Socio Political Scenario of Madras Presidency Between 1920 - 1932 A.D.
CHAPTER - II

SOCIO POLITICAL SCENARIO OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY BETWEEN 1920 - 1932 A.D.

The condition of Madras Presidency during 1920 was at a degenerate condition which was once noted for its civilised perfect features but had fallen into the deep pit of foreign barbarism. The excellent administration of the Tamil Kings could not be compared with any other form of administration as it was so excellent and beneficial to the mass. The supreme power, the king sympathized with their people and they in turn added divine regard and respect. This affection and integration between the rule and the ruled very often bring to the recollection of the ancient glory of the Tamil country. The ancient village organisation in the country demonstrated the excellence of a republican form of Government. All these system shattered because of the intrusion of foreign rule\(^1\). The ancient Indian history had its own unforgettable glory. The Muslim conquest of India left a permanent impression on the stages of history and it was one of the epoch making episode since the Aryans came to India during the medieval period which witnessed Muslims, Turks, Pathons, Afghans, Nayaks, Mugsals and soon.\(^2\) From the beginning of the fifteenth century European

\(^1\) "Sampad Abhyudaya", NNR., 19 December 1920, P.1481.

nations sought a sea route to India. The trouble of India started when Vasco da Gama found a sea-route in 1498 AD and made a successful voyage to India by this sea-route and landed firmly at Calicut in May 1491 AD.

In the first place it opened the gates of India to European traders. British East India Company was formed in 1600 AD and similar companies were formed by Dutch, the Danes and the French respectively in 1602 AD, 1616 AD and 1664 AD. There was a great rivalry among the traders. The British East India Company became victorious by abolishing the power of Dutch, Spanish, Danes and French companies and established its power in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa by acquiring the "Diwani Right".

FORMATION OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY

By 1800 AD the British had acquired most of what was to be constituted as Madras Presidency. It is really pleasing to know how this Madras Presidency was named by British. The area known as the Madras Presidency during the British rule was a vast land, stretching from cape Comorin in the South to

Majumdar, R.C. & Chopra, P.N. "Main currents of Indian History", New Delhi, 1996, P.129.


Vishakapatnam in the North and from the East to the West coast of Peninsula. It was also a multilingual unit covering the whole of the present Tamil Nadu, a considerable portion of the present Andhra Pradesh, Malabar area, the present Kerala state and a part of present Karnataka state.8

Madras is the first city of South India and capital of British India, a historic land of culture was surprisingly, a comparatively new city. It owes its genesis to Andrew Cogan and Francis Day of the East India Company, two determined men who despite their supervisor's pessimism, leased the site of Fort Saint George in the seventeenth century from the local Nayaks who were appointed as governors at Poonamallee and founded a "factory" that was to grow into the seat of British power on the coromandal coast.9 Francis Day was the member of the Masulipatnam Council and chief of the Armegan factory and Andrew Cogan. The territory of Venkatagiri Zamindar was adjacent to the factory that the place was not convenient for the inland trade in piece goods. The Armegan factory was an ideal place for trade for the art of painting calicoes to a high perfection which had a great demand in Europe, Burma and Siam.10

Fort Saint George was formed in 1639 A.D. by Francis Day. In 1639 there was a proposal for the removal of Armegan factory to South of the Dutch settlement, Pulicat. So it was the idea of Francis Day, who was the factor (agent incharge) of John companies dilapidated "shop" at Armegan which was situated at

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9 Muthiah, S. "Madras discovered", New Delhi, P 2
Durgarayapatnam. Some way to the north of that desolate sandy strip land was the site he had chosen for his new "factory". Beri Thimmanna, the dubash of Nayak was the interpreter to English Officials. It was with the help of Beri Thimmanna, Francis Day finalised terms with the local powers and got the grant. The result of which was the establishment of an industry in Madras¹¹. Francis Day made an agreement with the local Nayak called DAMARLA VENKATADRI NAYUDU by which the English were to be allowed a settlement at the place which is now Madras. The term Madras by which the place has always been designed by Europeans is of doubtful origin. The most generally accepted derivation is from Madrasa College. The routine name "Chennai Pattanam" is generally connected with the name "Chennappa of Damarla, the father of Venkatagiri Nayak"². 

Between the two main gates of Fort Saint George today is walled up portion where once was the main sea gate, the only entrance to Fort. On the west gate was the settlement where Francis Day proceeded to the construction of a fortress which was soon surrounded by a town. This site, a mere strip of land was granted just south of a tiny village that was called even then Madras Patnam. Here lived few fisher families and two capuchin fathers from France. A catholic named Madarasan whose banana grove was the chosen site for the Fort. It was then the interpreter Beri Thimmanna stepped in and promised to get the factory called Madarasan Patnam. Madarasan was no doubt thrilled by


Ibid., P.3.
an idea of being remembered by positively, but the official grant had to be made by the Damarla brothers, the local Nayaks of the Raja Chandragiri of Vijayanagar kingdom and they wanted the new settlement named Chennapatnam after their father Chennappa Nayak. So there was a kuppam called Madraspatnam, a fort possibly called Madrasapatnam and its settlement called Chennapatnam, which was colonised by imported weavers. In time all merged into the city known as "Madras" to most of the world and as "Chennai" to Tamil Purists.¹³

RESTORATION OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY TO BRITISH

Francis Day proceeded to the construction of a fortress which was soon surrounded by a town and named as "Fort Saint George". In the middle of seventeenth century the settlers in the new town, a small island formed by two branches of the river cooum, had to meet uneasy situation. This new town was 400 yards long and about 100 yards wide and it could be easily rendered secure against the predatory attacks of nature horsemen.¹⁴ The advance of Muhammadan king of Golconda into the peninsula and frequent invasion of Marathas obstructed the business operation of the British. The Chandragiri Raja was conquered in 1646 A.D. by the Muhammadan of Golconda. His officer Neknamkhan, the Nawab commanded the places surrounding Madras and he was satisfied with timely rent. Presents and fines were exacted and occasionally


an embargo was laid upon goods and supplies going to Madras. For the first
twelve years it was subordinate to the Presidency of Bantam in Java but in 1652
A.D. Fort Saint George was raised to the rank of a separate presidency
independent of Bantam and Aaron Baker became the first governor. From this
time till 1748 AD until the peace treaty of Aix-la-Chaplee in between the English
and French, there prevailed always disputes and struggles for supremacy. But
the peace Treaty in 1748 A.D. made many new arrangements in India. And at
the end of 1749 A.D. Madras Presidency was restored to English.

