

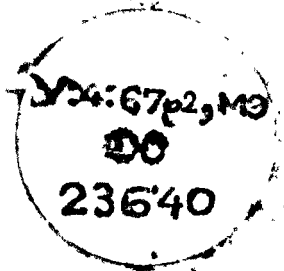
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Report of the Fourteenth

National Social Conference

Held in Lahore on 30th Dec. 1900

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APPENDIX B.

THE NINTH VAISHYA CONFERENCE,

ALIGARH.

The Ninth Vaishya Conference was held at Aligarh on the 28th, 29th and 30th December 1900, in response to the invitation of the Vaishya Community of that place. Aligarh is not a large Vaishya centre, but the enthusiasm shown by the Vaishya Community of that place, and the care and trouble bestowed by them in carrying out the Conference programme, threw many larger and more important Vaishya centres into shade. The gathering this year was by far the largest of any previous years and more than 2,000 delegates and visitors from the N. W. P. Punjab, Rajputana and Oudh attended the sittings of the Conference. So great was the interest shown in its proceedings, and so keen the discussion, that the sittings had to be prolonged for three instead of two days. The arrangements made by the Reception Committee were on a very liberal scale and left nothing to be desired; every member of that body was anxious to do his utmost to make the Conference a success. The Committee comprised among them almost all the leading Vaishyas of Aligarh, who by throwing themselves heartily into the movement, made it a greater success than it had been in any previous year.

Lala Lokman Das, one of the oldest and most respected Pleaders of Aligarh, as President of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates and visitors in a short but impressive speech and asked them to elect their President for the occasion. Rai Bahadur Lala Natthi Mal, Rais and Honorary Magistrate of Khurja, who commands much influ-

ence in and is highly respected by the Vaishya Community of Khurja and the adjoining places, was then elected President of the Conference. In his address, after reviewing the work done by the Conference during the nine years it has been in existence, the President laid great stress upon the necessity of practical action on the part of all who were interested in the progress of the community and of furnishing by their own conduct examples to their less enlightened brethren to follow. The President showed his own earnestness in the matter by pledging himself to carry out most of the resolutions of the Conference and doing his best to help the movement on by every means in his power.

Reports of local Sabhas and brief accounts of the work done by the Upadeshaks of the Conference and the various institutions like the Vaishya Orphanage at Meerut and the Vaishya Boarding House at Agra managed by it, were then read before the meeting, and the undermentioned resolutions discussed and passed.

Most of these resolutions had already been passed at previous Conferences, but what distinguished this year's proceedings was the earnestness with which the speakers treated their subjects and the attention with which the vast concourse of 2,000 people present at the Conference meeting listened to them. The speakers comprised among them men of all ranks most of them fully capable of handling the subjects entrusted to them. There was great unanimity of opinion upon almost all the subjects discussed, and wherever there was difference of opinion, the discussion was always most friendly resulting in a resolution which showed the force with which the subjects appealed to the community. Besides the Vaishyas a number of Shastris of rank and authority were also present in the Conference. Two of them, Pandit Ram Misra Shastri Mahamahopadyaya of Benares, and Pandit Madhusudan Lal Goswami of Brindaban, spoke in favour of the resolu-

tions against early marriages and cited authorities to show that the practice had not the sanction of the Shastras. Among other important practical steps taken by the Conference to carry out its programme, was the formation of a band of workers who pledged themselves to carry out all the resolutions in their daily lives, as well as to have them enforced among the rest of the community as far as possible. These men were not only those who had received an English education, but also others who commanded great influence and were reckoned as the leaders of the community in their respective places. Their names are given in Appendix A. The number has since increased and in the last annual meeting of the Vaishya Sabha at Begumabad a large number of people pledged themselves to carry out the Conference resolutions like their brethren at Aligarh. A Scholarship of Rs. 30 a month, tenable for three years, was also founded by Rai Bahadur Babu Shyam Sunder Lal, Minister of Kishengarh; Rai Kedar Nath, District Judge, Hoshiarpur, Lala Ramanuj Dayal, and the General Secretary, to have a Vaishya student trained in the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute at Bombay and Babu Prayag Narain, a Vaishya who has passed the F.A. Examination of the Allahabad University, has accordingly been sent to be trained in Cotton Mill Engineering for a period of three years. The Conference has also sent Lala Babu Lal, a Vaishya student of Khurja, to Tokio in Japan for technical education. The cost of the training will be about Rs. 3,000, and it is hoped that the members of the community will utilize these young men's services by establishing their own mills and factories for the purpose of encouraging Indian Manufactures and affording their countrymen a wider field of useful employment.

