CHAPTER V

A SOCIAL REFORMER AND THE PATRIOT
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The institution of untouchability, although not of a recent growth, was 'the most painful difficult social problem with which history has even cursed the civilized people.' "For Gandhiji Hinduism had been comparatively a tolerant and progressive religion, but its intimate association with the caste had rendered it a calamity to the people. In his attempt, Gandhiji, to create a force of integral nationalism in order to make India one unit, he tried to reconcile the Brahmins and non-Brahmins, the untouchables and the so-called higher castes. In short he was opposed to the superiority and inferiority complex."1

By 1919 Gandhi had considerably brought the Congress under his influence and this enabled him to pursue his politico social philosophy. His reign shaped India's destiny and an unflinching struggle against untouchability began. He never compromised on this ground.

By the meeting of the working committee at Baradi, removal of untouchability became an integral part of the Congress programme. Thus the congress, as Gandhi shaped it, differed from its older self and from the liberals in its revolutionary conception of the struggle. Gandhi was determined to fight the evil of unbtouchability with fervour. Year after year till the forty-fifth session held at Karachi,

the Congress reiterated to root out untouchbility. The report of the Congress sub-committee, appointed at the working committee meeting at Calcutta in January 1929, the year of the historic session at Lahore, indicated considerable success in getting access to wells, temples and schools.

Dr. Ambedkar had no confidence in the Congress. "For he feared in case it gained political power it would lean towards the Hindus who were orthodox in their approach to the depressed classes. He demanded, in and for each province and in and for India, it shall be the duty and obligation of the legislative and the executive or any other authority established by law to make adequate provision for the education, sanitation, and recruitment in public services and other matters of social and political advancement of the depressed classes and to do nothing that will prejudicially affect them. In addition to this he had demanded separate electorate for untouchables."\(^2\)

Mahatma Gandhiji was against the separate electorate. He announced his epic 'Fast unto death' to begin on September 20, 1932, while still in prison. Gandhiji's words reverberated throughout India.

Rabindranath Tagore also believed that the issue, on which Gandhi fasted, would brave to be carried on to the finale and by 'every one of us'.

\(^2\)Ibid., P.104, 105.
The scheduled castes in Indian society represent the weakest group in the socio-economic structure, whose sufferings, miseries and disabilities can be traced back to thousands of years, when the social institutions of 'Varansharma' and 'Caste' were created. The oppressive and discriminative Hindu religious codes have waged an inhuman war on the socio-economic, cultural, educational and political life of the scheduled castes. Much has been done now a day for the emancipation of the untouchables, still they have remained weak, depressed, and oppressed because of the age-old oppressive system. Even after nearly five decades of independence there has been no perceptible change in the socio-economic and educational levels of these people for various reasons.

The Hindu religion has condemned these people as untouchables. The caste system is mainly responsible for the social disharmony among different sections of people. Caste in India has shaken the very base of Indian social system. The roots of exploitation are found in the caste system itself. The caste is a closed unit, which keeps people under prohibition, fear and separation. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the staunch critic of Hinduism says, "the literature of Hinduism is full of caste genealogies in which an attempt is made to give a noble origin to upper castes. This anti social spirit is not confirmed to caste alone, it has gone deeper and has poisoned the mutual relations."^3

Manu, the ancient lawgiver, wrote in his 'Manusmriti' that the

creator has created four Varnas Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudras. This is illogical, unscientific and irrational, which divides the society in to water light compartments and infuses the idea of high and low, superior and inferior among the people. Acxording to the code of Manu says J. Wilson, “The king shall never execute a Brahmin though convicted of possible crimes but may banish him with all his property secured and his body unhurt. No greater crime is known on the earth.” Thus law givers in the Hindu society have not only reduced the social status of Shudras but also degraded their economic position.

Untouchability has constituted one of the major instances of social injustice in India. At the outskirts of any village or town, at a respectable distance, their lie sprinkled the small huts of these unfortunate folk. They are isolated not only topographically but also socially from the rest of the population. They are systematically excluded from all religious and social activities of the rest of the people. They are forbidden to use the common tanks, wells, schools, hospitals, choultries and temples. In the village their main job is to clean the area, to utilize the skin of dead cattle for making useful goods like footwear, and to assist the peasants on simple manual work. In bigger towns they act as -scavengers and clean the gutters, streets and lavatories. In short their main function is to see that the rest of population may breathe a fresher and cleaner air. Their reward for this service is social isolation and degradation. Their chief sin is

the sin of being born to parents belonging to a certain group.

In the Calcutta congress session of 1917, Harijan movement came to be formally recognized as part of the congress programme. Gandhiji, the helmsman of the movement at the national level, waged a ceaseless war on the evil of untouchability through speeches and writings. It is interesting here to recall that once during the political conference at Bijapur, Gandhiji was called upon to address an audience on a resolution for the removal of untouchability. Before starting his speech he wanted to know if there was a single Harijan among the audience. On hearing that there was none, he sank back despondent and silent. Such was the significance he attached to this problem. “In 1919 Gandhiji took over the editorship of the paper, 'Young India', and wasted no time in turning it into an effective champion of the Harijan cause. In the issue dated 8th August 1920, he declared that untouchability was a blot on humanity itself. Thus with his blessing the movement began to gather momentum. The Malabar Vaikom temple entry Satyagraha and the Kerala Guruvayur temple entry Satyagraha were organized under his general guidance.

On 2nd August 1931, thanks to his efforts, a private temple and well were thrown open to the Harijans in Ahmedabad. As usual, Gandhiji was reasonable and fair-minded with his opponents. He conceded that private temples ought not to be made targets of any Satyagraha unless they were traditionally open to the public. As for himself, the Mahatma made it a point not to enter any temple, which Harijans were not allowed to enter. In 1931 the Karachi Congress
passed a resolution on fundamental rights, including equality and thus placed the Harijans on a footing of equality with the rest.\(^5\)

The Round Table Conference of 1931, which Gandhiji attended, revealed how the British statesmen tried to exploit the Harijans to their advantage. Both Dr. Ambedkar and Mr. Jinnah seemed to have played into the hands of these statesmen. Dr. Ambedkar pleaded for a separate electorate for the Harijans. Gandhiji opposed it as it would undermine the unity of India. On 12th August, 1932, the Government announced its communal Award, accepting the principle of a separate electorate. Gandhiji decided to undertake a fast unto death on the issue from 20th September 1932. This decision, while plunging the country into gloom, gave a tremendous fillip to the Harijan movement. Countrywide support to the Harijan cause was eloquently demonstrated. The fast had its effect, and a compromise was announced on September 26th, 1932, upon which the Mahatma broke his fast. This compromise did away with the separate electorate, and by a somewhat complicated scheme assured the untouchables their proper share in political representation.

On September 30, 1932, an association for the eradication of untouchability was started, with Ghanshyamdas Birla as its President and Amritlal Thakkar as its secretary. Later it was named the Harijan Sevak Snagha. It opened branches all over the country. After his release from prison in 1933, Gandhiji decided, in the teeth of

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considerable opposition with the freedom movement, to set apart one whole year for the Harijan cause. From November 1933 onwards he undertook a strenuous all India tour and campaign in the interest of the Harijan movement. In 1936 the Travancrore Government threw open all temples officially to the Harijans; in all in that state, some 1526 temples became accessible to the Harijans. In 1937 the Congress took part in the elections and won them in seven provinces. The Congress in office encouraged the Harijans by opening tanks, wells, and choultaries and schools to them and by giving them Government land for cultivation.

HARIJAN MOVEMENT IN KARNATAKA:

In Karnataka, as in other parts of India there was no dearth of reformers who tried to alleviate the suffering of Harijan. Earlier, the reformers like the Budha, Basava, Ramanuja, Kabir, Gurunanak, Swami Ramadas, saint Tukaram and later Swami Vivekananda and Swami Shradhananda had attacked the evil of untouchability. The Arya Samaj and the Brahma Samaj revolted against such evils in the Hindu society. Mahatma Gandhi is an outstanding champion of the untouchables. He succeeded in giving the Harijans Movement an All India basis. He persuaded the Indian National Congress to accept the Harijans uplift as an integral part of the freedom movement. The Mahatma was aware that it was primarily a socio-religious issue. But he also knew that it had political implications. He knew that the British were attempting to wean the Harijans away form the national cause;
he felt that India's case for freedom would be normally vulnerable so long as India tolerated such an evil as untouchability.

It was during the 1917 session of the Congress at Calcutta that the Harijan movement came to be recognized formally as part of the Congress programme. Gandhiji waged a ceaseless war on the evil of untouchbility through speeches and writings.

