CHAPTER I

EARLY INFLUENCES

The foundation of Indian National Congress in 1885 stimulated the growth of national awareness among the educated men in British administered Karnataka. Bhao Saheb Bhate from Belgaum, Kolachala Venkata Rao from Bellary and Narayana Ganesh Chandavarkar from North Canara, all from British Karnataka, are recorded to have gone to Bombay to attend the First session of the Congress as delegates. The Second Session at Calcutta, because of distance, did not attract many delegates. Except Bhate no other name from Karnataka is found in the records of this session. The Third Session of the Congress in 1887 at Madras was attended by several delegates from Karnataka. Kolachala Venkata Rao was prominent among them. Hereafter it became a regular feature for some educated men from Karnataka to attend the Congress Sessions. The Bombay Provincial Political Conference was also attended by Congress men from Karnataka. To strengthen the Congress movement in Karnataka, A.O.Hume visited northern districts of Karnataka in 1893. He was given a warm reception at Belgaum and Dharwar. His visit influenced many educated men in these towns. After this event Congress became a familiar organisation in this part of Karnataka.

In 1895 the session of the Bombay Provincial Political Conference was held at Belgaum. Dinshaw Wacha presided over this Conference. This was clearly a move to further strengthen the nationalistic ideas in this part of Karnataka. Once again this conference met at Dharwar in 1903. Dajee Abajee Khare was the President of this session. During this session leaders like Muduvidu Krishna Rao, Alur Venkata Rao and Narayana Rao Karagudri came into prominence. These were the leaders who took the Congress movement to a larger section of urban population and also who
fought for the primacy of Kannada against Marathi in British-Karnataka.

In 1903 Karnataka as a province was still a distant dream. The delegates attending Congress Session from Karnataka represented either Bombay or Madras Presidencies. British gave priority to administrative convenience while forming provinces. The influence of Bombay and Poona as educational and political centres was indeed great on the Karnataka districts coming under Bombay Presidency. Naturally the leaders of these towns wielded much influence on the population of Bombay-Karnataka. In the absence of institutions of higher education either at Belgaum or Dharwar, one had to go to Bombay or Poona, where they came under the influence of Maratha leaders, particularly either Tilak or Gokhale.

In the beginning the influence of moderates prevailed in Karnataka. Gokhale and his disciple Ranade were much revered. But at the turn of the century this atmosphere changed and the influence of extremists led by Tilak was more pronounced. While the older generation was still pro-moderates, the emerging new generation was influenced and closely associated with extremism in Congress politics.

The administrative blunders and personal attitude of Lord Curzon towards the Indians immensely helped the Extremists to consolidate and strengthen themselves. Tilak's ideas about political freedom, his belief in the competency of Indians and his appeal through religion made him very popular in Karnataka. His attitude towards the regional languages, particularly Kannada, won him many followers in Karnataka. His Kesari apart from Mahratta and Dyanaprakash wielded strong influence in Karnataka than any other contemporary newspaper.

Under such circumstances was held the first Dharwar District Political Conference in 1903. This Conference as it was held soon after the conclusion of the Bombay Provincial Political Conference
was a great success. This conference assembled at Dharwar under
the presidency of Shri Viswanatha Rao Jog, an eminent lawyer
who fought later on for the creation of a separate Karnataka
Province in the Bombay Legislature in the 1930's.

The British did not make any serious attempt to provide
proper jobs to educated and qualified men. Consequent of this
there were many Kannadigas in Belgaum and Dharwar without any
jobs. Such men often gathered to discuss the country's socio­
economic problems. Usually they tended to blame the British
for all the evils prevalent in Indian society. These young men
soon joined the Congress. As Congressmen they organised political
meetings, staged patriotic dramas and talented ones composed
patriotic songs. This group of young leaders changed the life
style of literate in the urban centres of Karnataka.

Towards the close of the 19th century the North Karnataka
districts had to face a series of famines. During the famine period
the authorities did not undertake any long term measures to prevent
the reoccurrence of famines, other than giving revenue concessions.
Further because of continuous exploitation this part of the province
had become poorer by the end of the century. The dissatisfied
educated men were to find a channel soon to protest against the
existing system. The opportunity came in the year 1905.

In 1905 Curzon effected the partition of Bengal under the
pretext of improving the administration and in the interest
of public. The economic situation had created discontentment
and the partition created a political agitation. Now both converged
into a single stream. This resulted in the beginning of swadeshi
and boycott movement.

