CHAPTER VI

PERFORMANCE OF THE JUSTICE PARTY

Educational Sphere

Education, a vital subject was not wholly entrusted to the care of the elected ministers. European and Anglo-Indian education was a reserved subject. The authors of the constitution ostensibly avoided entrusting the education of those communities to the care of the Indian Ministers. ¹ Nevertheless the Central Legislature possessed concurrent jurisdiction on all essential matters concerning the universities. But, Education was one of the fields in which the work of the Justice Party brought in a great progress. During its regime education of all categories - elementary, secondary and collegiate-made rapid strides.

Free and Compulsory Education

Free and compulsory education was one of the avowed principles of the Justice Party ever since its inception. It was only in the city of Madras that free and compulsory education was introduced for the first time for boys and girls. A great impetus was given to the education of girls by making education free beyond eighth standard. ² Gradually free and compulsory education was introduced into several municipalities. By 1925 in nearly eighteen out of twenty municipalities it had been put into practice. Likewise in rural areas many elementary schools had been started. The Rajah of Panagal who presided over the second All India

group" in the legislature as early as November 1930 to show their displeasure at the non-inclusion of the Zamindars. The dissensions in the Justice Party in the later half of the year 1932 hardened into a definite schism.

The Ascendancy of the Rajah of Bobbili

There was a threat of no-confidence motion against the ministry of Mudiaswami Naidu from the "Ginger group" of the Party who saw in him "a sneaking affection for the Congress and the Swarajists". A dramatic turn of events took place. When his own ministerial colleagues, P.T. Rajan and S. Kumaraswamy Reddier tendered their resignations, Naidu, suspecting that a motion of no-confidence against him might succeed, resigned his Chiefministership, and it was promptly accepted by the Governor. On 5th November 1932, the Rajah of Bobbili was appointed the Chief Minister. Even after this, the dry bickerings continued and tarnished the image of the party very much. Frantic efforts were made by the Rajah of Bobbili to rejuvenate the party but in vain.

The 1934 Assembly Election

The tenure of the Legislative Council which should have expired on 5th November 1933 in normal course was extended for another year in view of the impending constitutional changes and also due to the improbability of a new council under the diarchial constitution running its full course. The general elections to the Central Legislative Assembly took place in November 1934 and it was conducted alone for the first time. The ban on the Congress organisation was removed in response to the decision of the AICC at Patna in May 1934 to abandon civil disobedience.

50 RAMP, 1932-33, pp.XIV-XV.
It was also for the first time that the Congress Party had decided to contest the elections under diarchy. So it organised a vigorous election campaign. The demoralised Justice Party decided to remove the ban on the admission of Brahmins into the party at its Thirteenth confederation. It was considered a timely and wise decision by the leading partymen. A.F. Patro pointed out that this lifting of the ban removed a stigma from the Justice Party and it could not be any longer accused that it was purely a communal organism. However the Congress won a landslide victory.

It was believed that the Justice Party was defeated "not so much by the strength of their opponents' campaigns as by the intrigues of their party colleagues."51 Its set back posed a challenge even to its very existence. The leaders began to respond to it immediately by convening a meeting of party enthusiasts at Branson Baugh, the residence of the Rajah of Bobbili in Mount Road, Madras, to take concerted effort to revitalize the already corroded Justice Party. To patch up the factionalism within the fold of the Justice Party, the Rajah inducted Nuthiah Chettiar into his ministry when Kumaraswamy Reddiar resigned his ministerial post due to his failing health in 1936.

The 1937 Elections

The Government of India Act of 1935 provided for the establishment of full responsible Government subject to "safeguards" in the eleven provinces of British India. The first elections as per the Act of 1935 were to take place in February 1937.

of the total votes were cast in support of the Justice candidates. The Ministerialists were signally defeated at the polls. Since the Justice Party emerged victorious, the Governor called upon J. Munuswamy Naidu, the leader of the Justice Party, to form the ministry. He took up office on 27 October 1930 with P.T. Rajan and S. Kumaraswamy Reddiar as his colleagues. The victory that the Justice Party won was mainly due to its reorganisation before the elections and the reorientation of its programmes. In inviting J. Munuswamy Naidu to form the ministry, the Governor followed the healthy constitutional practice of calling on the leader of the largest group in the Legislature. The Madras Mail wrote on 25th October: "Taken as a whole it is a promising ministry. Its leader is an earnest man and his colleagues combine zeal with knowledge." The new ministry had a lot of problems to tackle. Furthermore, they assumed the responsibility of office at a time when the southern districts were being devastated by floods. The new ministry had to undertake many ameliorating measures such as remission of land-tax and other reliefs. The civil disobedience campaign of the Congress also absorbed the attention of the ministry. Though Munuswamy Naidu was capable of grappling with the problems of the state, he found himself miserable in the midst of factions in the party. The selection of his ministerial colleagues left the Telugu Zamindars headed by the Rajah of Bobbili and the Kumararaja of Venkatagiri aggrieved. The Chief Minister appeared to them as anti-Zamindari in outlook. Similarly M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, are influential leader of the Nattukottai Chetti community, a business magnate and a banker who expected a ministerial post was also dissatisfied. The Telugu Zamindars along with the Nattukottai Chettiar organized a Justice "Ginger..."}

Though certainly premature, the attempt to weigh the Ministry has already begun. To their credit they carry in addition to the Acts they have successfully got passed, the pioneer work they have had to do, to meet many difficulties for the first time and act in a practical manner as against many idealistic theorists. On the other scale there are expectations unfulfilled like progress towards Prohibition; advance towards Andhra University, Irrigation Schemes, Industrial Development, more decisive advance in Local Self-Government, Indianisation or a wider scale, Retrenchment in Higher Salaries and a host of Reforms which might be reasonably expected though not so easily realisable.
educational backwardness of the Telugus" by imparting education to them through the Telugu medium. With the establishment of the University of Mysore in 1916 and the Osmania in 1918 the tempo of the demand for the Andhra University increased.