Hosamani Siddappa violated the social conditions for the sake of emancipation of the untouchables. He implemented the programmes of Harijan movement in Haveri. He was aware of the worst conditions of the untouchables everywhere. In spite of the reformative works made by many like Basavanna and others, still the problem was green. In Haveri Harijans were illiterate. Their shadow also was prohibited to touch the upper caste people. They were not allowed to touch the water in the public pond and are not allowed to the educational facilities. Hence Hosamani Siddappa thought that it was his earnest duty to eradicate the evil of untouchbility and to uplift the untouchables, along with the fighting for the freedom to India.

Karnataka has produced a long line of great reformers who have sought to destroy the evil of untouchbility. The religious reformers here tackled the problem with rare courage and understanding. The major figure in this connection is, beyond doubt, Basavanna who brought about a great social and religious revolution in Karnataka in the 12th century. Basavanna and Devara Dasimayya possessed a unique and comprehensive socio-religious vision of an egalitarian society. Basavanna gave his movement a clear social
content. He generated a popular movement, which shook the very foundations of the existing social order; its consequences are felt even to this day. Once he declared in his forcible but simple manner, 'Brahmin or outcaste, all devotees of Shiva are one.' The Vachanakaras, who popularised the tenets of Veerashaiva revolution, became the best exponents of the cause of social justice. The egalitarian idea was also advanced. The 'Dasas' must be mentioned in this context. Purandara Dasa and Kanaka Dasa protested against the practice of untouchbility in some of their devotional songs. The great poet Sarvagna with his scorching satire did not spare this social evil. Thus Karnataka had a distinguished record of protest against untouchbility. With this background Karnataka was very hospitable to the Harijan movement.

"One of the abiding results of the movement was the production of writings pertaining to it. In this connection mention must be made of Pundur Laxminarayana Puninchalhya's poem, Harijana Sandhana, published in 1934, which helped Gandhiji in making the Harijan cause popular in Karnataka during his tour. Pandit Taranath in his speeches advocated the Harijan cause. Hardekar Manjappa wrote a book on the theme, entitled Adijanara Sudharane, and also he wrote a number of brilliant editorials on this subject in his paper Sharana Sandesha, during 1932-1934. K. F. Patils's Removal of Untouchbility is the most systematic account of the movement."6

Hosamani Siddappa was not in the habit of writing. He was a

6. Ibid., P.434.
practical man. Himself practiced all his thoughts as a model to his fellow beings. He advocated the Hindus, who were practicing untouchbility, to give up the practice and to treat everyone equal. Since they are also born like us, opines Hosamani Siddappa, and we all breath the same air, touch the same land, and when we are all human beings it is our bounden duty to treat the Harijans equally like human beings. No God says about untouchbility and no religion advocates untouchability. It is not a sin to be born in such class or to have social interactions with the Harijans. The Varanasharma is partial and one sided. It does not give equal status to all classes in the society. In fact we make classes for the convenience of our own demands in the life. “The classes made on the basis of labour does not create superiority or inferiority. No one is superior t other. If anybody think and act so, they are making sin and not the untouchables. Every one and the class in the society are depending upon others for he satisfaction of the demands of their day-to-day life. None is confined to a single kind of duty. If necessary and possible anyone can practice any kind of duty. Hence all are equal.”

Hosamani Siddappa was the staunchest supporter of the Harijan movement. His practicability regarding the issue cannot be paralleled with others particularly in Karnataka. Siddappa Hosamani’s belief was that political revolution in India was based substantially on social and economic discontent, and that mere political freedom was not adequate. In fact Mahatma Gandhiji’s

revolutionary movement was political. The uplift of the depressed class and the Khadi movement, the former social and the latter economic played a vital role in that revolution.

The part played by Hosamani Siddappa to eradicate the evil of untouchability was remarkable and glorious. Despite the reforms of the reformists Karnataka was still facing the problem severely. This movement started as a tributary to the national movement. When the Harijan Sevak Sangh was started in 1933, Karnataka was in the forefront of the Harijan Movement. Branches of this sangha were soon started in Bijapur, Belgaum, Karwar, Mangalore, Coorg and Bellary with Hubli as the Head Quarter. G.D. Desai writes, "The service rendered by Hosamani Siddappa to the Hirijan Sevaka Sangha was appreciable and unforgettable." 8

When Gandhiji toured in Karnataka in connection with the movement, he met with great enthusiasm everywhere. Among the leaders in the movement in North Karnataka, mention must be made of Hosamani Siddappa, Veeranagouda Patil and his wife, and many others. A Harijan Balikarshama for Harijan girls was started in direct response to Gandhiji’s appeal for Harijan uplift during his tour. At the same time Hosamani Siddappa also started a hostel for the Harijan Children at Haveri. But in many writings about freedom movement in Karnataka mention has not been made about this. Due to the efforts

of Hosamani Siddappa the hostel came into existence and many Harijan children got its benefit. Hostels in Hubli and in Haveri were started for the upliftment of the Harijan. Siddumathi Mylar, wife of the great hero of freedom movement, Mylar Mahadev was an active participant in the movement.

In the old Mysore region, the leaders in the movement were Gopalswamy Iyenger, H.C. Dasappa, and Yoshodharamma Dasappa. The Government of old Mysore helped the Harijans. Hostels were stated for their benefit. Scholarships, free ships and loans were liberally granted to the Harijan students. It is no exaggeration to claim that old Mysore was advancing the cause of the Harijans educationally as well as in the matter of employment. In Karnataka as a whole, there was not much done for the cause of Harijan temple entry. However, these efforts for the Harijans did succeed in drawing the Harijan youth into the freedom struggle. Karnataka also gave liberally to the Harijan fund and thus advanced the Harijan cause.

Many freedom fighters got married to untouchables. The selection of life partner from the untouchable class again helped the movement practically. For instance Ramananda Mannangi, one of the freedom fighters of Haveri Taluk, Jangamanakoppa, was married to a Harijan lady, while he was in the movement. She also was an activist. Both inspired others in the national movement. Their marriage and their life were very good example for tolerance and love.

Hosamani Siddappa did not wish to publicise his programmes and their implementation for the removal of untouchbility. Even today
the Harijans in Haveri remember gratefully the service rendered by Hosamani Siddappa for their community. Because of the control of the press by the Brahmins at that time he could not get due publicity of his work done in this field. Though there are not enough records of his service, the work done by him is still green in the memory of Haveri people. Even Hosamani Siddappa had not the habit of writing articles for newspapers and periodicals. But the citizens of Haveri from a child to the age-old man speak proudly about him and his service in Haveri. The people, especially the untouchables in Haveri were very lucky to have a leader like Hosamani Siddappa who produced his thoughts on secular base and treated every one equally. Also he taught the same to everyone.

**HARIJANS IN HIS FAMILY FUNCTIONS:**

Mahatma Gandhi says that Hinduism and Hindu people are fine but the practices in the religion have polluted the society. For many the ‘Shudras (Untouchables or Harijans) are to be kept at outskirts of the village and town. They are born to be ruled whereas the Brahmins are born to rule. Thus he goes on saying about the negative conditions of the untouchables. The Indians blindly followed dharma shastras. The Harijans were ill-treated. Despite the reformative works and policies of government still we find the Harijans in the same wretched condition at the outskirts of the villages and towns. Even today this problem is grave. We can’t even imagine the ill treatment done to the Harijans in the ancient India. Even during the freedom
movement the problem was not solved. The British Government also
did not pay attention to it.

Hosamani Siddappa, born in lingayath family, was a staunch
follower of Basava of the 12th century. Basava, a shivasharana,
treaded all equally and taught the same through his writings. He
established the Veerashaiva Dharma in which no caste or class was
found. The same ideology was followed by Hosamani Siddappa. He
started the movement even in the midst of great opposition of
orthodox Hindus. The incident that happened in his house at the time
of his daughter's engagement mirrors his firmness regarding the
removal of untouchability. Even he was ready to sacrifice the
relationship settled for his daughter for the sake of protecting the
dignity of untouchables.

Hosamani Siddappa's only daughter Siddalingamma's
engagement function was arranged at his house in Haveri.
Davanagere people, with their friends and relatives, were present at
the function. Since Hosamani Siddappa was a leader of the freedom
movement in the North Karnataka, a social worker and a great
popular lawyer of that part. Many people had come to his house to
bless his daughter. As soon as the function started, the relatives
present in the house started murmuring. They were unhappy because
Hosamani Siddappa had invited many Harijans for the function. And
also the servant in the house, who was to bring water, was also an
untouchable. In fact there was no such tradition to restrict the entry of
Harijans in the house. The new relatives, who did not have any
knowledge of this, were shocked to see Harijans in Hosamani
Siddappa's house. Then they started alleging on Siddappa.
It was the time, when even the shadow of the untouchables was prohibited to reach the higher-class people. It was like swimming against the flood. The deep-rooted customs and traditions in the society had made the people blind. It was not an easy task to tame the people. But Siddappa had belief in the principles of the great social reformist and Shivasharn, Basavanna. He alone started the movement against such inhuman customs. He was firm in his stand.

