worthy of being so seen by kings. The boy was at once ordered to be placed under restraint for having slept where he should not have had access. But scarcely had an hour passed before news reached the Maharajah that a ship laden with rich merchandise had neared his port. The Maharajah felt much gratified at the news and attributing the glad tidings to the sight of the young boy in the morning ordered his immediate release and enrolled him as a servant in the palace.

\textbf{As a Rayasom}\textsuperscript{8}

\begin{quote}
Raja Kesava Das gradually grew up under His Highness’
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{8} Rayasom means ‘writer’.
paternal and support and became a most intelligent and deserving man. When about twenty-four years of age, he was appointed as a *rayasom* in the palace under the *Samprathy*\(^9\).

When about twenty-four years of age, Kasava Pillay was appointed as a *rayasom* (writer) in the palace under the *Samprathy* (the State Secretary). He know became most influential and proved himself a highly efficient State servant, so much so that His Highness Secretary as well as the Prime Minister, used to consult him and seek his advice on questions of the greatest importance.

Kesava Pillay was much attached to D’Lanoy and to several Mussulman and Pattan officers in the military service. He was trained in the military art and was competent to command a whole brigade in times of emergency. He learnt the Dutch and Portuguese languages under General D’Lanoy and the Persian and Hindustani under the Pattan officers.

At this period, the Maha Rajah sought for and procured a Portuguese, by name M. Pedro da Veigas, and appointed him the king’s interpreter and State clerk. A Persian *moonshee* was entertained and one or two able Hindustani writers on the Lalla caste (Rajputs) were also employed under His Highness.

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The word Samprathy menas ‘The State Secretary’.
Kesava Pillay was specially entrusted with the management and supervision of commercial affairs and a regular correspondence was opened and kept up with the Dutch and the English East India Company, established then at Cochin and Anjengo respectively. The former had their commercial factories at Poracaud and Colachel, while the latter had flourishing trade at Anjengo.

As usual, pepper, cassia, cinnamon and other articles of which the Sircar had the monopoly, were sold to these allies, and in return, iron, copper, sugar, arms and ammunition were purchased from them.

**As A Head of the Commercial Department**

The Maharaja formed a high opinion about the talents of Kesava Das. Further, he was pleased with his abilities and Kesava Das was soon raised to the work of supervising the commercial Department of the State. As head of the Commercial Department, he has been in touch with the Dutch and the English and his experience with their affairs had convinced him that the prosperity of the State depended on its commerce, and so from the beginning it was his endeavor to commercialize the State. He opened regular correspondence and kept up with the Dutch and the English East India Company\textsuperscript{10}. This helped tremendously to increase the material prosperity of the country.

Military Training

Kesava Das received military training under General De Lannoy who was deeply attached to him\textsuperscript{11}. This training enabled him to take active service in the field as an efficient general. He was much attached to several Mussalman and Pattan officers in the military service. He was well trained in the military art and was competent to command a whole brigade in times of emergency. He learned the Dutch and Portuguese languages under General D’Lanoy and the Persian and Hindustani under the Pattan officers\textsuperscript{12}.

Sarvadhikariakar

From the post of Samprathi, Kesava Das rose to the high office of Sarvadhikariakar\textsuperscript{13}. It was in this capacity that he made arrangements for the great yaga which Rama Varma conducted at Alwaye to propitiate the Gods when Tippu Sultan was at the gates of Travancore. The Maharaja was pleased with that he conducted the whole ceremony\textsuperscript{14}. He now became most influential and proved himself a highly efficient State servant, so much so that His Highnes’ Secretary as well as the Prime Minister used to consult him and seek his advice on questions of the

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 146.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p.147.
\textsuperscript{13} Abraham, M.V., op.cit., p.29. (Sarvadhikariakar means Deputy Prime Minister)
\textsuperscript{14} Parameswaran, op.cit., p. 41.
greater importance. The death of Krishnan Chempakaraman, the Dalawa at this time, enabled the Maharaja to confer the highest office in the State on Kesava Das.

**As Dewan**

In the year 964 M.E. (1789 A.D) when the post of Dalawa having became vacant Sarvadhi Kesava Pillai as the legitimate claimant for the office was appointed as the first Dewan on the 8th Kanni 964 (22 September 1789)\(^{15}\).

