CHAPTER 3

MODERN EDUCATION AND DEPRESSED CLASSES
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3.1 EARLY ATTEMPTS

In Mysore the people of two castes namely Holeyas and Madigas were considered untouchables. Holeya means ‘native of the land’ is the Kannada name for a large untouchable category of sweepers, agricultural labourers and village watchmen who were called Mala in Telugu, Paraiyan in Tamil and Mahar in Marathi. In the Malnad region of Mysore they used to be agrarian serfs. The Holeyas traditional caste status was very low, as they had to do degrading work like removing dead animals and beating drums for funeral processions. The Madigas were the other large untouchable who constituted 5 per cent of the state’s population. Madigas were traditionally leather workers. Madigas were numerous in the eastern districts of Mysore state particularly Kolar, Bangalore and Tumkur. If the position of the Holeyas was low, that of the Madigas was still lower. But the depressed classes included besides these two, the Vodda, Koracha, Korama and the Banjaras were later included. The communities were originally called in the official records as backward. Once the ‘backward’ designation began to expand and shift in meaning, these communities were together labeled as the “Depressed Classes”. Later the term ‘Panchama’
was used to refer to *Holeyas* and *Madigas*, meaning the fifth class outside the four fold Hindu Varna system\(^1\). The term was used to denote these classes who were considered impure and untouchable. The phrases used during the debates of the Mysore Representative Assembly during 1920s to refer to the depressed classes like “low, filthy people” and ‘animals” indicate low social status of the Depressed Classes\(^2\).

No serious attempt was made by the government to facilitate for the spread of education among the depressed classes during the period before rendition. The Christian missionaries had taken lead in promoting education among the depressed classes, but it was not without intentions. The report of the department of public instruction for the year 1890-91 states that “the extension of education among these classes is best left to the missionary bodes go long as Brahmins and even Mohammedans object to teach them or to inspect their schools”\(^3\).

The policy of the government underwent a change in the year 1890-91. In the year 1889-90 government established two schools for the depressed classes, one at Huskur (Anekal Taluk), and another at Narasapur (Malur Taluk) of Kolar district\(^4\). Sixty two students enrolled in these two schools during the first year of its establishment. The students of depressed classes in government schools were made to sit apart from the other students of high caste, usually outside the school building. The
London Mission was running a school for depressed classes at Anekal. Wesleyan mission was running three schools for the depressed classes at Mysore and another at Hassan. All these missionary schools were unaided. The total number of children belonging to the depressed classes attending schools during 1890-91 was 349 boys and 35 girls including students attending ordinary schools. The above number constitutes 0.23 per cent of enrollment of students belonging to the depressed classes to the total school going population of the state.\(^5\)

During the year 1891-92 government started one more school, while the Wesleyan mission school established six more schools for the depressed classes. In recognition of the interest taken by the Wesleyan mission, government extended financial aid to two out of the nine schools established this mission. With a view to bring more private schools for depressed classes under grant-in-aid the government framed new rules for grant-in-aid to indigenous schools during the year 1894-95\(^6\).

The new grant-in-aid rules were made applicable to private schools for depressed classes which were classified under the following categories – Holeyas, Madigas, Lambanis, Koramas, Korachas and Naindas. But the rules were relaxed in the case of schools for depressed classes by bringing down the average daily attendance to become eligible for grant from 10 to 6. The step taken by the government had a positive effect in
increasing the number of private schools for depressed classes from five in 1890-91 to twenty seven in 1899-1900\textsuperscript{7}.

Most of the schools were provided with suitable buildings. In some schools, the students were allowed to attend the school at any time during the day that was most convenient to them. Books and slates were supplied free of cost to the students of these schools. While giving these benefits regular attendance and progress in education was insisted. Carpentry was taught to grown up boys along with prescribed syllabus. The inspection reports of the department of public instruction refers that most of these schools were making satisfactory progress.

The following table gives details of the number of schools established for depressed classes during the decade 1890 and 1900\textsuperscript{8}.

**TABLE–3: Number of Schools established for Depressed Classes during 1890-1900**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th></th>
<th>Private</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-1891</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1900</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following table gives details of Depressed Class students enrolled in schools.

**TABLE- 4: Enrollment of Depressed Class Students for the year 1890-1900**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890-1891</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1900</td>
<td>2214</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>2,371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.2 ACCESSIBILITY AND RESISTENCE**

Before the year 1901-02, there were special schools only for *Holeyas* and *Madigas*. In that year, the education department with the cooperation of the police department opened schools for educating the ‘*lambanis’* a ‘criminal’ tribe known as the Indian gypsies. Seven schools were opened in that year. At the end of 1910-11 there were eleven *Lambani* schools. Of these seven were in Shimoga district and two in Tumkur district and one each in Hassan and Chitradurga districts. These schools had a strength of 252 boys and 10 girls.

With the object of providing greater facilities for the education of depressed classes, government sanctioned during 1906-07, 8 scholarships of Rupees two each specially for the benefit of *Lambani* and *Beghari* pupils.
reading in the II and III classes of vernacular schools. Though a number of schools were opened for these classes, the condition of many of the schools was unsatisfactory and the principal reasons for this, according to the Inspector General of Education, were the poverty and apathy of the parents, the prevalence of epidemic diseases and the want of qualified teachers to work in these schools\textsuperscript{10}.