Immediately after the formation of the first Justice Ministry the notion of Telugu University was rigorously advocated by the leaders of all political parties hailing from Telugu regions. Educationalists like C.R. Reddy made a forceful plea in favour of starting a University for the Andhras. The Senate of the Madras University in a resolution dated 15th October, 1920 communicated to the Government of Madras its view that "the increase in demand for liberal education in this Presidency should be met by the establishment of more universities and by distribution of the territorial areas of the existing university, so as to provide, as far as practicable, at least one university for each linguistic area within the presidency." Since education was one of the subjects of the Transferred half the question of starting a university lay in the hands of the Justice Ministry. A committee under Stratham was constituted. It gave its report on the proposed university in 1924. A bill for the Andhra University was finally drafted on the lines indicated in the report of the committee and introduced by A.P. Patro in August 1925 for the "rapid development in the study of Telugu language and literature." On 26th April, 1926 the Andhra University was started at Bezawada with jurisdiction over all the Telugu Districts, even though there was considerable opposition especially about the headquarters. It took nearly

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23 K.V. Narayana Rao, The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh, p. 89
24 PMLC, Vol.II, p. 714; M. Suryanarayana Pantulu quoted the views of the Senate while moving a resolution on Andhra University on 2 Sep. 1921.
three years to decide upon the place where the university could be located. Rajahmundry, Visakhapatnam or Anantapur were the alternative places suggested for the headquarters of the university. At last in 1929 due to the earnest efforts of the founder Vice-Chancellor, C.R. Reddy, Visakhapatnam was chosen as the venue of this great temple of learning. This was the first University in the whole of the Indian sub-continent started in the name of a linguistic group. It is considered that it was also the first University which provided for the use of the Indian languages such as Telugu, Kannada, Urdu and Oriya as medium of instruction and examination. However, the establishment of Andhra University encouraged the Tamilians to demand the creation of a separate university in the heart of the Tamil country in order to promote the interests of Tamil culture, obviously because the University of Madras with its "Sanskritic and Brahminical" affiliations failed to give the Tamils the right kind of cultural atmosphere and training.26

Economic Sphere

The Presidency of Madras was in the beginning of this century politically "benighted", economically backward and industrially tardy inspite of its rich resources. Enormous amounts of raw materials such as raw skins and hides, oil seeds and raw cotton were exported. The capitalists of the Province were not enterprising. Therefore, the industrial progress of the Presidency was almost negligible.

State Aid to Industries Act

The Justice Party which came to power after the general elections of 1920 desired to place the Presidency of Madras rather

26 E.F. Irshick, Politics and Social Conflict in South India, pp.250-251.
prominently on the industrial map of the subcontinent. K.V. Reddi Naidu who was incharge of industries in the First Justice Ministry took earnest efforts to promote the industrial growth of this Presidency by bringing forth an act called State Aid to Industries Act, which is considered the "magnum opus of his life." The Act was intended mainly to assist the establishment and development of industries that had an important bearing on the economic development of the Presidency. The categories of industries that were selected to receive state aid were as follows:

1) New or nascent industries;
2) Industries to be newly introduced into areas where such industries were undeveloped; and
3) Cottage industries.

The forms of financial aid contemplated in the Act were:

1) Loans;
2) Subsidies for machinery and for research;
3) Investment in shares and debentures;
4) Guarantees for a minimum return on capital and for the due discharge of cash credits, overdrafts or advances; and
5) Concessions in the grant of land supply of raw material, firewood and water, being properties of Government.

This Act also made provision for the constitution of a statutory Board of Industries for advisory purposes in the matter of industrial development. The Board consisted of members elected by the

banking, industrial and commercial organisations. It was expected that
the industries of this Province would raise their head and the revenue
of the government would grow in manifold ways.29 The Justice Party could
justifiably be proud of its role in committing the government to the policy
of industrial development with support from public funds. By enacting
this Act the Justice government provided an infrastructure for the indus-
trial development of the Madras Presidency. Though the aims of the Act
were very much laudable the financial constraints that the Transferred
Self suffered had not allowed much industrial growth to take place. The
lack of industrial knowledge and capital on the part of the Indians
indirectly helped the Europeans who were prepared to invest capital and
start industries in India even without the help of the government. None
the less this Act was a conspicuous landmark in the history of industrial
growth and development of the Madras Presidency. During the tenure of
the First Ministry the Department of Industries was reorganised, reducing
the number of divisions to three, each under an Assistant Industrial
Engineer working directly under the Industrial Engineer.

The new industries started during the regime of the Justice
Party would include

1) Sugar Factories
2) General Engineering Works
3) Tanneries
4) Cashewnut Factories
5) Electrical Engineering Factories

29 Nyaya Dipika, 22 Nov. 1922 (Madras MNR, 1922).
6) Aluminium Factories
7) Carpentry and Cabinet-Making Works
8) Tram-way Workshops
9) Breweries and Distilleries
10) Cement Works
11) Umbrella and Soapmaking Works
12) Ice and Aerated Water Works
13) Oil Milling.\(^{30}\)