When Siddappa knew about the unhappiness of the new relatives, he was on the horns of a dilemma—whether to please the new relatives or to stick to humane principles. If any other person were there in such a situation, naturally he/she would have chosen the first option. He did not consider the family interest. He decided even to give up the relationship settled for his daughter's marriage. The interest and well-being of his daughter was minor in front of the ill treatment of the untouchables. His humane heart did not like to hurt the untouchables. But the bitter incident his wife, Parvathemma could not swallow.

Parvathemma was also an ideal wife. She was also in the dilemma of taking decision. She did not want to lose the relationship for her daughter, Siddalingamma. But at the same time she was not ready to agree with the guests who were demanding that the Harijans be kept away separately in the function. “Then Siddappa tactfully settled the matter by asking them—‘is there any drinking water pond in your native place’. They said yes. Then he explained that the pond would be always kept open and there would be none to guard it always. If a dog or some other animal touched the water with its dirty
mouth in which it had eaten any kind of foul things, what you would do for that. Is that not spoiling your water? You are not bothered about the animals that are really dangerous but you are worried about the human beings that too who are like you. That shows your foolishness.”

“The guests in the house felt ashamed of themselves. They realized the truth, which was explained by Siddappa. Actually they were not ready to sit by the side of the Harijan. But a well educated invitee, Sri Ghatti Kambli, the Haveri Mamaledar, was clean, disciplined and in good position. But only because of his birth in the Harijan class nobody was ready to treat him equally. That did hurt Hosamani Siddappa. He said-’I am not bothered about the consequences of my decision. I am not ready to get back from war that I have declared against untouchability. Ghatti Kambli is my friend and my guest today. I have decided to sit with him for food. If any of you has the objection can sit separately, or even you may return to your place. Ghatti Kambli is a well disciplined human being and that is sufficient to love him.”

Hosamani Siddappa said, “Some among you are not clean like him. Caste or class should not be a bar to make good friends.”

Hosamani Siddappa was always right in his way of thinking. His skilful and logical thinking and analyzing of the matters made others

11. Ibid., P.5
to keep mum. None of them tried to raise their heads. He was of the opinion that—"these castes were not made by God, we made them for our convenience. No separate arrangements would be made for each caste people everywhere. He said—the railway department had not made separate bogies to each caste people, like bogie for Harijans', Lingayaths', Brahmins', Christchains' etc. Travellers of all castes sit together during the journey. In the same way if anybody goes to an officer's house to get the things done, there the caste will not be a bar to receive hospitality there."¹²

For Hosamani Siddappa the foot wears are to be kept out of the threshold, and not the footwear makers. He was a great humanist and reformist who provided better environment for untouchables in Haveri to breathe freely. "He taught the people at Haveri the essence of humanity and the importance of equality. He made sagacious attempt for the eradication of the evil from the society. He did much for the upliftment of the untouchables."¹³

Hosamani Siddappa was of the opinion that the reform should start from the upper stratum of the society. "When the upper caste people have made this inhuman system in the society, the eradication of that evil also must be made by themselves. The poor always treats the untouchables equally. But the rich people will not recognize that.

Whatever the rich and the upper caste people do will be great. Hence the upper class people should start the movement. Automatically the others follow it. Then undoubtedly the eradication of the evil from its root becomes easy."\(^{14}\)

**PUBLIC POND FOR HARIJAN:**

Hosamani Siddappa was a patriotic unique leader. He dedicated his life for the cause of the downtrodden and the untouchables. His struggle was to achieve social justice to the untouchables. He was inspired by the ideas of Lord Basava ideas and Mahatma Gandhiji. He gave priority to the social justice to the untouchables.

Siddappa served as the President, Haveri Municipality for 10 years. He made unbelievable and unforgettable reforms in the administration. He never differentiated the citizens. He made better use of the authority for the well being of the society as well as to intensify the freedom movement. He hoisted the national flag on the municipality to uphold the dignity of our nation. He compelled the British Government to allocate more powers to the local Self-Governments. He did not spare even the influential rich people in Haveri at the time of his administration. Equal importance was given to all citizens.

Haveri was though a taluka place, it was completely buried in the clutches of blind beliefs, customs and traditions. The orthodox people had kept the untouchables away from the city and civilized life. There was only one pond of drinking water in Haveri for the whole town, during the 1930s. Of course there were many wells in the town. But in the summer all of them would dry up. The scarcity of water, course was not the problem of only Haveri. The Non-Harijans were able to get water from the pond. But the Harijans were not allowed to touch the water in the pond.

"Harijans, though they were suffering from water problem, they were not able to take water from the only pond. They had to sit aside the pond waiting for the upper class person to pour water into their pot. Some times they had to wait hours together. They had to beg for water infront of all those who came there for water. Most of the time the selfish people used to purposely neglect their request as if they had not heard the voice. The condition of Harijans in Haveri was miserable."15

Siddappa felt very bad to see this social injustice. It did hurt him. The pond was the public property; all should make use of it. He took the issue and raised it in the Municipality meeting. First it was decided to dig separate well for the Harijans. Later Siddappa felt that if a separate well was provided for the untouchables, again they would be kept way from the others. Siddappa had a dream of just

social condition of the untouchables. The wells separately dug would not fulfill his dream. He rejected the idea of separate wells. He argued in the meeting, -“If we go on digging wells for each caste, we have to dig pits in the whole town. The public wells and ponds that are already there today are for the sake of all. They have to be kept open to every body irrespective of caste or religion.”

Hosamani Siddappa felt sorry that the untouchables were required for menial purpose. There was no castbar to bring water for the domestic purpose of upper caste people, but they should not touch the water. “If we are responsible for the miserable condition of the untouchables regarding water, we have been committing a blunder. Our caste or any other caste does not say this. If we are not able to give water to the untouchables, whatever else can we give them?”

“First Siddappa, being President of the Haveri Municipality, gave public notice informing that the pond will be kept open to Harijan also. If any body had any objection they had to inform immediately with proper grounds for the objection. But none-had the courage to make objections infornt of Hosamani Siddappa.”

“Siddappa got the resolution passed of the very next Municipality meeting. The proceeding passed

17. Ibid., P.56,57.
read-"Now onwards the one and the only drinking water pond will be kept open to the Harijans also. None can prevent the Harijans from touching the water............."19

Siddappa did not give up the matter here itself. He later went to Harijan street to encourage them to touch the water. He collected all of them and went to the pond as a leader of the battalion. He inspired them-"You are not supposed to get scared of moving towards the pond. It is not the private property of anybody. It is public property. I am here with you. You come with your pots peacefully and get water. Until you take water and come out of the pond I will be with you only."20

The Harijans got the water filled in their pots. They were very happy. They were feeling that the Goddess Ganga herself came from the heaven. This all happened peacefully due to the strenuous efforts of Hosamani Siddappa. Even today the pond says the unforgettable story of Hosamani Siddappa's reformative work. Since then Harijans got new spirit to think about their social injustice. He awakened them to realize their rights to enjoy like others. It was his strenuous efforts, which made the untouchable recognize themselves on equal line with higher cate people. There is a Kannada saying-'Mane Geddu Maru Gellu', which means 'First reform the home, and later the wider arena'. Hosamani Siddappa also did the same. He started the

movement from his home, and developed it to his town Haveri level. The news of his reformative efforts reached even up to the national level.

MACHEAGAR YELLAPPA’S MARRIAGE:

Hosamani Siddappa was a famous lawyer and an earnest freedom fighter. At the same time Siddappa was a reformist of the society *conceiving to the untouchbility. There is a Vachana by Sarvganya in Kannada,

- “Äade Madhuvava Roodhiyolaguttamanu,
Adi Mduvava Madhyama,
Adhama thanadiyoo Madabava Savagna ||.”

There are three types of men. The first type of men are those who do without speaking about of what they intend to do or boasting. The second type of men are those who do after speaking about what they intend to do. And the third type of men who speak about what they want to do don’t do. Hosamani Siddappa was of the first type. He never said what all he did but he did. But he always did good to the society. He never advertised his programme of his service. Nor did he ever publicity for it. What ever he has done for the sake of untouchables in Haveri has not been completely brought to light. Govindamurthi Desai writes in his book on Siddappa Hosamani, that he never treated the untouchables differently. Machegar Yellappa was a servant in Siddappa’s house. But Siddappa treated him as
equal to his sons. Yellappa was like one among the members of the family. He regarded Siddappa and Parvathamma as his parents.

Yellappa was to bring water for domestic purpose. No nook of the house was kept out of his entrance. Food was served to Yellappa along with their children in the Kitchen. This practice by Hosamani Siddappa mirrors his ideas and principles of universal brotherhood.