A \textit{Panchama} Boarding School was established at Mysore with a provision for instruction in both general and vocational subjects\textsuperscript{11}. The strength of the school which was thirty in the year of its establishment increase to fifty five during the year 1917-18. The school had provision for industrial training in mat weaving, book binding, shoe making, leather stitching, tailoring, gardening, practical agriculture, carpentry and smithy. The industrial section was worked at a profit and the school earned a reputation for weaving and leather stitching which attracted a large number of pupils from other districts to learn the trade in a systematic manner. The school was under the management of a strong committee. Besides the superintendent who was a panchama graduate, another graduate belonging to the same community was appointed to successfully manage the boarding school. The education provided to the students in this boarding school was entirely free, the cost being borne by the government. The report of the department of public instruction for the year 1915-16
records that “there is every hope of the school serving as an effective medium for raising the social and moral conditions of Panchamas in the near future”. The success of the Panchama Boarding School at Mysore led to demand for establishment of similar schools at various part of the state. As a result, the government established Panchama Boarding Schools at Tumkur, Chickmagalur and Bangalore.

During the year 1916-17, the education of the depressed classes received considerable encouragement. The government sanctioned an annual grant of One lakh rupees for the institution of scholarships for the students of backward classes studying in schools. Out of this provision, a sum of rupees 15,000 was earmarked by the benefit of depressed classes. Of this amount, a sum of six thousand was for primary schools, rupees four thousand and eight hundred was for the students of vernacular lower secondary, and rupees four thousand two hundred for students of industrial education. As the demand for English education among the community grew and applications for scholarships increased in number, government sanctioned a separate allotment of rupees ten thousand which was subsequently raised to rupees fifteen thousand towards grant of scholarships to panchama students studying in English classes.

To concentrate attention on the needs of the depressed classes, the Inspector General of Education C.R. Reddy had proposed to establish
Depressed Classes Development Trust and appointment of a special officer. This board was to be on the model of the malnad improvement committee with full-time secretary of which the Inspector General of Education should be ex-officio president. This board should consider industrial education, housing and all other measures required for the betterment of the *panchamas* and other depressed classes. The board should endeavour to work through the existing education department staff and carry out its mission of moral and material improvement including Temperance Reform without employing a special agency. It was hoped that by these measures progress of depressed classes would be achieved and secure them their due share in society.

The functions of the board as proposed by the Inspector General of Education were as follows:

1. The proper provision and supervision of education.
2. The industrial advancement of the depressed classes by demonstration, loan of cheap capital, machinery, organizing and marketing of their products, labour bureau etc.
3. Agricultural advancement, settlement of colonies, acquisition of lands on their behalf without however giving them, in the first instance, full ownership but only the tenancy right, with the ownership vested in government.
4. Hygiene and sanitation.

5. Improvement of social morals and customs.

6. Housing of the depressed classes.

It was also suggested that not less than a lakh of rupees each year should be allotted to the board. However, the government failed to approve the scheme on the grounds of financial stringency. The representatives of the Adi Dravida Abhivriddi Sangham raised the issue in the Mysore Representative Assembly. But the government sympathises with the cause of the depressed classes and expressed its helplessness to go ahead with the project due to poor financial status of the Mysore state.

One of the methods adopted by the department to facilitate the Panchama students to take to higher education and also to improve their habits of life was that of admission to general schools. As special prejudice against the intermingling of these students with those of the higher castes were still strong, it was felt that if reform was left to popular initiative it would take decades before the principle that no boy should be refused admission on the ground of caste to a government school or school maintained at the cost of public funds was enforced in practical working. In some centres no doubt, the depressed class students were allowed in to the general schools without creating any trouble. Such students were in some institutions given separate seats while in others
they mixed freely with the other boys. The admission of three Halepyka boys into the Anglo vernacular school at Sringeri was the signal for a serious outburst of social prejudice. The parents of the high caste boys protested against the admission of Halepyka boys in to school and withdrew their boys from the school. It became a big issue all over the state. The government maintained a firm stand that no school maintained under government grants could deny admission to the Panchama students. The parents of the high caste boys protested and withdrew their boys from the school. Gradually the non-Brahmin and Mohammedan parents also withdrew their boys from the school and started what they called “National School”. The Sringeri Swami issued a Sreemukh declaring that the Halepykas were not untouchables\(^\text{14}\). The Inspector General of Education while bringing this to the notice of government, observed that it would create a dangerous precedent if ground was yielded at that stage to artificial agitation and that if an order excluding Halepykas was passed, it might produce a reaction in other centres in which a liberal policy was being followed without creating any trouble.

Government after a mature deliberation of the various issues involved defined its policy and an order was passed on 29\(^{\text{th}}\) November 1918. The order declared “Government cannot uphold the view that any one shall be excluded from public school on the ground of caste, as
schools maintained from the public revenues are intended for the benefit of all classes of people in the state in the same way as hospitals, courts of law, railways and other public institutions. The unreasonable social prejudices in such matters have been wearing away with the spread of enlightenment in the advanced communities and the rise in the standards of social life of the depressed classes. Government are gratified to note that in some parts of the state students of these classes were freely admitted to schools and in some of them allowed to mix freely with the students of other cases. Any retrograde step calculated to revive the dying opposition to the legitimate rights of all castes to enjoy the benefits of such public institutions has to be deprecated. The spirit of intolerance displayed by certain classes of people at Sringeri in setting up the agitation against the admission of Halepyka students therefore deserves no sympathy. Whenever a school is opened as a protest against the admission of pupils of any community in the public schools, the promoters of such movement should be given clearly to understand that the institutions concerned will not be entitled to any grant-in-aid or other concessions from government, but recognition should not be withheld unless the prescribed standards have not been maintained"15.