In 1788, Raja Kesava Das was raised to the office of Dewan that the Maharaja Rama Varma found a real helpmate. His appointment was most opportune; for it was then that the great avalanche, till then slowly moving towards the State descended into it with all its force.

He did not relish the title of Dalawa. With the sanction of the Maharaja he changed the old title of Dalawa to that of Dewan eschewing the old designation of Dalawa, as better suited to the times. He was thus the first Dewan of Travancore.

The new minister was altogether different from the old order of Dalawas in both his training and outlook. His achievements in office have made him one of the greatest Dewans of the State.

The Period of his Dewanship

The period of his Dewanship was the most critical one for Travancore. In 1782 Hyder Ali died and was succeeded by his son Tippu. He found that his possession in Malabar had all been conquered by the English and held by them with the help of the Travancore Troops. He also wished to subdue the whole of South India and drive out the English from the borders. He found that if Travancore was taken, he could easily strike at Madurai and Tirunelveli, the outlying and comparatively defenseless Provinces of the Nawab of the Carnatic, the underlying of the English. So he marched down to Travancore. But, Dewan Kesava Das was able to take up coolly the hazardous task of defending the State against the aggression of Tippu and succeeded remarkably well.

Internal Reforms

Dewan Kesava Pillai now turned his attention to the internal reforms of the country. His first and foremost object was to raise the commercial importance of the country. For this purpose he visited all the sea-coast towns from Cape Comorin to the north and resolved to open two new ports, one at Alleppey and the other at Vizhinjam. Alleppey was then a mere jungle inhabited by jackals and monkeys. Within a short time, it was converted into a port-town and a warehouse and a few shops were

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opened. Merchants were brought from various places especially from the rich provinces of Sindh and Cutch and they were given every facility for carrying on a successful trade. To make their stay permanent, a Hindu temple and a Cutchery were built in addition to a place for the Maharajah to stay in whenever he should visit the new town. Some of the rich and influential merchants of the present day in Alleppey are the descendants of these settlers. To make the place a centre of commerce a timber depot was opened and one Mathu Tarakan, a rich native Christian, was given the contract to collect all the timber of North Travancore and store it in the depot for sale. The Sirkar agents, known as Vicharippukars, stationed in the different forests of the State were ordered to collect the hill produce such as cardamom, honey, wax and ivory and forward them to this new port thereby laying the foundation for an efficient forest conservancy. Three ships were built at State cost to carry on trade with other parts of India, especially with Bombay and Calcutta. To extend and facilitate communication from the backwater to the new port, several canals and roads were constructed. The backwater as far as the Pallathurithy river was deepened and coconut trees were planted on either side of it. For the purpose of increasing traffic, the ports of Colachel and Puntora were opened. Merchants were brought from various places especially from the rich provinces of Sindh and Cutch and they were given every facility for carrying on a successful trade. To make their stay permanent, a Hindu temple and a Cutchery were built in addition to a place for the Maharajah to stay in whenever he should visit the new town. Some of the rich and influential merchants of the present day in Alleppey are the descendants of these settlers. To make the place a centre of commerce a timber depot was opened and one Mathu Tarakan, a rich native Christian, was given the contract to collect all the timber of North Travancore and store it in the depot for sale. The Sirkar agents, known as Vicharippukars, stationed in the different forests of the State were ordered to collect the hill produce such as cardamom, honey, wax and ivory and forward them to this new port thereby laying the foundation for an efficient forest conservancy. Three ships were built at State cost to carry on trade with other parts of India, especially with Bombay and Calcutta. To extend and facilitate communication from the backwater to the new port, several canals and roads were constructed. The backwater as far as the Pallathurithy river was deepened and coconut trees were planted on either side of it. For the purpose of increasing traffic, the ports of Colachel and Puntora were

\[ 18 \text{ Velu Pillai, T.K., } op.cit., \text{ Vol.II, pp.448-450.} \]