The military History of Madras Presidency came to an end with the treaty
of 1799 AD. By July 1801 AD Azim-ul-Daula of Mughal resigned his power and
handed over the administration into the hands of the British retaining the
titular power and dignity and consented merely by receiving a liberal
stipend as pension. The effect of this treaty was to bring under the British the
whole of Northern circars to Cape Comerin with the exception of French settle-
ment at pondicherry, Karaikal and Danish at Tranqubar.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES**

The present Madras Presidency or the Presidency of Fort Saint George
occupied the Southern portion of the peninsula from latitude 20° 18' on the
eastern coast and latitude 11° on the western coast to Cape Comarine in latitude

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Ibid., P. 28.

Ibid.

Ibid.
8° 4' the longitude range from 74° 9' to 85° 15'. The extreme length of the Presidency from North East to South west was about 950 miles and its extreme breadth about 450 miles.\(^{18}\) The Presidency occupied a total area of 1,42,260 square miles excluding the area occupied by the five native states namely sandur, Banganapalle, Pudukottai, Cochin and Travancore.\(^{19}\) The Eastern boundary of the Presidency was the bay of Bengal. The western boundary was Cochin and Travancore states and the Arabian sea. The Mysore state was under the dominations of Nizam of Hydrabad, Bombay Presidency and the central provinces formed the northern boundary of the Presidency. It comprised of twenty seven districts including Madras city. The Tamil districts constituted one third of the land area.\(^{20}\) It contained a population of 42,794,155.\(^{21}\) As per the economic condition, the Presidency was divided into seven clear distinct geophysical regions. The regions around Cauveri, Krishna and Godavari were rich in rice production.\(^{22}\)

From the Krishna and Godavai hills, south and west through the ceded Districts (Ananthapur, Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah) and hinterland Tamilnad (North and South Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichinopolyand Tirnelveli Districts) stretched a regime gave way to cattle breeding on higher

\(^{18}\) Annual report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, Madras, 1923, P.1.

\(^{19}\) Annual report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, Madras, 1921-22, P.2.


\(^{21}\) Ibid., Madras, 1921.

ground and to rice cultivation along the banks of occasional rivers and tank was mainly under system of dry cultivation. Cambu, Cholam and ragi were the main products. The most usual crops were cotton and groundnuts. There hill ranges that break the plains and plateau in the north east and south west of the Presidency. Europeans were attracted by the hilly regions of Nilgiris and Palnad were rich in tea and coffee estates. Ganjam, Vizagapatnam and Godavari Districts were inhabited by tribes. They had their own way of cultivation. In the extreme south west of province lay the coastal strip of Malabar. It was rich in rice and coconut cultivation. The many regional economies of Madras, with their own settlement Patterns, Crops, marketing arrangements, and agricultural seasons naturally produced a variety of regional, social and political structures.

**POLITICAL CONDITION**

Since time immemorial India had trade relations with western countries and had commercial ties with Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Rome. India was famous for its craftsmanship and artisan. This commercial ties tied up Indian administration in hands of British East India Company rule. India underwent a series of hurdle under the despotism of British which they beleived as best suited for India. Robert Clive was the Chief architect of British domination and they divided the acquired territories into three Presidencies viz. Madras, Bombay and Calcutta under different governor General's rule after the

*"Annual reports on the Administration of the Madras Presidency", Madras, 1920.*

consolidation of their extended boundaries. Indians suffered under the colonial rule of the English East India Company which completely changed Indian political system. This system by colonial rule brought a vast change in political, social, economic and cultural life of the people in India which generated powerful and firm forces for the liberation of the country. This resulted into the outbreak of the first war of Independence in 1857 A.D. as Sepoy Mutiny which paved the way for the end of Company rule in 1858 A.D.

The bitterness and enslavement of the people, the loss of political freedom and the resentment over the despotic rule of the East India Company necessitated the British government to change administrative pattern and new mode of administration was introduced.

People of India first found it very difficult to adjust with the colonial rule. They were deprived of their freedom in their own country. The economic impact was most ruinous. The firm belief of British in their imperialism in India was changed when the spirit of nationalism in India kindled the minds of Indians. The socioreligious movement of Rajaram Mohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswathi, Kesav Chandrasen and Swami Vivekanda and westernised education brought a radical change in the history of constitution of India when Indian National

Congress had been started in 1885 AD to secure political reforms and representation of Indians in the enlarged legislative council. The first blow to the supremacy of British rule started in the victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 AD. The revolutionary stirrings in China, the risings of young Turks in 1908-09 AD and the Persian liberal movement encouraged radical agitation in India. The partition of Bengal in 1905 AD exposed the policy of "Divide and Rule" of British. This resulted into the Boycott-cum-Swadeshi movement and the formation of Muslim League in 1906 AD. The younger Nationalists began to develop a Faust like mood. The rift between Gokhalae and Tilak made a split in the Congress session in 1907 AD at Surat. This rupture gave rise to the enactment of "The Sedition Meetings Act in 1911AD which gave arbitrary powers to the police to prevent the holding of public meetings. This in turn increased the activities of terrorists. In April 1908 A.D. Moderates took the lead in drafting the of constitution. The revolutionary minded youth became very violent and indulged in secret organisations and started bomb factories. At last every nook and corner of India was filled with unrest and resentment. In fact an era of mass politics began.


