CONCLUSION

The history of Democratic experiment in Madras is an illustration of the unfailing endeavour of Great Britain to help Indian Nationalist aspirations, to build Parliamentary institutions on a strong and permanent foundation. From the time of the Proclamation of Queen Victoria, Britain had initiated a change in the administration of India as earnestly perused from the days of Palmerston, Sir Charles Wood, Ripon and others. But the period from 1861 to 1935 is the most formative period in the constitutional history of India. With a definite guarantee of representation evenly distributed from 1861, the first installment of responsible government in Madras was granted in 1919 which coincided with the rise of Non Brahmin movement. In 1935, Provincial Autonomy was granted with Statutory provision for representation in the legislative and cabinet to the Depressed Classes. Thus transfer of power from British to Indian hands was not a simple political phenomenon, but it embodied fundamental and revolutionary change in society and paved the way for the mental and moral regeneration of the people.

It is very significant that the Reform Acts were preceded by a period of assurance that there was a change in the outlook of the people in general both among the high and the low before political power was granted. This was evident from the formation of the Non Brahmin Party in 1916, the significance of which was apparent from the conversation of Alexander Cardew and Montague in 1919, and the assurances given to the Depressed Classes about their fundamental rights after the communal Award, as seen in the Poona Pact, and the guarantee of representation in the Cabinet given to them by government, preliminary to the
introduction of the 1935 Act. The reorganisation of the Public Services, the
guarantee for all minorities were also directed towards this end.

The process of change was slow democratic. But they were far reaching.
If the period of Temple Entry and Prohibition in Madras could be an index to the
overall change in Society and religion, that within a period of 30 years from
1909, when representation on democratic lines was introduced on a nationwide
basis in India, Britain had brought about a point of culmination of the period of
reform, in a comparatively short period, against a background of centuries of
slavery.

The delay in the transfer of power had only guaranteed an orderly
evolution of society and peaceful transfer of power from British to Indian hands.
Britain had avoided the contingencies arising out of an abrupt transfer of power.
The critics against the delay in the transfer of responsibility as early as 1909,
should realise the great social problems that India presented, and the patience
and perseverance that British statesmanship had shown in freeing every
individual from bondage, which was necessary to guard against any social or
political upheaval in India, at any time in her history, in the days to come. Britain
had provided India with an instrument of change to constitute a government,
based on the consent of the people.

Thus Britain conducted the democratic experiment with great caution,
skill, and dexterity and it had proved to be one of the greatest democratic
experiments that the world had ever seen. But it was doubtful whether India
stood the test of time. The great schism in the congress between the Extremists
and Moderates, the rise of the Non Brahmin movement in Madras, and the superhuman task of Gandhiji after the communal Award for uplifting the Harijans and the tomb intended for Gandhiji in Poona in 1934 by the Sanatanists, who indulged in numerous incivilities against him indicate the social backwardness of the Hindu society. How political progress towards the realisation of full fledged democratic institution and the struggle to gain responsible government at an early stage, had been thwarted by internal divisions in the nationalist camp itself, should be a valuable lesson to India and the need for great changes to make India pise to the full stature of a civilised nation.

Thus, if Britain introduced Self Government and Responsible Government by slow and successive reforms, it was the Hindu society which was responsible for it. But it was welcome that the social structure had shown signs of destruction and reorganisation, preliminary to a society based on equality. The deflection given to the Indian Nationalist struggle had only helped the growth of a new social order which would receive well, and preserve unfailingly the gift of freedom and democracy.

