PART V

THE EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES IN KANARA
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INTRODUCTION

The advent of the Europeans in India is a most significant event in Indian History. It gave a new turn to the political, economic and cultural life of the land. This significant event took place for the first time in Kanara, when the ship of Vasco da Gama landed at Anjirdiv islands near Karwar in 1498 A.D. This accidental landing of the Portuguese adventurer opened up the highway of commerce between East and West. Behind him came a number of Portuguese sailors who settled in land and tried to build up their activities. In course of time, they gradually started to interfere in the local politics by siding with one chief against another, thus trying to strengthen their position in Kanara.
The situation gradually changed from the middle of the seventeenth century when other Europeans also entered Kanara and consequently, commercial rivalries and European interference in local politics gathered momentum. All these had a deep impact on the political, economic and religious aspects of Kanara. Towards the end of the period under study, the Portuguese were on the decline, the Dutch were on the verge of extinction and the English were consolidating their hold at Honnavar. In this part, we are tracing the policies of the Portuguese and their impact and also the activities of the Dutch, the French and the English.