When agitation in favour of Swaraj, Boycott and Swadeshi movements were severe in the north, the south also had its own impact. The response of Madras Presidency especially Tamilnadu to the Swadeshi movement was marvelous and wonderful. The Tilak of South India, V.O. Chidambaram, a lawyer from Tuticorin started a Indian Steam Navigation Company to compete with Britishers boldly. He was assisted by Subramania Siva to challenge the British monopoly. Kavi Subramania Bharathi appealed through his inspiring poems. A single terrorism in Madras was the shooting of Ashe, the Collector of Tinnevelly by Vanchi Aiyar in a railway carriage at Maniyachi Junction for his action to crush the Swadeshi movement. In 1911 when Bengal was annulled the terrorism disappeared from the political field. But the instinct of hatred began more vigorous which resulted into reformatory activities on British administration.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF BRITISH

A scheme of administrative improvement had been started to secure the support of moderate by the British with the view to strengthen their power. To secure the interests of minorities like the Muslims to prevent the undue predominance of any one class reform measure were taken in the constitution

Gangadaran, K.K. "Indian consciousness, growth and development", New Delhi, 1972, P.73.


of the Indian administration.46 The result was Minto-Morley Reform Act of 1909 AD which gave a separate electorate for Muslims.47 This act also made provision for the appointment of an Indian member to the Viceroy's executive council of both Bombay and Madras Presidencies.42 This measure was the first open attack on the monopoly of the civil services by British43. S.P. Sinha was the first Indian who was appointed as a fifth member to the Viceroy's executive council and Maharaja of Bobbili was appointed to the Madras Governor's executive council as per the act of 1909 AD.

When the memorandum for the communal representation was given by Muslim under Agakhan, Lord Minto was over anxious to please the Muslims and Lord Morley though personally hesitated to consent with the demands of the Muslims, had to submit to the Viceroy's view in the interest of British empire.44 This led Muslims to keep a little distance away from the congress and Hindus. Thus started the communal hostility between Hindus and Muslims. This intensified the hatred and it never ended until the partition of the country in 1947 AD as India and Pakistan.45

This religious animosity between the two communities failed to unify the

Speech of Mr. Stokes, "Madras Legislature council proceedings", 1909, Para 789, P.57.


country. It gave room for other communities like Sikhs in Punjab for their separate communal representation. 46 This sowed the seeds in the non-brahmin community in Madras Presidency for their representation in the administration. 47 The special feature of this act was it increased the number of members of the executive council of Madras and Bombay. It gave right to discuss matters of public interest. The Act of 1909 was a compromise between bureaucracy and democracy. This act gave Indians only influence in the legislative council and not power. Indians were not given appointment to the upper posts. So it provoked revolutionaries and awakened the Indians educated unemployed youth of India. 48

URGE TO REFORM THE ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA

First World War broke out in 1914 AD which made a turning point in the administration of India. Lord Hardinge was the governor general and Lord Petland was the governor of Madras. 49 Indians wanted to support British in the hour of their distress during the war because of Lord Hardinge who won the sympathy of Indians. Indians extended their help hoping to get self form of government after the end of war but in vain. They were not given dominious status after the end of war as promised by British which culminated into severe

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49 Ibid., P 155.
revolutionary actions and home rule movement for self-government of India as a reward for their rule in the war field.\textsuperscript{50}

The political riots and unrest developed in all parts of India had its own impact. The year 1916 saw the beginning of a new home rule agitation. It was on 3rd September 1916 A.D. Annie Besant started the Home Rule League at Gokhale Hall, Madras\textsuperscript{51} Annie Besant along with Tilak inspired Indians for their Home Rule. This momentum gained strength because it propagated national education, Swadeshi and self-government. Partial support was given to this movement especially in Madras. But no one could deny that Madras had been the Centre for Home Rule agitation.\textsuperscript{52} It was realised that a contented India would be a far greater asset to Great Britain than a disappointed and discontented nation.\textsuperscript{53} Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India had made a declaration on 20th August 1917 which was to harden and exaggerate the differences in the politics of Madras Presidency. This remarkable pronouncement of Montagu was made to the development of India on self-governing rule.\textsuperscript{54} The Muslims once disunited with congress now gave their full co-operation to Hindus by forming congress League scheme to oppose British

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50} Krishnaswamy, S. Op.cit., P.71.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Irshick, E. F. Op.cit., P.35.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Ibid., P.54.
\item \textsuperscript{53} "Thoughts of Home Ruler", Official congress report, 1890, P.69.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Venkatarangasiah, M., "The development of Local Boards in the Madras Presidency", Bombay, 1938, P.60.
\end{itemize}
administration. The same political bitterness against Britishers were formulated among Hindus and Muslims. To add fire to this situation Rowlatt Act was passed which suppressed the Indian independence. Therefore the year 1918 A.D. witnessed much violence and the protest and opposition of Hindus against the Bill which strangled the elementary rights of the people. The fire of agitation filled the air of India particularly among the English educated youths. So the British announced the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Act in 1919. This act proposed to increase the number of Indians in every branch of the administration. It aimed at the transference of control in certain departments of administration to ministers selected by the governor from among the leaders commanding a majority in the elected portion of the legislature.

In this critical juncture Mahatma Ghandhi entered politics with full faith on British administration. The heart burning incident of Jallianwala Bagh massacre, at Amritsar on April 1919 followed by Marital Law turned him against British and influenced him to launch non-co-operation movement. Though the Madras Presidency was not much affected by this movement as in the north it had its own consequences in the Presidency. It was received with mixed feelings in Madras. V.S.Srinivasa Sastri, Satyamoorthy and Rangasamy Iyengar felt that if the non-co-operation movement was accepted it would led the

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country to a calamitous course.\textsuperscript{60} Ghandhi also advocated Khilafat agitation to give effect to the Muslim's representation. Ghandhi's political tactics had a stream lined feeling among the leaders of the Madras Presidency.\textsuperscript{61} This intensified the formation of new administration in the Madras Presidency. As per the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform election was conducted to the new council in 1920 A.D. in all Presidencies. This marked a new era in the Indian legislation particularly in Madras because majority of the poll was won by the non-brahmin party, since the congress boycotted the election as the policy of non-co-operation. The result of the election was the decisive victory of the new Justice Party formulated by the non-brahmin and their ministry was eventually formed of by three non-brahmins.\textsuperscript{62} The newspaper Justice, Dravidian and Andhra patrika explained the aims and goals of the Justice Party. It was for the first time it represented the forty million non-brahmin castes of the Presidency which paid the bulk of taxes to the provincial government as they were landlords, Zamindars and agriculturists.\textsuperscript{63} The burning impulse of hatred and jealousy experienced by non-brahmins gave a success in the election. The brahmin's monopoly had a set back. New system of administration started in the provinces from 1920 by Justice Party as a true representative of the people, as the leaders of the party were selfless, practical and loyal men devoted mainly to the betterment of the people.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{60} "The Indian Review", Madras, Vol I, 21 January 1920, P.3.