In defence to the various representations, the government revised the above order so as to admit grants being sanctioned to each institutions if
they are found to be otherwise eligible. The *Panchamas* took advantage of the opportunity offered to them and entered many of the general schools.

During the year 1922 there were 608 schools for the *Panchama* and the number of students enrolled had gone up to 13,706. However, during the later years there was a marked decline due to closing of a number of aided and un-aided schools\(^1\). Many of these schools had to be converted to government schools. During the period 1923-24 and 1928-29, one hundred and thirty aided schools were converted as government schools. Government also adopted the policy of amalgamating depressed class schools with general schools. The practice of supplying books and slates to students of depressed classes was discontinued. The fee concession given to students of depressed castes was renewed each time for a period of three years till the year 1932. In that year the government while renewing the concession for a further period of three years, ordered levy of half of the usual re-admission fee from depressed class students. The exemption granted from payment of sports and reading room fee and medical fee was withdrawn.

In the year 1921 government passed orders to give effect to the education memorandum of the depressed classes\(^1\). The memorandum outlined the following measures for the educational advancement of the depressed classes.
The opening of 25 special schools each year for a period of five years in all important centres of Adi-Karnataka population in view of their backwardness in matter of education.

The development of the three existing residential institutions at Mysore, Tumkur and Chickmagalur, so as to facilitate the training of 250 people in each and the opening of 3 more such institutions.

The provision of instruction in weaving, in addition to the industrial training provided in the residential institutions and the award of scholarships to pupils having an aptitude for higher studies in agriculture or industries.

The starting of Adi Karnataka Boarding School for girls which should combine general with industrial education and train students to become mistresses in Adi Karnataka Girls Schools.

During the year 1922-23 to 1931-32 the Adi Karnataka Boarding Schools made good progress. The success of these institutions stimulated the demand for admission into them to an extent that cannot be easily be met. The expenditure on account of boarding and other charges had increased over the years. To solve the problem, government passed an
order in the year 1931-32, to the effect that boarding charges should be recovered from such of the boarders of the Sri Narasimharaja Hostel, Bangalore, who are able to pay because of the financial wellbeing of their parents. Boys were made to pay something towards their maintenance by gardening, shoe making, carpentry, weaving and such other work in which they had been trained. It was also proposed that in future the number and magnitude of free boarding homes should be limited and the establishment of aided hostels encouraged in order to prevent the demoralization likely to result by continues spoon-feeding and to teach these classes, as they became educated, the virtues of self help and self reliance.

The Central Adi Karnataka Institute, Mysore made good progress during this period. Various vocational skills were taught in this school for Panchama students. The skills taught were weaving, carpentry, tailoring, smithy, rattan work and leather work. Specimens of work done in the industrial sections were exhibited at Dasara Exhibitions as also at All India Exhibition held at Mysore during the month of October 1929. A certificate of honour for good work and a gold medal was awarded to the whole collection exhibited by the Central Panchama Boarding School. Gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded to specimens of Rattan work and Shoe making exhibited at the Dasara exhibition during the same year.
With a view to reduce the rush of students seeking admission to the Central Adi Karnataka Institute, Mysore and to cater to the needs of the local people the District Board of Hassan contributed a sum of rupees twenty five thousand and established an Adi Karnataka Boarding School at Hassan during the year 1927\textsuperscript{19}. Sri Narasimharaja Hostel at Bangalore was established in the year 1922-23. The successful working of the Home and its progress was largely due to the influential committee of management, consisting of officials and non-officials. The hostel committee was headed by Mr.K. Shankaranarayana Rao, the then Judge in the High Court of Mysore, Dr.C.B. Rama Rao, Rajasabhabushana, K. Chandy, retired member of the council, and Rao Sahib H. Channaiah, who had spared no pains to improve the institution and ensure the progress and welfare of the boarders.

In addition to maintaining Adi Karnataka Boarding Homes the government promoted establishment of Aided Hostels for the Depressed Class students. Revised rules for the grants to aided hostels for the depressed classes were published in the year 1931. The new rules made a provision for granting half of the boarding charges in respect of non-scholarship holders, warden’s allowance, establishment charges and full rent of the hostel building. The following table gives list of Aided Hostels and the amount of government grant released during the year 1933\textsuperscript{20}.