The industrial and agricultural policies which had created
more poverty in India helped the movement to gain popularity.
The economic administration of the British had more insidious
influence on India than that of political administration.
revenue source of British in Karnataka was the land revenue. Here industries were practically non-existent. Population growth was faster than the economic growth, consequent of which pressure on land increased. More and more people began to migrate to rural areas in search of farm based jobs.\(^7\)

In 1901 the Famine Commission estimated that "atleast one fourth of the cultivators in the Bombay Presidency have lost possession of their lands; that less than a fifth are free from debt." This condition was the direct result of the zamindari system of the British. The zamindars who had the support of the government were not only the land owners but were also merciless money lenders to the agricultural labourers. This atmosphere helped the swadeshi and boycott movement. The movement started in the middle of 1905 came to Karnataka towards the close of the year through Tilak and Maharastra.

Boycott and swadeshi were interrelated. They were complementary to each other. Boycott of British made articles, mainly cloth, was a novel means to bring pressure on the British to realize their mistakes. The principle involved in the swadeshi and boycott movement was not only boycott of foreign articles, but also fostering home made articles. This had permanent impact on the Indian freedom movement, particularly during the Gandhian period. While boycott was negative, swadeshi was the positive aspect. This movement of 1905 also included the education of the people as to the economic benefits that were derived from swadeshi and boycott and the demerits of importing and using foreign made articles.\(^8\)

England had conceived an economic plan to exploit the raw materials and natural resources of India, and Indian markets for her own national benefits. England was buying from India, those articles or raw materials which she could not produce or procure cheaply. Further England was dumping into Indian markets the articles which could have been produced in India at much lower
rates and by utilising the locally available unoccupied labour. This economic policy affected the growth of indigenous industries. England while bought articles from India produced by low-paid labourers at a lower price, India was forced to buy articles from England manufactured by high-paid labourers at a higher price. This explains how wealth went out of India and how the poor Indian was made to loose his small income to keep the English economy running and her working class in happiness.

Swadeshi also meant national education. When national schools were started in Maharashtra, Karnataka also organized several national educational institutions. Shivaji and Ganesha festivities were made national festivals in Maharashtra and also in Karnataka. When Maharashtra started prohibition movement and again this was copied in Karnataka though the drink evil was not widespread. Hence it can be said that to a great extent the movement in Karnataka was a replica of the movement in Maharashtra.

Swadeshi and Boycott in British-Karnataka :

Belgaum was the first town in Karnataka to receive the waves of the movement. This was because of its proximity to Bombay and Poona. Gangadhara Rao Deshpande, Hanumantha Rao Deshpande and Govinda Rao Yalagi were in the forefront. The first was an eminent pleader. Until the arrest of Tilak these leaders relentlessly preached swadeshi, boycott and national education. From 1906 onwards liquor and toddy shops were picketed enthusiastically. In this connection some picketeers were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment. In 1906 Gunaji and Kalelkar inspired by Tilak founded a national school in Belgaum. This school gave education in Marathi.

From Belgaum the movement came down to Dharwar. Prominent lawyers of this place, particularly Gurunatha Rao Ghatke and Bhimarao Kamalapur took leading part in this movement.
September a large meeting was organised in Dharwar under the leadership of Gurunatha Rao. In this swadeshi meeting the partition of Bengal was condemned and a resolution sympathising with the aspiration of Bengalis was passed. It was also resolved to establish and encourage swadeshi industries. The meeting called upon the people to use Indian made articles as much as possible.  

Alur Venkata Rao started a national school at Dharwar in 1906. This he called as Nutan Vidyalaya. This was followed by opening national schools at Hubli, Navalgunda, Hanagal, Bagalkot and Badami. In all these schools instruction was given in Kannada. These and other national schools that were founded later owed their origin and growth to Samartha Vidyalaya of Maharashtra. In 1906 Prof. Vijayapurkar of this famous Vidyalaya toured Karnataka and inspired the founding of many national schools. On his advice Alur Venkata Rao gave up his lucrative law practice and devoted his whole time to the upbringing of the school he started at Dharwar.

Towards the end of 1905 and in the beginning of 1906 Tilak toured British Karnataka preaching Swadeshi and boycott. Consequent of this more people joined the movement. By 1906 the movement had entered the life of the urban population in Bombay-Karnataka in a big way. Ganapathi and Shivaji festivities were organised and celebrated on a grand scale in every town. On these occasions meetings were held and processions were organised to inspire the people.

