CHAPTER 5

MODERN EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE
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5.1 MODERN EDUCATION AS A TOOL OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Modern education was introduced in India to meet the political and administrative needs of British Imperial Power. Since the main purpose of the inauguration of modern education was to supply the English going personnel to the British administrative operates, mass education had been throughout seriously neglected. In spite of its defects, the introduction of modern education in India was a progressive act of British rule. It was secular in character, liberal in essence, opened to all irrespective of castes or creed, unlike the education in the pre-British period. Above all, modern education was the key which opened the great treasures of rationalists and democratic thought of the modern west to the Indians. It was not a mere accident that the pioneers of social reform and leaders of Indian nationalism came from western educated classes of the Indian society.

The educated Indian who studied English democratic literature and imbedded its democratic principles, felt inspired to rebel against the reactionary social institutions such as caste system which sought to enslave the individual and suppress his free initiative. He also thought in terms of free national existence of the Indian people on a democratic
basis. The English educated intelligentsia exercised great ideological influence on the masses of India. This process which began during early 19th century in Bengal gradually spread to other British Indian Presidencies like Bombay and Madras. Some of these changes obviously began to influence the Princely States like Baroda, Travancore, Mysore which were often referred to as progressive states or model states. These terms were used to indicate the response these Princely states shown towards western education and initiating social reforms.

British rule produced radical and lasting changes in Indian society and culture. It was unlike any previous period in Indian history as the British brought with them new technology, institutions, knowledge, beliefs and values. During the 19th century, the British slowly led the foundations of a modern state by surveying land, settling the revenue, creating a modern bureaucracy, army, police, instituting law courts, codifying law, developing communications, railways, posts and telegraphs and canals, establishing schools, colleges and so on. One obvious result was that the books and journals, along with the schools made possible the transmission of modern as well traditional knowledge to a large number of Indians. Knowledge which could no longer be the privilege of a few, hereditary groups.
In the first half of the 19th century, the British with the support of enlightened Indian leaders abolished sati (1829), female infanticide, human sacrifice and slavery (1833). M.N. Srinivas used the term ‘Westernization’ to characterize the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule. The term ‘westernization’ subsumes changes occurring that different levels – technology, institutions, ideology and values. Westernization, according to him, not only led to introduction of new institution but also in fundamental changes in the old institutions. While India had schools long before the arrival of British, they were different from British introduced schools in that they had been restricted to upper caste children and transmitted mostly traditional knowledge.

In Mysore, as in other parts of India Brahmins were the first to take up western education. This was obvious as they possessed a literary tradition and in addition many of them stood at the top of the rural economic hierarchy as landowners, having received land grants from the ruling kings. For the Brahmins land became a major source of financing western education, rather than as a direct source of power in itself. They were the first to sense the arrival of new opportunities following the establishment of British rule. Many of them left their villages and migrated to cities like Bangalore and Mysore in order to pursue English education.
which became an important and indispensable passport to employment under the British rule. The Brahmins became a filter through which westernization percolated to the rest of the Hindu society.

By 1921 despite various schemes launched by Mysore government to promote education, English education was available only in Bangalore and Mysore, district headquarters towns and some of the larger taluk headquarters towns.

In 1921, 7.4% of the nearly six million Mysoreans were literate. Of them only one per cent were able to read and write in English. The Brahmins, Christians and Muslims together accounted for three quarters of literates in English, Brahmins alone comprising nearly half the literate male population.

1/5\textsuperscript{th} of the Brahmins lived in four major cities. In Bangalore they alone constituted 1/5\textsuperscript{th} of the population. Brahmins dominated most of the administrative and clerical grades of government service, where formal educational qualifications were stipulated.

Education was one of the crucial British policy which was used to control Indian princes. In light of this, it becomes significant to discuss the modern and western education which Mysore maharaja received in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries. British through western education found
it useful to create new loyal Indian princes. The successive creation of boarding schools for sons and relatives of Indian ruling princes was started in north India during 1870s. These schools had their origin in Lord Mayo’s educational scheme and these schools were all modeled upon English public school. Lord Mayo believed that ruling classes require a distinctive education focused on inculcation of self reliance, a sense of moral duty, and team spirit, all tested on the plain field, which made the young men fit for leadership in the services of the Empire. The fact that many Indian princes were minors, and therefore under the supervision of British agents and residents, also facilitated British control over education. It was doubly tragic that these princes were vulnerable and probably easily manipulated by British officers because of their tender age, but at the same time these young princes could not have kept their position without the British.

Chamaraja Wodeyar X was the first Maharaja of Mysore to receive a western and modern education, and was also a typical late 19th century Indian Prince, who was an adopted son and sat on the throne at the age of 5, after that former Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III struggled to get recognition for his adopted son and to recover his power over the administration of Mysore. English education was started in the year 1833 when Krishnaraja Wodeyar III founded a free English school at Mysore on the suggestions of Col. Fraser, the then British Resident. It is not known
what kind of education Krishnaraja Wodeyar III himself received. It seems he had some interest in promoting English education. He was probably educated by Brahmin teachers of the palace. After 1831 though Maharaja lost his power, the palace continue to patronage and encourage traditional arts and education. The bulk of the Sanskrit literature which he himself wrote shows the high level of his knowledge of Sanskrit and religious literature.

The death of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in 1868 brought drastic changes to the lives of the courtiers and royals. The palace was no longer a place segregated from British control, where they could still enjoy their authority and status. It was subjected to several intervention which tried to convert it into a modern and open place. The education of the Maharaja was one of these intervention. After the death of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III Col.J.B. Malleson was sent to Mysore as a guardian of the young Maharaja Chamarajendra Wodeyar, who was then 6 years of age. When Malleson arrived in Mysore, he found that young Maharaja had only once been outside the palace and his education could hardly be said to have begun. Within two months of his arrival, Malleson started the royal school for the young Maharaja and sons of the nobles and state officers at Mysore city. His task was, however, was not simply to arrange and organize suitable educational measures for the Maharaja and the young royals, but
to instruct if necessary, interfere in the palace office which had undergone a drastic reorganization under Major Elliott in 1868 immediately after the death of the Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III.

The newly established royal school was mainly run by two highly educated Brahmins, both of whom were in their twenties. Apart from classes in history, geography, dictation and arithmetic taught by the Brahmin school masters, field sports, such as cricket and riding ponies, were regarded as important part of the young Maharaja’s education. Traditionally, mathematics was considered to be unnecessary for Kshatriya classes. In fact, seven year old Chamaraja Wodeyar was struggling to learn arithmetic, which was his weakest subject.

When Malleson arrived at Mysore palace, there was a certain feeling of skepticism about the young Maharaja’s education and even strong hatred towards Malleson. A faction in palace politics consisting of former minister of the Maharaja and the influential priests were dominated the affairs of the palace. Malleson thought even two Maharani of the former Maharaja were entirely under the influence of these agents. Malleson in his report, urged the commissioner of Mysore to appoint an European school mistress for the education of the women of the palace. The reason was that the influence of an uneducated women upon the educated man is
sufficient to encourage prejudice which in theory he detests and it must always work a retrograde effect upon the offspring.