"Once Yellappa's marriage was arranged in his house situated in the Harijan street. Hosamani Siddappa went to attend the marriage along with his friends. His friends were feeling uneasy in marriage ceremony. When they served tea on the occasion, Siddappa had tea with great affection. But his friends denied touching the tea. When Siddappa said that if a dirty man in your caste served you won't hesitate to drink. But if a clean Harijan provide the same, it is not acceptable in your religion. Thus when Siddappa convinced their mistake, they felt bad for their mistake. All of them had tea with pleasure and blessed the couple. Siddappa had such a magnetic power to bring all under his influence, who came in contact with him. Never did he lose any chance of changing the blind belief of the people".  

Being a staunch flower of Basavannna, Hosamani Siddappa adopted and followed the principle of equality of all in the society. The Harijans, the Muslims, the Christians and of any caste was equally

treated by him. He lived the life on the basis of Basavanna's vachana-

“Ivanaarava Ivanaarava Ivanaaravadenisadirayya
Ivanmmava Ivanmmava Ivanammavadenisayya”

A Christian fellow who had no way left to live in Haveri after the loss of Master's business. Hosamani Siddappa gave him an opportunity to live with him in house. Since then that Christian fellow also became one of the members of family. Siddappa and Parvatamma were the parents for such oppressed, downtrodden, suppressed and the poor.

GANDHIJI GARLANDED THE HOSAMANI SIDDAPPA:

If every one likes your untouchbility be alienated from its root itself. These were that words of Mahatma Gadhiji, who said when he met Hosamani Siddappa inn Haveri.

In the year 1934 Mahatma Gandhiji toured throughout India to awaken the people for the removal of untouchbility. At that time he came to Haveri also. Hosamani Siddappa, who was the leader at that time shouldered the responsibility if Gabdhiji's hospitality. Many people used to ply thousands of miles to see Gandhiji. When Gandhiji himself came to Haveri, people were very happy. Even old people, children, men, an women all welcomed Ghandjhiji with great pleasure.
Siddappa’s wife who was ill and could not walk on her own, wished to see Mahatmaji Siddappa arranged for that, when she came to Gandhiji, Gandhiji said ‘Why you gave strains to her? If you had informed I could have come to your house only’. Then Hosamani Siddappa replied, we did not like to give strains to you. Thus his wife Parvathamma also met Mahatma Gadhiji.

His holiness, Jayadeva Swamiji of Chitradurga Bruhanmatha, also met Mahatma Gandhiji for which Siddappa himself had made arrangements. Jayadeva Swamiji had dedicated himself for the society like Mahatma Gandhiji. It was a historic meeting of these two personalities. Jayadeva Swamiji donated some amount to Gandhiji for the sake of removal of untouchability.

Siddappa Hosamani collected a lot of money in Haveri and gave that to Mahatma Gandhiji. But when Gandhiji recognized the spirit, the enthusiasm in Hosamani Siddappa regarding the removal of untouchability he thought that, Siddappa was the right person for this movement. He could do better in this direction. Immediately Gandhiji called Hosamani Siddappa and gave all the amount collected there to Hosamani Siddappa and garlanding him, Gandhiji said “this money is collected in Haveri, hence this amount must be utilized for the upliftment of the Harijans’s here. This is your duty here to work for removal of untouchability”.  

By this Hosamani Siddappa felt that he was going to take a very big responsibility Gandhiji had the intuition. He had recognized the ability in Hosamani Siddappa. Hence the responsibility of removal of untouchability and the upliftment of those untouchables was entrusted to Siddappa.

Siddappa built a hostel for Harijan children, where they could get free education, boarding and lodging. While constructing this hostel Siddappa brought the iron sheets from his house. The boarding house was a great contribution to the untouchable community. Thus the hostel gave the opportunity of getting education for many untouchables. In fact due to his efforts many untouchables became well educated, and developed their carrier. Hosamani Siddappa maintained the hostel until his death. Hosamani Siddappa not only made efforts for removal of untouchbility but also for the upliftment of the untouchables.

**HIS OWN HOUSE ON THE HARIJAN STREET:**

It was the time that people were not even ready to see the shadow of the untouchables. They were not only kept out but also illtreated. There was no difference between animals and the Harijans since long time they were suffering social injustice. Because of the blind beliefs in the Hindu religion, these people were treated in bad manner.

Hosamani Siddappa firmly stood for the well being of the untouchables. Hosamani Siddappa had the moral right to advocate
others to do the same. He convinced the people about their blind beliefs and their drawbacks. He made the environment for untouchables very easy. The untouchables, particularly in Haveri, got relief from the age-old bindings, like prohibition of touching the public property.

“Got opportunity of using the public pond, to enter school, free boarding and hostel facility, entry to the temples and soon. One more important work he did was, he built his own house on the Harijan street. Even today the house can be found in the Harijan street. Today his grand sons and their children are living in the same house.”

This was necessary in the interest of the Indian unity, without which the national movement would not have got fair footing. It did aim a sever blow at the British Policy of encouraging the fragmentation of Indian Society. His efforts of the Harijan upliftment bought them under the banner of the national movement. None other than Hosamani Siddappa had made such efforts to reform Harijan’s condition in Haveri.

THE PATRIOT:

Hosamani Siddappa was one of the most important personalities of the twentieth century. This age was known for many significant changes, and Hosamani Siddappa in a large measure

symbolized some of these major forces of change. Though he was born and bought up in rural environment, his scholarly academic performance and the career he made him personify immense interest and faith in the future of India and also of Karnataka.

Siddappa was a great humanist. He regarded human beings as endowed with dignity and self-respect and he condemned any violation of man's dignity and rights. The Indian tradition had given too much importance to the hierarchical order of human beings, though in theory the Upanishads said that all human beings, and even inanimate things, had a divine soul in them. The hierarchical position of the individuals depended upon the caste in which they were born. Some of the lower castes were confined to do duties like that of sweeping or scavenging. Such people could never hope to rise in society and had a few chances of building up a sense of self-respect.

He did not like the servility and dependence of his fellow countrymen. He believed that human beings had to be self-reliant, facing boldly the challenges in whatever from they came, rather than positively accepting them or conforming to them out of any fear or weakness. He had great compassion for those who suffered violation of their self-respect and dignity. Hosamani Siddappa's sense of pride and his faith in the dignity of human existence made him rebel against the ideas and institutions that tended to degrade and dehumanise man.
Hosamani Siddappa was no doubt a charismatic leader who characterised his leadership in the national struggle. He combined a sense of dedication to the cause of the nation, with an ardent desire to uplift the mass of humanity who were oppressed and suppressed. His concern for the peasantry was the result of his first hand knowledge of that, because he was born and bought up in the agrarian family. He identified himself with the innumerable problems of the masses, and through such a process developed a mystic communication with them. The masses in turn came under his hypnotic influence and accepted him as their leader. Even intellectuals were overwhelmed by his charismatic personality. His speeches were fiery, though mixed with humour. They were flashily. The diction and fiber of his voice were so alluring that people felt inspired while listening to him. He had tremendous energy and the driving force matched his remarkable mental alertness. Hosamani Siddappa was called a living 'Computer.'

The sacrifices made by Siddappa and the renunciation of a life of ease and comfort were associated with a virtuous quality in the religious mind of the Karnataka people. He had suffered the arduous prison life for the sake of his country's freedom. He represented the hopes and aspirations of the Indian National Movement in a unique way. The masses always invigorated him and he found sustenance for his titanic energy from them. His appeal to the masses and their love for him was their realization that he was one of them who shared their joys and sufferings and that he was their comrade and champion in their struggle for freedom.
Hosamani Siddappa was marked by extraordinary charm. A great capacity to extract love from all with which he came into contact marked Hosamani Siddappa. He was flexible and tactic but rigid and firm regardinging his goals. It was a revolutionary creed with him and he talked, argued and wrote incessantly of its power. He was a man of both passion and compassion. Intense nationalism was another passion with him, which is overwhelmingly evident in his role in the National Movement. "His intellectual endowment was excellent, his knowledge was encyclopaedic, encompassing different branches of learning. His range of interest extended over literature, history and law. For his sustained capacity for physical work and his power, he was surpassed by a few in Karnataka. His command of English and Marathi languages was felicitous and exceptional." 24

Hosamani Siddappa's mind was made up of many issues and problems of the day and he tenaciously propagated them to people. He had immense faith in the destiny of the nation. He was a great lover of his motherland, Karnataka, and the great mother-tongue Kannada. He was a personification of fierce determination and iron will. He clung grimly to his principles. He never compromised. His humanism was part of his genuine concern for the downtrodden masses of humanity. He was self-revealing. He was a democrat to the core. He was a man of ceaseless action and energy.