Britain, ever since the days of Dyarchy, had been constantly pointing out, to the necessity of forming political, free from communal sentiments. But chess aspirations had been perpetually defeated. If the early congress was criticised as a platform for educated classes, the Justice party in Madras was the forum for the Non Brahmins. There was also the Depressed class Federation which became the spokesman of the Harijans. It was true that the Muslims largely depended on separated organisations to represent their interest. It is, however, heartening that
the emancipation of the Depressed Classes had opened the eyes of the Congress to accommodate them in their fold. In fact, this revolutionary change in the reorganisation of the congress was a compelling necessity brought about by the Reform Act of 1935, the preliminaries being done under the great exigencies of dyarchy. It is evident that congress should feel externally thankful to the civilising influence of British administration, which had inevitably forced the change on it, for the good and the country and the congress.

There had been always a sense of defeatism which generally manifested in implementing the loftier aims of British statesman in their cause to advance parliamentary institutions in India. The intentions of Ripon and his difficulties to develop local self government from 1882, point out, the obstructions that the caste structure presented. The growth of the Press, and public opinion tell the same story of communal wrangling. Native associations remained the bulwark of casteism, and hindered, rather than helped an united front in the nationalist struggle. These contingencies had out success all political organisations and free institutions that Britain wanted to implant in India.

The period under review may be called a period of definition and reorganisation in the constitutional history of Madras. It anticipated all the changes that were to come forth in the history of Madras and anticipated in the history of India in general. In them, the glimpses of an arrangement that accrued to a free country could as sad. Assurances were given for representation of important minorities in the cabinet, which was taken as a model after
independence. It appears that the idea of social justice had gained strength, for which the government and the justice party had been trying so ardently.

Assurances were given for linguistic states and it was only a question of time and finance for reorganisation. However, the forces at work for linguistic state were kept in check, but it was a foregone conclusion. It should be understood that the demand for separate state might appear to be democratic, but the reasons that precipitated such demands should be traced to the denial of representation in the services to the linguistic group by the higher castes in Madras. Universities were reorganized and new ones started on a linguistics basis.

The inception of the Public Service Commission in Madras, the clear cut definition of the system of representation to the various communities, reservation to the Scheduled castes and the backward classes were real safeguards against the violation of the principle of representation. The welfare of the Depressed Classes and the sympathetic attitude of the Government to salvage even the criminal tribes indicated the beginning of the work of redeeming the society. The introduction of prohibition in 1937 in the district of Salem on an experimental basis had been proceeded by propaganda by Government, and an experiment in Classes had coincided with the concept of their welfare and it was easy for the congress to carry out the policy, which the Government had already enunciated.

Fundamentally the idea of social justice had grown from strength to strength and it had become the inviolable doctriss for the future. Whatever might have been the temporary advantages that the higher classes might have enjoyed in
the transitional period, to the exclusion of the lower classes, the prosperity of the latter was assured. The tendency was towards a welfare state, and the concept of the greatest happiness of the greatest number to her people were implanted in the field of administration.

Thus, as a preliminary to the advent of the Act of 1935, every aspect of administration was almost streamlined, the high ideals which should motivate the different aspects of the policies of the Government were defined, after an elaborate discussion inside and outside the legislature. The question of temple entry itself had been discussed, though not in the progressive way, as it ought to have been, which conclusively proved that the society in the thirties was not quite fit for independence. However, before the passing of the act, Parliament had been assured of the successful implementation of the democratic principles embodied in the reforms. The idea of political, social and religious justice had been the forerunner of the great political changes of provincial Autonomy. These tremendous changes adumbrated in India, only reminds us of the memorable and inspiring remarks of Edmund Burks, on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, "That the commons will not have the melancholy and the unsocial glory of having acted a right part in an imperfect work. What the greatest inquest of the nation has begun, its highest tribunal will accomplish. Justice will be done to India. Justice was done to all and perfection was aimed at in social reorganisation, with an achievement which would speak eternally for British justice. There words echo and re-echo in the annals of Indian History. The historic words of Burks are more apt in the context of the transfer of responsibility, with ultimate freedom and democracy. Which had already taken

Nationalism and Patriotism demands a casteless society. It is evident that individual or group victimisation would disappear only in a reformed society. By the abolition of untouchability, the lowest class has been emancipated, no doubt and placed on an equality with others. The justice party which had placed before the public as the fusion of all castes as one of the main principles of the party had itself fallen a victim to caste faude. Democracy in India would remain in its experimental stage till the whole community is well organised and knit together by the fusion of all castes.