The subjects taught in the Maharaja’s classes during the year 1900-1901 when he was sixteen years old were history, political economy, English, science, mathematics, Kannada, Urdu, drawing. The history taught to the young Maharaja was all derived from books written in English by British authors. In addition to these subjects of general education, the Maharaja had two hours a day set aside for the study of so called special subjects. These subjects included basic elements of state administration, legislation, the taxation system and other aspects related to general administration. Besides the general education, the tour was another important component of Maharaja’s education. In the year 1900-1901 Maharaja of Mysore was on tour for 26 days to provincial places and for 44 days on a foreign tour to Burma. After he became Maharaja in 1902, he spent even more time on tour.

In the year 1910, the Maharaja took steps towards the upliftment of his own caste people. Till that year English education was available only for royals and upper caste Urs students. Other castes especially dominant castes of Mysore like Lingayats, Vokkaligas and Muslims started forming caste associations and setting up schools and hostels for their community students. The Maharaja patronized Urs community education
as he considered education was an effective tool to transform themselves from mere martial race to nobles. In the year 1918 Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV ordered a survey to be conducted on Urs caste members living in villages. They made enquiries, collected statistics and submitted a report to the Maharaja about the economical and social condition of Urs community members. The survey indicated that most of the Urs community people lived in villages as poor agriculturists struggling to survey. In order to elevate their community, the Maharaja admitted the sons and daughters of these rural Urs community students to boarding schools in Mysore city and sanctioned scholarships to village pre-primary school children who could not be admitted to hostels in Mysore.

One of the objectives of the Urs community educational policy was to make the Urs community significant and influential in public sphere in Mysore, not by their numbers but by their cultural capital. Being noble, no matter what it signify exactly, became the core of their caste identity. Therefore, the extension of royal education was the only way to reshape themselves as politically significant but at the same time different from other castes.

The original purpose of the royal school was to provide a lower primary education to little Maharajas and royals, Urs boys from distinguished families, Brahmins and Muslims boys from respectable
families in the city. When the royal school was replaced with the scheme for the Maharajas private education in 1892, the Chamarajendra Urs School and Home was opened in Nazarbad outside the Mysore fort and dedicated exclusively to the education of the Urs community. The students engaged in higher education could also stay in this student home and go to high school or colleges in Mysore city. The Urs student home was renamed the Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School sometimes in the late 19th century. After the government lower secondary examination was started in 1895, the Urts boarding school established five forms leading up to this examination.

In 1913, the Vani Vilas Girls School was established by the order of the Maharaja and given a dormitory building in 1915. Despite the fact that most of the Urs girls living in Mysore city were still practicing further, the Maharaja was very keen on educating Urs community girls. He gave a speech on the occasion of prize distribution at the Vani Vilas Girls School in 1917 in which he appreciated the girls education in the school by saying that “we are very pleased to note that cooking is not neglected, nor is guarding, games too, I hope, are receiving adequate attention. A healthy mind in a healthy body is a double necessary in the case of our girls who have to observe the purdha system⁵”. It is interesting to see here that giving education to the girls and keeping girls behind purdha not
apparently opposing ideas. The purpose of girls education was still mainly to create healthy house-wives who were capable of looking after the household. The Urs community members who lived in villages took full advantage of the boarding school and also avail the scholarship benefits extended by the Maharaja.

During year 1919, a particular incident happened which throws much light on changes brought about in the lives of rural Urs community students who came to city to pursue their education. In February 1919, the boarding school authorities decided to introduce *ragi* at breakfast time on every Saturday in order to give variety to school meals. Certain students were discontented with this decision, and misbehaved by doing such things as throwing *ragi* at the walls of the dining hall. The authority took this incident seriously and made a decision to dismiss nine students from the school and demoted two students from boarders to day boarders.

*Ragi* is a millet which is even now widely consume in rural areas in southern Karnataka. It is grown on land that is too poor or dry for the cultivation of rice. The area around Mysore and Mandya districts where most of the Urs community people live, is the richest area for rice production owing to its modern irrigation system and abundant water resources. However, even in rural area where people cultivate rice, it is *ragi* which is mainly consumed rather than more costly rice, which is
exported to cities. Therefore, white Akki (rice) and black ragi (millet) are the very metaphor of city and village. Considering this, the reason why the boarders of Urs boarding school, most of whom were from rural areas, misbehaved seemed to be more complex than simple conclusion of school authorities that this was simply a sign of loose morality of inferior students. The school authority probably introduced ragi to reduce cost, but the boarders may have misinterpreted the decision and felt disregarded or discrimination against by the fact that they had to eat ragi even after they came to the city, the denizen of rice eaters. It might not unreasonable to assume from their behavior that they had strong feelings of inferiority about their origins.

The example of the Mysore Maharaja's education and of the Urs boarding school suggest that the acceptance of English education did not merely lead to Hindu/nationalists reaction, but could also become effective political assets and that in the process of appropriating cultural values, which were originally the sign of a loyal subject, the Urs transformed education into the sign of an effective political and authoritative leader in a local society. It is difficult to argue that the Urs succeeded in this strategic appropriation. It is however certain that the Maharajas and the royals were not simply passively educated by the British, but were capable of
transforming their newly acquired values and practices into local significant cultural capital.

**Absence of Elite Movement**

In the state of Princely Mysore during 19\textsuperscript{th} century we do not come across the kind of social reform movement which British India experience\textsuperscript{6}. As a matter of fact, we do not find any voluntary indigenous elitists movement based on rational principles of social reform like that of Brahma Samaj. It does not mean that the leaders of Mysore were not aware of these movements which were in full swing in British provinces. In fact, the message of Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission and Theosophical Society did make inroads into Mysore particularly in few urban centres like Bangalore and Mysore. Though branches of Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj were established there was no indigenous voluntary association on the model of Brahma Samaj or Arya Samaj to propagate the fruits of new awakening of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century in Mysore state. Whatever voluntary organizations that were established in Mysore were limited in scope, membership, objectives and goals. These were confined to particular sectarian or caste ideology which were intended to reform the respective castes or sects.
In light of this lacuna, although reform initiative in society were effected in the name of the Maharaja, a symbol of nativity and not at the initiative of any individual or organization. The representative assembly played an important role in allowing different groups of elite classes to take part in the discussions are some of the important issues. This forum unable the state to induce changes with the support of interested groups in the assembly. It also helped to arrest the rise of radical or revolutionary elite leadership in Mysore.