\textsuperscript{61}irschick, F. Op.cit., P.171


\textsuperscript{64} "The Mail", NNR, 2 July 1917, P.4.
THE NUCLEUS OF SOCIAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

The year 1920 was a remarkable year in the administrative history of India especially in the Madras Presidency because it marked a turning point in the administration which showed much interest in the improvement of the public welfare. The seed for the new form of administration was sown on the ground when Annie Besant entered India in 1898 A.D. She laid the foundation for the political reforms by boldly clashed with the British authorities in Madras and created an unforgettable legendary for the establishment of Home Rule. The Home Rule she founded awakened the political consciousness of the people. Annie Besant became the champion of Home Rule for India and this aroused serious social conflict and political dispute. Many attempts to revise the Hinduism were sponsored in Madras City with the help of Hindu Sabhas and many other revivalistic organisations. This activities increased the awareness of non-brahmin caste Hindus on their social and political position in the society. Finally it led to the formation of Indianised administration in the Madras Presidency.

In the beginning of the twentieth century the difference between Brahmin and non-brahmin was very much prevalent not only in religion but also in politics and in the Government employment. Edwin Montagu commented on this division of brahmins and non-brahmins before he announced the legislative


Subbha Rao, "Revised Memories", Madras, 1933, PP.184-201.
reform when he visited Madras. Every one would be proud of being an Indian if he was aware of himself as a true citizen of India was the motto of self government. Annie Besant was able to bring to light the art of self government that was practiced by Indians many centuries in the villages which followed the Panchayat system of indigenous local governemnt. With the help of National Congress, Annie Besant was able to implement in the mind of people the urge for self government as a necessity at the period of British Rule in India at the opportune and psychological moment. It was started to educate the people politically. The home rule league had its impact. The congress also carried on a programme of Continuous work, both educative and propagandist. Gokhalae, C.P.Ramasamy Iyer, A.Rangasamy Iyengar, kasturi Ranga Iyengar and Dr.Varadharajulu Naidu supported her for Home-Rule league and Montford Report admitted latter "a new sense of self-esteem and feeling of profound pride".

The people in Madras city were very much excited on knowing the principle of self government. People began to realise the principle of liberalism from the clutches of despotism. They thought that the language bound

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50 "Madras Mail", NNR., Madras., 30 July 1913, P.420.
70 "Madras Mail", 17 November 1913, P.526.
72 "New India", NNR., Madras, 11 October 1916, P.638.
74 Annie Besant, "The future of Indian Politics", Madras, 1922, P.125.
communities were to be outlined into a single race and accorded all these accessories of communal and political institutions which illustrated the feeling of unity for the first time. This political agitation had its own implications not only for linguistic groups but also for caste groups which sought a more substantial place in the political, educational, and administrative framework of the Madras Presidency. Pattabhi Sittaramayya felt that the day was nearing to realise the responsibility associated with the full work of administration. The feelings of the Brahmins vs the unholy non-brahmins demoralised the vast majority of Indians. The division between Brahmin and non-brahmin was offensive to some people including many Brahmins.

The brahmins were responsible for the development of caste system. They were very stubborn in maintaining their position in the society and prevented lower caste from rising in status. As a result of Brahmin dominance, other classes were becoming unfit to accept political responsibility. All the important position were occupied by Brahmin. Even the Englishmen began to wary of the Brahmin though they fully depended on them for their status in Indian society. Brahmins were of the opinion that they were the custodian of all sorts of intellectual culture. Bur the very social condition which gave the Brahmins this

Standing committee of Andhra Conference, "The Reorganisation of Indian Provinces", Commonweal, Madras, 6 October 1916, P.53.

"For and against the Andhra Province", Masulipatnam, 1913, P.53.


Srinivasa Rao, "Crisis in India", Madras, 1911, P.54.

advantage had Pari Passu handicapped them in their ability and desire to absorb democreadive ideas on social matters. Non Brahmins were aware of their condition in society and wanted to have an organisation to represent their own interests against the popular minority high class. This fear and feeling culminated in the foundation of a non brahmin party to overwhelm and prove equivalent to brahmin in the society. The brahmin vs non brahmin hatred was found supreme in every taluk.

THE VICTORY OF THE JUSTICE PARTY

The non brahmins who formed the bulk of Indian population now realised the dominance of the minority population of Brahmins. Madras Dravidian Association was formed in 1912 A.D. C.Natesa Mudaliar, medical student started vigorously to organise an association for non brahmins. He began gathering funds for the establishment of a hostel in Madras city for non brahmin youth who desired to receive their education from the schools and colleges in this city. The city of Madras showed its interest in the non brahmin organisations. The two important figures of the Madras city Dr.T.M.Nair and P.Thiagaraja Chetti joined hands with Natesa Mudaliar to form a non brahmin party at the Victoria Public Hall in Madras city on 20th November 1916 A.D. To promote the political interests of the non brahmin caste Hindus. The South Indian Liberal Federation was formed in 1916 which termed as Justice Party. Some non

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"Madras Mail", NNR. 23 September 1916, P.753.