It was evident that with the approach of British Rule, Caste system was showing signs of losing its rigidity and traditional conservative outlook. British Rule in India did not recognise caste system as it was prevalent in the Hindu Society; however, it only meant that the general legal sanction behind the Varna system had been withdrawn. But the Varna system had a religious sanction.\(^1\) Whatever might have been the strict rules that governed caste and caste organisations, the modern educational facilities to all Communities, the impact of Science and Technology and industrial advancement, had made a spectacular effect in the general thinking of the society. Modern civilisation had brought about favourable circumstances for free mixing of people in public places, restaurants, theatres, industrial concerns, schools and colleges. Assessing the modern trend, Professor A.L. Basham, an Orient list of repute in the university of London and Member of the Executive committee of the congress of orient lists
and chairman of the section on Indian History and culture, rightly said the caste system, “was not wholly rigid. It had never worked in practice though it provided the framework of the Indian social system. He noticed that the system was already breaking down” under the impact of Modern life. However in industrial concerns caste sympathy in all its intensity continued unabated.

The only way for the abolition of caste lies in the propagation of the freedom of the individual to choose their partners in life and thus promote inter-caste marriages. As long as men and women are restricted in the free exercise of their rights, to choose their partners, social rigidities would continue. It is the conventional system of caste marriages which imposes severest restrictions on the freedom of the individual, to extend his thoughts, his sympathies, his affections beyond the domain of caste. It has been said that caste is mainly a matter relating to marriage, and it is certainly true that there is nothing to which the caste pays such attention as the maintenance of its marriage customs. The system of dowry, the arbitrary decision of the parents in the selection of the brides or the bridegrooms, in many cases, even without the knowledge of the boy or girl, which had worked as a tyrannising force in the creation of many unhappy families which accounts for the clannishness in every family, and the absence of a national consciousness. It arrests the instincts for a larger society. Man and women fall a victim to an evil, for which they were in no way responsible. The unhappiness in family life, is one of the chief reasons for the gloomy prognotions in Indian National life. Endogamous marriages are pillars of Caste system. With disappearance of endogamy, its formidable pillar, the edifice of caste would collapse. Imposing an arbitrary will on the people, the system had
erected an unnatural fortress for human confinement. As Mr. Gokhale said, where is work enough for the most enthusiastic lover of this country. On every side, whichever way we turn, only one sight meets the eye; that of work to be done; and only one cry is heard, that there are but few faithful workers. The elevation of the depressed classes who have to be brought up to the level of the rest of the people, universal education (co-education), co-operation, improvement of economic condition of the peasantry, higher education of women, spread of industrial and technical education, and building up the industrial strength, promotion of closer relation between the different communities; these are some of the tasks which life in front of the people and each one of them needs a whole army of devoted missionaries. These are prophetic words which need prompt adherence. In view of the economic position of the backward classes, land reform and housing should attain priority. Added to these, the temptations of dowry and jewelleries should be reduced to an absolute minimum. Money should be diverted for the industrialisation of the country. India is the great sink and there had been a heavy investment on gold and precious stones while the nation suffer for want of capital. These are essential changes, which should precede any spectacular change in the outlook of the people. Naturally, under such circumstances it would be much easier and as professor A.L. Basham had rightly concluded, that caste might vanish completely in a generation or two if India allowed more meetings between here men and women and the practice of arranged marriages were out.