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TABLE-5: List of Aided Hostels and the Amount of Government Grant released during the year 1933.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Name of the Hostel</th>
<th>Amount of Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>D.C. Mission Hostel, Robertsonpet</td>
<td>84 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adi Dravida Christian Hostel, Bangalore</td>
<td>204 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Adi Jambava Hostel, Bangalore</td>
<td>97 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adi Karnataka Hostel, Mysore</td>
<td>62 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sri Mallikarjuna Hostel, Hapuvadi</td>
<td>45 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sri Sarada Adikarnataka Hostel, Malavalli</td>
<td>46 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Banjara Hostel, Chitradurga</td>
<td>60 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ganjara Hostel, Arasikere</td>
<td>83 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Koracha and Korama Hostel, Arasikere</td>
<td>62 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>New Adikarantaka Hostel, Bangalore</td>
<td>124 8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Adikarnataka Hostel, Chitradurga</td>
<td>5 8 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the year 1931 the value of scholarships granted to depressed classes was reduced to three fourths of their former value under the general scheme of retrenchment of all grades of scholarships, while the award of scholarships for depressed class students in primary schools were discontinued. The report of the department of public instruction refers that the reduction in the value of scholarships has not resulted in any decrease in the enrollment of depressed class students.
The report of the department of public instruction for the period 1932-1944 indicates the progress of depressed class education in the state of Mysore\textsuperscript{21}. The report refers that “of late, the social disabilities are fast disappearing and various agencies are at work to ameliorate the social, educational and economic conditions of the depressed classes. Social reforms have concentrated their efforts on the education and uplift of the community. The influence of leading statesmen and politicians has roused popular conscience against untouchability. The interest evinced by the more advanced classes of Hindu community towards their less fortunate brethren, the awakening in the depressed classes themselves to a sense of their own degradation, the desire on their part for the amelioration of their condition and the vigorous policy of expansion of education of the depressed classes and the facilities offered in that behalf, by the government, by opening new schools and providing sufficient inducements to enable as many as possible to take to education have helped to bring about a decided improvement in the social and educational improvement of the community\textsuperscript{22}.”

The following table gives the number of special institutions exclusively intended for the depressed classes during the year 1931 and 1944.
TABLE–6: Number of Schools started for Depressed Classes during the year 1931–1944.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Municip</th>
<th>Aided</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle Primary</td>
<td>Upper Primary</td>
<td>Lower Primary</td>
<td>Special schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above it is seen that depressed class primary schools decreased from 597 in 1931-32 to 417 during the year 1940-41 and further decreased to 405 during the year 1943-44\(^{23}\). The government felt it undesirable to increase the number of separate schools specially in rural areas, as experience had shown that most of those schools were inefficient for want of qualified staff and un-economical for want of sufficient number of students enrolled. The government adopted the policy of amalgamating the depressed class schools with general schools, wherever possible. This accounted for the fall in the number of separate schools for depressed classes. In certain places, amalgamation was opposed by the members of the depressed community themselves for the reason that amalgamation involves removal of the schools from their own
localities. When the department took control of elementary education in July 1941 from local boards, there were nearly 1,482 primary schools where depressed class children were not admitted. As a result of the intensive propaganda carried on by the school inspectors, the number of such schools was steadily reduced, so much so there were as on June 1944 only 174 primary schools of which 97 were held in temples and 77 in buildings other than temples where depressed classes were not admitted. The department continued its efforts to make these schools also accessible to depressed class students by shifting these schools to rented buildings wherever available.

The total number of depressed class children studying in various grades of schools during the year 1943-44 was 34,004 as against 19,620 during the year 1931-32. During the period the number of students studying in colleges increased from 45 to 97, those studying in high schools increased from 234 to 720. The number of students studying in middle schools increased from 1,651 to 3,002. The number of depressed class students enrolled in primary and lower primary schools increased from 17,453 to 29,958. The enrollment of depressed class students in primary schools shows an increase of 71.6 per cent during the period from 1931-32 to 1943-44. There was a marked improvement in the performance of depressed class students in the SSLC examination. Out of
199 students who took the SSLC examination during the year 1943-44, 96 came out successful. In addition to this, 9 out of 22 students who appeared in supplementary examinations were declared eligible for college education.

3.3 ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

After six months of Rendition a political institution at the state level was created in the form of Mysore Representative Assembly. Dewan Rangacharlu in his first official address to the delegates of the assembly pointed out the necessity of such a political measure. He said, “… such arrangements by bringing people in immediate communication with government would serve to remove from their minds, any misapprehensions in regard to the views and actions of the government and would convince them that the interests of the government are identical with those of people.”

The Representative Assembly was an important venture of the state because such a purely non-official body was not yet formed in any part of India by the power centre. Of course, there were a good number of non-official voluntary associations in British India but they were not formed of the initiative of the government. It is also a fact that there was no demand from the elite section of those areas to have such an assembly.
The Mysore Representative assembly consisted of nominated rich ryots and merchants representing all the taluks of Mysore state. This assembly was constituted by an executive order and had no recognized rights and constitutional base till 1923. The member could represent to the state in the annual meeting the problems of the people. But still, certain European members with a few locals discussed social problems like infant marriage, widow rehabilitation and reforms of the religious muts. The discussions created much conflicts and confrontations in the assembly. In these debates the Brahmins dominated the Mysore politics, while the great majority were mere onlookers.

The problems of *Panchamas* did not receive sufficient attention during the first two decades of the establishment of the assembly. In the year 1915 first step towards integrating *Panchamas* with other classes of people was taken. Head Master of the Anglo Vernacular School in the orthodox Sringeri Jahgir admitted three low caste students into the school. The incident created a storm of protest in the state of Mysore. The members of Mysore Representative Assembly debated extensively on the subject. Some members pleaded that *Panchamas* should have separate schools till such time they attained a status in society. The class distinction had been handed over from times immemorial and government should not precipitate any action that would ultimately harm the depressed
classes. Some members openly said that the *Panchamas* were not clean, they were un-hygienic and their customs and traditions made them beasts. They were accustomed to spurious liquors and subject to other evils. It was contended that the government should not interfere with the social customs of the people, like the British who had kept away from interfering with religious practices in India.