"New India", NNR., Madras, 1 June 1916, P.915.

brahmin groups such as Chettis, Komatis, Mudaliars, Vellalas and Balija Naidus were progressed rapidly under this party.\textsuperscript{85}

It was at this time Edwin Mantogu announced his declaration for the increased association of Indians in every department of administration.\textsuperscript{86} Before Justice Party occupied a significant place in the Madras Legislature council, we have to mention the first Reform Act of Montogu-Chelmsford in 1919AD. The impact of first World war, formation of Congress League scheme and the urge of Indians to be rewarded for their warline services made Montogu to announce his declaration on behalf of the British government which emphasised the British Policy in India in securing the association of indians in every branch of administration.\textsuperscript{87}

Montagu realised that the blood of innocent Indian had been shed for the benefit of others and were used as nails to garland the victory. It was clearly understood that if the British imperialism was to be continued India would remain fertile for political agitation to achieve their political status\textsuperscript{88}. British felt that a discontented India would be a real problem and obstacle to the wheel of progress. If reconciliation was not sought for the purpose of establishing real peace, India might became the root cause of a future war. It was felt that Happy India would spread the glory of British and a discontented India would assuredly

\textit{Ibid.}


"\textit{The Home rule Demand}”, Memoranda presented by the Home Rule League to his Excellancy the Viceroy and the secretary of State, Common weal office, Madras, 1917, P.10.

"\textit{Kanthirava}”, NNR., Mangalore, 30 March 1920, PP.403-404.
be a source of disgrace and endless trouble. Moreover the British government wanted to get the support of Indians for their stability in India. That is why this reform was announced. The powerful brahmin who enjoyed the profit and advantage in the British government started loosing their hold due to the emergence of non brahmins and brahmin totally had a set back which was obviously shown in the election held in the year 1920.\textsuperscript{99} The disorganised masses of non brahmin caste Hindus achieved a reserved place in the 1920 Legislature council in the Presidency of Madras because of their hard and task labour under Justice Party. This party assumed its office when the dispute between brahmins and non brahmins were intensified. But any how this party paved the way for the decline of brahmin dominance in the political as well as in the educational field. This Justice Party tried its level best to maintain peace and prosperity of the Madras Presidency by its various welfare measure in their administration\textsuperscript{100}. For the first time in the history of India, the lower castes of Madras have asserted themselves against the intellectual oligarchy of the upper and have seized political power in their own hand\textsuperscript{101}. The victory of the Justice Party in the Madras Presidency changed the political and social status from 1920 onwards. It was because of the herculean campaign of the builders of the party like Thiagaraya Chetty and T.N.Nair, it met with victory. The boycott of election by the congress was also responsible for its success\textsuperscript{102}. The reservation of the seats to the non brahmin Hindus served as a lever to secure for them something like a decent representation in the local Legislative council\textsuperscript{103}. This in fact improved the society to a desirable manner.

\textit{"Hindunesan", NNR, Madras. 21 December 1916, P.60.}


\textit{"Official Review of Government of India", Madras, 1921-22, P.20.}

\textit{Hardegrave, R. "The Dravidian Movement", Bombay, 1965, P.20.}

\textit{Law (Legislature), G.O.No. 280, 12 November 1921.}
SOCIAL CONDITION

A society is a place where a group of people with different conduct, character and ability live together. All the activities of human are centered around the society only. History is nothing but the history of the society. Society should formed the unit of historical society. So if society was to be improved, it should be administrated with welfare measures. The people who lived in the society by their customs, traditions, habits and races brought tremendous changes which in turn led to reformatory action. So it was the social reforms, that were responsible for the progress and promotion of the country. The status of the country could be deciphered on how far it was progressed in its social and political matters in the society. As the time passes by, the ephemeral social techniques and institutions caused its transition depending on the reforms that were implemented into the society every now and then.

The English made their entry in India only to develop their business trade. Later on they propagated their religion "Christianity". The fear of Christian Missionaries was the beginning of much social wisdom reform administration among Indians.

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After the advent of Europeans in India the society underwent an endurable change. In the dawn of the nineteenth century the christian missionaries became the harbingers of social administration. The impact of rational minded christian Missionaries gave birth to social reform movement in the Madras Presidency. It was the religious animosity between the Hindus and Christian in one hand and Hindus and Muslims on the other hand, the prevalent of untouchability on a large scale and the deep rooted casteism made the early nineteenth century administrators to bring measures for liberal ideas in the social administration for the uplift of depressed classes. It was true that Indian economy was exploited like anything and wealth was drained to the level of death. Indian Polity also underwent a dramatic change under the despotic imperialism. The wonderful and significant transformation in the social life of the people started in the year 1920 after the introduction of Montague Chelmsford Reform Act.

No one could deny that the British rule in India widened the scope of improvement in the welfare measure of the society by the method of their administration, education, foreign travel, railway, health measures etc. Britishers had been bringing about reforms to stabilise their position which gave birth to the welfare administration, which even kings and emperors could ever have dreamt of acheiving it. British ruled such a vast dominion of India not with the view of establishing colonies but for plundering and exploiting the material resources. Their merciless plundering of the rich resources resulted in the

Srinivas, M N. "Social Change in Modern India". New Delhi, 1977, P 50


"Sampad Abhydaya", NNR., Mysore, 20 March 1920, P 404

"Dravidian", NNR., Madras, 24 March 1920, P 397
birth of new society in India. The society was awakened and social organisations were established for the purging of the society changed the administrative pattern of British in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. The legislative proceedings, educational pursuits, economic activities and social upliftments implemented in India caused drastic changes. Truely speaking the important social changes emerged in the Madras Presidency in the wake of the introduction of Western Education. Nineteenth century was a century of considerable attempt at social change in India as a whole and Madras Presidency was not an exemption.

Since Madras was the birth place of settlements acquired by the British in 1639 AD from Chennappa Nayaka, it played an important role in the consolidation of the British rule in India. Rationalism took the place of faith, superstitious belief gave way to scientific approach and a zeal for reform overtook the country. Social administration was due to the political significance only. The British insisted on the rapid progress in the social field of conceding the demands of Indians for increased representation in the Government. The main aim of the Indian National Social conference was to give importance to social issues only. M.C.Ranade and R.Raghunatha Rao were the founders of the Indian National Social Conference.