Hosamani Siddappa was an ardent freedom fighter and fighter for democracy and also for unification of Karnataka.

He was a philosopher anchored to deep loyalty and faiths. He aroused nationality feelings of nationalism. He was a great leader of Karnataka, who fought till he breathed his last for the unification of Karnataka.

Hosamani Siddappa was an epoch-making man who developed an integrated personality. He personified all that was noble in his time. He was a well-cultivated man, with generous instincts who proved him to be a great leader. He led the people of Karnataka from the front and truly reflected their will, their passion and their determination to secure freedom, as also Karnataka's unification. He was the foremost champion of democracy and an unbending opponent of authoritarian imperialism.

As a freedom fighter, he was in the vanguard of the struggle. He was courted and arrested many times, and he spent crucial years of his life in the British-Indian jails. He played a significant role in the Congress. In the process, he left an indelible impression on the movement and his name would be written in letters of gold as the foremost fighter for freedom. He would be remembered for ever for his distinct attainments. He was in the great gallery of Gandhi, Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose and others who shaped the destiny of the country.

Hosamani Siddappa was a rare statesman of Karnataka. He dedicated his entire life for the freedom of the motherland and unification of Karnataka. To unite the Kannadigas and to regain their
past glory, he struggled nearly for four decades. He was well-educated and very well read, cultured and also a shrewd politician. He was very much influenced by the Vachana Sahitya of Lord Basavanna, the justice Ranade’s ideas and Jyothibha Pule’s ideas. He was much influenced by the Gandhian philosophy of dedication and upliftment of the downtrodden. He was the staunch supporter of Subhas Chandra Bose.

A person who wants to achieve anything in his life should have knowledge of history. More over, a leader should have mastery over language to express and convey his ideas effectively to the people. He imbibed all these features. Above all, he had the grace of God, Kanavalli Parmameshwara. He had read the books, like, ‘The Rise and Fall of Roman Empire’, the works of Rousseau and Montesquieu. He had the habit of reading the Githa every morning at the time of worship. He had the knowledge of ‘Vachana Sahitya’, and even practised them. He was inclined towards folk culture. Singing folk songs, dancing Bayalata and even taking part in dramas were his habits. He was an ideal statesman. His political philosophy was based on moral and secular principles. He was a pragmatist and innovative in his approach and method. His ideas on nationalism and socialism are very much comprehensive. He thought not only of Karnataka but also of whole India. He preached and practiced ideas of ‘Shiva Sharanas’, who were the social reformists of the 12th century.

He was the follower of Basavanna, the social reformist of the 12th century. He was a politician, social reformer, the best
administrator, educationalist, economist and loyal disciple of lord Basavanna. His virtuous behaviour, simple and pure life was the reminiscent of Basavanna’s values. S.G.Hiregouder, a veteran lawyer of Dharawad, says, “For Hosamani Siddappa there was no upper class or caste in the society, Siddappa was a Brahmin among a Brahmin, a Chirstiran among Christian, a Muslim among Muslims and a Hindu among Hindus. He believed in the truth and was impartial. He was not crazy after name or fame. He did not expect the publicity of the reformative work or constructive programmes. He had not the habit of writing. The then press did not bring into light the work done and service rendered by Hosamani Siddappa.”25

Hosamani Siddappa was the only son to his parents much loved and cared by them. He devoted his service to the nation. He graced many virtuous positions, but he was still committed to the society and the poor, working day and night for the welfare of the people. Until his death he dedicated himself for the cause of the nation without any desire for personal reward. He was a spirited soldier working persistently to lay the strong foundations of vital and strong Indian nationalism.

“Hosamani Siddappa’s way of living was very simple and frugal. He never wished to have curds or dal in his food. Only ‘Rotti and Chatni (Red Chilly Chatni)’ he used to have. Extravagance and luxury had no place in his life, and in his house he practiced economy. His

dress was very plain. In his old age he used to wear only the half pant and shirt. He had no fondness for delicacies. He would eat whatever would be served to him.\textsuperscript{26}

He did not wish to amass wealth. Though he graced many positions of power he never misused the power. He was not a rich man but throughout his life he had almost an ascetic contempt for money. He never cared for money, nor ever kept accounts. He chose for himself not the comfortable life of the bar and the bench but a thorny path of the constant service and prolonged sufferings.\textsuperscript{27}

A STRAIGHT FORWARD MAN:

Hosamani Siddappa's greatest asset in is life was his firm and strong moral character. His was not a gigantic personality. He was short but had the power of reverberating eloquence, and his personality towered over other leaders'. He was a leader of leaders, but he was never vain and never autocratic. He had inherited from his parents a strong sense of personal dignity and self-respect. He had a passion for independense, both for himself and for his country. He did not care for any body if he found anything wrong with them. He cared for the neither name nor for fame. Dr. Patil Puttappa writes in the year 1937, while Jawaharlal Nehru was on tour throughout the country, he visited Karnataka also. Hosamani Siddappa was then Karnataka

\textsuperscript{26}Ibid., P. 1.
\textsuperscript{27}Patil Puttappa, Hosamani Siddappanavaru, Veerashaiva Adhyayana Samsthe, Gadag, 1984, P. 62.
Pradesh Congress Committee President. He had made all arrangements of the public function in Haveri. But Nehru could not reach Haveri within the scheduled time, not even informed the organizers regarding the inordinate delay. The public who had been curiously waiting since morning were tired of the waiting. Even some of them depressed.

Nehru came late and straight away went to the stage. He did not even for formality's sake tell the K.P.C.C. President, reason for his late in coming. He did not even consider the patience of the public. After his address he went away to take rest in the guesst house, which was arranged by Siddappa himself. Siddappa tolerated all this and went to meet him at the retiring room. When Siddappa went there Nehru was reading a newspaper. The assistant would not disturb him so he did not inform Nehru about Siddappa's coming. Again it was a great insult to Hosamani Siddappa who had maintained self-dignity. Immediately his anger burst out he started shouting at Nehru, -'what do you think of yourself? ? Do you think that you are Mogul Badashah of this country? Being a responsible man you don't have sense of time? You don't have knowledge of formalities to meet the Pardesh Congress Committee President? If you are the Indian National Congress Committee President, I am the Pradesh Congress committee President. Since you have come to my jurisdiction, you have to respect me. You are not bothered about the public who had been waiting since morning.

"Such sharp words pierced Nehru who was abosberbed in reading the news paper. With great anger he threw a pillow at
Siddappa. Even Siddappa also threw a pillow at Nehru. Later Nehru got up and went off from Haveri. This news spread like hot wave all over India. The leaders of the nation and the people wondered. Hosamani Siddappa was the only man who could question Nehru. Till then none had made such an intrepid effort, as Nehru was the unquestionable master of the congress of that time. Siddappa was straight forward and strict. "28

He had enough experience in his life that could make him embittered. "He had to experience personal tragedies and bereavements. He never became intellectual introvert of the pessimistic type. His life was an embodiment of struggles, sufferings and aspirations of the people, and his name was a symbol of service. He was an institution, a school of thought by himself. This energy and will played a magnificent role in destroying the British power and prestige in India and also unifying Karnataka on linguistic basis. Few of his times had such a hold over the people."29

As His Holiness Shivamurthi MurughaRajendra Swamiji opines, "Patriotism is love, honour and respect towards one's own nation. A patriot is ready to sacrifice anything for the sake of his country Hosamani Siddappa belongs to this category"30 His qualities of strict discipline, promptness and devoted service in the freedom movement are valuable ideas for the youths today.

Many were the facets and dimensions of Siddappa's life, each was colorful and each had the power of charge to face the national life.

"Siddappa was a lawyer, a freedom fighter, the president of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress committee, the President of the city municipality, Haveri, the President of the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board, chairman, The district school board. He was the member of the Central Assembly in 1935. He was a farmer, an educationist, the reformist of untouchables, and an earnest fighter for Karnataka unification. He was the president, the bar council of the Haveri Court until his death. Thus the list of his positions he graced swells. Everywhere he served with complete dedication. He and his ideas, his administrative style, his political life everything were really ideal for the politicians, youths, educationists."31

Hosamani Siddappa did not amass wealth or any kind of property, so that his children should lead an ideal life of simplicity. All that he made was a small house in the Harijan street and the ancestral property in the form of land.