In 1907 Holi festivities and Muhurrum were also included among the national festivals of Karnataka. Holi festivities were organised to signify a deviation from following Maharashtra. More important than this was the inclusion of Muhurrum as a national festival and as a part of the national movement. This paved the way for unity among both the communities of Hindus and Muslims. It was a time when Muslims were suspecting Congress movement as Hindu national movement and had organised themselves into the
Indian Muslim League. The objective of the Muslim League was to co-operate with the British and to isolate Muslims from joining the swadeshi and boycott movement.

In reality the suspicions of the Muslims were not true. The religious garb was purely to infuse the spirit of nationalism among Hindus and it never meant to keep away Muslims. This was clearly demonstrated during the swadeshi and boycott movement. It is interesting to note that British officials made every attempt to impress the Muslims by saying that the partition of Bengal was a scheme for the betterment of Bengalee Muslims. This government propaganda failed to impress the Muslims in Karnataka. It was Karnataka's fortune that both the communities were together since the beginning and Karnataka as a whole was free from Hindu-Muslim clashes which so frequently occurred elsewhere in India. The contribution of educated Hindu and Muslim leaders in forging communal harmony is great indeed in Karnataka.

Students of Dharwar and Belgaum took a leading role in swadeshi and boycott movement. They joined picketing of liquor shops. In Dharwar when school students went on a strike in support of the movement many were fined and a few were debarred from schools. The temperance movement also gained much popularity. Among Lingayat community, who formed a majority in the northern districts of Karnataka consumption of liquor was considered a social evil. However picketing liquor shops was a novel idea and hence it received much attention and popularity.

During national festivities swadeshi volunteers visited every street and every house in their respective towns to convince women folk of the sin of using imported sugar and kerosene, and wearing imported cloth and bangles. Pitre, Joshi, Mudhuvedekar, Alur Venkata Rao, Honnapur Mutt, Bindu Rao and hundreds of other volunteers did commendable work in awakening the people about the swadeshi movement. Leaders of the movement regularly visited
local fairs where people would gather in large numbers, and deliv­ered speeches on nationalism, virtue of swadeshi, the meaning and necessity of boycott, and appealed for popular support to the movement. They did this in the zeal of missionaries.

Boycott was essentially negative in its nature. As a positive corollary to this negative programme swadeshi movement was started. In Karnataka the boycott movement was a political movement and swadeshi movement was an economic movement. Swadeshi was a positive movement and it provided initiative to start industries in several parts of Karnataka. Attempts were made to manufacture boycotted articles locally by importing the raw materials or procuring them indigenously.

Some of these attempts materialised in the form of small factories to produce matches, pencils and cigarettes in 1905 at Dharwar. Same year a porcelain factory was started at Lakshmeshwar. In 1907 a tile factory was started at Khanapur by the cumulative efforts of Alur Venkata Rao and his friends. In the same year a ginning factory was started at Alur. The attempt to build a sugar factory at Bagalkot did not materialise for want of capital, technical personnel and co-operation. Several weaving units were set up at Kittur and Badami. These manufacturing units survived economically during the movement period.

In May 1907 the first Bombay-Karnataka Industrial Conference, on the lines of Indian Industrial Conference, was held at Dharwar. The Conference was held to foster the growth of the swadeshi manufacturing units. This conference was attended by swadeshi manufacturers and by persons interested in swadeshi. Here problems of swadeshi manufacturers were discussed and speeches were made in support of the swadeshi industries.

However these swadeshi industries did not last long. Once the movement slackened interest in swadeshi articles also came down. Again foreign made articles swept the Indian markets.
This apart there were other reasons also. Swadeshi industries had to face constant competition from foreign made articles. There was shortage of capital, trained personnel in manufacturing, managing and marketing areas. The commencement of War was also a great blow to these industries. During the war the cost of raw materials went up steeply. The price of phosphorus, the important ingredient of matches, reached Rs.100/- per pound from a mere Rs.5/-.

The cost of labels per lakh went up from Rs.3/- to Rs.30/- when their imports from Germany was banned. Absenteism among proprietors, who were usually the leaders of the movement, also was a major cause. All these factors cumulatively forced the end of a large number of swadeshi manufacturing units, inspite of the fact that the articles were of good quality and cost-wise cheap. Though nothing concrete came out of this swadeshi movement it proved a symbolic protest against the British economic mismanagement of the country.

The failure of swadeshi industries gave birth to a different kind of agitation. The British government was blamed for not having come to the rescue of the infant home industries. Discussions on this point were initiated in the Legislative Councils, on the platform and in the Press. Public opinion pressed the government to provide positive assistance for the development of Indian industries and to save them from the foreign competition through increased tariff on foreign imports.