To disseminate industrial knowledge and skill among the people

the Justice Party endeavoured to start Industrial Schools in various

places, of which Bellary, Calicut and Mangalore were popular.\(^{31}\) In

addition, 72 private Industrial Schools were recognised and aided with

grants. In view of the development of the sugar industry in the

presidency and the necessity of providing for the training of sugar

technologists, a number of scholarships in technology tenable at the

Andhra University, Waltair, were instituted.\(^{32}\) With the starting of

diploma courses in mechanical and electrical engineering the nomenclature

of the Madras Trades School was changed into Government School of

Technology thereby opening new vistas in the industrial field. The

State Aid to Industries Act was amended in 1935 in order to enlarge its

scope. The amended Act provided that electricity from a source belonging

to Government might be supplied to industrial enterprise on favourable

terms.\(^{33}\) This enabled a happy union between electricity and industry

contributing much to the industrial progress of the Presidency.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., p.306.
\(^{32}\) Justice, 19 Aug. 1936.
\(^{33}\) RAMP for the year 1934-35, pp.XIV-XV.
Agriculture

The Justice Party championed the cause of the land-owning people and strove to improve their well being by adopting various measures. As early as 1921 the Justice Party made its policy clear towards land tenure. In its Fourth Annual Confederation it passed a resolution on land resettlement which runs as follows: "This Confederation is strongly of opinion that land is over-burdened with taxation at present and that periodical revisions of settlement are calculated to create serious discontent amongst the people." In moving this resolution M.D. Devasoss, M.L.C. drew the attention of the members to the defects in the system of land revenue settlement. According to that system he pointed out, the assessment on lands was much heavier than either in Bombay or Bengal where the same system of Permanent Settlement was in existence. He highlighted further that the periodical revision of assessment in Madras and Presidency was a great hardship on the poor ryot/in places like Tinnevelly district they were paying as much as Re.poss twenty per acre. By adopting this resolution the Justice Party made it clear that it was keen in safeguarding the interests of the poor agrarian population.  

The grovelling poverty coupled with heavy burden of loan at an exorbitant rate of interest made the life of an agriculturist miserable and deplorable. In order to offer succour, the Justice Party government enacted series of legislations of which the Agriculturists’ Loans (Amendment) Act of 1935 was very important. Though this Act amended the Act of 1884 by inserting a single word, "indebtedness" for "distress", it conferred great benefits on agriculturists by permitting the grant

\[34\] Public Department, G.C.No.171, 26 Mar. 1921.
of loans to them for the relief of indebtedness.\textsuperscript{35}

The next significant relief which the Justice government brought forth was the Madras Co-operative Land Mortgage Banks (Amendment) Act. The primary object of this Act was to advance money to small holders of land on easy terms repayable in twenty to twenty-five years. This Act enabled the Mortgage Banks to make payments to creditors in discharge of prior debts of the mortgagors at their registered offices.\textsuperscript{36}

The Madras Estates Land (Amendment) Act, 1934

A significant legislative measure which the Ministry of Bobbili passed in 1934 was the amendment to the Estates Land Act. This Act was considered necessary in order to remove some of the difficulties experienced in the working of the Land Act of 1908. The main principle and object were to safeguard the rights of the cultivating tenants. It prevented the occupancy right being appropriated by middlemen, whose only interest in land was to extract as much as rent as possible from the cultivating tenants. The noteworthy thing behind this legislative measure was that the cause of the poor tenants was championed by a Zamindar who happened to be the Chief Minister of the State.

A further amendment to this Act, which was famously known as an Act the Inams Act, was of far-reaching importance ever placed on the Statute Book. But the Act created a heated debate in the Madras Legislative Council and the Rajah of Bobbili was attributed with communal designs


in bringing forth this Act on the ground that most of the Inamdars were only Brahmins and they were not represented in the Legislative Council. The Chief Minister made a brilliant statement elucidating the objects of this legislation.

"One third of the Presidency was in the hands of Zamindars and one third of it in the hands of major and minor Inamdars. In 5000 Inam villages, there were five million cultivators. By this Bill, the Government sought to ensure the happiness of the cultivators of the land who were then in a state of serfdom and slavery. The cultivating tenant had inherent rights of property in the land, subject to his paying reasonable rent. If the Inamdars had bought and sold the interests of the tenant in the land, they had been dealing with properties to which they had no rights, and it was not good for any criticism at this stage to say that this Amendment to the Inam Bill was in the nature of confiscatory legislation. On the other-hand, it sought to give what was due to the tenant and asking Inamdars to give up the rights of their tenants which they have expropriated themselves.37

The main purpose of this Act was to confer the right of 'Kudivaram', as on millions of agriculturists though there was much opposition from the Inamdars. On their deputation to the Governor the Act was thrice returned to the Council before it could be passed. The Act also brought whole Inam villages under the definition of "estates".39

The Tamil Nadu wrote about the deputation of the Inamdars and about the

37 Nilkan Paramal Bobbili, p.63.

38 Kudivaram means a cultivator's share in the produce of the land held by him, as distinguished from the landlord's share which is known as Melvaram.

39 R.M.P 1933-34, p.XVIII.
memorandum submitted to the Governor as follows:

It is not proper to support the monopolistic rights of a few Inamdars and impose disabilities on lakhs of poor tenants thereby. If Justice is really to be dispensed to the people of this country, the Government should confiscate all Inam lands without giving any compensation whatsoever to the owners thereof. We appeal to the Viceroy to give his assent to the Bill passed by the Government of Madras, as many more beneficial measures like this have to be enacted in the interests of the ryots in India. 40

The Inams Act was regarded as the most progressive one conferring the rights of "Kudivaram" on thousands of tenants in Inam villages. It is true that no ministry in any province of the sub-continent ventured to bring forth such a radical legislation to protect the interests of the poor folk.