5.2 MODERNISM VERSUS CONSERVATISM

Two important issues which engaged the attention of the Representative Assembly are infant marriage regulation and widow rehabilitation. A study of the debates in the assembly on the above issues shows the direction of social change in the state of Mysore. The Infant Marriage Regulation created a serious discussion in the Assembly. The progressive group in the Assembly supported the proposed regulation on the early marriage. The other group which represented conservative forces in the Assembly did not fall in line with a proposed regulation. In fact, they wanted the maintenance of status-quo in this regard. It should be noted that the social legislation was initiated by the government itself. In 1893, when Infant Marriage Regulation Bill was introduced in the Assembly, the Dewan explained the importance of the Bill to prohibit infant
marriage in the state. He pointed out that a regulation draft had been published with a view to offering the fullest opportunity for discussion and suggestion. He said that this measure was merely a response to general sentiment of the country which demanded the abolition under the authority of law. He informed them that it was not against the spirit of Hindu shastras but it was in the best interest of the society. He also furnished statistical data from the Census Report of 1881 and 1891 as to the increased number of child marriage in the state. According to the number of married girls under the age of 9 in the year 1891 was 18,000 as compared with 12,100 in the year 1881. The increase amount to almost 50 per cent raise which was a chief cause for the enforced widowhood.

A full discussion was followed after the address of the Dewan on the Infant Marriage Regulation\(^7\). The following discussions in the Assembly indicate the response of the members of the Representative Assembly towards social reform and change. M. Venkatakrishnaiah, a prominent member of Mysore city, who initiated the discussion agreed that proposed law was entirely in accordance with the shastras. He objected to the lowering of marriageable age of 8 years for girls and 14 years for boys. He was of the opinion that this should be raised. He quoted from a religious text in support of his argument. He further explained that the evil results of infant marriage were chiefly found among Brahmins and Vaishyas. He
said that early marriage in certain cases led to enforce widowhood which in
term led to immorality and crime. The best course, according to him, was
to prohibit all marriages before the girls attain the age of 18 years. And
again, while justifying the action of the government, he stated that it was
the duty of the state as a guardian of public to protect the interest of the
minor. He defended the government action saying that it was just and
necessary as it was done in the case of the abolition of sati, the
suppression of thuggee and human sacrifice to Kali and Durgi etc. Nadiga
Shivappa while supporting the Bill, stated that Hindu women have suffered
a long under various disabilities because of men being the legislators and
administrators of law. He charged that men were selfish and could not
understand the pain and sorrow of women which were peculiar to them.
Srinivas Rao, a prominent member of the Assembly welcoming the
regulation, hit out at the objection raised by some conservative members
of the Assembly saying that government should not interfere in social
matters. He supported the regulation and favoured the proposed
punishments in the form of fine and imprisonment. He gave a convincing
reply to those who argued that only a minority were in the favour of Infant
Marriage Regulation Bill. He declared that great reforms were inaugurated
only by a few.
B. Garudachar, a prominent representative of the conservative section in the Assembly raised several objections against the Bill. He criticized that it was an undue interference with the freedom of an individual and was, therefore, unnecessary. He pointed out that the proposed law would invade the privacy and that domestic relations. In his opinion, it was not correct to say that the proposed law had the support of public opinion and the consent of the Representative Assembly. He contended that the insignificant evils arising from infant marriages had been exaggerated and hence it was not necessary to call for government interference. In his opinion, the proposed legislation instead of suppressing infant marriage, would create more evil. He further argued that the proposed marriageable age was not proper according to the shastras. Malhar Rao advanced argument against the introduction of the Bill. He said that no other government in India had undertaken a similar kind of legislation. He referred to the statement of the Viceroy who assured that the government of India would not legislate any law interfering the religious matters of the people. He also questioned the statements that heads of religious mutts have approved the regulations, which according to him, did not carry much weight, since most of them were amenable to the influence of the government. He also raised doubts about the authenticity of the Census figures quoted in the Assembly. He regarded the Bill as an interference with the social customs of the people.
He pointed out that there were many objectionable customs among Muslims and Christians which the government had never thought of interfering with. He said that the proposed law would chiefly affect Brahmins, who according to him, were physically the weakest in the social system.

The above lengthy summary of the speeches from the proceedings of the Assembly would clearly show how members of the Assembly deeply involved in social reforms. It is interesting to know that the members were able to mobilize opinions for and against the Bill from outside the Assembly. There were a good number of petitions drawn in the form of memorandum to the government. These were either against or in favour of the draft regulations. While 53 members submitted a memorandum supporting the proposed draft regulation, 164 members submitted another memorandum opposing the draft regulation. Thus the debate over the issue which was started the Assembly in 1891 came to an end by 1894 when the Regulation was passed into law with little modification. While passing the legislation, the government which had initiated the Bill had taken great caution in consulting the heads of religious Mutts and important members of the Representative Assembly. It appears that among the Representative Assembly, a majority of them were against the proposed legislation. But, the government in response to the general
sentiment of the people of the country, decided to prohibit marriage of girls below the age of 8. Dewan referring to the proposed legislation said, "His Highness trusts that the country will welcome in its present form the legislation, as it is important measure of protection against a growing evil of infant marriage.

The second social problem which engaged the attention of the Representative Assembly related to rehabilitation of widows. The Census Report of 1891 noted with regret that every fourth Brahmin woman in Mysore state was a widow\(^9\). The influence of social reform movement for the emancipation of women taken up by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and others was also felt in Mysore, though nearly three decades later. Members of the Assembly sympathized with the cause of widows and took affirmative action for their welfare. It is worth noting that along with women's education, widow rehabilitation was also received active support of the government.

The changes introduced in socio-religious matters did not had any radical character. The members of the Representative Assembly were interested in upholding the ancient traditions to meet the demands of the modern times. Those who spoke for and against the Infant Marriage Bill, derived inspiration from the great tradition of the past. The conservative group wanted to uphold and preserve age-old customs whereas the
progressive group wanted to modify the tradition to suit changed condition. In case of widow rehabilitation they never spoke on the desirability of their remarriage. But they wished to accommodate them in the new set up by providing education while retaining their same widowhood. In the matter of religious institutions too they advocated changes so as to suit the modern changes. Their attitude may be summarized as adopting to the new opportunities without giving up its old or the past tradition.

In Mysore, Brahmins led other castes in process of modernization. Brahmins possessed a literary tradition and in addition, many of them stood at the top of rural economic hierarchy as land owners. Earlier, they had received Inam land from the ruling kings which enabled them to lead a secure economic life. They were the first to sense the arrival of new opportunities following the establishment of British rule, and left their villages and moved towards cities such as Bangalore and Mysore in order to obtain the benefit of English education which became an indispensable passport to employment under the colonial rule.

Traditional Sanskrit learning did not have either prestige or the yield the dividends which western education did. The position of the Brahmin in the new socio-economic order became very crucial. He served as a filter through which modernization reached the rest of Hindu society.
5.3 ROLE OF CASTE ASSOCIATIONS

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most of peninsular India was marked by powerful Brahmin – Non-Brahmin cleavages and struggles. These phenomena, which peaked in intensity during the 1920s are collectively called the ‘Non-Brahmin Movement’. In cultural content there were elements in the movement that long antedated the British, but in their modern political expression the non-Brahmin movements were part of the great complex consequences of and responses to British rule, both direct and indirect. ‘Indirect’ because anti-Brahmin movements were in part reactions against the considerable growth in secular power by Brahmins during the 19th century as a result of opportunities they were able to exploit through their acquisition of English education. ‘Direct’ because of the impact of new ideas through the school system and other channels of communication, the opening up new opportunities for social mobility and political participation, and for a while, active support of anti-Brahmanism by British.