In the Karnataka districts of Madras Presidency the movement did not gather significant momentum. In these two districts of South Kanara and Bellary the public life was influenced by the political movement in Madras province. As the movement was not strong in Madras province, the movement in Madras-Karnataka also lacked spirit. Panje Mangesha Rao in South Kanara organised the people to stage processions in sympathy of Bengalis and their plight. He also undertook to spread the temperence movement. In Bellary the leader was Kolachala Venkata Rao, an ardent
Congressman and the pioneer of the Congress movement in this district. He organised people and imparted political education to them.

Swadeshi and Boycott movement in Princely States of Karnataka:

The views on British economic exploitation were not identical in British India and Princely States. This was because of the fact that British economic exploitation was not deeply felt in the latter. Likewise there was no unity of political ideas in these two regions, since Congress refused to play an active role in the awakening of the people in Princely States. This was particularly true in the case of Hyderabad. Because of the autocratic rule of the Nizam and lack of outside contact, the people in Hyderabad-Karnataka were economically and politically ignorant. In the absence of the outside influence the question of a swadeshi and boycott movement did not arise here. Here the press was controlled strictly. They were barred from publishing anything related to politics.

In Mysore State the political situation was better than that of Hyderabad. Here people's participation in the administration of the State in a very limited way was effected soon after the Rendition in 1881. The Representative Assembly established in 1881 was the first step in the direction of adopting the ideal that "actions of the Government should be brought into greater harmony with the wishes and interests of the people." In 1907 the Legislative Council was constituted to include non-official members, who had "practical experience and knowledge of local conditions and requirements" in the process of the making of laws and regulations.

Thus in the direction of democratisation of the administration Mysore State was better placed than other parts of Indian India. Further unlike in British-Karnataka, in Mysore State due attention was given to the economic betterment of the subjects. There were no major grievances against the government either in the
administration of the State or economy. This kind of an atmosphere prevalent in the State did not encourage swadeshi and boycott movement which was a protest against the British bad administration.

The public men in Mysore State had little political contact with British-Karnataka leaders. Hence their field of action did not go beyond the limits of the big towns like Mysore and Bangalore. The movement in Mysore State commenced and ended with a couple of meetings in Mysore. Swami Rao Deshapande and Channakeshava Iyengar delivered speeches protesting the partition of Bengal as wicked. However the press, which was free from government restrictions, gave wide publicity to the political happenings outside the State.

As early as 1901 the idea of organising a Congress in Mysore was initiated by a leading newspaper of the State, the Suryodaya Prakashika in its issue of May 29, 1901. It did not receive good response from the elite or was given publicity by any other newspaper. In the early years of the Congress, many princes of Indian States showed interest in the Congress. Since Ahmedabad Session Congress started organising exhibitions along with its annual meet. In 1903 the Congress session at Madras was preceded by the Congress Exhibition. This Exhibition was declared open by His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore. Thus in the early years Congress was patronised by the Princes. Probably this liberal view and patronage of Congress by the Prince influenced educated men in Mysore State to turn towards the Congress.

The people of Mysore took a new step in the right direction in sending a few delegates to Indian National Congress in 1905. In that year the Congress met at Banaras under the Presidentship of Gopala Krishna Gokhale. The Congress records mentions of a delegate from Mysore for the first time in 1905. However, the name of the delegate is not mentioned anywhere. In 1906 the
the Congress Session was held at Calcutta under the presidency of Dada Bhai Naoroji. Congress records again mentions the delegates from Mysore State. The Congress had envisaged in 1903 the programme of enlisting the support of the Indian Princes and as well their subjects.\textsuperscript{29} There are no references of delegates from Mysore taking part in the Congress Session after the Surat Split in 1907. After Surat Split the Congress lost the patronage of Indian Princes.

In brief the swadeshi and the boycott movement was originally conceived as a means to express the dissatisfaction of the Bengalis against the partition of Bengal. But within a couple of years the partition issue receded into the background. A Bengali movement became an all India Movement. It was no longer the question of annulment of Bengal but was that of whether the British should continue to rule India or they should handover the administration to the Indians.\textsuperscript{30} Gandhi in 1908, then an obscure name in Indian politics, wrote that "that day (Partition Day) may be considered to be the day of the partition of the British Empire."\textsuperscript{31} The movement had its own impact on Karnataka. It gave rise to the concept of a British Karnataka province based on linguistic considerations. Alur Venkata Rao, described as the Kannada Kulapurohita, initiated a movement which sought to unify Kannada speaking population into a province. Though there was opposition from leaders like Deshapande Gangadhara Rao, the move had been made definitely during this period.