In order to find out how far the allegation that the Conference was not making much headway among the Vaishya community in general was true, a circular letter was issued

to all the members of the Vaishya Maha Sabha and others interested in the movement, to ascertain and report as to how far our programme had received the sympathy and co-operation of the people. The replies received and the number of people who attended the last Conference, and the sympathetic spirit in which they received our resolutions, showed that, though slowly, we were making good impression upon the community, and that given a large number of men determined to labour for the good of the community, as well as to act up to their convictions in their own daily lives, our success was sure. Social reform, which aims to strike at the root of practices prevalent in a community for centuries, can neither be popular nor successful in the beginning, nor can those who sow the good seed hope to see it grow and bring forth fruit in a single life time. If they can only clear the ground and make the soil fit for receiving it, they may rest assured of the result coming in good time; and what we saw of the Vaishya Conference at Aligarh, leads us to hope that the new century will mark an era in the history of the Vaishya Conference in cementing a bond of union, not merely between a few practical and earnest workers, but throughout the Vaishya community. With these remarks, I commend the undermentioned resolutions to the members of the Vaishya community in particular, and Indian reformers in general; hoping that the former will receive them in the spirit in which their representatives have hitherto received them in their annual conferences, and the latter will sympathize with our efforts to advance our community in the scale of Indian Nations and favor us with suggestions to extend our sphere of public usefulness.

RESOLUTIONS.

I. The Conference notices with regret that difference^s and disunion still prevail amongst the members of the community in most places on trivial matters. Such difference

are mostly due to misapprehension and prove a great stumbling-block in the way of progress of union among the community.

The Conference therefore invites the particular attention of all members of the community to its first principle of promoting union and removing disunion, and suggests the following methods for the more practical carrying out of this object:—

(a) All members of the Vaishya Maha Sabha, all Vaishya visitors, delegates, and all Upadeshaks of the Conference, ought to make it their first duty to ascertain in their respective centres, the state of feeling among the various members of their community and its different sections, the cause of their differences, if any, and the means of removing them.

(b) They should solicit the aid of all respectable members of the community residing in such centres, towards the amicable settlement of such disputes.

(c) They should organize local Sabhas and Panchayats for the purpose, and induce all members of the community to join and have their disputes settled by them.

(d) All members of the community be requested to help their poorer brethren by every means in their power.

(e) The names of all such members who help to carry out the above objects should be sent to the Maha Sabha in order that public thanks be given to them in the Conference.

(f) All members of the community ought to respect each other's feelings and customs.

I am glad to note that this resolution is being attempted to be carried out in a practical manner, for the Vaishya

Maha Sabha often receives appeals on caste disputes and intimation of the willingness of the parties to abide by its decision.

II. That this Conference, in reaffirming its resolutions of the preceding years, notes with satisfaction that the efforts hitherto made in the reduction of marriage and funeral expenses, and removal of pernicious customs, are encouraging; but there is still ample room for improvement and the Conference hopes that more persistent efforts shall be made in this direction by all members of the community.

In order to carry out this resolution in a practical manner, the Conference suggests the adoption of the following methods by all members of the community:—

(a) Reform in distribution of charity and discouragement of indiscriminate throwing away of money on occasions of births, marriages and deaths.

(b) Reform of pernicious customs, and encouragement of beneficial ceremonies.

(c) Framing of rules by local bodies with reference to local requirements in places where such rules have not yet been framed.