The Maharaja was sympathetic but not active parties on, preferring to remind about political controversy of all sorts. By 1918, however, his government was staffed seventy per cent by Brahmins, who accounted for less than 4 per cent of the population. That year upon the petition by a non-Brahmin deputation, he appointed a committee to find ways of
ensuring ‘adequate representation of backward communities’ in the state service, known as ‘the Miller Committee’. Subsequently, his administration took steps favouring non-Brahmins, if only to ensure a wider base of support for itself.

Mysore non-Brahmin Movement began in the three large cities namely, Bangalore, Mysore and Kolar Gold Fields. The people who worked behind this movement were merchants, clerks and professional men. They had frequent contact with their opposite members in Madras. Later, after the World War I, it spread into the approximately hundred towns and large market villages that also passed as ‘urban’ in the Census records. The considerable investments in, and reform of, the educational system in the decade around World War I, meant that English medium middle and high schools were being established in these towns, which were in most cases also taluk headquarters. In the period 1918 and 1938 these greater and lesser urban areas provided the arena for the non-Brahmin movement. Whether the non-Brahmin families were originally in trade and money lending or farmed land in smaller villages nearby, these towns were the scene of their efforts to marshal political support. As they completed their education, they found themselves confronted with a Brahmin predominance in virtually every area they might be interested in. The learned professions, managerial or clerical employment in new
transport or industrial ventures, even seats on electoral bodies. .. which was comparable to the predominance in government service. It is thus, not surprising that as they entered public life, they did so as anti-Brahmins and found anti-Brahmin rhetoric emanating from the cities and from outside the state very appealing.

To begin with, the two major dimensions of the non-Brahmin movements suggested above were two sides of the same coin. The growth of popular participation in ‘modern’ politics, initially anti-Brahmin and later feeding into the nationalists movement, on the one hand, and on the other the development of elaborate system of ‘backward classes’ benefits in education, government jobs and other forms of state patronage. For the 1920s, it is difficult to discuss the one without also discussing the other. Later, however, they diverged, interact in different ways, and today they seem to have become quite separate topic.

The first phase of the movement in Madras was the formation at the end of the first World War of the South Indian Liberal Federation, better known as ‘The Justice Party’, named after its English language newspaper. Mysoreans were in touch with the justice party lead us. They contributed to the non-Brahmin manifesto published in the year 1916 and they subscribed to Justice from the time it started publishing in the year 1917. With one exception, they were not wealthy landlords, however, and
in the mid-1920s, as the **Justice Party** rapidly lost ground in Madras, the Mysoreans were widening their support\textsuperscript{11}.

In the year 1917, the leaders of various Backward Class Associations formed an alliance and established a political party which came to be known as ‘Prajamitra Mandali’. The Mandali leaders submitted a deputation to the Maharaja in June 1918 which resulted in the appointment of Miller Committee.

The non-Brahmins who were active in public life during this period were urban, living mainly in Bangalore and Mysore city, and seem to have had many contacts with Madras Presidency. Relatively small in number, they were contractors and merchants, lawyers, government servants and only a handful of them had college education. The leaders of Vokkaligara Sangha are a case in point. Though the name ‘Vokkaliga’ means farmer and improved agriculture was among the Sangha’s announced purposes, the Sangha officers during 1906 when it was formed consisted of three contractors, one merchant, three lawyers and three government servants. Though the community was overwhelming the rural, only half a dozen of the four dozen executive members during its first decade or to had village addresses, the rest came from Mysore, Bangalore and larger taluk headquarters towns. It was this urban character of its leadership, rather than their educational level, that accounts for their contact with British
India. That two legal advisers and two government clerks on the executive council of the Sangha between them account for most of the University degrees in the community at that time.

The men who organized earliest caste associations seem to have been influenced by many such associations form at that time in Madras, where there was a political incentive for it.

The deputation of prominent non-Brahmins called on the Maharaja on June 24, 1918. Most of the members of the deputation were either presidents or secretaries of their community associations. They had come together earlier to form Prajamitra Mandali alliance against the Brahmins, and now the Mandali was seeking the Maharaja’s support for several measures. The immediate occasion for the deputation, it is said, was the impending passage of new regulations expanding local self government. The Mandali’s petition to the Maharaja made requests concerning three topics: (1) the first and most important, concerned elections to Representative bodies, but the Mandali was not successful here. (2) the second set of issues had to do with education. Apart from improvement in Muslim education, the emphasis was on a complete overhaul of the educational system to provide more opportunities for the rural population. An ambitious plan of this sort was subsequently drawn up and promulgated in the educational memorandum of 1921, but for financial
reasons it remained largely on paper. The non-implementation of some of its provisions and the inadequacy of schooling in rural areas remained for many years a grievance of the rural representatives in the Assembly. (3) the third topic was government employment and related higher education. Here, Mandali was more successful. On August 23, 1918 a committee was appointed to consider steps necessary for the adequate representation of Backward Classes, Backward Communities in the public service which came to be known as Miller Committee after its chairman, Sir Lesslie Miller, chief judge of the Chief Court. The steps deemed necessary and accepted by the government were set forth in a government order on 16th May 1921. Thereafter, the activities of the Praja Mitra Mandali gradually subsided took to inactivity.

The two major government policy documents concerning non-Brahmins were both issued in May 1921 within ten days of each other. One was the government order on the report of Miller Committee\(^\text{13}\). The other was the government order on education in Mysore\(^\text{14}\). The two were handed quite differently. When the Miller Committee, set up in August 23, 1918 submitted its report in July 1919. The report was not released but was circulated among department heads for nearly 2 years until government orders on the recommendations was issued in 1921. The committee made twenty nine recommendations in all, of which 10
recommendations dealt with public services and 19 recommendations dealt with education. Nearly all recommendations on education were accepted. The committee while defining backwardness referred that the ‘backward’ were those, whose community literacy rate in English was less than 5 per cent. It is highly significant that literacy in English was the criteria and that no other standard, either of material conditions or of traditional caste rank, seem even to have been considered. During this time, rumors above and a good deal of anxiety and hostility were expressed among the Brahmins, who included not only most of the civil servants and college students but virtually all the active journalists. The Brahmins reacted strongly to the government order even though he turned out be rather mild and to have considerably modify the substantive recommendations of the Miller Committee. The Government Order on education, by contrast, was issued after two years of the most thorough public debate on the original educational memorandum published in August 1919.