Political development between 1907 and 1914:

Within the Congress the boycott and swadeshi movement had been a major issue of controversy.\textsuperscript{32} The issue was not settled either at Varanasi Session (1905) or at Calcutta Session (1906). At Surat Session in 1907, both the factions, the Moderates and the Extremists, were determined to settle the issue at any cost. When the Session was in progress and issue was being hotly discussed a Marattah shoe was thrown on to the dias which created a pandemonium and panic.\textsuperscript{33} Next day the Moderates assembled
and expelled the Extremists formally splitting the Congress. 34

A large number of delegates from Karnataka took part in this historic Surat Session. Alur Venkata Rao, Srinivasa Rao Kaujalgi, Hosakeri Annacharya, Gangadhara Rao Deshpande and Govinda Rao Yalgi were some of the important persons who attended this session. All these men were the followers of Balagangadhara Tilak. They were all wedded to his programme of swadeshi and boycott. Henceforth very few men from Karnataka took part in the Congress Sessions and Congress activities. The government waiting for an opportunity found it in the split. Several arrests and convictions were made in the whole of the country. In 1908 several arrests were made in Karnataka also. Nine volunteers who were picketing the liquor shops in Belgaum were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment for one week with fines. These volunteers refused to pay the fines and suffered further imprisonment. 35 The famous of all the arrests was of Tilak in June and his deportation from the country for six years. To protest this arrest students in Karnataka boycotted schools and staged demonstrations on a large scale. Immediately prohibitory orders were issued in Belgaum and Dharwar to maintain peace.

British authorities were aware of the role of the press in keeping alive the spirit of the swadeshi and boycott movement. Hence after putting the leaders behind the bars, the government passed the Indian Newspapers (Incitement to offences) Act 1908 and subsequently the Press Act of 1910. Under this Press Act the erring editors were required to deposit a huge sum with the government as a guarantee of their good conduct. 36 This was a serious strain on the already meager resources of the vernacular press in Karnataka. With the enactment of this Act most of the newspapers in Karnataka ceased to exist. 'Dharawada Vrita,' 'Chandrodaya,' 'Hindustan Samachar,' 'Raja Hamsa,' 'Kshema Samachar,' 'Kannada Kesari,' were among the most prominent. Some newspapers took to political neutrality and stopped publishing
objectionable political matter. Prominent among them were 'Karnatak Vaibhava' and 'Lokabandhu.' 'Karnataka Vritta' was the only Kannada newspaper that somehow managed to survive in spite of its occasional publication of political articles.

The years that followed 1909 were a period of political uncertainties. This situation lasted till the outbreak of the Great War. During this period Congress under Moderates was not popular in Karnataka and Extremists had no organisation of their own. Consequent attempts of the Extremists to build up an organisation parallel to the Congress failed mainly because the British prevented it by repression and violence.

British always exerted influence on the Prince of Mysore. When the British felt that the Press in Mysore was anti-British, it saw that Press regulations were passed in 1908 and newspapers like Vrittanta Chintamani and Nadegannadi were closed. When they thought that some politicians were anti-British, they suppressed them through the Dewan. Vetoing of the elections of M.Venkatakrisnaiah and D.Venkataramanaiah by the Dewan is an example. This British interference and the Dewan's reactionary rule gradually alienated the educated people from the administration. British also sought to prevent political contact between Mysore and British India. V.S.S.Sastri of Servants of India of Madras was prevented from delivering a lecture in Bangalore which was condemned by everyone. These developments in Mysore State show how British wanted to suppress any movements which had anti-British feelings.

Home Rule Movement in Karnataka:

In June 1913 Tilak was released from prison. Immediately on his return he commenced the work of reorganisation of his followers. But he was against forming another Congress Party. In August 1914 the Great War commenced in Europe. The reorganisation of the Extremists and the Great War gave a new hope and kindled the dormant national aspirations of the people. Also
this was the year in which the concept of home rule in India was enumerated by Tilak.

The Home Rule League was founded in April 1916 at Poona by Tilak. To propagate and spread Home Rule Movement in Karnataka, Tilak toured the province. Tilak first visited Gadag accompanied by Alur Venkata Rao and here he was to deliver his first speech on Home Rule in Karnataka. Alarmed by his arrival, the Collector of the district issued an order prohibiting Tilak from making a 'pernicious' speech. Tilak delivered a political speech and the police officials present could not make out whether the speech was pernicious. From Gadag he visited Hubli and Dharwar. In these towns the meetings were held in private places so that the authorities would not obstruct Tilak's speech.