The Malabar Tenancy Bill

A much controversial tenancy bill that the Legislative Council of Madras ever debated was the celebrated Malabar Tenancy Bill. It was a timely legislation which gave a solace to the tenants of Malabar, who suffered from the ills of merciless eviction and excessive demands at the hands of Jarmis (mostly Nambudiri Brahmins) who were the unquestioned owners of the entire landed property in Malabar. This legislation was partially social in character. It aimed at rectifying the defects of the "Nayar Act", enacted in Cochin, Travancore and British Malabar. As the Nayar Act was found useless because of the permanent domination of the Jarmis in the economic field it was felt that certain vital changes were necessary in the system of land tenure. Hence the Malabar Tenancy Bill was introduced by Krishnan Nair in the Madras Legislative Council and

40 The Tamil Nadu, 14 June 1935 (Madras NNR, 1935).
it was passed with the support of the Justice Party on 2nd September 1926. The outstanding feature of this Bill was "the right of occupancy given in certain cases to the cultivating Kanamdars and Kuzhi Kanam or other tenants and to the cultivating Kanamdars and Kuzhikanam tenants." But the Governor refused his assent on the ground that "it took away from the members of one section of the community, without any adequate compensation, rights over property in which they had been confirmed by a century of legal decisions." However, the Bill was finally passed by the council on 1st March 1930. Under the Bill both the Jammis and the tenants stood to gain certain advantages. The first and foremost, the Jami had his customary rights recognised by law. Now he would be entitled statutorily not only to renewal of fees but also to fair rent. The Bill also secured to him the right to resume his land for his own bonafide use. The tenant on the other hand, whatever the nature of his tenancy whether verumpettam, Kanam or Kushikanam, had now a guarantee that he should not be arbitrarily evicted. It is to be noted here that the Justice Party both on the treasury bench and in the opposition espoused the cause of the poor tenants thereby proclaiming that it was a party in favour of the havenotes.

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\(^1\) RAMP 1925-26, p.XV.

\(^2\) Ibid., XVI

\(^3\) (a) Verumpettam means renting the simple produce of grounds against a yearly sum that leave little after paying the taxes.

(b) Kanam signifies usufructuary mortgage or a lease to the creditor.

(c) Kushikanam: usufructuary mortgage of a gardenland.

\(^4\) The Hindu, 22 Jan. 1930 (Madras NNR, 1930).
Social Sphere

The Justice Party which adopted "Social Justice" as one of its declared principles was able to "create a spirit of intelligent enquiry in the minds of the people and stirred the peaceful, pathetic contentment of the masses and . . . impelled them to take their rightful place in the administration of the country. It . . . stimulated a sense of self-respect in the minds of the members of the depressed classes . . . gained for them a position of vantage in the council of the land." 15

Fight Against Brahmin Monopoly

The communal representation for the non-Brahmins in the public services was one of the cherished goals of the Justice Party. From the beginning the Justice Party insisted that the interests of the various non-Brahmin communities should be taken care of in filling up the appointments to all grades. In the very first non-Brahmin Conference at Coimbatore in 1917 a resolution on public services with particular reference to the recommendations of the Public Services Commission was adopted. It reads as follows:

This Conference . . . beg to point out that, unless stringent rules are framed and carried out, the object of the recommendation will be defeated, and suggests that the following among other rules ought to be adopted:

a) When competent applicants belonging to different communities apply for a place, it should be given to the applicant belonging to the community which has not had due representation in the office or service.

b) Appointments should be so distributed that no more than forty per cent of the appointments are held by the same community in the same office or service.

15 Justice, Commemoration Day Supplement, 26 Feb. 1931
c) One third of the appointments of Sub-Magistrates and Deputy Tahsildars and a fair proportion of those of Deputy Collectors should be thrown open for direct recruitment, and preference should be given to deserving young men belonging to communities not duly represented in the services.46

As soon as the party assumed administrative responsibility of the Madras Province under the new constitutional constitution it started agitating for the representation of the non-Brahmins in public services. The recommendations of the Miller Committee Report47 of the Mysore state had deeply impressed the non-Brahmin leaders who wanted to implement such a scheme of giving the non-Brahmins in the Presidency a larger proportion of Government appointments. C. Thanikachalam Chetty, a prominent member of the Justice Party in the Legislative Council, moved a resolution on 5th August 1921 urging the Government of Madras to adopt the instructions issued by the Mysore Government. The above resolution reads as follows:

That this council recommends to the Government that a standing order be issued to every officer or board or body of officers authorised to make appointments to the public service to give preference to candidates from the Non-Brahman communities (including therein Christians, Muhammadans and members of the depressed classes) until a provision of at least 56% amongst the offices carrying a salary of Rs.100/- per mensem and upwards and a provision of 75% amongst offices carrying a salary less than Rs.100/- are reached within a period of seven years from this date so long as such candidates possess the minimum qualifications prescribed by the rules relating to appointment to the public services, although such candidates may be less qualified than the Brahman candidates.48

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Explaining the purpose of this resolution O. Thanikachalam Chetty observed:

This resolution provides a remedy for a long-standing, deep-seated and fostering sore from which the non-Brahmin communities have been suffering for a long time. In this Presidency, Sir, he continued to state, the non-Brahmins for decades past, have been kept down from rising higher, both in the matter of recruitment and in the matter of getting promotions, by the Brahmins who managed to capture higher appointments in the state, leaving the crumbs to their less fortunate brethren.  

There was a very heated and acrimonious debate over the resolution of O.T. Chetty. Views far and against the resolution were put forth. R. Venkataraman, a seasoned Justicite, pleaded before the house that the eagerness shown in the matter of communal representation was not an outcome of an inordinate craving for the loaves and fishes of office. But it emanated from the conviction that such a representation would serve as a "powerful stimulus to education and sure index to the civil recognition and the social responsibility of the community as a whole."  