The government order on reforms in education was discussed in detail and they were received with wide support. The problem that government had to face was that they would cost for more than it could expect to raise even with new taxes. Consequently, government order on the memorandum, when it was issued in 1921, was more restrained in its
directives, much concerned with estimating cost, and made clear, on a back page, that new taxes would have to be levied. Even so, the government order to miscalculated the actual cost and the revenues which could be used to pay them. Some examples of this point can be given.

Primary school fees had been abolished in 1906, so the proposal had to do with converting roughly 7,000 government aided schools (mostly new schools) into government schools with proper building, trained teachers and a uniform four year curriculum. There were already 2,417 government primary schools, so the conversion of all others would provide an adequate number of schools for a population of 6 million. The memo called for converting 1,000 aided schools a year for seven years. But the government order found the cost of Rs.7 lakhs net increase per year prohibitive and directed conversion of 250 schools per year, of which 100 schools were to be girls’ schools. But even this would cost an additional Rs.1,60,00/- per year and required a raise in all existing land and excise taxes as well as certain other cess increases. What actually happened in 1921-22 was that 704 aided schools were closed for want of local support, and the government itself defaulted on its matching grants for those villages which had already raised their part of money for buildings. The total number of primary schools which rose from 5,512 in 1915 to a peak of 9,676 in 1918 suddenly dropped to 6,782 in the year 1921-22.15.
For the middle school, the pattern was somewhat similar. Abolition of all middle school fee was announced in the year 1919. The problem was to convert the various types of schools at this level into uniform, government regulated, four year fully developed Anglo-vernacular school by which was meant using Kannada as a medium of instruction with English as compulsory as second language. There were only 157 such schools and of 321 existing rural schools, 250 were to be converted at the rate of 50 per year. Most buildings already existed, but cost of about 90,000 rupees per year net increase would be incurred to raise salaries and improve teaching equipment, especially for the newly introduced compulsory subjects. But, because of the financial situation, the total of converted schools was actually reduced during 1921-22, and no effort was made to start any of the new programme until 1923-24.

For the non-Brahmins, the middle and high schools were the most sensitive level in the educational structure. It was here that English was first taught as a compulsory subject. It was here that the rural – urban differential had such impact on employment chances. Non-Brahmin representatives in the Assembly and elsewhere were constantly calling for greater investment in Anglo-Vernacular schools because of the strategic importance of English. People were quite conscious of the market value of English as compared with Vernacular education and often remarked on it.
Without a good beginning in the middle school, no pupil could hope to go to high school and the passage of SSLC was the key to all government appointments.

The policy in the educational memorandum had government hostels at every high school, with separate kitchen for each community with at least ten boarders, and to give liberal grants in aid to encourage others to build and run hostels at the middle as well as high school level. The grants came to about a third of the cost, and in a letter this was raised to about half. Later in the decade, this programme became an important one for many of the community associations that were formed. For most of the 1920s however, the provision existed more on paper than in fact, because of financial shortages. The Miller Committee had found that 522 students accommodated in government hostels at all levels in 1917-18, 435 were Brahmins. The situation changed gradually over the years.

The pertinent provisions of the government order on the educational memorandum had been given in some details because this remained the basic policy document on education in Mysore for many years. Several items were implemented only slowly or not at all, but the government constantly referred to this government order of good intentions as its definitive document on education. The elected leaders, especially non-Brahmins, regularly called for better or quicker implementation. But, when
it came to the question of whether to concentrate on the base of the educational pyramid or its middle and top, this early generation of leaders gave great emphasis to the latter.

The starting point was that middle school level was both the one which English instruction began and the one at which there was a great drop in enrollment. This was so because of the need of the many village children to travel, and perhaps live, away from home in order to get such education. On these grounds the government agreed with the education committee of the Economic Conference that the backward classes scholarship money should be used for scholarships from the middle school level onwards. Of the total of one lakh rupees, 15,000 rupees was reserved for the depressed classes and combined with other funds made available for their education under a different head. The reminder was distributed on the population basis in the form of scholarship ranging from Rs.2/- to Rs.10/- per month. However, the appointment of various committees at different level to distribute this scholarship amount led to the delay and whole procedure became cumbersome.

A total of nearly 30 community associations were founded in Princely State of Mysore before 1930\textsuperscript{16}. Virtually all associations stated the general advancement of the community as their goal. Twenty four of them included education as an important objective. By this was meant
both encouraging members to get a formal education and raising funds to provide all reasonable facilities to help them to acquire education. Half of the associations listed had specific plans to provide scholarship loans to their members, nearly as many planned caste hostels, reading rooms and libraries. While some plans set forth when the association was founded were never carried out, those in the field of education were most likely to be implemented. All associations which stayed in existence for any length of time managed to acquire one or more buildings which served as hostel, reading room, headquarters, and site of the annual meeting. A few also organized instructions programme of various sorts, notably in religious matters, Sanskrit, English and Urdu. Several caste associations provided scholarship loans, though the amount of money and numbers of recipient were never large.

The caste associations had a number of ways to raise money for their activities. The most important source of raising money was occasional or one time large donation by well to do patrons. These could take the form of cash contributions to the endowment, trust funds for specific purposes such as scholarships or gifts of buildings or land or other income earning properties. The second source of income was the payment of small, regular fee or subscriptions which was supposed to be
the way persons of humbler means could make their contributions to the Sangha.

5.4 SOCIO-POLITICAL MOBILITY

During the Dewanship of Kantharaj Urs, the government opened all government and aided primary schools to the untouchables. The public reaction was intense and angry, and nearly unanimous, and the government had to modify its orders in the light of much public debate. Since then it had followed the easier path of encouraging special schools for the depressed classes mainly at primary level assisting in building depressed class hostels and providing scholarship funds. In other words, like other governments after them, they emphasized providing benefits for the untouchables themselves rather than trying to change the behavior of every one else, which is what removal of untouchability entails.

In the later effort, however, the public campaigns of Mahatma Gandhi injected a new element and contributed much to a change in public opinion. It was not a large change and it occurred mainly among the literate public, but it was enough to lead to the passage of modern legislation in many part of India during the middle and later 1930s. Mysore was no exception. Sir Mirza Ismail became the Dewan in mid 20s at the same time that Gandhi shifted from political confrontation to his constructive programme. Mysore Durbar adopted a conservative
programme of encouraging Khadi and Village Industries and assisting the ‘anti-untouchability work’. As long as it did not produce clashes and confrontations with local custom. Later, when Gandhi had to returned to political fray, he and Mirza Ismail were allies on certain matters at the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1931. Gandhi toured Mysore at various times, as did most of the other nationalist leaders. Although Gandhi, like Sir Mirza Ismail did not believe that temple entry and other desirable reforms should be accomplished through the coercive power ‘of legislation’, some of these followers felt that this was a proper legal reform if there was enough popular support for it.