This resolution is also not a dead letter; on the contrary, local bodies of important centres often ask the aid of the Vaishya Maha Sabha in framing rules for regulating expenses incurred in marriage and other ceremonies. Efforts are, moreover, being made to apply money spent on such occasions to useful public purposes, while lectures on social reform are now and then resorted to in place of nautches. Donations are often given to the Vaishya Orphanage and other useful institutions, instead of money being thrown away among crowds of able-bodied beggars, and the community is beginning to understand that the right use of money is not to throw it away on marriages, but to employ it on the educa-

tion of children, as well as in work of public utility. One of the richest bankers of Ajmere told me the other day that had the Conference come into existence 20 years earlier, he would have saved lacs of rupees he had thrown away in marriages and had applied them in a more useful manner. It is also some satisfaction to note that our local Sabhas are doing some good work in this respect. In Kota, for instance the expenses of each particular marriage are regulated by the Kota Vaishya Sabha. The parties apply for permission to celebrate the marriage and the Sabha determines the amount to be spent on such occasion, regard being had to their position in life. It has thus been able to effect a saving of many thousands of rupees (*vide* Appendix B.), and it is hoped that a similar procedure will be adopted in other places.

III. The third of the twice-born castes being designated *Vaishyas* in the Hindu Shastras, this Conference impresses upon all members of the community the necessity of giving the name of their caste as *Vaishyas*, and not as *Bania*, *Bakal* or any other term which is employed to denote a particular trade.

(1) The Conference cordially approves of the letters sent by the *Vaishya* Maha Sabha to the Census Commissioner for India and the Superintendent of Census Operations N. W. P., and resolves that a Memorial be sent to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, N. W. P., with the prayer that those members of the community who wish to style themselves *Vaishyas* in any public proceeding or return, be entered as *Vaishyas* and not as *Bania* or *Bakal*.

(2) This Conference expresses its deep obligation to the Census Commissioner for India for his reply to the General Secretary's letter, that "the instructions in the Census Code have the same object as that contemplated by the Maha Sabha, *viz.*, the substitution of real caste names for general

occupational terms." It also tenders its thanks to the Superintendent of Census Operations, N. W. P., for his reply to the Maha Sabha's letter, that "the object of the rules enjoining the use of the word Bania for Vaishya was not to cause annoyance to any section of the community," The Conference, however, submits, that the use of the word *Bania* for *Vaishya* would lead to errors in the Census Returns, while, on account of the inferior education of the greater number of enumerators, the use of a term likely to mislead as well as to hurt the feelings of a large section of a loyal community, should not be considered desirable.

(3) That a Vyavastha of some recognized Shastris be taken and sent up with the memorial.

In accordance with this resolution, a memorial was submitted to the Local Government. The memorial and the Government reply, together with further correspondence on the subject, are printed as an Appendix to this report. The Vaishya Maha Sabha has already collected and is collecting information likely to lead to a settlement of the question as to which of the present mercantile castes of India represent the Vaishyas of the Shastras and why they do so. The enquiry is likely to take some time, and involve much labour, but the Sabha hopes to furnish to the Vaishya community as full and exhaustive an account of the origin and location of its different sections as is possible out of the materials at command.

IV. That this Conference reaffirms its resolutions of previous years and impresses upon all members of the community the necessity of promoting the physique of boys by some of the following methods:—

(a) So long as students are under instruction they should be encouraged to observe their Brahmacharya (celibacy.)

(b) Parents and guardians should not only attend to the maintenance and education of their children and wards, but should also see that they take bodily exercise and attend manly games.

In accordance with this resolution, the Hon'ble R. B. Lala Nihal Chand has given a donation of Rs. 25 for those of the Vaishya students who show themselves proficient in manly exercises, and this money will be distributed in the shape of medals to the Vaishya students of the Meerut, Agra, and Rohilkhand Divisions.

V. That this Conference reaffirms its previous resolutions regarding the prevention of early marriages and hopes that in all sections, families and places where such marriages prevail, boys shall not be married before the age of 16, and girls of 12.

This resolution, as I have already said, was supported by two of the most eminent authorities on Hindu Law, Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Ram Misra Shastri of Benares and Goswami Madhusudan Lal of Brindaban. Pandit Ram Misra challenged any Pandit to show that infant marriages were recognized by the Shastras; and he cited his own example in support of the resolution. In fact, he went further and maintained that Brahmacharya ought to be observed till, and no marriage take place before, the age of eighteen. He proved from quotations from the Shastras that the meaning of the rule enjoining the marriage of girls at eight has been misunderstood by the community.