There was no enthusiastic welcome to the resolution from the Executive Council. A.R. Knapp, its Home member viewed the resolution with consternation. Since the debate went on relentlessly A.R. Knapp accepted reluctantly the resolution with certain modifications.

The resolution as modified and accepted by Government runs below:

This council makes a recommendation to the Government to the effect that with a view to increasing the proportion of posts held by non-Brahmin communities the principles


50 Ibid., p. 131. It is also cited in B. Kesavanarayana, Political and Social Factors in Andhra (1900-1956), p. 306.
prescribed for the Revenue Department in Board's Standing Order No.128(2) be at once extended to all departments of Government, and be made applicable not only to the principal appointments but to posts of all grades, and the Government should issue orders accordingly and insist on their being enforced, and that to this end half-yearly returns showing the progress made should be submitted by the heads of such office, and that such return should be made available to members of the Legislative Council.\[51\]

The resolution was unanimously passed by the Legislative Council. In giving effect to this resolution, the Government of Madras issued a G.O. on 16th September, 1921 which is famously known as the First Communal G.O. (1) The Government of Madras in accordance with the G.O. directed that the principle prescribed for the Revenue Department in Board’s Standing Order No.128(2), on the subject of the distribution of appointments among various castes and communities, should be extended to appointments of all grades in the several departments of Government.

(2) All heads of departments and other officers empowered to make appointments were requested to adhere strictly to this principle in filling up vacancies in future.

(3) The G.O. required Heads of departments, collectors and District Judges to submit a half-yearly returns showing the number of men newly entertained in the permanent service during that period in respect to their own offices and subordinate offices under their control for the following categories: Brahmans, non-Brahman Hindus, Indian Christians, Muslims, Europeans and Anglo-Indians and others.\[52\]

\[51\] The Presidential Address at the Maharashtra Provincial Non-Brahmin Conference met at Satara on 16 Dec. 1922 by C. Thakurachellam Chetty, Published in R.N. Mitra, The Indian Annual Register, 1923, p.975.

\[52\] Public, G.O.613, 16 Sep. 1921.
Though the Government was earnest in implementing the G.O. in its true spirit the expression "newly and permanent" occurring in the G.O. were taken advantage of by heads of departments who were either Brahmins or under Brahmin influence. They resorted to many subterfuges to evade compliance with the order. In order to prevent the violation of the resolution accepted by the Government the Justice Party tabled a resolution" for the substitution of returns showing not merely the appointments made newly to permanent posts but return of all appointment whether permanent, temporary or acting, whether the officers appointed were appointed for the first time or promoted from subordinate grades."\textsuperscript{53}

None the less the resolution did not give any scope for discussion in the Legislative Council owing to the termination of the session. However, the Government recognised the existence of dissatisfaction regarding the inadequate nature of the returns called for by the G.O. of 16th September, 1921 and it also felt the necessity of giving fuller information of the return in order to show the progress made in the implementation of the policy in the matter of representation of the various communities in the public service. Hence the second communal G.O. was issued on 15th August 1922, even before the commencement of the next term of the council. This order was much more lengthier in its contents, more comprehensive in details, more definitive in its instruction than

\textsuperscript{53} The Presidential Address at the Maharashtra Provincial Non-Brahmin Conference met at Satara on 16 Dec. 1922 by C. Thakurachellam Chetty, published in H.N. Mitra, The Indian Annual Register, 1923, p.996; Public (Ordinary Series) 3.0.658 15 Aug. 1922; See E.F. Trischich, Politics and Social Conflict in South India, Appendix 3.
the earlier one. Its directions are as follows:

(1) Endeavours should always be made to divide the principal appointments in each district among several castes,

(2) In order to give effect to this policy the Government directed that the principle specified in the Board's Standing Order should be translated into action both at the time of initial recruitment and at every point at which men were promoted wholly by selection and not by seniority.

(3) Besides, the Government gave direction that yearly returns were to be made by the Heads of departments showing the extent to which each of the six main subdivisions of the communities was represented in each department.

The return was to be submitted only with regard to non-gazetted officers divided into two categories: one drawing Rs. 100/- and over, the other drawing from Rs. 37 to 100. As regards the gazetted officers the Government accepted the suggestion contained in another resolution moved in the council to the effect that a column indicating the community to which each officer belonged should be added to the Quarterly Civil List.

These orders mark a significant triumph for the Justice Party in its struggle against the monopoly of public services by a minority community namely Brahmins. By positively responding to the pressure of the Justice Party the Government of Fort St. George had accomplished one of its cherished goals. The very fact that the communal G.O.s remained only on record books show that there was much ado about nothing, until a G.O. on communal representation was passed by the Government of Madras

54 E.F. Irshick, Politics and Social Conflict in South India, p.237.
in 1928 adopting the principle of communal rotations in recruitment to public service.55

In fact the early success of the Justice Party encouraged it to press for further concessions from the Government in order to achieve its aims and objectives. The noble principles which lay behind the communal G.O.s have been incorporated in the Indian Constitution by the First Amendment Act passed in the year 1951. It cannot be denied that some of the ideals for which the Justice Party stood had not failed to fascinste even administrators like Jawaharlal Nehru.

Under Montford Reforms in the Transferred departments the ministers were expected to control the members of the Civil Service. But on the contrary they had no authority over the permanent officials. The promotions and postings including transfers were nominally within the purview of the authority of the Governor. But what was in practice was altogether different. It was only the Chief Secretary of the Government who actually possessed powers to do anything with the service matters. Paradoxically the minister had no authority over his own secretary.