In the same month the Bombay Provincial Political Conference met at Belgaum. This was an historic meeting which M.K. Gandhi attended. This was Gandhi's first visit to North Karnataka districts. The educated men in Karnataka who had already been influenced by his work in South Africa came into direct contact with Gandhi and his programme.

As a result of the visits of Gandhi and Tilak there was a good response to Home Rule Movement. Many leaders in Karnataka felt the necessity of having a branch of the Home Rule League in Karnataka. Proposal to this effect was made by Alur Venkata Rao, but the plan was vehemently opposed by Majali and Deshapande Gangadhara Rao. Tilak who favoured a separate Karnataka province for Congress intervened in the conflict to establish a branch in Karnataka under the Presidency of Deshapande Gangadhara Rao at Belgaum. Following this, Home Rule Centres were established at Hubli, Bagalkot and Dharwar. The founding of a branch of Home Rule League for Karnataka province was a step towards the formation of Karnataka. Immediately after this a demand for a separate Provincial Congress Committee for Karnataka was putforth vigorously.
In North Kanara the Home Rule movement gained some popularity. D.Narayana Hegde was the President and S.Subbaraya Bhat was the Secretary. Though members were enrolled and subscriptions were collected the work could not be carried on for want of encouragement from the provincial head quarters. Gangadhara Rao Deshapande was not very enthusiastic about publishing Kannada literature on Home Rule Movement. He did not allow the publication of Tilak's speeches translated into Kannada on the grounds of non-availability of funds.

Differences of opinion thus emerged. Alur Venkata Rao stood for the regionalisation of the movement while Deshapande opposed it and wanted the influence of Maharashtra to continue. Again Tilak interfered and settled the matter. Alur Venkata Rao was made the Secretary of the Swaraj Sangh, which he had founded recently. Swaraj Sangh was nothing but the Home Rule League. It carried on the same activities. The Home Rule Centres in other towns came under the control of Swaraj Sangh. As the Secretary of Swaraj Sangh Alur was allowed to publish booklets and pamphlets in Kannada on home rule. In a couple of years several booklets were published on swaraj and on the expected reforms. Prominent and popular among them were: 'The Swaraj we Demand,' 'What is Swaraj?' 'Futility of Reforms,' 'The Pretext for Refusing Swaraj,' etc.

In 1917 the Home Rule Provincial Conference was held at Nasik in Maharashtra. In this conference Alur Venkata Rao, Naragundkar Rama Rao and others agitated for a separate provincial conference for Karnataka. Prominent leaders like Gangadhara Rao Deshapande and Narayana Rao Joshi did not support this agitation. By this time the delegates to the Conference had started to speak from the platform in their respective regional languages. In the meantime Gandhi conducted a separate political Conference for Gujarat and succeeded. In 1918 the District Political Conference of Belgaum met at Athani when a step in this direction was taken.
In this conference it was decided to demand unanimously for a separate political unit for Karnataka. These political Conferences and agitations show how a section of the leaders wanted to give a separate and distinct political identity to Karnataka. As long as they were following the Maharashtrian leaders it was impossible for them to evolve their own political institutions and movements.

In 1916 Mrs. Annie Besant of the Theosophical Society of Madras entered politics and founded an organisation to agitate for home rule in India. In 1917 to distinguish her home rule movement from that of Tilak's called it All India Home Rule League. Besant's home rule movement could not make an impression on British-Karnataka where the influence of Tilak was predominant. However a branch of All India Home Rule League of Annie Besant was founded in Mysore State, where the influence of Madras was strong. This branch in Bangalore housed in the Theosophical Society in Doddanna High School had to face problems for its survival in the beginning itself. Expecting political trouble arising out of this branch the Mysore Government warned that the High School's recognition will be withdrawn if its teachers or students participated in the home rule movement. Actually it was a threatening hint to the school authorities to vacate the occupation of the branch from the school premises.

In Mysore State home rule movement did not have much relevance. Home rule movement stood for native rule against foreign rule in India. In Mysore State the ruling Prince was a native and his interests were identified with the interests of his subjects. Further the immediate objective of the home rule movement was to secure constitutional reforms from the British. In Mysore already some democratic principles were at work. However the principle involved in the movement was complete political freedom in which Mysore was lacking as much as British Indian Provinces. It was also true of Hyderabad-Karnataka districts, where the Nizam's autocratic rule was still strong. Thus on the whole this movement
in Karnataka was not widespread. It also failed to achieve the popularity the swadeshi and boycott movement had in 1906.