There is no doubt that this resolution is making much headway among the Vaishya community and it is only the wealthy and highly conservative in towns, who advocate infant marriages on the plea that it is difficult to get suitable bridegrooms after the girl has reached a certain age. How

far this plea ought to hold good in these days, let our young men answer.

VI. In order to have a thorough knowledge of religious duties and rites, to discharge their household duties properly and to impart sound education to children, it is essential that females should be properly educated, not only in the Hindi and Sanskrit languages, but also in the art of household management. But as such education can only be imparted by properly qualified tutoresses, the Conference suggests the following practical methods :—

(a) That the Vaishya Maha Sabha devote a portion of its funds towards the education of women to qualify for tutoresses, in such schools as the Sabha may direct.

(b) That prizes be given by the Vaishya Maha Sabha from time to time to authors of useful works on female education.

This resolution has already been partly carried out by the Vaishya Maha Sabha, in utilizing the services of Lala Sannu Lal, Supervisor Qanoongo of Bulandshahar, who is the author of several popular works for Indian females, to compile a series of graduated readers in Hindi for girls. He has already compiled two of the series, both of which have been published by the Sabha, and Lala Sannu Lal has been thanked by the Conference for his labours.

VII. That this Conference impresses upon all members of the community the necessity of improving and promoting their trade by the establishment of Joint stock Companies and the encouragement of manufactures and industries, and it hopes that its members will avail themselves of every means afforded by the present system of education and travel.

The Conference notes with satisfaction that its members have established manufactories at some of the more impor-

tant Indian centres, but in order to make such efforts successful, much more ought to be done in this direction. The Conference also hopes that its members will encourage native arts and industries and will use native articles of consumption as far as practicable:—

(a) All members of the caste who own manufacturing, trading or banking firms, may be requested to train a certain number of youths of the caste in their respective concerns, and those who express their readiness to help in this good work may be asked to send in their names, the number of youths they are ready to train, and the terms of training, if any, to the office of the Vaishya Maha Sabha.

(b) An industrial exhibition of articles invented and manufactured by members of the community be held at the annual meeting of the Conference.

(c) That the Vaishya Maha Sabha send by April next a Vaishya student to Japan, for the purpose of receiving technical education, in accordance with the resolution passed at the Bareilly Conference of December 1899 and defray the necessary expenses.

This resolution has been partly carried out by the Vaishya Maha Sabha and one student has already been sent for technical education in the Victoria Technical Institute at Bombay, and another to Japan for the same purpose. The number of cotton and other factories owned by Vaishyas is largely on the increase, but much remains to be done in this direction, and the fact cannot be too strongly impressed upon all, that the wealth of the community does not increase by its exclusive devotion to money-lending or land-holding, but by promoting the arts and industries of the country. Our annual exhibition is not large, but it affords promise for the future. Among other things exhibited at Aligarh were specimens of Egyptian and American cotton and American

Indian-corn ruised, and of Gur manufactured from the latter by Lala Ram Chandra, Rais of Sisauli, in the Muzaffarnagar District. Babus Prayag Narain and Sri Narain of the Vaishya Young Men's Association, Meerut, also showed a machine for calico-printing. This contrivance, though very crude and yet in its very first stages shows that our young men are turning their attention in directions other than the Bar or Government service. Lala Gobind Ram of Kasganj also exhibited some excellent photographs showing great skill for an amateur photographer.

VIII. That this Conference invites the attention of all members of the community to the undesirability of marriages by widowers, after the age of forty in any case. It also recommends that the practice of giving young girls in marriage to old men, on receipt of money consideration for such marriages, ought to be put a stop to. Such practices are pernicious and demoralising, and are looked upon by the Sabha with the strongest disapproval.

This resolution was passed by a majority of votes, after a very hot and spirited discussion, and the attitude of the meeting showed how strong was the feeling against the marriage of widowers after forty, whether they had children or not, and whether their health was good or otherwise. How far the rest of the community will respond to this resolution remains to be seen.