\[ 19 \text{ Ibid.} \]
improved and a warehouse and a spacious bungalow built.\textsuperscript{20} Many fishermen were brought in and were induced to stay there. Vizhinjam was converted into a small port and a warehouse was opened here. After making all these improvements which brought to the treasury a large income, Kesava Pillai turned his attention to Trivandrum, the capital of the State. The main road leading from the Eastern Fort gate to Karamana was repaired and widened and bazars and shops were built on both sides of the road. This is the present Chalai Bazar of Trivandrum. A bridge over the Killiyour and another over the Karamana were constructed.\textsuperscript{21} A good number of weavers, dyers and painters were brought from Tinnevelly and Madura and were made to settle at Kottar which was thus made the centre of cloth trade. Many opulent merchants very soon sprang up and even now the ‘Kottar Chetties’ are proverbial for their wealth and industry.\textsuperscript{22}

The old fortifications were improved and a few new ones were added. A fresh impetus was given to warlike-store manufactory of Udayagiri, where guns and shots were manufactured with greater speed and vigour. All the temples throughout the State, especially the one at Trivandrum, were improved. The tower of the Trivandrum pagoda which was begun by Dalawa Rama Iyen was completed. The flagstaff was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Ibid., Vol.I, p.68.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ibid., Vol.II, p.439.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Singh, K.S., \textit{People of India}, Tamil Nadu, Vol.XL, Madras, 1997, p.294.
\end{itemize}
repaired and gilded; big brass lamps called *Dipastambham* and small copper ones also were made for the temple.\textsuperscript{23}

Several new coins were minted, chief among them being the gold coins of *Anantarayanpanam, Chinnappanam* and *Anantavarahan* and the silver chuckrams. The five custom houses on the banks of the northern backwaters were abolished. A new tax called *Nilavari* was imposed on all *Sirkar pattom* lands. For the proper administration of the State, the *Sattavariola* or a collection of rules and laws was framed for the guidance of the various *Sirkar* officials. The following are a few specimen provisions of the same.\textsuperscript{24}

Provisions for the religious ceremonies and other wants of the *Sirkar* shall be purchased from the inhabitants on payment of ready cash and the established hire also be paid for carrying the provisions to the place where such are required; but in failure of immediate payment the officer who conducts the transaction shall be made to pay the value with 50 per cent interest and after paying the ryot, the surplus shall be credited to the *Sirkar* as a fine for the neglect.

Strict attention shall be paid to the charitable supply of water mixed with butter-milk to the weary travellers on the road and the public inns, where this water is supplied, shall be thatched and kept always clean.


Payment for the butter-milk for this purpose shall be made daily and the pay of the person employed in giving water, shall be paid punctually in every month.

The officials of every village shall inspect at every season all such lands as have suffered injury by the breaches of banks of tanks, canals & c., and by any accumulation of sand and thus rendered unfit for immediate cultivation. The servants shall exert themselves in having such obstructions removed through the owners in all ordinary cases or cause the same to be removed by the owners of the adjacent lands conjointly; but if such works are found too expensive, the same shall be done at the Sirkar expense and the land in question made cultivable at once without allowing the same to be laid waste for any time.

Every dispute between ryots concerning landed property shall be settled by the decision of four men of the village, (in the form of a Punchayat) through the Proverticar; if that officer does not settle the case immediately, he shall be summoned before the district cutcherry and an adequate fine imposed upon him and the case enquired into by thadasthers (jury) formed of the inhabitants of the village where the disputed property is situated and in the presence of the district officer. The parties shall be then made to pay each one fanam as a vow to Padmanabha Swamy, and when the case is so decided by the thadasthers (jurors), the party gaining
the case shall be required to pay a feet at the rate of ten per cent on the amount of his suit; and the contra-party who loses the case shall be required to pay a fee of five per cent.

The district officials shall not apply fetters, chains and manacles to those ryots who are found entangled in any criminal charge.

When petitioners appear before the district cutcherry, with their complaints, their cases shall be decided reasonably so as to be concurred in by public opinion; but no petitioner shall be detained to his inconvenience and put to expense for feeding himself, pending the settlement of his case; that such cases as could be decided soon shall be settled then and there, and the parties dismissed. But such cases as would required time to settle shall be decided within eight days, and if any petitioner is detained before the district cutcherry beyond eight days, he shall be fed at the expense of the district officer.