THE PERVASION OF THE NEW SOCIETY

The terminology of social changes commenced only after the introduction of westernisation and modernisation. They advocated the abolition of caste system.\textsuperscript{104} It was a disquieting positive spirit touching public institutions as well as private aspirations. It was the product of the new idea which spread in the innocent minds of the Indians to form a new society in the wake of Western Education. Western Education brought the Indians from darkness to light. The great European thinkers like Milton, Burke, Mill, Maculay, Herbert, Spencer, Rousseau, Valtaire, Thomas Paine, Mazzini, Carlyle and Ruskin educated Indians and instigated their life giving ideas of patriotism. Liberty, democracy and nationalism.\textsuperscript{105} The newly educated Indians now began to learn the lesson that it was the bounden duty of every Indian to strive for a social status under the despotic bureaucracy. This was encokuraged by leaders like Lokamanya Thilak who kindled the young mind in the following words “Swaraja is our birth right and we shall have it”. Thilak brought fame to the race and motherland fighting with stone hearted British for betterment of social cause.\textsuperscript{106} Indians who were sleeping still yesterday were awakened today.\textsuperscript{107} A new force had been developed which found its root in the partition of Bengal in 1905 AD itself.\textsuperscript{108}

Annie Besant, "Wake up India A plea for Social Reforms", Madras, 1913, P.52.

Jyoti Prasad Suda & Dr Satish Kumar, Op.cit., P.52

"Dosabhimani", NNR, Guntur, 15 August 1920, P.967


The authorities tried their level best to deeproot the repressive measures to supress the radical view of this new group but were disappointed because the new society was not affected by the negative approach of the high officials. This was possible only after the contact of Western Education. British foresightedness, sense of justice and statemanship were now appearing to be losing their force. So the western education created in the minds of Indians the spirit of equality also. The vital effect of western education was the intensification of political consciousness as well as social order among the innocent people of India.

The new ideas injected by the English language fragranced the whole country through its intellectual thinking. This led to the emergence of a "middle class". There was a vast difference between the old middle class of India and the new one. The former played a very subordinate role in the affairs of India. Language, Caste, creed and race divided people into different classes. The customs and traditions and occupation differentiated each one from one another.

ELITE GROUP

So the western thought produced a new class namely "Elite Group". This English educated elite group started to modify the Indians. The era of passing resolutions was gone and instead an era of implementing the resolutions into

"Godavari Patrika", NNR, Rajamundry, 63 August 1920, P.967.
Ibid., P.55.
actions was dawned. The Indian Nations were reconstituted and a new epoch had commenced. The new enlightened group made revolutionary changes among the slumbering people. The outcome was the feeling of social justice which began to dawn in the minds of the non-brahmins who were mostly the down-trodden people politically. They sowed the seeds for nationalism and engaged into the freedom struggle movement. Politics means a reconstruction of the nation, an evolution of the society, the cementing of all castes into union, the adoption of our national education, the preservation of traditions and ideas. The English educated Indians constituted this new Elite Group who occupied a dynamic microscopic minority. They had an instinct that they were superior even to any European. They were aware of their capacities. They openly expressed them. They dared even to think that they might oust their alien rulers and govern India themselves. They were conscious of their talents and began to regain confidence in themselves. This growing middle class intelligentsia consisted mainly of lawyers with a sprinkling of medical man, journalists and learned professors. It was this class which provided leadership to the National Congress. This Elite group stirred the demand for the self-form of Government. The feeling of unity developed gradually among this educated young and paved the way for radical changes in the society. The trader, the land-owner and the cultivator of different provinces had been conscious of class interest. Their patriotism was severely localised and was limited by caste, by


Francis Young Husband, "Political Awakening in India during the British Rule", Delhi, 1986, P.22.

creed and by language. The prominent figures in National Congress such as Phiroz Shah Mehta, C.Rajagopalachari, Vallabhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr.T.M.Nair and Thiagaraya Chettiar received valuable recognition in the local administration. The reforms of Ripon gave the new Elite a sphere to prove their administrative talent.

Since the western education provided a common language the educated elite people could easily communicate with one another and transact common affairs. They came to realise national degeneration which were attributed to social and religious life. The rigidity in the caste was rooted out and a purified society emerged as an united society. So western education brought a great revolution in the ideas and outlook of the educated elite. It had sharpened their intellect and reflected the growing consciousness among educated non-brahmins.

This class emerged from different sects irrespective of their caste and contributed much to close the bridge between the brahmins and non-brahmins. The sufferings which the brahmins caused to the non-brahmins in the political field also melted away. It was this Elite group which made a striking change in the legislation of Indians by bringing into the scene the


"Indian Journal of Political Science", September 1979, P.419.


non-brahmin movement. The extraordinarily a high position for the brahmins in the social hierarchy particularly in the Madras Presidency and Tamil and Malayalam speaking areas was gradually taken away by this movement.

Facing social ostracism was like a warfare and one had to face hell itself. The society was cancrerated and remedied by the emergence of the elite group. The majority in India belonged to this group only. They consisted of moderates, rationalists, home ruler and non-cooperators who played a dominant role in liberalisation of Indian society in religious, social and political field. The attitude of Brahmin to have a prominent role in the politics as well as in the society had been turned into pieces and burnt into ashes or otherwise charred in the hands of the "Elite Group" that is educated Indians.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The entry of Aryans into the Indians soil and their subsequent intrusion into South India paved the way for the outcome of modern caste system. Their fourfold Varnashramam i.e., Brahmans Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras had prominent place during ancient, medieval period and this system began to decline due to intermingling and inter communal contacts. Due to this contacts and mixing a lot of sub caste emerged on the basis of social and economic

120 Francis Young Husband, Op.cit.,
122 Ibid.,
Caste was the structural basis of Hindu society. It was not only the basis for the social diversion but also a comprehensive system of life dealing with food, marriage, education, association and worship. Caste was defined as hereditary, endogamous usually localised group having a traditional association with an occupation and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. The extraordinary feature of Indian society was its segmental division of Hindu society. It witnessed a lot of restrictions in the social intercourse, in the choice of occupations and restrictions in marriages, and boundless privileges to the different sections. Civil and religious disabilities and superstitious custom and traditions. Endogamy was the essence of caste system. This division of caste was responsible for inequality of mankind based on his birth and profession and created a rigid social stigma among the main four divisions. The whole system permeates the dogma of Brahmanic superiority. Caste was the social imperialism preferred by experience and maintained by religious section. So a caste based society was developed and caste became so rigid that endogamous subgroups multiplied within the four castes. The three major divisions were brahmans, non-brahmins and untouchables or depressed class.
BRAHMINs