However, this anomaly was well recognised by the Indian ministers and European officials. Hence a spirit of accommodation between these two categories emerged in view of the changed character of the administration.56

The communal representation in public services that the Justice Party

55 Public, G.O.1129, 15 Dec. 1928. This is also quoted in E.F. Irshick's Politics and Social Conflict in South India, p.212. According to this G.O. and out of every twelve government posts "five had to go to non-Brahmin Hindus, two to Brahmans, two to Muslims, two to Anglo-Indians or Christians, and one to the Depressed Classes (Earijans)".

56 Keralaputra, The Working of Dyarchy in India, p.130.
achieved by pressurising the Government encouraged the Justice Ministers to Indianise the services at higher level in their respective departments. It was the Rajah of Panagal who appointed Indians in the place of Europeans especially in medical departments. "His policy as the Minister of Public Health was marked by a spirit of progressiveness... Within the limits laid down by the Secretary of State he pressed for the Indianisation of services and made his pressure felt." The Vizagapatnam Medical College and the Lady Willingdon Medical School for women were the monumental testimonies to his initiative and constructive labours in the processes of Indianisation of services. In the matter of Indianisation of services even the Rajah of Bobbili had to wage a relentless fight with the British I.C.S. officers. Indianisation of services in the departments of Transferred half was nothing but a logical extension of communal representation which the Justice Party cherished.

The Hindu Religious Endowments Act

A far-reaching social legislation which the Justice Party enacted during its regime was the Hindu Religious Endowments Act. It was a more revolutionary measure than any of the Acts that the Justice Party attempted to bring forth. As a non-Brahmin political organisation it had pledged to fight against the domination of the Brahmins in religious sphere also. Its attitude towards the religious and charitable institutions was distinctly made clear in the very first conference of the party held at Coimbatore 1917. The conference by means of a resolution protested against the utilization of chutram and other

charitable funds for the founding of Sanskrit schools and recommended to
the Government and to the trustees of such institutions the use of those
funds whenever available for the establishment of primary schools. The
speakers on this resolution did not fail to reveal that "it was only the
Brahmin community which benefited by the establishment of Sanskrit schools."
"Not even a single non-Brahmin was admitted into such institutions
despite the fact that it was mostly their money with which these charitable
endowments were instituted." Dr. T.M. Nair while supporting the resolu-
tion pointed out how the Mahant of Tirupati utilized the mutt funds in an
objectionable manner by starting a Sanskrit school. He vehemently criticised
that the funds of the Tirupati mutt was mostly utilized for starting
exclusively Brahmin institutions. This practice, Dr. T.M. Nair wanted
to put down. The monopoly of Brahmans in religious institutions, the
Justice Party decided to fight by bringing a legislation on Hindu Religious
Endowments which fell within the spheres of the Transferred half. More
than this, the polluted atmosphere that prevailed in the ecclesiastical
sphere of South India warranted revolutionary enactment. The Hindu
temples and mutts in Madras Presidency had enormous "properties either
through endowments or through the accumulation of income derived from
pilgrims." It was unfortunate that the mutts which were originally endowed
for charitable and religious purposes had virtually become the private
property of the individuals under whose control the mutts were. They
maintained no account and auditing of accounts was a thing unheard of in
their annals. The funds were utilized in anyway they chose. Though there
was absolute necessity on the part of the Government "to correct the abuse

58 T. Varadarajulu Naidu, (Comp.,) The Justice Movement, 1917,
Sec. II, pp.21-22.
of power by committees and individuals placed in charge of Hindu endowment funds", it, in conformity with its declared policy of religious neutrality, could never have intervened and legislated for its control. None the less when the Justice Party came to power, it decided to eradicate the abuses accumulated in the portals of religious institutions in pursuance of its policy. Hence a comprehensive legislation on religious endowments was framed and the bill was moved on 18th December 1922.

The Object of the Bill

"The object of the Bill, which was to supersede as far as the Madras Presidency was concerned the Government of India Act, XX of 1863 was to ensure the efficient administration of Hindu Religious Endowments in the Presidency."59 The special feature of the bill was the constitution of a special board on the lines of Charities Commission in England to supervise and control the management of religious endowments. It "placed all the temples - except those which were strictly proprietary and private - directly under its control."60 It gave enormous powers to the Board to take over the management of these endowments in case of maladministration. It was also invested with the power of inspecting them and get their accounts audited. A significant provision of the bill which aroused a lot of hue and cry was the provision for diverting the funds of the religious institutions. Accordingly the Board was given authority to divert the surplus funds of religious endowments for purposes of public utility such as "education in the Hindu religion, sanitation of pilgrim

59 RAMP, 1922-23, p.7.

60 Keralaputra, The Working of Dyarchy in India, p.86.
centres and other objects of allied interest, which would benefit the Hindu community as a whole." A large body of public opinion in the Presidency was directed towards opposing the bill. Representations to this effect were made to the Governor requesting him to withhold his assent. But Memorials appreciating the Government's decision to give up the policy of neutrality were sent to the Governor. However, the bill was passed by an absolute majority and sent on to the Governor for his assent. After an elaborate discussion with the Viceroy he decided to return the bill to the Legislative Council raising objections to some of the provision of the bill with a request for the reconsideration of them. In the light of the suggestions given by the Governor the bill was amended and was introduced in the next council and passed into law as Act I of 1925.

It was subsequently reserved for the assent of the Viceroy as per section 87 (3) of the Government of India Act of 1919. The Viceroy gave his assent justifying that the bill contained no provision vitally objectionable on principle to merit a veto. As soon as the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India had given their assents, the Act was at once put into forces. Of all the Acts it was the only Act which took long number of years to pass. The Council sat more than eighty five times to discuss and debate the various provisions of the Act. Approximately 1200 amendments were introduced in the Local Legislative Council. Amendments of drastic nature were totally rejected. However amendments of minor nature were accepted. Despite the long drawn battle the contents of the bill were not in anyway diluted. The original spirit of the bill

61 Ibid., p.87.

Do Unto Others As You Would Never Do Unto Yourself.