When a female petitioner comes before the district cutcherry, her complaint shall be heard and settled at once and on no account shall a female be detained for a night.

That not one of the subjects (ryots) shall be oppressed, by placing him in restraint, without allowing him even to attend the calls of nature, or making him stand within a given line in a stooping posture, putting a stone on his back or keeping him in water or under the burning
sun or confining him under starvation, neither shall he be subjected to any sort of disgrace.

The measures by which the ryots are required to give paddy to the Sircar in part-payment of the land tax, shall be annually examined by the district officer and the ryot himself will be allowed to put the paddy into the measures at a fixed height and the measurement shall be made by clearing the bridge of the *parah*.

The long reign of the Maharaja was a period of war or preparation for war. The treasury had to meet a continuous drain. The pay of Travancore while the contributions made to the British Government for the maintenance of the auxiliary forces was a recurring item of expenditure. Large sums had to be expended on the performance of religious ceremonies which were sanctioned by custom and regarded by the public opinion of the time as indispensable to the prestige of royalty and the welfare of the state. The personal example of the Maharaja, the austere simplicity of his life and the regularity of financial administration enabled the Government to meet the continual demands. The levy of special war-taxes was sometimes resorted to, but the rates appear to have been equitable. The taxes were punctually collected, but the taxable margin was scrupulously respected. The Maharaja and the minister Kesava Pillai realized that the stability of the public revenue depended more than
anything else upon the prosperity of the people. The policy inaugurated by
Marthanda Varma and his ministers in developing agriculture and
stimulating industries was continued. The claims of irrigation were always
kept in view. Fresh lands were brought under cultivation. Loans were
advanced to agriculturists and remissions allowed in all appropriate cases.
A careful settlement was made to enable the Government to fix the rate of
land-tax throughout the state. In 948 M.E. a comprehensive revenue
survey was made which took in the whole area of the state as finally
constituted. The tenures were classified. The revenue officers were
ordered to pay the most scrupulous regard to the provisions of the
Chattavariyola or rules issued from time to time.

Dewan Kesava Pillai’s acquaintance with the Dutch and the
English afforded him considerable opportunity of learning the conditions
of trade. When the nations of the west were fighting one another in the
remote corners of the globe for commercial advantages Kesava Pillai felt
that he would not be serving the people and the sovereign unless proper
arrangements were made to collect the natural produce of the country and
sell them at the highest possible price. Travancore was rich in her natural
produce, and her forests abounded in timbers, cardamom, honey, wax and

many other products. All these were running to waste. Arrangements were therefore made to collect the produce of Travancore with due safeguards against indifference and corruption.\footnote{Velu Pillai, T.K., \textit{op.cit.}, Vol.II, pp.439-440.}

Communications were opened to facilitate transport. Roads and canals were widened, and the smaller streams and water-courses were bridged. Facilities for export and import trade were provided. A survey of the coast was conducted by competent persons under the personal supervision of the Dewan.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} The existing ports were improved, while a new one was opened at Alleppey, which was then “a sandy wilderness covered with thorny herbs and infested by jackals and monkeys.” Kesava Pillai appreciated the natural advantages of the place which gave a safe anchor for ships in wintry weather. The port was soon opened and merchants, artisans and labourers were encouraged to reside there in large numbers. Traders from Bombay, Cutch and Sind were persuaded to start branches of their firms at Alleppey, the Government giving them every kind of assistance and encouragement.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p.449.} The erection of a Hindu temple in the heart of the town became a source of attraction to the Hindu settlers. In the south Colachel, Punthura and Vilinjam were improved and provided with warehouses and other buildings. Ships were built to help the growth
of commerce. Transport of goods in foreign ships necessarily meant increased freightage besides delays and uncertainties incidental to their chartering. The teak trees in the forests were excellent for ship-building purposes and Kesava Pillai caused a few ships to be constructed which conveyed the products of the country to distant places. The venture was successful and brought in a considerable revenue to the State.  