Effects of War and initiation of Satyagraha:

In the meantime the Great War in Europe ended in an Armistice in 1918. The war left behind many scars in the form of economic problems. The general price line of all the commodities was falling steeply while the rate of unemployment was rising high. Much wealth in the form of raw materials, men and money had been drained out of India during the war.

During the war in Karnataka there was a shortage in every commodity and consequent of this the prices had gone up artificially. In rural Karnataka people knew that a Great War unheard before was being fought only by the reason that every commodity was becoming costlier and scarce. During the war in British-Karnataka the price of wheat went up by 62 per cent, that of rice by 33 per cent and jaggary by 35 per cent. But immediately after the war the prices started falling down faster than expected.

In Bombay-Karnataa many home industries were closed because of the fall in prices and demand for finished commodities. In Dharwar district out of 15,000 weavers thousands were forced to give up their profession. Government did not come to their rescue. The British themselves were facing similar economic problems back at home. To save their own industries from closure the British allowed export of large quantities of finished goods to her colonies. At the same time British were importing raw materials from India at a cheaper rate. This shows how as late as 1918 the British were following an economic policy, which was advantageous to Britain and injurious to her colonies.

The Great War brought many economic problems to Mysore also. Unlike the British Government the Mysore administration under the enlightened Dewanship of Sri M.Visveswaraya took effective steps to overcome the economic effects of the depression. Revenue
concessions were given wherever required to the farmers when the prices of the agricultural products declined. The famine that appeared in several parts of the State was attended by the Dewan himself. Relief work was undertaken in famine hit districts. To help and recover the war time commerce and industries, Mysore Bank and Mysore Chamber of Commerce was founded. Mysore-Arsikere railway line was laid down soon after the war as an economic measure. To improve agriculture many irrigation works were undertaken.

Conclusion of the Great War marked the beginning of an hectic political activity in India. The Great War was fought "to make the world safe for democracy" and "to give the right of self determination to the people in choosing their own government." These war objects had a direct bearing on Indian problem. When the Extremists and Moderates pointed out at these utterances repeatedly, the British statesmen could not ignore it altogether and in August 1917 promised far reaching reforms. The report of the reforms however was published in July 1918. Tilak characterised it as a sunless dawn and Besant said "the reforms were unworthy of England to give and India to take." Except the Moderates others were disillusioned by these reforms. This again led to a split in the Congress. The Moderates this time came out of the Congress and formed their own moderate party - the All India Liberal Federation. This party did not remain in existence for a long time. Gandhi's influence pushed the Moderates into oblivion and later the Swarajists in the Councils paved the way for their exit from Indian Politics.

In the meantime the Bombay Provincial Political Conference met at Bijapur in 1918 under the Chairmanship of Vitalbhai Patel. Once again Gandhi was invited to take part in this Conference. By this time Gandhi was a name well known in the whole of Karnataka. When he announced his civil disobedience movement in 1919 Karnataka gave him unflinching support.
From 1917 onwards Gandhi undertook to experiment his satyagraha weapon. In 1917 he first experimented his satyagraha against the European planters in Champaran in Bihar State, where the labourers had fallen prey to illegal exactions. This was followed by a satyagraha to lower the land revenue in Khaira, a satyagraha during the dacoities in Borsad, a satyagraha to raise the wages of the mill hands in Ahmedabad and finally a satyagraha in Kheda in 1918. All these satyagraha campaigns were conducted to elevate the economic conditions of the peasants and labourers.

These successful campaigns convinced Gandhi of the bright outcome of a national satyagraha campaign against the British administration. He was waiting for an opportunity and this came in February 1919 when two bills to curb sedition and revolutionary crime in British India were introduced. These bills were based on the Rowlatt Report and out of these one was dropped and the other was passed into an Act in March 1919, under the title Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act. Gandhi had notified that he would launch an All-India Satyagraha Campaign if the Rowlatt bill was passed into an Act.

This Act was a blunder at the most inappropriate time. Indians had contributed immensely to the British war efforts in expectation of a reward in the form of constitutional reforms. But instead there came this Act which sought to curtail the civil rights of Indians. The announcement of Gandhi's nation-wide satyagraha, which was destined to shape the future course of the freedom movement, went unnoticed by the British as an insignificant threat. Thus this Act turned out to be a great event which marked the end of an era of representations and deputations and the beginning of an era of dynamic non-violent resistance.