Hon'ble the Raja of Panagal, casting his Religious Endowment net wide enough to haul in the Temples and Mutts of S. India: "Help, brothers, in dragging this net in; we shall have plenty to make us merry, each in his own way. Come, I shall make you fishers of Temples."

Sir M. C. T. Muthia Chettiar: "Yes, Raja, we shall all help you; but save me the Chidambaram Temple. It is too good to—

H. H. the Raja of Ramnad: "Certainly it is too great and good to go the way of other Temples.

Mr. Muthukumaraswami: "You can net all others; but save Chidambaram. I can tell you plenty of hoary facts about it."

Rao Bahadur O. Thanikachalam Chetti: "Do what you like to others. You can dip your pen in blood and write their doom. But save the Temples of Madras."

Dr. U. Rama Rao: "Let me also raise my voice to save the mutt of Udupi, for it is not meet that I should hold my tongue and not speak out on behalf of a Western mutt having myself come from the West."

A Voice: Save Madura; it is historic.

Another Voice: Save Rameswaram; it had to be bridged over.

A Third Voice: Save my Thambiran; he knows English.

A Fourth Voice: Save Sree----; it is in my district.

Rajah of Panagal: "Well, my friends, at that rate, why pass the Bill at all? Each one of you wants to save your own pet on religious, sentimental or electioneering grounds. Verily, Reforms, social or religious, are what we shall be glad to enforce on others without following them or inconveniencing ourselves."
was retained. It may well be regarded as the greatest piece of social and religious legislation which the Justice Party brought forth. It cut the very grass root of an organised system of corruption and misuse of funds that had been flourishing in temples and mutts for years past.  

Rural Reconstruction

The Justice Party inaugurated various progressive schemes of rural development to meet the needs of agrarian population. The Justice Party government, launched ambitious plans of rural reconstruction. But the financial stringency that diarchy imposed on Transferred half, contributed towards making the task of rural reconstruction more difficult than it should have been. It cannot be gainsaid that rural reconstruction programmes were anticipated by the Justice Party many years back.

Public Health

The village reconstruction was one of the tasks personally undertaken by the Rajah of Panagal when he was the First Minister. Justice Party, as a welfare measure, during 1922 and 1923, introduced a scheme to prevent the spread of diseases. A mobile district health unit was organised in each district to rush to any spot where the slightest indication of an epidemic was noted. These mobile units were capable of putting down the sporadic diseases before they could spread over to wider areas. The statistics of the early 20's of the present century show that the scheme of preventive medicine had done considerable good to the people of the Presidency. Epidemics like cholera, smallpox and plague were effectively controlled by these medical units. During the

63 Justice, Commemoration Day Supplement, 26 Feb. 1931.
64 Justice, 19 July, 1935.
as the Chief Minister, office of the Rajah of Panagal he founded rural dispensaries in different parts of the Presidency to look after the health of the villagers. Thus a far-reaching scheme of village sanitation was started by the Justice Party for the welfare of the rural population.

**Forming of Village Roads**

To augment the village economy and to provide adequate marketing facilities for the village produce the Justice Party inaugurated a scheme of laying village roads. These roads not only formed as a link between villages and the towns but also provided excellent marketing facilities for the agricultural products of the villagers. During the ministry of the Rajah of Panagal the Government of Madras gave a grant of Rs.3 lakhs to each district with a request to supplement it with an equal amount and devote it for the specific purpose of forming village roads. When Rathnasabhapathy Mudaliar was the president of the District Board of Coimbatore 1,000 miles of new village roads were formed entirely due to the goodwill and encouragement of the Justice Ministry. Thus the village reconstruction scheme became one of the successful endeavours of the Justice Party.

**Slum Clearance and Housing Schemes**

The Corporation of Madras, the formidable fortress of the Justice Party from its inception, adopted various schemes to make the metropolis a clean city. The Town Improvement Committee of the Corporation which gave Slum Clearance and Housing Schemes top priorities did conspicuous service in making the city of Madras a place of good health and hygiene. Model houses were built for the poor. Public bathing houses

65 Justice, 19 July 1935.
Had a Public Bathing House constructed and a Park known as Venkataramanjanlu Naidu's Park formed at Komaleeswarapet.

Model houses built for the poor by the corporation at the Egmore chery at the instance of Mr. T. Sundara Rao Naidu.
were constructed at congested areas where there was scarcity of water. Many of the schemes introduced by the Justice Party served as examples to be emulated by the succeeding governments. For instance, the Slum Clearance and Housing Schemes of the Justice Party were perhaps the nucleus of the present day Slum Clearance and Housing Boards.

The Uplift of the Depressed Classes

One of the main planks of the programme of the Justice Party was the upliftment of the depressed classes. A community which had been cursed for generations as untouchables acquired only during the time of the Justice Party government the statutory right of entering all public institutions, using public wells and public roads. As a social welfare measure the Government of the Justice Party implemented a scheme of assignment of waste lands in every ryotwary village for the people of depressed classes. Of the 7,36,000 acres of land reserved for them 4,18,000 were assigned upto 31st March 1935. It was only the Justice Party which believed in the principles of equality that stretched a helping hand to the Panchamas to raise up to the level of caste Hindus. The campaign organised by the Justice Party for temple entry for the people of depressed classes in various places such as Virudhachalam is to be noted here. The famous communal G.C., one of the major works of the Justice Party, gave them a splendid opportunity to occupy high official positions like Deputy Collectors and other dignified jobs in Madras Civil Service.