Gold coins called *Anantharayan Fanam*, China fanam and Ananthavarahan were coined in the Travancore mint in addition to a large quantity of silver bullion coined as *chuckrams*. A new contribution called *Nilavar* upon *Sircar pattom* lands was raised, which yielded a good round sum of money. Thus the Dewan succeeded in clearing away the greater part of the state debt contracted in consequence of war and other emergencies.

Other improvements made by Kesava Pillai are thus narrated by Shungoony Menon. "The Dewan after accomplishing so much returned to Trivandrum and commenced his improvements there. The public road leading to the east from the eastern gate of the Trivandrum fort was further widened. Bazaars or shops were built on the side of the road at Chalay and a regular traffic and market established there. A bridge over the Killiar river and another over the Karamanai river with granite stone and several

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other public works were constructed, besides further irrigation works at Nanjenaud. The Dewan also introduced improvements into the town of Kottar by inviting a number of weavers, dyers, painters and other industrious workmen from Tinnevelly and Madura to settle there; and thus this town became a very rich and important one and formed the grand depot for the supply of cloths for the whole kingdom of Travancore. The great Pagoda of Trivandrum was repaired and the large flag-staff beautified and gilt. A golden vehicle for carrying the image of Sri Padmanabha Swamy, called Indra Vahanam, was made and an admirable granite work called Kulasekhara Mandapam, as well as several other valuable works were constructed."

All the fortifications were improved, a few more were newly constructed; and the manufacture of guns, shots and other warlike stores at Udayagiri was pushed on with great vigour. Palaces were built in different parts of the country and the official buildings at Mavelikkara received much attention. The Pagoda tower at Trivandrum was successfully completed. The temples throughout the country were repaired or improved. The work of administration was eminently successful. Kesava Pillai attributed the success of his measures to the inspiration and guidance of his royal master. “The creatures born on the Maha Meru cannot but

have at least in a slight degree a reflection of its greatness; so born as I am, though humble and poor in Your Highness’ glory and supported as I am, by Your Highness’ glory cannot but reflect on myself by Your Highness’ merciful countenance in whatever clime I may be; like the sun’s rays to which I shall compare Your Highness’ kindness.” This language may appear to be high-flown and euphuistic to prosaic tastes. But Kesava Pillai expressed no sentiment which he did not feel, feel in the heart and feel along the blood. Born in a poor family Kesava Pillai rose to prominence and fame through dint of steady exertion and uncommon intelligence. The Maharaja picked him up a beardless boy, a merchant’s clerk. His service in the palace under the inspiration of a great ruler opened to him vistas of honourable ambition. It gave him facilities to cultivate the acquaintance of Dutch merchants and the officers of the English East India Company. He rose step by step in the ladder of public service. As Valiya Sarvadhikaryakkar he controlled the strings of administration to the entire satisfaction of the Maharaja. Dewan Kesava Pillai lived and moved and had his being in an atmosphere of loyalty to his king and devotion to the interests of his country. Whatever money he received from the treasury was spent with rigid economy eschewing luxuries and even comforts, the balance if any, being paid back with scrupulous attention. The Maharaja wished to grant him a desam which the minister politely declined. The Earl of Mornington conferred upon him the title of ‘Raja’ in recognition of
his proved service and in sincere appreciation of his “ability and prudence” as well as “his attachment to the interests of the Company”.  

Raja Kesava Das is known to this day as the *Valiya Dewanji*, the great Dewan.

In 963 M.E. (1788 A.D.), the Dalawah Rama Iyen died and was succeeded by one of the Sarvadhikariakars Krishnen Chempaka Ramen (a Sudra native of Travancore). This minister was not a very able man; but was selected for the post on the ground of is seniority. He was not quite equal to the duties of Dalawah and so, Samprathy Kasava Pillay who was the first officer for the post of Dalawah, was appointed Sarvadhikariakar and entrusted with the actual performance of the functions of the prime minister.