Gandhi presented to the nation a programme of civil disobedience based on truth and non-violence to resist the evil laws made by the British. There were two programmes - one to be followed by the general public throughout British India and the other the programme for the pledged Satyagrahis. The satyagraha
was launched on April 6, 1919. On that day the general public was to observe a 24-hour fast to purify their souls and to show their wounded feelings towards the Rowlatt Act. Hartal was to be observed on that day and public meetings were to be held and resolutions calling upon the repeal of Rowlatt Act were to be passed. The pledged satyagrahis, apart from fasting, would civilly disobey the law by distributing prohibited literature and unregistered newspapers without any secrecy.

Why Gandhi insisted upon this violation of the laws made by the Government? The laws introduced in India were prepared by the British which did not owe their origin in the willingness of the Indians nor had their sanction. Hence they were not morally binding on Indians. Politically no nation owes any allegiance to laws not made by it directly or indirectly through its representatives. Indian adherence to the laws made by the British was not out of their willingness, but from compulsion by force of the British might. Again the British Government was not established by the Indians, but by the laws of the Great Britain. Hence Gandhi thought of disobeying laws that would morally and materially affect the social and political life of Indians.

In Belgaum and Dharwar the hartal was observed along with fasting, prayers and meetings. The whole campaign was smooth and went off peacefully in Karnataka. But elsewhere in the country there occurred violence. In Punjab the situation was serious and hence Gandhi was eager to proceed there, but was prevented by the Government. The climax to the violence and repression on the part of the British came in the form of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, where five hundred unarmed and peaceful persons were shot down and hundreds were wounded by the notorious General Dyer. This was followed by a reign of terror in Punjab which surpassed all the misdeeds of British administration in India. On April 18, 1919 Gandhi suspended the movement owing to the outbreak of violence in retaliation to Government measures, which
he feared would smear the name of satyagraha. Thus the first nationwide Satyagraha campaign against Rowlatt Act was suspended because of eruption of violence, which Gandhi always wanted to avoid. Continuation of the campaign would have led to more violence. This would have given an opportunity to the British to show their might on the unarmed people. At this stage Gandhi was reluctant to see suffering of the innocent people, who were not trained in the ways of satyagraha.

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NOTES

1 Chandavarkar was born in Honnavara in 1855. Educated at Elphinston he settled down in Bombay as a pleader. He was a firm Moderate and was the only Kannadiga to preside over the Congress Session (before independence) at Lahore in 1900.


3 Karnataka Vritta, September 5, 1905.

4 A.B.Keith, A Constitutional History of India, p.226.


10 Karnataka Vritta, September 5, 1905.

11 Alur Venkata Rao, p.118.


13 A.K.Majumdar, Advent of Independence, p.56.

14 Karnataka Vritta, December 12, 1905.

15 Karnataka Vritta, October 17, 1905.

16 Alur Venkata Rao, p.120.

17 P.B.Sinha, p.33.

18 Karnataka Vritta, November 3, 1905.

19 R.R.Diwakar (Ed.), Karnataka Through the Ages, p.896.

20 Karnataka Vritta, May 14, 1907.


22a For details and a correct economic situation of the three districts of Hyderabad-Karnataka see relevant pages and charts in the Report of the Fact Finding Committee (States Reorganization), 1954, Government of Mysore.

Ibid, p.102.
P.R.Ramayya, Mysore's Political Evolution, p.10.
Nadeegannadi, December 12, 1905.
Congress Presidential Address by Lal Mohan Ghose in 1903 at Madras AICC Session.
Valentine Chirole, Indian Unrest, p.88.
M.K.Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, p.15.
See Presidential Address (First Series), p.697.
Karnataka Vritta, June 9, 1908.
A.B.Keith, p.228.
The Hindu, November 27, 1909.
Veera Kesari of November 13, 1909 observes:
"In a word the Press Law has been passed in obedience to the mandate of the British Government. What is good of blaming Mysore Officers, who seem to be not their own masters in the present situation."
P.R.Ramayya, p.10.
The Hindu, October 15, 1909.
The Hindu, August 31, 1911.
Sadhwi, September 16, 1911 and The Hindu, October 4, 1911.
The Hindu, November 27, 1909.
Karnataka Vritta, July 24, 1917.
Alur Venkata Rao, p.158.
Karnataka Vritta, July 24, 1917.
Alur Venkata Rao, p.159.
Ibid., p.160.
Ibid., p.160.
25

Sampadabhyudaya, July 19, 1917.


Athalya, Tilak, pp.251-52.


Ibid., p.148.

Ibid., p.150.


Death figure according to official sources was five hundred, but it was about thousand according to other private sources.