

KEEP BEFORE YOUR EYES THE STRUGGLE OF GAUTAM BUDDHA AND RAMANUJA

While on tour as a member of Franchise Committee, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar visited Madras in 1932. "On February 28, Dr. Ambedkar was accorded a colourful reception at Madras by a huge gathering of 10,000 men belonging to the Depressed Classes. Muslims, Christians and Non-Brahmins also participated in the reception. The Chairman of the Depressed Class Army Service presided. Almost all Depressed Class Institutions in the Southern India such as the Depressed Class Army Services Institution, Madras Provincial Depressed Classes Federation, the Presidents of Adi-Dravida Malayalam Sabha, Adi-Andhra Mahasabha, Arundhateya Mahasabha, Kerala Depressed Classes Association and the Labour Union unanimously presented Dr. Ambedkar with an address.

At the meeting Dr. Ambedkar revealed Rajah's somersault from separate electorates to 'joint electorates with reserved seats'. He said that Rajah should not have made any commitment before Kamptee session of the All-India Depressed Classes Congress was held. He, therefore, exhorted the Untouchables to capture political power, to be on their guard against any verbal and rosy promises, and urged them to believe only those leaders who had experience their woes. In the end he asked them to keep before their eyes the fare of the touchable leaders like Gautam Buddha and Ramanuja who had struggled to better their condition and to remove the stain of Untouchability."¹

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¹: Keer, P. 196.