**His Appointment**

Here, we must observe that though Kasava Pillay was generally acknowledged to be the fittest man for the important post of Prime Minister, though there had been frequent opportunities for promoting him and though he was a favourite and protégé of the Maha Rajah, still His Highness would not appoint him to the post, simply because such a selection would have been an injustice to Kasava Pillay’s seniors in office and a deviation from the established rules. This grand

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principle must bear strong and clear testimony to the Maha Raja’s impartiality and high sense of justice.\textsuperscript{37}

Sarvadhi Kasava Pillay began to distinguish himself in a very remarkable manner. His attention was directed for a long time towards the strengthening of the alliance with the English East India Company, and accordingly he commenced a friendly correspondence with the several English officers in the presidencies and other places in India.\textsuperscript{38} The conditions of the commercial treaty with the Anjengo factory, which was then under the Bombay Government were punctually observed and performed.

A few months after Kasava Pillay’s appointment to the post of \textit{Sarvadhikariakar}, His Highness the Maha Rajah took another tour to the northern districts of Travancore, and while at Alwaye he was so delighted with the place principally on account of the crystal-like clearness of the water of the river at that season, that His Highness resolved upon, remaining there for some time. During His Highness’ stay at Alwaye he performed a particular Hindu ceremony called Yagom (sacrifice) at an immense expenditure. He bestowed several grants upon Brahmans of note and respectability and distributed valuable presents to educated persons who came to pay their respects to His Highness from Calicut,

\textsuperscript{37} Abraham, M.V., \textit{op.cit.}, p.28.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Ibid.}
Palghautcherry and the Cochin Rajah’s country. The expense attending His Highness’ stay at Alwaye was enormous, but Sarvadhi Kasava Pillay without the least difficulty, managed affairs so economically in regard to the necessary funds, that the Maha Rajah was quite pleased and delighted with the manner in which he performed this important duty.\(^{39}\) At this time, the Dalawah fell ill and his recovery being doubtful, the Maha Rajah contemplated appointing Kesava Pillay in his place.

This officer was a man of great ambition. He wished to have a more high sounding name than that of Dalawah, a title which he thought was too antiquated for him. On this point he consulted his English friends and also the Nabob’s officers at Madras and came to the resolution of adopting the title of *Dewan* as in the Courts of the Mogul monarchs.\(^{40}\)

His Highness returned from Alwaye to Mavalikaray and fixed his residence there for the Dasora festival of the year 964 M.E. (1789 A.D) and the post of Dalawah having then become vacant, Sarvadhi Kasava Pillay as the legitimate claimant for the office, was appointed as the first Dewan on the 8\(^{th}\) Kanni 964 (22\(^{nd}\) September 1789), the last day of the Dasora festival.\(^{41}\) Thus was the title of Dewan first introduced into

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\(^{39}\) Parameswaran Pillai, *op.cit.*, p.32.
\(^{40}\) Abraham, M.V., *op.cit.*, p.29.
\(^{41}\) Shungoonny Menon, P., *op.cit.*, pp.118-119.
Travancore. General, who urged upon him the necessity of preventing Cranganore from falling into Hyder’s hands.

These proceedings of Hyder were in the meantime communicated to the Madras Government and the Nawab of Arcot, who at once resolved to put an end to the rising power of Mysore. In the war that followed, the Travancore sepoys fought side by side with the English at Calicut, Palghat, Tinnevelly and other places. In 1782 Hyder Ali died and was succeeded by his son Tippu. The war continued for two more years in which the Travancore troops fought very bravely in the united action. They were “universally allowed to have behaved remarkably well”.42 Col. Humberstone wrote to the Rajah about the services rendered by the Travancore force: “I am well informed how steady and sincere an ally Your Majesty has ever been to the English nation. I will relate to the Governor-in Council the great friendship you have shown and the services you have rendered to the English interests in general and to the army that I commanded in particular.”43

The friendship of the Rajah and the assistance rendered by him were not forgotten at the conclusion of the Mysore peace in March 1784. The Rajah of Travancore was expressly named and included in the treaty as the Company’s friend and ally and the peace plenipotentiaries,

42 Parameswaran Pillai, op.cit., p.35.
43 Ibid.
Staunton and Hudleston assured the Rajah on behalf of the Company, “Your interests and welfare will always be considered and protected as their own”, and added, “the Company did not on this occasion forget your fidelity and the steady friendship and attachment you have uniformly shown them in every situation and under every change of fortune”.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{44} Shungoonny Menon, P., \textit{op.cit.}, p.154.