IX. The Conference notices with regret that its resolutions are not yet fully carried out in practice, but that a large number of the community often act in disregard of them. The Conference therefore thinks it to be the first duty of all its members, as well as those of the Vaishya Maha Sabha, to show by their own example how its programme of reform can best be carried out. It impresses upon each and all of them the necessity:

(a) Of not giving others ground for unfavourable comments upon their conduct; and

(b) Of trying their best to remove all misapprehensions regarding the aims and objects of the Conference.

(1) The Conference further directs that all Upadeshaks do report to the Vaishya Maha Sabha the names of all such members as carry out its resolutions in a practical manner, so that their names be published in the caste papers and thanks given to them in the Conference.

(2) That those members of the community who help to carry out the resolutions passed by the Conference in their respective centres, be awarded silver medals at the annual meetings of the Conference.

(3) In places where local Sabhas have become extinct or are lifeless, or have not yet been formed, such Sabhas be revived or formed, and that all their members, as well as those of the Vaishya Maha Sabha, do their utmost for the purpose, as well as see to their effective working.

(4) That all Upadeshaks do solicit the aid of all respectable members of the community in having local Sabhas established, and report to the Vaishya Maha Sabha the names of such as help them in the matter, in order that their names be published in the caste papers and thanks given to them in the Conference.

(5) The Conference, moreover, suggests that a deputation of some of the members of the Vaishya Maha Sabha visit one or more important centres in the country and ascertain how far the resolutions of the Conference are carried out in practice, and if they are not, the reason thereof and how they can be carried out. They should also explain the aims and objects of the Conference to the community; and the Vaishya Maha Sabha should publish and distribute tracts, fully stating its aims and objects and removing any misap-

prehensions which may be prevailing regarding them, and such tracts should be distributed through the Upadeshaks.

I have already alluded to the pledges taken by some of our members. The Conference employs two paid and a number of Honorary Upadeshaks who visit various places in the country to disseminate its programme among the Vaishya community. Greater success has been achieved by us in the smaller towns and villages of the N. W. P. and Rajputana and the Punjab than in the larger towns, where the influx of wealth, strength of zenana and priestly influence and sectional pride often prevent people from realizing the necessity of immediate action in social matters. There is, however, ground for hope that future years will show that the Vaishyas of our larger towns, who claim to be more advanced than their brethren in villages, are really so, not in mere devotion to money-making, but also in reforming their home-life.

X. The Conference hopes that all members of the community shall contribute to its funds at least one rupee at births and two at marriages, as well as help its funds on other occasions of charity also.

This resolution has not been without effect, for the last marriage season brought us a fair amount of money, both for the Orphanage and the funds of the Vaishya Maha Sabha.

XI. That in the opinion of this Conference, it is most desirable that in public offices and courts where the Urdu character is still exclusively used, as in the Punjab, the Nagari character be also employed in all processes and proceedings.

The Conference records its deep obligation to the Hon'ble Sir Antony Macdonnell, Lieutenant-Governor, N. W. P. and Oudh, for sanctioning the use of the Nagari character, along with Urdu, in all courts of the N. W. P., and hopes that all members of the community shall largely profit by a conces-

sion which removes a serious impediment in the way of the progress of Hindi Literature, and that they will encourage and promote it by the publication of works in accordance with the exigencies of the time.

XII. That this Conference, in re-affirming its resolutions of former years, again directs the attention of all sections of the Vaishya community to the promotion of Sanskrit and Devanagari education, and the knowledge of the principles of morality of their respective religious tracts, and suggests the following practical methods:—

(a) Education be given to every child in the beginning in the Devanagari character, and all schools (Pathashalas) which have been established by the members of the community, be superintended, and their system of education so regulated by the Vaishya Maha Sabha in consultation with their founders and managers, as to be able to impart sound and useful instruction.

(b) Devanagari character be introduced in all Mahajani Schools.

(c) All Vaishya students who attend schools and colleges, be encouraged to take Hindi and Sanskrit as their second language by means of scholarships and prizes as far as funds permit.

In accordance with this resolution, Seth Bansi Dhar of Bulandshahar has given a prize of Rs. 10 to the Vaishya student who passed first in Sanskrit in an Examination of the Allahabad University; and the Vaishya Maha Sabha two of Rs. 25. Three medals shall therefore be given in the current year to students passing the B.A., F.A. and the Entrance Examinations of the Allahabad University held in January 1901.