THE EDUCATIONIST:

Hosamani Siddappa believed in mass education. He was the

President of the Dharwad district school Board. "He was mainly responsible for the construction of the big high school building with its extensive playground and park. Although he had toiled hard for the construction of this building, he firmly refused when his followers came forward to name the High school after him."32

While constructing this High school building, he had to face opposition of many people who did not consider education as essential. There was drinking water problem at Haveri. These two problems were to be solved by the Haveri Municipality President soon. Those who wished Education had to go away from Haveri, which was not possible for the poor. Both the facilities were important. But because of water problem people did not die whereas due to the absence of high school the interested children remained uneducated. Here Siddappa gave importance to construct the school building rather than for procurious water facility. This was opposed in the municipality, and then Siddappa Hosamani, the President of the Haveri Municipality, justified his decision as follows-

"We are not dying because of scarcity of water. If we don't have water we all make efforts to get it from anywhere, because we can't live without water. Education is also equally important like water. Since we are human beings we should learn. Then only we identify ourselves, develop our personality, and know our rights and, at the same time, duties. For our survival we make all sorts of efforts to get

water. But as along as we don't have our own school building in our place, our children remain uneducated. To go away for education is expensive which the poor can't meet. Then education becomes the property of a few rich people. If we educate our children, they will be the best citizens. So I consider investing money to construct the school building first. "33 The comfortable, needful infrastructure was the gift of his strenuous efforts to educate the children in Haveri.

He purchased a land of 24 acres on the outskirts of Haveri. Many people ironically reacted, 'who will send their children to that forest?'. Because there was no other building, the place was calm and suitable for educational purpose. Today the building is be found in the midst of the town. Thus Haveri is developed and extended. "For those who were teasing him, he said-I am constructing this school keeping in my mind the future Haveri and not todays."34 Such farsight of the President Hosamani Siddappa benefited Haveri today in many respects. Many got jobs in the school and many children got education there. This work is a model for the administrative class.

The school building was constructed in the year................. spending 40,000/- Rupees. Though toiled for the construction of the building he did not agree to carve his name on the building. The only information we get is-

34. Ibid., P.52.
Established in the year.................
Expenditure Rs. 40,000/-.”

“Many of his friends, and also Valasangad Panchakshari persuaded him to have his name carved on the board, but he said, -I have constructed this building by the public money and not mine. The building belongs to public. I have no right to carve my name on this building.” 35

Hosamani Siddappa was the Chairman of the Dharawad School Board for some years. During his tenure as the Chairman, he brought about many new reforms in the working of the D.S.B.(District School Board). The educational officers were taking the service of the D.S.B. servants for their self-purposes. He stopped practice of taking undue advantage of the innocent persons. This was another revolutionary reform in the D.S.B during his tenure, and was first of its kind in the Bombay Presidency. His surprise visits to schools compelled all teachers to discharge their duties properly. He was a sort of nightmare to the more negligent staff. Thus he improved the standard of education.

AN EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATOR:

Hosamani Siddappa was popularly known as a humanist and a

lawyer of the poor and the suppressed. His secular thoughts and his personality made him the representative of the people. He graced many positions including the President of the Haveri Municipality.

a) **HOISTED NATIONAL FLAG:**

"In 1922 Hosamani Siddappa was elected as the President of the Haveri Municipality. He got a resolution passed to hoist the national or the Congress flag on the Municipal office. The Haveri Municipality thus became one of the earliest public bodies in India to hoist the Congress flag. Siddappa was elected as municipal President for three consecutive terms and he consistently exerted his utmost to improve the condition of the town."³⁶

b) **AGAINST FAVORITISM:**

When Hosamani Siddappa was the municipality President, he served with clean hands. He never encouraged corruption but kept away corruption and favoritism.

"Dr. Deodhar was also a member of the Municipality during his Presidentship. The member wanted exemption form payment of Municipality cess."³⁷ A few members supported him and requested

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Hosamani Siddappa to give his consent to the exemption. But he denied it. The members said that the Doctor had opened free Medical section in his hospital. The Hosamani Siddappa replied-

"I would have exempted him if it was my personal money. I can lose my money, but I don't allow anybody to swallow the public money. If he has opened a separate free medical check-up section, exception could be given to that section only. Otherwise who so ever he might be the money should be remitted which was decided by the laws, and these laws are equal to every one. I am not ready to distinguish the citizens an any basis."

Hosamani Siddappa never bowed his head or breached the laws for the benefit of a few on the basis of caste or class or even community.

About his efficiency in administration. Patil Puttappa writes,"Once the collector had come to inspect the Haveri Municipality. But Hosamani Siddappa the then President was not there in the office. The officer instead of doing his duty he sent somebody to bring Siddappa. But Siddappa instead of coming over sent a reply, The officer had to inspect the books and files and not me. The clerks and the assistants in the office who have maintained them will provide those. I have nothing to do with him. Then why should I come there?"

39. Ibid., P.71.
The officer got angry to hear his denial to come to the office. But when he checked the records he was astonished at the neatness and efficiency. Then the officer said, “He had kept everything properly. No single mistake can be found in his administration. He is not supposed to giggle in front of any officer. If every Municipality gets such President, the fate of the whole nation can be changed.” Indeed, he was an ideal administrator.

**AN ECONOMIST:**

Hosamani Siddappa served in many walks of life. His service was not just confined to the freedom movement. He was an educationist, an administrator, a politician, more than that he was an economist too. To awaken people for savings he started ‘Swaraj’ Bank in Dharawad. He was of the opinion that “Political freedom is to be achieved through economic development. The British have not just politically dominated us. Primarily they had the intention of economic exploitation. But when they found opportunities of divide and rule they started occupying the provinces. Socially, economically and also politically we have been exploited. Hence we are in miserable economic condition. We have to strengthen the economic position. In this direction we have to make many efforts and ‘Swaraj Banking is one of them.”

Under their colonial policy raw materials from India were

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40. Interviewed, Bnakar, Mahadev, Bangalore, on
exported to English factories, and then returned and sold in the form of finished goods. The most notorious example of this policy was in the field of textiles. India had once a flourishing cottage industry of hand made textiles. Fine Indian cloth was exported and sold in many other parts of the world, including England. This industry was the major source of employment in India next to agriculture. The British however required raw materials and markets for their Lancashire mills. Thorough economic manipulation and physical coercion, they succeeded in almost completely destroying the indigenous Indian industry subsequently, Indian cotton was exported to England, and India became dependent on foreign cloth.

The effects of the British economic policy on India were adverse. The country was deprived of its second most important occupation, resulting in massive unemployment and underemployment. In addition, the money sent out of the country for foreign cloth, much greater the amount received for raw cotton-created, a tremendous drain on the country's wealth, these effects had repercussions all over the economy. More over the pattern was repeated in a lesser way in other industries.

According to Hosamani Siddappa, this economic relationship was the real cause of India's poverty. The industrialization harmfully affected the Indian economy. The development must start from the individual. He, in this direction propagated and brought wider arena under the Khadi Campaign. He actively worked for Khadi Movement.
On the outskirts of village, Karajagi Siddappa and his cousin Paramanna Hosamani established an Ashram where in Khadi weaving was the main occupation. Until his death Hosamani Siddappa supported and worked for Khadi.

In the same way he addressed the people to create employments through different means, with which the economic condition of the people could be improved. With such purpose he established ‘Swaraj’ Banking in Dharawad. He had thought of better benefits in the co-operative field also. He expanded co-operative field also by encouraging co-operative institutions.

“The branch of the K.C.C. Bank (The Karnataka Co-operative Credit Bank) has got the good history and known for better service also. He brought its branch to Haveri with his strenous efforts. At the initial stage he provided a portion of his house for the bank without rent. It was to reduce the burden of the bank in its developing stage.”

His attempts of starting the ‘Swaraj’ Bank and the K.C.C. Bank branches in Haveri created some jobs for the needy, and also developed the nature of savings. The financial assistance made by the banks could not be undermined, as a result of which many talents could create their own self-employment.

There was a belief that only the corrupt could develop the co-

operative institutions. But it was not true with Hosamani Siddappa. He was quite different from others. For him well being of the society was most important. Wealth was of little consideration to the service of the people. He served also as the President of the District Co-operative Bank, Dharawad, the District development office and also the Land Mortgage Bank.

"For Hosamani Siddappa, the freedom struggle was not mere political, but economic and social rehabilitation of India. Perhaps we could not put him in any particular pigeonhole. He was an economist in the technical sense. But the programmes he followed for the economic enhancement were more than what a technically trained economist could do."

"Hosamani Siddappa opined that the development of agriculture was more necessary. But providing employment to millions of people was also essential. The establishment of 'Swaraj' Bank was a very good example."

Siddappa expected the preference to be given to the decentralized, labour-intensive pattern of production, rather than capital-intensive industry. Removal of poverty and solution of colossal unemployment of the masses living in the rural India was his primary objective.

43. Interviewed, Rajenavar, Shivabasappa, Haveri.
44. Interviewed, Menasinkai, B.M., Haveri, on 01-08-2000.
A LEGAL LUMINARY:

Hosamani Siddappa was a famous lawyer in the part of North-Karnataka. Hosamani Siddappa was known as 5/- Rs lawyer of the poor and a legal luminary. Never did he fail in his attempt to serve the poor. He completed his scholarly life of education up to L.L.B. in the year 1908, from Bombay University. Soon after getting the L.L.B. degree, he started his career as lawyer, and soon came to be known as an eminent lawyer on account of his integrity, entirety, honesty and outstanding ability.