The issue of admitting *Panchamas* to general schools evoked a lengthy debate in the representative assembly in the May session of 1920. A large number of members took part in the debate. Amble Annaiah Pandit who opened the discussion opposed the move of government to admit *Panchamas* to general school\textsuperscript{26}. He said that it was not his idea to discourage education of *Panchamas*. He wanted to see that separate arrangements were made for them to learn English and Kannada side by side. But the nature of help given to them should not interfere with the feelings and customs of the higher classes. At least in the beginning there should be separate schools for the *Panchamas* with English and Kannada teachers. It would not be right that they should be forced to enter into the ordinary Anglo-Vernacular Schools and made to sit side by side with the boys of higher castes. Many students had left the school because the *Panchamas* had been allowed to enter. The member said, “these students could not make up their minds to associate with people notorious for their
unclean habits for ages past". Amble Annaiah Pandit said that until the *Panchamas* gave up unclean practices, they ought not be allowed to join higher classes. As at present, they were not fit to be associated with the other classes. It was not only the Brhamins that objected to sit with them. The people of other classes such as Lingayats, Vokkaligas objected with equal vehemence. In the vies of the members it would not be right that the feelings of such large body of people should be disregarded in the matter of admission of *Panchamas* to study in separate schools and learn to improve their habits and customs. When they showed decided improvement let them be admitted into higher classes along with others", he added.

Venkatakrishnaiah made a very lengthy speech on the subject. He agreed that in the eyes of the government all citizens are equal and no difference should be shown. At the same time government should not ignore the existing differences handed over from times immemorial. The government should make special arrangements to elevate the underprivileged classes to make them fit to be associated with higher classes. But such arrangements should be made with the least friction. With a view to help few people, it would not be right to displease a vast majority of others. He wondered whether the present efforts by the government would
really help the *Panchamas* since it went against the established notion of the civilized world.

Another member K.T. Seshiah supported the previous two speakers and said that the forward communities were trying their best to improve the condition of *Panchamas*\(^{28}\). But it would be unwise to precipitate matters. Public opinion should be prepared. Whatever may be the other defects of the Brahmins, they were highly educated and were tolerant. The *Panchamas* should get clean, they must reform themselves morally, give up spirituous liquors and also give up large number of other evils existing among them. He concluded by saying that the time had not yet arrived to bring them into the midst of other communities by compulsion. Krishnamurthiyachar followed the pattern of arguments of the previous speakers and cautioned that by allowing the *Panchamas* to mix with other boys, he said the other boys would learn the bad and unhealthy habits of the *Panchamas*.

Krishnasastry contended that the *Panchamas* had certain customs and practices which degraded them to the lowest level of beasts\(^{29}\). They ate the carcass of dead cattle. Was this done among the civilized sections of the people in any country?, asked Krishnasastry in the course of his speech. He concluded by saying that the *Panchamas* were so filthy and dirty that very few people could make up their mind to associate with them.
These differences could not be removed by an executive order. Social and civic bodies should take up the question of upliftment of the *Panchamas* in the first instance. According to Krishnasasy, if one *Panchama* joined with ten other boys the chances were that while the *Panchamas* might not improve his habits, the ten boys would be spoiled by the bad habits of one *Panchama* boy. The member continuing his long speech said that the *Panchamas* had been a wild race with no trace of civilization. They were not the rulers nor were they highly learned men. From the beginning they led a low life, more or less like beasts.

Doreswamy Iyengar participating in the debate said that Mysore country is known for its *Dharma*. The Maharaja gave liberal patronage to Brahmins and protected them. If this had not been done they would also be like the *Panchamas*. He noted that for the last one year the *Panchamas* had been forced upon other people against their feelings and sentiments. During this period the other boys did not go to schools and had no education. Therefore he pleaded that there should be separate schools for the *Panchamas*.

Gopalaswamy Aiyer, a Brahmin reformer who was instrumental in the foundation of the Adi Jambhava Sangha championed the cause of depressed classes in Mysore. As member of the Mysore Representative Assembly he countered the attacks and criticisms made against the
Panchamas by the members of the assembly. When the assembly was discussing the desirability of admitting Panchamas to general schools, Gopalaswamy made a lengthy speech on the subject. He said there were two arguments against Panchamas being mixed with the other castes. The first was that Panchamas were not clean, they ate beef and drank liquors. The second was that until they were reformed they could not be considered equal to others. He dispelled the argument that the Panchamas ate meat and asked if all people were divided into vegetarians and non-vegetarians, would it be possible to keep the non-vegetarians separately from the other, he asked. Regarding the reform of the Panchamas he said that no time limit should be fixed. He rejected both the points against the Panchamas. Refuting the argument that the Panchamas were never reigning sovereigns at any time, Iyer asserted that Adi Dravida Association had been urging that the Adi Dravidas were the sovereigns in the past and they had a very good history behind them. He said that it was not always true that boys of other castes would get into unclean habits by association with the Panchamas. Such danger would not be present if the boys were taken proper care in the school. The government could open two kinds of schools, one for vegetarian and another for non-vegetarian. Otherwise there might be village committee in every village to decide whether the Panchamas might be admitted into the schools. Time had come when the problem must be faced boldly instead
of postponing consideration indefinitely. He did not know what social organization could do to reform the *Panchamas* if other castes were not prepared to admit them into the society. All *Panchama* boys could not be admitted to one central boarding school. In Mysore nearly two hundred boys were refused admission for want of accommodation. That was the reason why *Panchamas* should be allowed to join the ordinary schools. If the *Panchamas* could not enter boarding schools and were not allowed to go to ordinary schools, how could they get education, he asked. He argued that ordinary schools had all along been meant for all communities and not for communities minus *Panchamas*. He referred to the argument of a member that the *Panchamas* should not be admitted into lower classes along with the boys of higher castes, but there would be no objection to take them in the degree classes. Iyer asked, “but if you do not give them facilities to learn in the lower classes, how can they be expected to go to higher classes.”