The first major resolution on the subject was moved in the Assembly as part of Gandhi’s epic fast in September 1932, while still he was in prison\textsuperscript{17}. He has fasted against the British award of separate electorate to the untouchables, but it has been presented to the world as a dramatic fast against untouchability, and this was the tenor of the Poona Pact between various untouchable and Hindu leaders that emerged. Some months later, he was released from the prison and devoted himself to a national campaign against untouchability. During the winter of 1932-33, various public meetings and conferences passed resolutions against untouchability, including the Mysore People’s Conference (Praja Paksha), the Mysore All Parties Conference, and Lawyers Conference and others.
In June 1933, a fortnight after one of the Congress Brahmins, Tagadur Ramachandra Rao, had gone on a miny epic fast of his own, a resolution calling for government to introduce legislation abolishing untouchability was moved in the Assembly and was passed by a 111 to 59 margin.

The resolution moved in the Assembly and Council were introduced by Praja Paksha leaders with Congress support. The resolution was moved by V.Venkatappa, a prominent leader of Praja Paksha and other members of Praja Paksha like M.C. Lingegowda, Subbarama Chetty, H.C. Dasappa, K.C. Reddy and T.Siddalingaiah supported the resolution and spoke very forcefully for the cause of depressed classes. The resolution was opposed by B.S. Puttaswamy, T. Mariappa and a few others.

In October 1933, a few months before Gandhi’s brief to in January to raise money for the anti-untouchability cause, another resolution was moved that was more specific. It called for removal of all civil disabilities by amending several regulations so as to ensure assess by everyone to tanks, wells, reservoirs, roads, markets, chatrams, rest houses and other places of public utility and proposing imposition of fines for violation. It was moved by T. Subbarama Chetty and other Praja Paksha members. Even this Bill was opposed in the Assembly. Most of those who opposed were of minority communities as well as conservative rural representatives.
The third major resolution moved in the Assembly, and discussed again by members of Legislative Council, was on October 1936 calling for admission of Harijans, as they were now called, to all Muzrai managed Hindu temples in the state. In the year 1936, the Maharaja of Travancore had opened all temples in the state to the Harijans. This resolution in effect called on Mysore to do the same. It was eventually withdrawn on government assurance that it would do so when public opinion was ready for it. Even this resolution was supported by members of Praja Paksha and most of those who spoke against it were also non-Brahmins, less well educated, who accused the Paksha people as men now hypocratic. The resolution was moved by P.Subbarama Chetty, to this is indicating of the whole orientation of the Praja Paksha towards the untouchables.

The men who established effective rural-urban links, a beginning of mass political mobilization, and the first statewide political party organization were of a different generation and of a different background than the non-Brahmin leaders who founded the community associations. The second generation non-Brahmin leaders nearly all the men in this generation were born during the decade 1896-1905. Leela Dushkin call this generation as ‘the class of 02’ because a surprising number of them were born in that year. These leaders were able to work out rural-urban equation that had eluded the older non-Brahmin leaders. Instead of being
based in the city attempting to arose their country-cousins, they were based in the country-side and learned city ways in the course of getting their education. Most of them were big landlords or sons of big landlords.

A person born in 1902 in a taluka town, or a village near a town, would have been able to benefit from considerable investment in education made during the Dewanship of Sir Visveswaraiah. Many of these men were the first in their families to go beyond the seventh standard in their school. They were just passing SSLC examination as the first World War was coming to a close and the Miller Committee has began its work. They were getting their B.A. degree and entering into law college at the time the Backward Class policy decisions were adopted in the year 1921. Possibly, more important, this was also the time when the first non-cooperation movement led by Gandhi, challenged Imperial authority in British India. And these men all had to go to Bombay or Madras in order to get their law degree, as Princely Mysore had no law Law college.

One of the unique characteristics of this leaders was they began, politically, by repudiated the authority of the Brahmins, the intellectual definers of the great tradition of Hinduism, not only by claiming equal or superior intellect to the Brahmins but by proclaiming them morally unworthy of respect through numerous stories of their duplicity, corruption and alleged depravity. Unlike their predecessors in the Praja Mitra
Mandali the class of 02 also challenged the authority of the British and of the Mysore Dewan (though not the Maharaja) in increasingly strident tone.

In addition to a rural base, a good education, and a bold temperament, the second generation of Backward Class leaders had a number of political opportunity opening up for them as a result of political reforms and other institutional adjustments just as they were completing their education. These non-Brahmin leaders possessed a law degree and adequate financial resources tended to run for the office in the Representative Assembly, Municipal Council or District Boards as soon as they had qualified to practice before the High Court. Within 2 or 3 years, they would run for a seat in the highest electoral body, the legislative council. Their combination of a rural or taluka town base and the sophistication of a legal education was a rare combination among their community fellows that they were slotted into leadership role almost immediately. These leaders on the one hand, sought to exploit the new opportunities on the District and Municipal Boards and built up a base of electoral support in the district. On the other, they moved into the state level representative bodies, where they quickly became among the more articulate members.
5.5 TOTAL APATHY, RIDICULE, CRITICISM AND ACCEPTANCE

Expansion of education in Princely Mysore during the 150 years of Colonial rule underwent various stages of transformation. These stages were total apathy, ridicule, criticism and acceptance. R. Gopalaswamy in his address to the Mysore Representative Assembly refers to apathy among the depressed classes towards modern education. He says the children of Brahmin Shanbhogas went to school wherever they are available and got educated, whereas the non-Brahmins failed to utilize the opportunity. Even though, education facilities were concentrated in few towns the non-Brahmins did not make use of them (page 408, HL). A similar experience was expressed by Jane Rice wife of Benjamin Rice who founded London Mission Girls Boarding School in the year 1842. She refers that Canarese people took less readily to the idea of girls boarding schools. When the Maharaja established the first English school in the year 1833, the school could not make much progress for want of much taste for English education on the one hand and of proper supervision on the other. This institution did not flourish for a long time. Only a very limited boys took advantage of it. In the year 1840, Maharaja handed over the school to the Wesleyan Mission. During the year 1890 the report of public instruction refers that the depressed classes were facing prejudice in matters of education as they were required to sit outside the school.
building apart from the other boys. In light of this, the educational secretary refers that education of depressed classes is best left to the missionary bodies so long as Brahmins and even Mohammodens object to teach them or to inspect their schools.