Mensinakai., B.M. Said, “Hosamani Siddappa had an excellent brain power. Like a human computer he had memory power of remembering whatever he heard at once. Whenever needed he used to give reference for cases from any law book with page number, without looking at the book. His brain was like a record room of the judgment given by the court of law. He dedicated his legal service mainly to the oppressed and suppressed and for the freedom fighters. But later he gave up the profession to intensify the movement to confront the British.”

Siddappa was magnanimous. Whosoever had problems would go to him to consult him for solutions. He was a man of principles. The spirit of simple living and high thinking was inculcated in him by his parents. He was simple in food and dress also.

"Hosamani Siddappa who took his L.L.B. degree from Bombay University in 1908 soon he started his career as lawyer in Haveri, and soon came to be recognized as an eminent lawyer on account of his integrity and outstanding ability."\(^{46}\)

"Siddappa did not start his legal career soon after his completion of L.L.B. He started a drama company at Guttal, a village nearby Haveri. He had the intention of arousing nationalism among people through his dreams. But his parents did not expect him to be an actor. They wanted him to serve the nation along with his practicing as lawyer. Siddappa had more inclination towards drama field. But the fate was otherwise; the drama company was winded up due to scarcity of money. Then Siddappa returned to Haveri to start his legal career."\(^{47}\) He became a well known eminent lawyer but more of the poor people.

Earlier, after joining the Haveri Bar Council, he had to travel from Karajagi to Haveri everyday. When he realising that his staying at Karajagi had created a problem for his clients, he shifted to Haveri and settled there itself. This legal luminary, Hosamani Siddappa, could have amassed a lot of wealth if he had wished. But he had the motto of serving the poor and the neglected common people. He was called a five-rupee lawyer. "Once a poor old woman came to the Haveri Court expecting less expensive justice to her. When she approached many lawyers in retiring room of the court none found

\(^{47}\) Ibid., p.76
interested to plead for her. Because she had only 5/- Rs to pay. Then she straightly went to the judge, and he advised her to meet the 5/-Rs lawyer Hosamani Siddappa. That old woman approached Hosamani Siddappa with whom she could get justice in the court for only 5/-Rs. \(^{48}\)

He never expected reward for his service. Always he tried to serve the needy people in all aspects. He had won the applause of Bulbhai Desai and other reputed advocates of that time.

**WITNESS OF NEEM TREE:**

Hosamani Siddappa had wonderful brainpower. His name and fame reached up to Mysore state. "Because of his successful efforts in making neem tree witness, people from different parts came to see this genius." \(^{49}\)

Borrowing money from the rich is rich not an unknown factor. Particularly in villages the poor peasants used to barrow money without any records. The same thing happened with a poor farmer of a village in Haveri Taluk. He had taken loan but after harvesting the crops he had returned the whole amount with interest. But he had not received anything for the payment of money. He had left a document with the rich man. He had faith in that man. But the greedy rich man went to the court

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48. Ibid., P.41.
49. Ibid., P.41.
demanding the payment of money. The poor farmers were not able to comply, and even he had no strong evidence. Hosamani Siddappa accepting the case and said, "I am ready to plead your case, I assure that you will get justice, if you are right. And I believe, you are right. I am interested in your case because you earn every paisa by shedding your sweat under the sunshine, whereas the rich man earns by sitting under the cool ceiling."50

Infact the moneylender had gone to the field to ask the farmer to return the money taken. Immediately he ran to his home and had bought the amount. With great respect he had spread a blanket under the neem tree in his field and gave the whole amount. None was there except that tree with these two. Since the poor fellow had faith in the rich man, he had not even thought of such a problem.

While doing cross-examination Siddappa said, the poor farmer had returned your amount with interest in his field under the neem tree. Then the rich man replied, which field and which neem tree?

Siddappa said, "the neem tree gives the witness! Then he laughed at Siddappa and answered 'how can a tree speak for you?'

Immediately Siddappa sent a summons to the neem tree with kind permission of the judge and after half an hour he again started the examination.

50. Ibid., P.43,44.
The first question he asked rich man, -by this time the summons must have reached the neem tree. Is not it?

He answered,' no not possible it takes at least two hours to reach that tree'.

You must know about the neem tree. You had gone there to ask the money back. The farmers suddenly went to his house and brought money to pay you back. While paying he even had thanked for timely help.

Hosamani Siddappa was explaining the misuse of the innocent of the farmer. The rich man felt ashamed of his greediness. Hosamani Siddappa’s sagacity saved the poor farmer. Then onwards Siddappa was called the lawyer of the neem tree witness.

Hosamani Siddappa was a principled lawyer. He never misused the innocence of his clients. His ideals are exemplary for the lawyers today. His integrity, sagacity and straightforward nature were known everywhere in Karnataka. " According to him courts are not just to refer or safeguard the laws but also they have to get justice to the needy."

Ignorance and innocence will be misused for the greed of a few. Humanity will not be considered there. The poor and the Harijans were regarding him as their friend, philosopher and guide.

51. Ibid., P.45.
He had to clarify the situation with references of sections to the judges. Once a senior lawyer of the court had appealed to the court claiming that he had paid the value of the property he had bought. The owner of the property denied that he has not received the money, and Hosamani Siddappa took the side of that fellow.

According to Hosamani Siddappa the lawyer, the plaintiff, was not right because on the power of attorney a note must be written by the sub registrar to confirm the payment of the amount for the property. The sub register had the responsibility of putting that note only after payment was made. There was no note by the sub registrar. Naturally the money was not paid. The judge did not accept this argument. Siddappa was confident about his legal knowledge. He advised his junior lawyer to bring the Registration Act Book and to open the page to show the section 58. He gave it to the judge. The judge could consider the necessity of the note and signature of the registrar. Later the lawyer who had appealed to court, felt bad and begged pardon of Hosamani Siddappa.

Such a genius man was Hosamani Siddappa. Never did he boast about his ability, knowledge and perfection. In fact some times he even used to give suggestions and guidance to his opponent lawyers in the same case. This kind of nature could be found only in broad-minded persons.

His case of adoption was a great success in the Privy Council. Neelanagouda, a landlord, had no offspring. He was facing a problem of adoption due to differences among the relatives. Neelanagouda
came to Hosamani Siddappa. He completely planned with references of sections and clauses to the case. The case failed in the lower courts. Siddappa did not give up the case. He had complete confidence about the point on which the case was moved.

Then India had no separate Supreme Court. The final court of appeal for Indians was the Privy Council, situated in England. Hosamani Siddappa inspired Neelanagouda to move the Privy Council. Dr. Patil Puttappa writes, "Hosamani Siddappa was like Galileo who was firm about his invention that the earth revolves round the sun. The priests were of the opinion that the sun revolves round the earth. Galileo did not change his statement even when he was sentenced to death, because he had perfect knowledge about the movement of the earth. Similarly Hosamani Siddappa was firm about his suggestions to Neelanagouda though it was futile effort in the lower court in India. Siddappa had deep knowledge of law."52

Menasinakai. B. M., a relative of Neelanagouda said, "Hosamani Siddappa encouraged Neelanagouda that he would certainly win in the Privy Council. You may have to pay at the most Rs. 100/- you get the whole hill if you lose only a rope and that is immaterial."53

"Neelanagouda accepted that suggestion and moved to the Privy Council on the basis of the same point of law. The Privy Council

52. Ibid., P.79.
53 Interviewed, with Menasinkai, B.M., in Haveri, on 01-08-2000.
judged favorably and gave a turn to the adoption system in India.\textsuperscript{54}

Most of his contemporaries, followers and admirers even today recall those days of his brilliant pleading. Most of the times he was successful in all cases. It was his principle to be the lawyer of the poor, the exploited and the needy. His life was many faceted. There is a saying in Kannada, "Adu Muttada gida illa" [There is no such tree that is not touched by the Goat.] Similarly there was nothing that Hosamani Siddappa did not do for the benefit of the society.

A HUMANIST:

Hosamani Siddappa never showed indifference to any work, people or service. Whenever he found time he used to advocate the people about sanitation. In his native place Karajgi, a sanitation committee was organized by himself, which made the village clean and good-looking. He taught the people of Karajgi about the essentiality of sanitation.

Hosamani Siddappa was a humanist. He was like "Kusumadapi Komala", "Vajradapi Kathoram". He graced many honorable and high positions. He never acted blindly or with arrogance. He did not tolerate or allow the corruption and at the same time he never punished the innocent people for any such mistakes done unknowingly. "He was of the opinion that-Let 100 culprits escape, but

not to punish even a single innocent man". 55

Hosamani Siddappa was a well-wisher of the common people. His thoughts and decisions were taken always in the interest of the common people. His humanistic attitude was broad for all castes and classes. Everywhere and among the people of every caste and class, he was a man of honour and dignity, and that was because of his humanistic attitude.