(d) Authors of useful works in Sanskrit and Hindi be encouraged by means of prizes, as far as the funds of the

Vaishya Maha Sabha permit, and their works, if approved of by the said Sabha, be published.

(e) Small tracts and pamphlets on social reform, improvement of trade and manufactures, and principles of morality and religion, be, from time to time, published and distributed by the Vaishya Maha Sabha. The Sabha should take early steps towards carrying out this resolution in a practical manner.

Rai Bahadur Lala Lalta Prasad of Pilibhit has carried out this resolution by establishing a Pathashala for higher Sanskrit learning at a cost of rupees one hundred and fifty per month. This Pathashala ought soon to be raised to the status of a good Sanskrit College.

XIII. That this Conference invites the attention of all members of the community to make such reforms in the distribution of their charities as shall bring them more in accordance with the injunctions of Shastras and would not entail mere waste of money, and the Conference has every hope that the members of the community shall adopt better and more useful methods of charity. Among others, it suggests the following practical methods.

(a) That on all occasions of distribution of charity and inauguration of charitable undertakings, the interest of Sanskrit learning and the promotion of general well-being be always taken into consideration by all members of the community; and a list of charitable buildings that exist, as well as those that may hereafter be erected, be sent to the General Secretary in order that the list of the donors be published in the caste papers and thanks given to them at the Conference.

(b) That a fund be opened at once by all local Sabhas, according to their local conditions, for the help of the widows of the Vaishya community.

XIV. That this Conference notices with regret that the present system of both school and college education still tells very heavily upon both the physique and the intellect of the students, and very often leaves them unfit for practical life, and it draws the attention of all University and Educational authorities to make such other changes in their curriculum as shall remove this complaint.

XV. That this Conference, in re-affirming its previous resolutions, expresses its entire sympathy with all Temperance Associations that have been established in this and other countries for the promotion of abstinence from the use of intoxicants.

While the resolutions about practical action were being discussed, an appeal for funds was made and the following gentlemen helped the several movements organized by the Conference with the amounts specified against their names:—

Names.	Widow Fund.	Upadeshak Fund.	Japan Fund.	General Fund.	Orphanage Fund.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Lala Ramanuj Dayal Sahib, Rais, meerut ...	...	...	...	...	750
2. B. Jai Lal, Sub Judge, Azamgarh ...	...	100	100	100	100
3. Rai Bahadur Seth Nathi Mal, Rais and Hony. Magistrate Khurja ...	...	50	...	240	100
4. Rai Kedar Nath, M. A., District Judge, Hosharpur ...	50	...	100	...	100
5. Agarwal Kadam Conference, through the President. L. Shiv Prasad, Rais, Muzafarnagar ...	25	25	25	25	25
6. Lala Faqir Chand Maheshwari Delhi ...	...	...	...	...	50
7. Lala Murli Dhar, Vakil, Umballa, on occasion of Marriage, ...	...	...	...	25	25
8. Babu Ganpat Rai, Sub-Divisional Officer, Thatoun, (Burmah) ...	...	50	...	...	...
9. Lala Jugal Kishore Sahib Rais, Thoura, Bulandshahar District ...	...	...	...	...	25
Other Subscriptions less than Rs. 25 ...	44	8	...	24	130

On the evening of the 29th December 1900, an evening party was held in the Conference Pandal for the delegates and visitors to meet and form each other's acquaintance as well as exchange friendly greetings.

At the conclusion of the programme, cordial votes of thanks were given to the President and the Vice-President of the Conference, and the President and Members of the Reception Committee; and with three cheers for Her Majesty the Queen-Empress the meeting dispersed, the delegates and visitors greatly appreciating the brotherly feeling and the kindness shown to them by their hosts in Aligarh.

In concluding this brief summary of our work at the Aligarh Conference, let me impress upon all members of the Vaishya community the fact that unless they rise to their tradition of mutual help and co-operation, and march with the times, they can never hope to hold their own in the Present race for progress. Courage of conviction, perseverance and determination to do the right because it is right, pure domestic life, commercial integrity and high moral character, simple habits, soundness and moderation of judgment, are all objects which the Conference is steadily setting before the Vaishya community to attain. Let me hope that they will soon be attained.