Caste barriers had destroyed the congenial atmosphere for free play and love and carried the society to the greatest degradation unparalleled in the history
of the world. Caste is the narrow compass beyond which the imagination of the Hindu mind seldom extended. Thus it had destroyed his natural genius, and imprisoned his mind. Wherever he went, he was called upon to revert back into the fold of his caste. He is forced to desert the larger society, to forego the vast opportunities opened before him; the splendid chances of meeting similar minds, which would have helped him to give an impetus to his creative thoughts, to be benefitted by a happy wedded life, and above all, to make him wars of the need of an integrated national life. A Hindu is narrow, stunted and stupefied. Abolition of caste alone would help, to scale down the barriers in Hindu society, and bridge the linguistic and religious barriers which engulf the people, and which had barred communication and accessibility to national life.

To mould a true democrat with individual freedom unfettered and to constitute a society based on equality, self-respect and above all a society based on love, it is absolutely essential to plan a new social order. It is on this solid foundation of a disciplined and well-knit society, a democratic superstructure could be erected on a lasting foundation. A society based on mutual respect would be any day better than a society based on hatred. The Parliamentary institutions that had come to stay in India, should be strengthen; and to Invigorate the growth of these institutions, it is unavoidable to eradicate the social inconsistencies, that had presented a poignant spectacle in the days of the Reforms, before India could become the torch bearer of Freedom and Democracy throughout the world. Charity begins at home.

Britain had ruled India to made her free, and if she could free herself from the bondage of those causes, which were responsible for her slavery, she could
live true to the great ideals for which she had struggled in here march towards independence. Lincoln had said, no country on earth had any right to rule over another, however weak or ignorant she might be. But it should be said, that no country had any right to rule over India than Britain, which had taught her the value of freedom, and had made it impossible for any other power on earth which could ever make her bound again. Her people are free and the country is free. It is so enlightening, that British statesmanship had testified to the high ideals for which great Reformers like Bentinck had contributed and who, while justifying the abolition of Sati, said “they will see that there can be no inconsistency in the way of the Providence, that to the command received as divine by all races of men, no innocent blood shall be split, there can be no exception; and when they shall have been convinced of the error of this first and most criminal of their customs, may it not be hoped, that others, which stand in the way of their improvement, may likewise pass away, and that, thus emancipated from those chains and shackles upon their minds and actions, they may no longer continue; as they have done, the slave of every foreign conqueror, but that they may assume their first places among the great families of mankind.

The history Democratic Experiment in Madras State is an unending story of an onward march of a nation towards political liberation, with a great emphasis on the perpetual social and religious emancipation of the people; to make the people lestipetend become partners among the great families of mankind.

It is unfortunate that the Muslims chose a separate state for them. The social ostracism, that the Muslims suffered had been the greatest humiliating
factor that estranged the religious, social and political sentiments of the Muslims. If Non-Brahmins thought of Dravidastan, it was not surprising that the Muslims preferred Pakistan. The selfishness for office, the aim of the high castes for Swaraj for themselves was factors that never created a trust in the Muslims. But for the anomalies in the social and religious life of the Hindus, India’s Political History would have run on different lines. Unity of the sub-continent lies in mending the social wrongs, and that day would be the dawn of understanding among all sections of the people. These events should open the yeas of every lover of this country to rise to the occasion to cement the relationship among all communities. One need not be platonic to create unity among the people, but there must be the need of love, even if not the bond of blood.

However, it was evident, that congress with its traditional haste created one of the greatest crisis, which would have been well avoided. According to Lord Atlee, if India had consented to a Constituent Assembly as per the proposals of Sir Stafford Cripps, partition would have been avoided. From the social evolution, from the days of the Morley-Minto Reforms to Provincial autonomy, it appears, that the next stage under British rule ought to have been the adoption of a technique to reduce caste rigidities to an absolute minimum and a separate state for Muslims would not have orison,. In that case, India would have been free after Independence, from the greatest destroyer of her freedom, namely her caste system. It is self evident, that India can never command the same respect among the Nations of the World, as long as per people are, as they were, discriminated against each other, even socially.