He was always supporting the exploited. If an innocent person were in a dilemma, he used to extend his help. Dr. Patil Puttappa writes, "Before independence the District Local Board had responsibility of looking after the whole district. Mr. Sulakunthe was an engineer in the D.L.B. (District Local Board) as deputed had planned and constructed a bridge across a river in the district. It is the duty of an engineer to judge the viability before construction of the bridge. Even if Mr. Sulakunthe had done the same, due to the uneven and heavy rains, the bridge collapsed. The Government of Bombay had given a show-cause notice. Despite his explanations the government decided to take action against him. He approached Mr. Hulkoti, the then District Local Board President and also a famous lawyer requesting him to suggest the way of defense. Hulkoti advised him to contact Hosamani Siddappa.

"Hosamani will be having solutions for all types of problems

55. Ibid., P.66.
from the treasury of his knowledge. If you have not done the mistake, no doubt he will survive you."^56

Hosamani Siddappa had a reference of the same case that happened in the Madras Province; the bridge was constructed by the government, and crores together money was spent. After the collapse of the same bridge no action was taken. Hosamani Siddappa recorded the case in one corner of his brain, which he had read in the newspaper. The wonderful memory of Hosamani Siddappa had knowledge of even the exact date and the name of the newspaper. Immediately according to his advice the engineer collected the newspaper, with its reference Hosamani Siddappa wrote a letter to the Bombay Government.

"To construct a bridge an engineer has to examine first many things including the intensity of rainfall. But the part of the district in which the bridge is constructed, referral is recorded less since many years. Only after all such formalities the engineer had decided about the thickness of the bridge and the materials to be used. Unfortunately this year Dharawad District is hit by heavy rainfall, which caused the collapse of the bridge. Hence the engineer will not be responsible for that"

"Further he wrote the honorable government to see the reference of the Madras Government case, where no action was taken even after the collapse of the bridge

56. Ibid., P.67.
constructed by the Government spending a lot of money. In both the cases natural calamity has hit the manual efforts. If the Dharawad District Local Board engineer, is to be punished according to you, let me know what action the Central Government has taken on those engineers who were responsible for the failure of a bridge across Krishna river in Madras, where in it is possible to have exact picture of the density of rainfall. There should not be differentiation in the administration. The Government, Central or provincial should treat every one equal".

The Bombay Government could not give answer to Siddappa's letter. Because the Government was guilty. Thus Mr. Sulakunthe, the engineer to the Dharawad District Local Board, survived due to Hosamani Siddappa's sagacity. Hosamani Siddappa's effort to awaken the government mirrored his intrepidity. He never spared any body or even Government to protect the truth. He had followed the principle of truth and justice in his life.

We find the common tendency of people to be crazy after publicity of their name. Hosamani Siddappa was an exception to such people. The ideas, the service, the ideals have to remain permanently even in His absence.

His ideals are to be followed by such persons, who wish to make their name permanent with the public buildings. Hosamani

57. Ibid.,P.68,69,70.
Siddappa laid down foundation stones to many buildings like-the Haveri Urban Bank, the Haveri Municipality Building, the Haveri Municipal High School Building, and many other such buildings but nowhere do we find his name carved.

He started many institutions, like the Swaraj Bank, Dharawad, the K.C.C. Bank branch, Haveri, a Hostel for the Untouchables. No where was his name recorded. Though his name is not carved or recorded, his still alive, in the minds of the people, in the hearts of the people, though not an rocks.

"Hosamani Siddappa was the source of inspiration during the freedom movement and even in the Karnataka unification movement. Mylar Mahadev, the great martyr of the 1943 Quit India Movement, had the fatherly respect towards Hosamani Siddappa. Mahadev was impressed by the seditions speeches of Hosamani Siddappa. He was impressed by the qualities like simplicity, sagacity, and farsighted nature of this intrepid man. "There was intimacy between these two prominent personalities. Before his every step in the movement Mahadev used to take his valuable and timely advise."58

"As Indira Bhai Khare, who took active role in the freedom struggle, intensified political activities and attracted sisters towards constructive programmer, she was guided by the humble and honest patriot Sri Siddappa Hosamani. Further she said, for all my

constructive programmes Hosamani Siddappa was the ring master”.59

He was fluent in four languages-Kannada, English, Hindi, and Marathi. Their deity, God Kanavalli Parameshwara blessed Siddappa. The first chief minister of Karnataka.Sri.S.Nijalingappa said, “Hosamani Siddappa deserved to be a national leader, but the circumstances, the castism and the vested interests in the party did not allow him to become so. Still he is recognized by the then national leaders in the movement and in the politics”60

He had studied many books like –Rise and downfall of Roman Empire, Rousseau’s works, and also works of Montesquieu. He had the habit of reading Bhagavad-Gita every morning. He had the knowledge of ‘Vachana’Sahitya of 12th century Shivasharanas who fought for the social justice. He practiced them in his life. He studied the books of writers like Gibbons, Mecaualay, Dickens, Plato, Chanakya and Machiavelli. In addition to the Hindu epics he studied the Bible. He was fond of acting in dramas. Specially, he studied and practised Marathi dramas of famous Marathi dramatist, Gadhakari. The unlimited knowledge of many walks of life, sagacity and humanistic nature of this short, moderate coloured, thin man was much respected and honoured by many leaders of that time.

Dr.Patil Puttappa writes, “Mohare Hanumantharayaru, a well

60. Interviewed, S. Nijalingappa, Chitradurga, 07-08-1996.
known journalist and freedom fighter, was mad of his speeches. Every week he used to meet Hosamani Siddappa. He was of the opinion that spending time with Hosamani Siddappa contributed to our knowledge. He was a tremendous man. Only Hosamani Siddappa could review and foretell the Indian politics exactly. Hence I should like to meet him frequently."

He was a man of taste, power and of witty personality. This honour was blended with intelligence. Menasinakai B.M., Ex-M.P., Dharawad South, opined that Hosamani Siddappa had deep knowledge of great epics like The Ramayana and The Mahabharatha. He believed that knowledge is God. But in most of the literature of the freedom movement in Karnataka, or of Dharawad district or even in the Vernacular press, not much about Hosamani Siddappa could be found. This was because he was not fond of publicity. Siddappa was not just an individual worker, but he was the intellectual leader of the activists. His service was not restricted to Haveri or the then Dharawad district, but to the whole Karnataka. Later the whole nation has amazed to see this great indomitable man.

Especially on two occasions the whole nation turned towards Karnataka because of Hosamani Siddappa. In the year 1934 when the British Government declared elections to the Central Assembly, the Indian National Congress decided to contest. The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee selected Hosamani Siddappa as the

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candidate for the election. He had to contest from different districts of Bombay Karnataka having different cultures and speaking different languages. His fluency in Marathi, Konkani and even English made him win. Born in the agriculture family, he had primary knowledge of the problems of the peasants, which helped him serve the people of Karwar and win their hearts at the time of election. Though it was so difficult to grab the votes of Marathi people, he won the election with overwhelming majority. He was a member of the Central Assembly.

While he was the Central Assembly member, he did not lose a single opportunity of raising the issues of Karnataka and the issues of common interest of the nation. He forced the Central Government to reorganize Karnataka comprising all its Kannada speaking areas.

In the year 1939, the second time, in the Tripura Congress Presidential Election again the then Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee President Hosamani Siddappa played a vital role. In fact there was difference between Gandhiji and Subhas Chandra Bose regarding latters’s candidature. Gandhiji aspired Pattabi Sitaramaih’s victory. Subhas Chandra Bose contested against the will of Mahatma Gandhiji.

Hosamani Siddappa supported Subhas Chadra Bose. Karnataka had to decide the elections. At last Karnataka turned towards Bose and Subhas Chandra Bose was elected for the second time as the Congress President. The whole nation turned towards Karnataka with great wonder that this man had opposed even Mahatma Gandhiji’s wish. That was the stature of Hosamani Siddappa. He was an admirer
of Subhas Chandra Bose and his ideas and at the same time he was an admirer of Gandhiji’s dedication. But here in this context Hosamani Siddappa did not tolerate the dictatorship of the few in the party. But later he quitted the Congress in 1939 along with Subhas Chandra Bose and joined the Forward Block as its President.

Hosamani Siddappa was the prophet of Indian Nationalism; he was also a sagacious pathfinder for the march towards modernism. He was the shining light of the Bombay province. No less were the services of Hosamani Siddappa to the nation. He was a fervent patriot who valiantly strove for the well being of the common.