In ancient time there existed four principal castes as Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra based on their birth.\textsuperscript{128} This rigid caste system had been slowly changed due to its contact with several historical events in the society. For easy social identity and for political developments it was broadly divided into Brahmins, non-Brahmins and depressed class from the beginning of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{129}

The priestly community was placed at the top of the social order. They were considered superior by birth and profession. From the days of Sangam age till 1920 AD they enjoyed all the privileges and hold a virtual monopoly of place and power in the society\textsuperscript{130}. Though they occupied a microscopic minority the major privileges of the society was enjoyed by them only. The British were strangers and knew nothing about Indian customs, traditions and language. So they wanted the services of the priestly group to avoid their ignorance since the brahmins started learning English. Traditionally brahmins belonged to the literate community and always accustomed to hold secretarial posts in royal courts. This inborn character of brahmins forced them to take advantage of the English education and occupied all the intermediate position leaving the top level

\textsuperscript{128} Samara Pungava Sastr\textsuperscript{i} (ed), *Sri Vyasavarnasrama Dharma*, Tirunelveli, 1884, P. 1-4.

\textsuperscript{129} Chandrababu, B.S. *Op.cit.*, P.68.

\textsuperscript{130} John Cumming, *Evolution of Political life in India*, Delhi, P.20.
resolutions to the English and were satisfied to occupy only the clerical post of reading and writing\textsuperscript{131}. The menial jobs were entrusted to the illiterates among the native communities\textsuperscript{132}.

Brahmins from the ancient time were religious by tradition, philosophical by temperament, clever by necessity, aloof by choice and anything by profession\textsuperscript{133}. They occupied disproportionately almost all the high positions. Even the British began to realise the dominance of Brahmins in the society and resented their having to the dependent on the brahmins for their security in India. This brahmin domination was possible until the Non-Brahmin Ministry in the name of Justice party formed in the year 1921 A.D. in the Madras Presidency\textsuperscript{134}. In the British regime they occupied important posts in the government which automatically raised their position and status in the society as well as the government \textsuperscript{135}. They were the guardians of Hindu traditions\textsuperscript{136}. They were considered as the regulators of the religious life and

\textsuperscript{131} Madhura Bharati, NNR., Madras, December 22, P.143.


Ibid., P.229.


\textsuperscript{134} Annual Report of Imperial Census of 1881, Operation and results in the Presidency of Madras, Vol.1, Madras, 1883, P.111.

social interaction of the Hindus\textsuperscript{137}. Though they formed a very low population, they had a firm and stable status in all aspects of life. Their position earned them the doctrine of superiority and the principle of arrogance in their character.

The Kshatriyas, the warrior class were the ruling race who dominated the other sets of people they too possessed a high status in the society. The British regime particularly after the permanent land settlement caused a set back in their superiority. British rulers lacked confidence in them and were not given proper position in their official affairs. The negligence of British rulers and lack of employment opportunity made them involved in unlawful acts like looting, plundering, robbery and other birds of evil activities\textsuperscript{138}. The consequence of this was the emergence of kallars. Thus the kallars, once belonged to warriors made their appearance as tribals who indulged in robberies and became an eyesore to British. The British followed all possible ways and means to suppress them by enacting the Criminal Tribes Act in 1924\textsuperscript{139}.

The third set of Vaisiyas grouped into the mercantile community. They also occupied high status as other two types and it was they who improved the financial condition of the society. Hence they enjoyed their position in the society by taking advantage of their economic position. They lavishly spent money on


\textsuperscript{138}Francis, W. "Madras District Gazettes", Madras, 1906, PP 88-95.

charitable works. Their contribution in the establishment of the Andhra University only materialised the settlement of the university. It revealed the patronage of their group in the development of education.

NON BRAHMINs

The second major division in the South Indian society was the non brahmins a cluster of castes mostly constituted by farmers who were kept below Brahmins but were ranked above the untouchables. Their main occupation was agriculture and did labour works to their superior castes. It was very difficult to enumerate the various castes in Non-Brahmins. They were catagorised into different groups depending upon their vocation. The term Sudra was generally applied to numerous non-brahmin caste Hindu group such as Vellalas, Kammas, Reddis and Vallamas.

Tamil Vellalas formed an important part of the rural population and they were absorbed not only in the Government service but also in the local administration. For example FV.Ramasamy and C.N.Annadurai got appointments in the local administration in 1929. Their main occupation was trade and commerce. They found their dwellings in Coimbatore, Thanjavur, Salem and Tirunelveli Districts. They were considered as the pivot of the

Narayanasamy Naidu, B.U (Ed) "Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Commemoration, Volume", Annamalai University, Chidambaram. 1941. P.9.


Ibid.,

development of wealth and administration. Tamil Vellalas were already similar to brahmins in some of their orthodoxy, religious and domestic principles. If any dealings in the society degraded their status and position they never indulged into that work. They were benefitted in getting English education and got M.A. Degree. It was really surprising to note that the Tamil Vellalas conducted their traditional ceremonies not by any brahmins but by their own men of caste.

Like the Vellalas, the Reddis or Kappas were also belonged to peasants. Kammans and Velamas were also grouped along with this Vellalas group of sub caste peasants. They talked in Telugu and were land holding people. It was at the time of Vijayanagar empire they migrated to the Madras Presidency in search of their livelihood. They used to eat meat and had the habit of liquor drinking. Though their food habit was against Brahmins they followed brahminical customs in all most all their traditional ceremonies. The largest Telugu speaking people in Madras Presidency were the Reddis. They occupied a high rank in the society next to the Brahmins. All four of these large castes the Kammans, Kapus, Velamas and Telugas closely resembled one another in their outward look and customs. They seemed to have come from one and the same Dravidian Stock. The leading aristocrats of the Madras Presidency namely Rajah of Bobbili,Kalabasti, Pittapur and Venkitagiri who did a lot for

144 "India, Census Commissioner, Census of India", Madras, 1901. P.902.
145 Anilrall, "The Emergence of Indian Nationalism", P. 99.
147 Ibid., P.94.
upliftment of non-brahmin in the first half of the twentieth century belonged to this Velama group of Naidu caste\textsuperscript{148}.