There are instances when introduction of modern education was ridicule at. Shamaiengar during his discussion in the Mysore Representative Assembly referred to the education of Panchamas and said there are differences among Yedagai and Balagai on one side and the Madigas and Holeyas on the other. There are important differences among them. The Madiga was not allowed to attend the school meant for the Holeya. Such a case occurred in Sosale where the Madigas wanted a school for themselves. When this request was not complied with, the Madigas went to Anglo-Vernacular school though they were only 18 numbers. The result was that 200 other boys withdrew from the school. Since there was so much of ill-feeling against admission of Panchamas into ordinary school. Forcible admission would have prejudicial effect in the long run. The Panchamas had to reconcile the difference among themselves. Why should they be introduced in places where they were not wanted and where their presence would not be tolerated. The member further said that in T.Narasipura only Madiga boys attended a Panchama school and not even a Holeya was willing to join that school. There were
only 3 Madiga boys in charge of a Mohammadan teacher. In hospital and railway carriages they were compelled to take seats with Panchamas. Shamiengar wanted that in the villages, civilization was not advanced far enough and the time was not right for introducing sudden reforms. Krishnamurthiyachar alleged 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. The young boys had no power of discrimination. The other boys left the school because Panchamas were admitted. He concluded by saying that he had learnt from the shastras that all people were born Brahmins, but only on account of difference in the habits and modes of life different communities came into existence. In such circumstances, Panchamas had to be treated differently from the rest for sometime till their uncleaned habits and practices disappear. Krishnashastri participating in the discussion referred that the Panchamas were not being kept upon purely on account of their habits of meat eating and drinking, similar discrimination was there even among Mohammadans and others. The Panchamas also had certain customs and practices which degraded them to the lowest level of beasts. They ate the carcass, of the dead cattles and concluded by saying that the Panchamas were so filthy and dirty that very few people could make up their mind to associate with them. He referred that if one Panchama joined a general school with ten other boys, the chances were that while the Panchama might not
improve his habits, the 10 boys would be spoiled by the bad example of one *Panchama* boy. Doreswamy Iyengar in his address referred that for the last one year the *Panchamas* had been forced upon other people against their feeling and sentiments. During this period, he regretted that the other boys did not go to school and had no education. He pleaded that separate arrangements should be made for the education *Panchamas*. Karnaik Krishnamurthy Rao in his speech expressed the view that they were only following the principles followed in western countries by keeping the *Panchamas* out of the midst. For instance, in the St.Joseph’s School at Bangalore, Hindu boys were not allowed with European boys. In public banquets of Europeans, a man of lower status was not allowed to sit. The late queen Victoria had given a soloman promise that the British government would not interfere with the religious feelings of the Hindus. The admission of *Panchamas* into the midst of higher caste would bring about resentment and would be an impingement of the promise given by the late Queen. Melukote Shamaiyangar in his speech referred that admission of *Panchamas* to general schools was against an accepted tenets of Hinduism. If the forsake the tenets, Hindu society was sure to go to ruin. Mysore was pre-eminently a country for *dharma* and *dharma* had to be guarded against all aggression. The *shastras* did not prohibit education of the *Panchamas*, but they should have their own school. It is interesting to note that members of the Assembly were opposing the entry
of Panchamas and they were ridiculing attempts made by them to enter general schools by quoting from their experiences of other communities from dharmashastras and even queens proclamation is quoted to prove that contention\(^{20}\).

Gradually, there was a marked changes in the attitude of the general public towards Panchamas education. The movement started by Gandhiji through his constructive programme towards upliftment of Harijans had an impact on the people of India, even the Mysoreans were influenced by his programme of Harijan upliftment\(^{21}\). During 1930s Gandhiji visited Mysore more than once to collect funds for his programme of Harijans upliftment. Leaders like Tagadur Ramachandra Rao and members of Praja Paksha created awareness among the people about the problems of untouchability and worked towards the upliftment of the depressed classes. With expansion of education in Mysore more and more depressed class people got themselves educated; there was a growing awareness among them towards the importance of education as a means of improving their status and position in society. Arguing in favour of admitting Panchama students to general schools, Paramashivaiah felt that the conditions of Panchamas could not be improved by keeping them separate and making them believe that there was a wide gulf between Panchamas and other high caste. He felt that it was not possible to open separate schools everywhere for
*Panchamas* even if there were only a couple of students. Education was not the private and exclusive property of any one class. Why they wanted the *Panchamas* for all kinds of works, they did not like to give equal facilities in matters of education. Paramashivaiah hoped that the cry against the admission of *Panchamas* into ordinary schools would die a natural death within a measurable distance of time. Supporting the argument of Paramashivaiah, another member Vasudeva Rao said that the real education commenced from the earliest age of the child, say when the child is 7 years. The *Panchamas* should be taught from their boyhood that they were not quite different from others although they had been kept separately for ages past. They could learn unity if they were allowed to mix with other people in ordinary schools. He admitted that the customs of *Panchamas* were different and their mode of life was repulsive. But how could they reform themselves? he asked. The first step would be to draw them near to the other communities. They would improve their physical appearance. The member remarked that it was a companionship and comradeship that encouraged to improve a man. He said that in Chickmagalur, a new teacher was appointed in a school and very soon the whole character of the boys changed for the better. The boys changed both in appearance as well as behaviour. Such improvement were possible if opportunities were provided. The *Panchama* himself was timid to approach others. But if encouraged his fears would disappear.
member said: “He may eat dead cattle, he may drink spirituous liquors, but who does not? Even among the higher classes, such vices are prevalent and yet they were kept aloof”. Continuing further, Vasudeva Rao said that people came into contact with the Panchama every day and particularly in the Malnad the people could not do without him. Panchama was required to work in the estate. Vasudeva Rao cautioned that if Panchamas were driven away they would perhaps join Christians who would receive them with open arms. This would decrease the strength of the Hindus. Hinduism had been preserved from the ages past because of toleration. The Panchamas were also Hindus. For these reasons, members strongly advocated opening of Anglo-Vernacular schools to the Panchamas. Purushothama Anandagiri Gosayi wondered as to why there should be an outcry against admitting Panchama boys to ordinary school. The Brahmin did not find it objectionable to sit with a Panchama in the same bench in a railway journey. In hospitals, both Brahmins and Panchamas are treated in the same way. The Panchamas were not prohibited from going to law courts. He questioned that the higher castes might refused to admit Panchama in their private houses, but as far as government was concerned, all subjects were same in their eyes and equally deserving of held. The Panchama being a tax payer could not be denied rights due to him. He concluded by saying no difference should be made between the Panchama and other boys in matters of admission to schools.  

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5.6 UPLIFTMENT OF DEPRESSED CLASSES

The depressed classes as they were ignorant and backward in all respects did not respond to modern education during the early years. During the period under study attempts were made to organize them by some liberal leaders belonging to other classes. The backward class movement though gave some concessions to the depressed classes did not materially effect their position. However, the reforms introduced by the government for the betterment of these classes and the attempts made by some liberal minded Brahmin leaders led to awakening among them. Modern education helped the depressed classes to improve their socio-economic status and achieve liberation from traditional low social status from which they were suffering from times immemorial. A study of the impact of education on depressed classes will demonstrate the process of change among them.

The plight of the untouchable castes in the field of education, as in other fields, was worse than that of the lower non-Brahmin castes. Besides lack of a tradition of literacy, mainly rural background, impoverishment, and dependants on land owning castes, the stigma of untouchability proved a strong barrier in their gaining access to western education. The dominant caste strongly opposed the admission of untouchable castes to general schools. While this indicates the strong
caste prejudices that were still widely operative in the society, it also, perhaps more importantly, brings out the gradual nature of the awakening of these castes to the opportunities offered by the new system of education. The government had given into the pressure from upper castes and had established separate school for the depressed classes. In 1906-07 the government also instituted for them a few scholarships which was like a drop in the ocean, considering especially their population and disabilities.