Referring to the interpellation in the Madras Legislative Council, he said the question concerned admission of *Panchamas* into private grant-in-aid schools, the government had stated that grants could not be denied on the ground that *Panchamas* were not admitted. But there was no objection to admit the *Panchamas* into government schools. From his experience, he found that when a boy applied for scholarship he took as long as one
year to obtain sanction owing to excessive red-tapism. At the end of the year the boy was either not willing to go to school or the parents had other work for him. Since the Panchamas did not know what facilities are available for his education, there should be a certain amount of propaganda to induce panchamas to take to education.

Sri Gopalaswamy Iyer argued further that they had been blinded by vested interest. It was strange that some people argued that if panchamas were educated they would not be available for work as coolies. Was this the only principle involved in the opposition to panchamas education, he asked. It was true that if an uneducated panchama worked for 4 annas a day he might demand 8 annas after he got education. But it had also an advantage in that the educated panchama would have a better sense of duty and would require no close supervision as at present. Sri. Gopalaswamy Iyer concluded his long reply to the criticisms made by members of Mysore Representative Assembly on matters relating to admission of panchamas to general schools. He concluded by saying that want of education was a menace to society. At least for sake of self protection it would be better to educate the panchamas so that they would become descent members of the society.

Replying to the long and controversial debate, the dewan in his closing remarks said that the question had been discussed with the great
ability and feeling. He felt that the opposition to the order was mainly based on grounds of expediency and of unpreparedness of public opinion. Every member who spoke on the subject agreed as to the principles of social justice on which the government order was based. Government felt that it was their duty to educate public opinion and it was impossible for them to receive from the attitude they had been called upon to take.

After 1920, Murugeshan Pillai of the Dravida Abhivruddhi Sangham, Bangalore emerged as an important spokesperson for the cause of depressed classes. He raised a series of questions on the conditions of the *panchamas* and the policies of government towards the upliftment of the *panchamas*. The following issues raised by Pillai indicate his understanding of the problems of *panchamas* and his commitment to the cause of upliftment of *panchamas*. In the year 1921, Murugeshan Pillai asked a question in the Representative Assembly seeking details of representations of *panchamas* in the government service and in public bodies. The government replied by saying that as on 31st December 1920, there were 72 *panchamas* in the superior services of government. Chief Secretary further said that there was one *panchama* in the Mysore representative assembly, none on the legislative council and none in the economic development board and in the senate of Mysore University. When Murugeshan Pillai demanded the government that it should appoint
panchama representatives on various public bodies like legislative council, central recruitment board, senate of Mysore University, Board of agriculture, Board of education, Municipal councils and local boards and in the scholarship committees. The Dewan replied that it was not expedient to revise the existing constitution of these bodies but noted the request for providing adequate representations to panchamas in important political and local-self government bodies.

Murugeshan Pillai pleaded for passing special legislations prescribing minimum wages for agricultural and industrial labourers, punishment for exploitation of panchama labourers. Murugeshan Pillai brought to the notice of the government that panchama agricultural labourers were held in bondage by the planters of Malnad region misusing the breach of Contract Act\textsuperscript{32}. He demanded extension of Labour Act of British India to be made applicable to these people. Dewan replied that the matter would be considered though he made it clear that it would not be possible to repel the breach of Contract Act\textsuperscript{33}. He also pleaded that government should issue a circular ordering all officials of government to deal considerately and politely whenever panchamas visit them for official work. In the June session of 1921, Murugeshan Pillai demanded that government should prohibit alienation of land given to panchamas. He also demanded interest free loans to be given to panchamas to procure
agricultural implements and bullocks. To this demand, the second member of the council replied that if loans were given to panchamas for purchase of bullocks, they would sell them away as such their condition would remain the same.

Murugeshan Pillai wanted the recommendations of the committee constituted by economic conference for the upliftment of the depressed classes to be implemented immediately. However, dewan replied that government had deferred the considerations of these recommendations for one year for want of funds. When Murugeshan Pillai wanted the government to increase the scholarships for the panchama students and scholarships to be extended to the boys studying in elementary and primary schools. He said that the number of scholarships granted was very small and the quantum of relief inadequate. The Inspector General of Education positively responded to the demand and agreed that some increase in the scholarship amount was necessary in the value of high school scholarships. He assured the members that the matter was under active consideration of the government.

During 1919 when the non-Brahmin movement was at its peak, various caste associations made representations to the government seeking adequate representations in assembly, councils, municipalities and other local bodies as well as more adequate representations to their
respective castes in government services. They also demanded more educational opportunities in the form of schools, hostels and scholarships for the students of their community for socio-economic advancements. On 25th October 1920, Adi Dravida Abhivruddhi Sangham made a representation to the Maharaja of Mysore. The memorandum highlights the conditions of panchamas and seeks a number of measures from the government towards the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the panchamas. The memorandum says “On behalf of the eleven lakh of the panchama population of this state, and in the name of the Adi Dravida Abhivruddi Sangham, I beg to submit our deep spirit of profound devotion and loyalty to our souvenir. His Highness the Maharaja, and our overwhelming gratitude to his Highness for the great act of emancipation graciously extended to our community”.