Another Telugu trading caste, the Baliya Naidus were found here and there throughout the Madras Presidency. Their main occupation was cultivation only though they were to be grouped along trading community\textsuperscript{149}. They had trade link with various parts of the province. So they knew many languages for the promotion of their trade. Therefore they were tri-lingual\textsuperscript{150}. The Baliya Naidus hailed from the Nayaks of Madurai and Tanjore. Velamas were illustrious, industrious and aversive to urban life. But Baliya Naidus longed for studious life. They played a significant role in the politics of Madras Presidency because of their contact with western education.

Another important non brahmin was Malayalam speaking Nairs hailed from Malabar Districts, Cochin and Travancore. They played prominent role next to Tamil and Telugu brahmins in the administrative and educational system of Madras Presidency\textsuperscript{151}. Women's education was recognised. The Nairs took advantage of the English education and somehow they were managed to get appointments in the Government service also due to their awareness. Among the non brahmin community this Nair group was considered as the most literate than any other group.


\textsuperscript{149} "Census of India", XIII, Madras, 1891, P.236.


\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., P.9.
UNTUCHABLES

The group who were separated from brahmins and non-brahmins in religious and social factors were constituted as outcastes or untouchables. The most important Tamil untouchables were Parayans, Puliysans and Pallans. The two great Telugu outcaste groups were the Malas and the Madagas. The untouchables formed the lowest stratum of Hindu society. The touch or shadow or even voice of an untouchable was deemed by caste Hindus as polluting. Untouchability was a corollary of the institution of caste and not a separate institution. The untouchables were prohibited from the use of public wells and temples. Their children were not permitted to get education along with other caste Hindus. They were not allowed to wear jewels either of gold or silver. Women of this community were the worst sufferers. It was really surprising to note that the women should not cover their upper portion of their bodies with jackets or clothes, nor they allowed to use flowers or saffron pastes. Men should walk bare footed. Worst of all they should not read or get educated. It was the separation from the society that segregated them as untouchables throughout their life. They remained socially degenerated economically impoverished, politically servants of the upper classes and were permanently excluded from the educational and cultural opportunities. They were born, lived

Mckim Marroitt (ed), "Village India", Chicago, 1955, P.37


and died as untouchables only. Special rights for higher classes and disabilities for the lower ones was a universal fact of the class society. Thus the implementation of caste system made the untouchables the most oppressed section of the Hindu society. They were forbidden to cross the street where brahmins were living. This social segregation kept them untouchable, in capable of becoming organised but moral code made them a threat to society. This untouchables were called in different names like Depressed classes, Unapproachables, Adi-Dravidas, Panchamas and Scheduled castes. They were classified under "Fifth Varna". So they were considered below the fourfold castes. Because of their poor financial position they were not even recognised by Sudras even. The concept of backward class was introduced by the British administrators in the Madras Presidency for providing educational and employment facilities to the downtrodden people.

From the time of Buddha in 500 BC energetic attempts were made to eradicate their social evil of untouchability. The Bhakti cult of Ramanand, Chaitanya, Kabir, Ekanand etc. succeeded in maintaining social and spiritual equality. It was only after the advent of missionaries the condition of depressed classes started showing some improvements though they were not fully


successful in their attempts to eliminate caste tyranny. Lord Mayo, the Viceroy (1869-1872) and Lord Hobert, Governor of Madras (1872-1875) made efforts to give some welfare measures to Muslims whose position was also deplorable. That is why the instructions were given in "Urdu language" to make them to understand as well as to improve their position. In politics, in religious, in Government employment the division between the Brahmins, non-brahmins and untouchables prevailed during the first two decades of the twentieth century and it slowly melting away after the Reform Act of Montagu Chelmsford. It was only during the British period the untouchables became a social problems to the caste Hindus. The policy pursued by the British Government in India of giving preference to the low castes was in accord with humanitarian sentiments. It had the effect of making the lower castes took up to the British for protection. It drove a wedge between the higher and the lower castes. The removal of untouchability became an important activity during the British rule in all the socio-religious movements in Nineteenth century by leaders like Rajaram Mohan Roy, Debendra Nath Thakur, Kesav Chandrasen, Dayanand Saraswathi, Theosophical society and Ramakrishna Mission to remove the rigidity of caste distinctions based on birth.

Law (Edn.), G.O. No.268, 7th October 1872.

Majority castes formed caste associations to defend their castes from the onslaughts and attacks of the other higher castes. Depressed class union. The Parriah Mahajanah Sabha and the poor School society were significant in their work. The Madras Presidency Association was founded on 20th September 1917.\textsuperscript{180} Communal conflicts were commonly prevailing everywhere. Mutual hatred and enmity existed in all castes from time immemorial. In many cases the majority populated castes suffered under the domination of minority numbered caste. Frequent revolt and quarrels and misunderstanding broke out among different castes in different places at different times. This accorded a position of superiority for Brahmans in the society.\textsuperscript{181} The exploitation of the majority community by the microscopic minority community out of their educational and professional occupation resulted into Dravidian Movement and the formation of the Justice Party\textsuperscript{182} which formed the ministry after winning the election in 1920. Thus the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of communal conflicts. It was at this crucial juncture Justice Party emerged as a prominent provincial party to appease the low caste people and for the uplift of the socially, economically and politically backward people.


\textsuperscript{181} Viswanathan, B.Sa. \textit{"The Emergency of Self Respect Movement"}, Viduthalai. 96th Birthday souvenir of EVR, Madras, 1974, P.79.

\textsuperscript{182} Dr. Rajaraman, \textit{P. Op.cit.}, PP.77-78.
The Government of Madras constituted some measures which paved the way for the enlightenment of the backward classes to improve their status in the society. After assuming office the Justice Party government passed the famous communal government in 1921 which gave employment opportunity to the low caste people according to the proportion of their strength. The famous non brahmin movement emerged as staunch Political Justice Party which formed its ministry in 1921 AD to give not only justice to the low casted down trodden people but also to redeem the society with their welfare administration.

Ibid., P.90.

Law (Public), G.O.No.613, 16th September 1921.
Law (Public) G.O.No.658, 15th August 1921.