We have noted earlier that a number of non-Brahmin castes lagged behind in education as compared with Brahmins, and the government made no special efforts to improve their lot till 1917. In the year 1918 government’s education policy showed a shift in favour of these castes, and along with them, the depressed classes too were showered with some extra educational benefits. The quinquennial report for the period 1916-17 to 1921-22 refers that “the development of education among the backward and depressed classes had been facilitated by grant of scholarships on a liberal scale… His Highness, the Maharaja was graciously pleased in the year 1917 to sanction an annual grant of Rs.1.00 lakh for awarding scholarships to communities who were backward in education, and the depressed classes, occupying as they did the lowest level in respect of literacy, were shown a special consideration in so far as a sum of
Rs.15,000/- was earmarked out of this amount for the benefit of depressed classes’. The government besides granting funds for special scholarships to the students of the backward classes and the depressed classes, also appointed a committee in 1918 to suggest measures for improving the representation of backward communities in government service. Under the term ‘backward communities’, the government made no special reference to the depressed classes, but seemed to have clubbed them along with backward classes.

The depressed classes received attention of the state and a number of schemes were launched for their upliftment. To help the depressed classes to improve their economic conditions a scheme of depressed classes co-operative societies were established with an annual grant of Rs.30,000/-. Special vocational schools of industries, agriculture, weaving and carpentry were opened in Bangalore, Mysore and other districts.

The Constitutional changes introduced by the government enabled the depressed classes to secure a place in Mysore Representative Assembly and Mysore Representative Council. The representatives of the depressed classes like Murugeshan Pillai used their position to fight for the long pending grievances of this community. The establishment of Adi Dravida Abhivruddhi Sangha started in 1920 by P.Murugeshan Pillai, a weaving master from Minerva Mills. The Adi Jambava Sangha was set up
to represent the depressed classes of Karnataka by liberal Brahmin reformers like Gopalaswamy Iyer and T. Ramachandra. In Bangalore, the Deena Seva Sangha promoted caste integration by organizing inter-caste dinners on Gandhiji’s birthday. The Mysore Anti-Untouchability League was established in the year 1931 by some Brahmin and other upper caste Congress men who were instrumental in finalizing a draft on Anti-Untouchability Legislation to be placed in the Assembly.

Although these were important symbols of change, there was a great ambiguity in the responses to these initiatives. The anti-untouchability programme did not envisaged a radical ‘anti-caste’ movement, and preferred a return to *Varnashrama Dharma*\(^2\) despite the obvious contradictions of an idealized Hindu hierarchy being given a new lease of life along side the promise of citizenship. Deena Seva Sangha was started with an aim of replacement of old social and religious superstitions, beliefs and practices by ‘rational thought’. This was no programme of atheism. A large number of depressed classes living in Srirampuram, Seshadripuram and other slums in which Deena Seva Sangha carried on its social upliftment programme were Tamilians and Kannadigas. They worshipped Grama Devatas, like Mariamma, and other tutelary female deities of like Muthyalamma, Gangamma, Poleramma, Yallamma to whom they established shrines in their slums. On one occasion, an animal sacrifice
performed for Mariamma by the devotees in Bangalore city became a target of the Sangha campaign. The Sangha offered an alternative Hinduism by popularizing festivals as Ramanavami, Vyasa Pooja and Shankara Jayanthi which conformed more to the dominant Brahmanic Hindu tradition. The rational thought that the programme sought to establish did not question Hindu hierarchy itself but instituted a more Sanskritic order in place.

In the year 1925, an incident took place in Bangalore city. A Tamilian high caste mill worker accepted water from a fellow mill worker of Kaniyar caste. The high caste man was immediately rebuked by another caste Hindu for accepting water from a Holeya. The issue spilled beyond the factory into the working class neighbourhood of Arlepete and escalated into a conflict between high caste Hindus and the Kaniyars in which a number of Kaniyars were injured. Kaniyars tried to recoup their honour in legal, juridical term, by fighting an assault case against the caste Hindus in the local magistrate court. They also sought the intervention of Tagadur Ramachandra Rao, a Congress man who had shown an interest in the upliftment of Kaniyars, warning that otherwise they would all become Christians.

Kaniyars in other words, opened up the option of leaving Hindu fold altogether. They were, at this time, politically active in other parts of
Mysore state, setting up Sangha of their own, and planning Sathyagraha for increasing admission to all village schools and draw water from wells from which they were expressly forbidden. Their position in the Hindu hierarchy was indeterminate, for certain purposes they were ranked as *Panchamas*, but they objected to this status, so it was later proposed to consider them Sudras. The Kaniyar response not only threatened the existing social order, but sought justice from the state law. Tagadur Ramachandrappa, who made his own enquiries, concluded that ‘there was not much of any racial or religious disagreement among the communities in the mill. He therefore convened a large meeting. This meeting was addressed by number of prominent leaders including Murugeshan Pillai, J.Bheema Rao, Gopalaswamy Iyer, V.R. Ramaiah, Ramaswamy Iyengar, who attempted to smooth ruffled feathers. Tagadur advised Kaniyars to withdraw the case against the caste Hindus and urged the passage of the following resolution – “That Kaniyars, be understood to belong to some sect of *Holey* community… should not mix up with the high caste people until their question was finally settled”. The resolution of the dispute in these terms, Ramachandra recalled later in life, was a significant movement in Kaniyar history.

The ironies of the incident are inescapable. The juridical terms with which terms within which Kaniyars sought to settle their grievances, were
rearticulated by Congress leaders in terms of caste disputes and peace was restored by ensuring them no overt transgression of the purity-pollution, paradigm took place in the factory environment. At the meeting, Ramachandra Rao cautioned that ‘unless we go back to old ways of living (Varnashrama dharma) and observe the principles of Swadharma and uplift the panchamas, there was no salvation for India. Thus if lower castes attempted to realize the promise of bourgeois equality held out by the urban industrial environment, order had to be reasserted through the upliftment of Panchamas by those at the top”, that is by the Congress or upper caste Hindus.\textsuperscript{26}
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4 Report on the Education of the Maharaja of Mysore, from S.M. Fraser to J.A. Crawford, the Resident in Mysore, dated 16th November 1901.

5 Speeches by His Highness Maharaja Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar Bahadur, Maharaja of Mysore, 1902-1933, Mysore: 1934, p. 147.


7 Proceedings of the Mysore Representative Assembly, October 1893, pp. 44-45.

8 Proceedings of the Mysore Representative Assembly, October 1893, p. 47.


11 Ibid., pp. 83-86.


13 G.o.No. 1827–80 EAG. 308 dated 16th May 1921.


19 *Proceedings of the Mysore Representative Assembly*, May 1920, p. 55.


22 *Proceedings of the Mysore Representative Assembly*, May 1920, p. 98.