It is now over six years when His Highness royal brother His Highness the Yuvaraja inaugurated the campaign for amelioration of our conditions by forming the Bangalore Social Service League and with characteristic foresight enlisted your sympathy also in our behalf as president of the league. Your appointment to the first office in the state naturally therefore raised hopes in us of further progress in our cause and your message of hope and help to us in your address to this assembly last year accentuated them. Those hopes have been rightly royally fulfilled by
the gracious act which has today rendered articulate the dumb millions in my community. To His Highness the Yuvaraja therefore and to you in a special measure, my community commands me to convey their sense of profound gratitude and thanks.

His Highness government have all along treated us generously and dealt with the schemes for our amelioration and advancement in a liberal spirit. We are accordingly actuated today by a spirit of thankfulness and not of complaint.

We shall however, be failing in our duty to the government if we omit to submit on this occasion, our needs as we understand them. It is in this spirit that I submit the following matters for your gracious consideration.

We are an ancient community with a civilization, philosophy and history of which we reasonably feel proud. We are confident that our present unfavourable conditions are the outcome of our economic degradation. We are confident also that our social condition will automatically improve with the improvement of our economic condition. We beg therefore, to urge that all efforts in our belief be concentrated on the following matters.

Our foremost need is education – more education – universal education. We are thankful to the government for throwing open all
government and aided schools to our boys and girls. We are thankful to them also for their programme of rural education promised in April this year. But we feel strongly that our advancement and even our utilizing the above mentioned privileges to the full extent, depends wholly on boarding schools of the kind established in Mysore city and we pray that one such school and on the same scale be established in each district as soon as possible. In any case, one such school in Bangalore is a crying need because of the very large population there.

Our next need is an opportunity to earn a descent living on our own account by our own toil. We pray that at least one special agricultural settlement be organized in each district granting to each settler an extent of at least five acres of dry land and an acre of wet or garden land when available and also advancing the necessary agricultural capital in some cases. As an additional safeguard, we proposed that such lands may be declared inalienable for two generations of holders, in order to ensure the development of a prosperous agricultural community.

Similarly, at least one special officer of the industrial department may be deputed to carry the home industries of the “homes” of our community and to improve the condition of the weavers, rope makers, basket weavers and other artisans amongst us.
Our third need is capital. We are convinced that the co-operative movement offered the only means for our emancipation in this direction. Owing to our special conditions, however, the problem of co-operative organization offers peculiar difficulties regarding constant study and sympathetic treatment. We pray that arrangements may kindly be made to give greater emphasis to this item of work in this department.

The housing of our community in the cities and towns and the provision of adequate facilities for water for domestic purposes and bathing is another crying problem.

The further progress of our community will be greatly accelerated by the creation of a special organization which will watch over the efforts made by the various departments and ourselves, and provide from time to time, the necessary stimulus are corrective. Such an organization is necessary also to ensure all officers dealing promptly with our requirements in pursuance of government orders, and for interviewing such officers or placing our case authoritatively before them when need be.

This organization will not be official, but it may be interested with the administration of a special grant to be made by government for our amelioration and may contain a few government nominees. The
government may also appoint a full time secretary who will, however, be subordinate to the organization in all matters. It may be given direct assess to any head of department or to government in all matters concerning our welfare, but may not be subordinate to government in respect of its individual actions or decisions.

The above summarizes our immediate need and we confidently leave them in your safe hands.

The patronage extended by the Maharaja of Mysore to Adi Karnataka Abhivruddi Sangha and attempts made by him to promote the welfare of the panchamas were acknowledged by C.R. Reddy, one of the champions of panchamas in Karnataka. He paid a glowing tribute to the Maharaja of Mysore in the following words:

“If today panchamas advancement and education have gone further in Mysore than any other parts of India, honour and credit are due to Srikrishnaraja Wodeyar, the Maharaja of Mysore, who stood as a rock amidst the waves of agitations bearing furiously, and did his fatherly duty for his panchama children unflinchingly."

Some of the social reformers like Kudmul Rangarao of depressed class mission, Gopalaswamy Iyer the secretary of the Brahman Samaj, Bangalore and president of the Adi Dravida Abhivruddhi Sangham,
Chandrashekar, president of Karnataka Theosophical Federation and M. Raja Rao of the Civic and Social Progress Association were the genuinely interested in the welfare of the depressed classes. Besides M. Raja Rao and the Yuvaraja’s support, the Civic and Social Progress Association was supported by V.N. Narasimha Iyengar, M. Venkatakrishnaiah and G.R. Josyer.

Among the non-official organizations that worked towards improving conditions of panchamas, Adi Dravida Abhivruddhi Sangha takes the pride place. This sangha was established in the year 1920 by Murugeshan Pillai, a depressed class man from Bangalore. In the beginning, Pillai associated himself with other backward class leaders and Prajamitra Mandali. Later having realized that backward class leaders have little concern for the conditions of the Panchamas, Pillai moved away from Prajamitra Mandali. He was responsible for drafting a memorandum representing the cause of depressed classes and submitted the same to the Maharaja of Mysore. Murugeshan Pillai was nominated to Mysore representative assembly as a representative of the Panchamas. He successfully voiced the problems of panchamas in the Mysore representative assembly and secured a number of concessions for the community.
Another important organization which worked for the welfare of the *panchamas* was Adi Jambava Sangha. The sangha established school for the *panchama* students. The sangha worked as a petitioning organization and successfully secured a place in the Mysore representative assembly. Gopalaswamy Iyer was nominated to representative assembly as a representative of this organization. Gopalaswamy Iyer successfully defended the community when members of the other community opposed the government order enabling the students of the *panchama* class to get admissions in general schools. Though the government withdrew from its position due to pressures of major communities that the debate it arose in the assembly and the speeches made by Gopalaswamy in the assembly led to general awareness among the public with regard to the problems of the *panchamas* in society.