66 Justice, 19 July 1935.
68 Justice, 26 Sep. 1928.
Since there were no sufficient men with necessary qualifications certain concessions were granted to them till the Justice Party was in power. The minimum general educational qualification for appointments to subordinate services was appreciably lowered and the age limit was increased to twenty-seven in the case of Ministerial services and twenty-six in the case of other services for the depressed classes. The party felt proud in renaming the depressed classes as the Adi Dravidas. In this regard it is apt to state that in 1920 Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar moved a resolution in the Corporation of Madras to change the caste title "Panchama" to Adi Dravida. This change was actually desired by the Fariah Maha Jan Sabha which presented a memorial to the Government requesting it to give them the ancient and proper name Dravidian instead of Faraiya. Convinced of the necessity of such a change the Justice Party passed a resolution in the Local Legislative Council in 1922 recommending that the name Adi Dravida should replace the caste titles such as Panchama and Faraiya. It also compelled the Government of Madras to give them adequate representation in the Local Legislative Council and bodies. Accordingly one Adi Dravida was given representation on the Simon Committee, another was sent to the Round Table Conference, yet another one was a recipient of the title of Dewan Bahadur. Many of the programmes of the Justice Party launched for the elevation of the depressed classes were far ahead of the times and served as forerunner to the programmes of Gandhi.

71 Ibid.
72 R. Srinivasan was the only person among the depressed classes to hold that title in the whole of India.
The Enfranchisement of Women

In spite of the fact that the Montford Reforms aimed at the progressive realisation of responsible government in India it was retrograde in certain respects. It denied the women the right to seek election to the Legislative Council. The Justice Party which was noted for its egalitarian principles championed the cause of the women and fought for their enfranchisement when it came to power in 1920. Though this issue had to be fought at national level within India and in the British Parliament, the Justice Party had chosen to fight for this issue in the Legislative Council. Krishnan Nair, a leading jisticite moved a resolution on 1st April 1921 that "the qualifications which entitle men to vote be made applicable to women." This was seconded by the Rajah of Ramnad with humour and wit.

In my family a very strict gosha system prevails and therefore I rise to second the resolution most heartily because I do not think that, that ought to be a matter which should prevent the giving of this franchise to women. A lawyer friend of mine has told me that under the General Clauses Act and under the Evidence Act man includes woman. I came across an inscription, relating to Uttaramerur Chatturvedamangalam, I think in Tanjore district, from which I learnt that women even a thousand years ago were serving on several committees such as Garden Committee, Tank Committee, etc. If this is so I fail to see why they should not be made eligible now with the advance of education and liberal views in the twentieth century.73

This resolution was warmly supported by several non-officials and finally passed by a majority of thirty-four votes.74 This measure which illustrates the broad-visioned liberal spirit of the Justice Party

73 Victor Trench, Lord Willingdon in India, p.122.
stands as a supreme piece of legislation with an avowedly social reform bias. The liberation of women from the thraldom of cruel customs and traditions was one of the declared principles of the Justice Party. It vehemently opposed dedication of girls to temples. When Nuthulakshmi Reddi introduced a bill in the Local Legislative Council on 2nd February 1929 for the abolition of Devadasi system by seeking an amendment to the Hindu Religious Endowments Act the Justice Party, though sitting in opposition rendered whole-hearted support and co-operation. It was thus proved beyond doubt that the Justice Party was revolutionary in deeds and in spirit.

The Cultural Revolt of the Non-Brahmins

The Justice Party aimed at undermining the domination of the Brahmin in religious sphere. Some of the leaders of the non-Brahmin community endeavoured to study Vedas and to chant mantras in order to dispense with the services of the Brahmin priests in religious functions. The Vysyas were the first people to revolt against the Brahmin domination inasmuch as the Brahmins denied them the right to Upanayana and to perform various religious ceremonies according to Vedic rites. So they began to learn Vedas and other religious literature. Atmuri Lakshminarasimha Somayajulu, a leading member of the Vysya Community of Telugu region was perhaps the first from the community to pave a new path and perform yajna. "This was followed by many Vysyas who rejected the services of the Brahmins in social and religious functions and a nominee of their community was asked to perform various religious rites." Leading Justices like K.V. Reddy

75 E.F. Irshick, Politics and Social Conflict in South India, p.257
Naidu for the marriage of his eldest son K.V. Gopalsamy boycotted the Brahmin priest. Similarly Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar conducted the marriage of his daughter, Tripurasundariammal without the services of the Brahmin purohit. The sacred ceremonies connected with the marriage were conducted by two non-Brahmin priests well versed in it and especially brought down from Coimbatore. 77 The Kammas of the Andhra region in order to boycott Brahmins trained some Kammas in priest-craft and designated them as Kamma-Brahmins. For all religious ceremonies of the Kammas the services of the Kamma-Brahmins were utilised. Special training schools were started for the purpose of teaching Vedic literature and mantras at Kollur in Tenali Taluk. 78

This endeavour, though an expression of the Doctrine of Self-Respect had a very little success and its impact on the masses was limited. In spite of the fact that it has made much headway in the 50s and in the 60s of the present century it should be admitted that the cultural tie between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins was stronger and it prevented complete alienation of one from the other.

Thus the performance of the Justice Party in social sphere was a record of brilliant achievement. However its policies and programmes were often condemned as communal. It was a democratic party with egalitarian principles which it strove to achieve step by step despite the constitution limitations imposed by Montford Reforms.

77 Justice, 28 June 1928.

78 B. Kesavanarayana, Political and Social Factors in Andhra (1900-1956), pp. 310-311.