Among other organizations that worked in the field of welfare of *panchamas* mention may be made of Civic and Social Progress Association established in Bangalore. This organization was mainly involved in organizing lectures on temperance, sanitation, hygiene and cleanliness. The Yuvaraja was one of the patron of this organization and was keenly interested in the activities of the association. The Kengeri Gurukula Ashrama was another organization which had opened a free boarding home and was running a school for *panchama* students. The
Deena Seva Sangha established at Malleswaram in Bangalore was involved in welfare activities of *panchamas* who were working in textile mills of Bangalore. The sangha started its work in slums inhabited by mill workers. The sangha started a day and night school in Bangalore which had a strength of 225 boys and 60 girls. The Kaniyara Sangha organized for the social upliftment of Kaniyara community was established by some liberal broad minded Brahmins.

3.4 POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT

No serious attempt was made by the government to facilitate for the spread of education among the depressed classes during the period before rendition. The Christian missionaries had taken lead in promoting education among the depressed classes, but it was not without intention. The report of the department of public instruction for the year 1890-91 states that “the extension of education is best left to the missionary bodies so long as Brahmins and even Mohammedans object to teach them or to inspect their schools”. The policy of government underwent a change in the year 1890-91 when government established two schools for the depressed classes at Huskur near Anekal and another at Narasapur near Malur Taluk.
Swami Vivekananda wrote to the Maharaja, Chamaraja Wodeyar that “the only service to be done for our lower classes, is to give them education to develop their last individuality. That is the great task between our people and prince… this is what is to be done in India⁴⁸”. The Maharaja tried in a moderate way to encourage the education of depressed classes.

The financial exigencies of the early period of the Maharaja’s rule necessitated the abolition of a separate departmental head for education and his designation of director of public instruction was in 1883 changed, and he was called education secretary to the dewan and his duties also included the duties of police secretary to the dewan as well as those of the census superintendent. In August 1884, archaeology was substituted for police duties and in April 1890 education was separated from archaeology and was entrusted to H.J. Bhabha, a Parsi gentleman of ability who was principal of the Maharaja’s College at that time.

On the occasion of the prize distribution on the 24th of March 1882 to the students of the Maharaja’s College at which Chamaraja Wodeyar presided, Rangacharlu on behalf of His Highness government stated that the requirements of an advancing age did not permit of education being left to the chances of individuals, philanthropy as in the former days but that it was necessary government should undertake the maintenance of public
schools and colleges, care being however taken not to allow them to
degenerate into mere government department worked on mere routine and
on considerations of monitory gain. Further, if educational institutions were
to attain their highest success, emphasis Rangacharlu, they need to be
characterized by public spirit, purity of intentions and devoted attachment
between masters and pupils which belong to the older schools. No nation
could thrive without a highly educated class at its head and the system of
government schools would never be complete without the colleges. So
long as these colleges were attended by all classes of people and a well
devised system of scholarships placed them within the reach of the more
gifted students of the poorer classes, it might fairly be accepted that it was
the national and not individual interests that were served. Education was
but a means to an end and desire for it could only spring among the people
by political ambition, or any religious movements, or great industrial
changes. What was really required at the time, concluded Rangacharlu,
was to stimulate a desire for education among the large agricultural
classes. If this was accomplished, government would no more be called
upon to pay for their education then are required to feed them.\textsuperscript{39}

In the year 1886, Seshadri Iyer announced in the representative
assembly the educational policies of his government for the future. “It
would be the aim of the government, he said, to maintain unimpaired and
in thorough efficiency all the means of elementary and secondary education and to bring them within the reach of all classes both by direct agencies and by assisting private efforts, to promote a scholarly study of the local vernacular and of the Sanskrit language, to elevate and extend female education and to conduct it on a system strictly national so as to enlist popular sympathy in its progress and to encourage higher education and trying young men for the professions of medicine and engineering\textsuperscript{40}.

These initiatives and statements of the Maharaja and his Dewans clearly enunciate the course of action the new government would intend to take over the years in the field of education. These statements emphasizes the commitment of the government towards the cause of education, recognized the importance of philanthropy and private initiative, and touches on importance of education of women, depressed classes and other deprived section of society. The statements assumed importance in light of the factors after rendition, the government was facing severe financial crisis as an after effect of epidemics and famines.
NOTES AND REFERENCE

1 S. Chandrashekar, Dimensions of Socio-Political Change in Mysore, 1918-40, New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1985, p. 16.


17 Government Order No.1827-80 EAG 308, 16th May 1921.


22 Ibid., p. 93.


27 Ibid., p. 97.

28 Ibid., p. 98.


30 Ibid., May 1920, p. 41.

31 Ibid., pp.51-56
32 Ibid., 1921, p. 61.

33 Ibid., 1921, pp. 61-68


36 Ibid., p. 119.


40 Ibid., p. 134-140.