BAIJ NATH,
General Secretary.

APPENDIX C.

REPORT OF THE WALTERKRIT RAJAPUTRA HITAKARINI SABHA FOR THE YEAR 1899. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

DELEGATES OF THE WALTERKRIT RAJAPUTRA HITAKARINI
SABHA,—

The report shows a good deal of work done in the year. The marriages that have come within the scope of the Committee rules number in all 5,177, and the funerals to 1,480. Of these 4,755 marriages have been regular and 1,377 funerals. Among the different associations I notice with especial pleasure the highly satisfactory account given of the Ajmer Committee's working. Kishangarh, Tonk, Karauli, Bikaner, Jhalawar, Partabgarh, Jodhpur and Alwar all earn the General Committee's special commendations. I think that in Bikaner we may trace the influence of His Highness the Maharaja in the interest which the Committee of that State has shown in the performance of its duties. I agree with this Committee in thinking that the sentence of four month's imprisonment passed in one of the States on a delinquent is a punishment that is too severe for the offence. The aim of the Committee is a social aim, and its object is to induce rather than to punish. It would be a misfortune if owing to the infliction of severe punishment an impression got abroad that the Committee's rules could be used as a means of harassing those who do not obey them, and placing them on the same footing as those who break the criminal law. Of the precise circumstances of the case I

refer to I am not aware, but I am fully in agreement with the Committee that a word of caution is required.

I join with the Committee in thinking that the presence of the Central India delegate among them is very satisfactory, and I notice the favourable way in which the Committee speak of the officials by whom their work has been conducted.

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT

FROM

THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

WALTERKRIT RAJAPUTRA HITAKARINI SABHA

TO

A. L. P. TUCKER, Esq., C.S.,

COMMISSIONER, AJMER-MERWARA, AND VICE-PRESIDENT
AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SABHA.

Dated Ajmer, the 2nd April 1900.

SIR,

We, the members of the General Committee of the Walterkrit Rajaputra Hitakarini Sabha, Rajputana, have assembled here at Ajmer, as delegates from the districts of Ajmer-Merwara and the Native States of Rajputana mentioned below, in order to attend the Thirteenth Annual Session of the Sabha :—

Alwar.

Bharatpur.

Bikaner.

Dholpur.

Jaipur.

Jaisalmer.

Jhalawar.

Jodhpur.

Karauli.

Kishangarh.

Kotah.

Pratapgarh.

Tonk.

Udaipur.

We held our preliminary meetings from the 26th to the 31st March 1900, and the reports and statements were laid before us by the General Secretary of the Sabha, which were read to and discussed by us.

From the statements and other records which we perused during the last week it appears that 4,980 marriages and 1,430 funerals among the Rajputs, and 197 marriages and 50 funerals among the Charans were registered during 1899, the year under report. It further appears that the total number of cases which were according to rule aggregated 4,584 marriages and 1,330 funerals among the Rajputs, and 171 marriages and 47 funerals among the Charans. Infringements of the Sabha rules were noticed as follows:—

		Rajput		Charan	
		Marriages	Per cent	Marriages	Per cent
(A)	Against rule in respect of age	191	3.8	8	4.06
	" " expense	39	.78	...	...
	" " <i>tyag</i>	37	.7	17	8.6
	" " rit	14	.28	...	...
	" marriage party	115	2.3	1	.5
	Pending cases	370	7.4	2	1
Total		766	15.26	28	14.2
		Rajput		Charan	
		Funerals	Per cent	Funerals	Per cent
(B)	Against rule in respect of				
	expense,	14	.97	3	6
	Pending cases	86	6.01	...	...
Total		100	6.98	3	6

The ceremonies performed among the Brahmins, Sidhs, Rajguru-Purohits and Jats were also mentioned in the report and statements. We are glad to see the Bikaner Local Committee has been trying to propagate the influence of Sabha

rules on other castes. We have noticed the interest which the Committee has taken in the performance of its duties, with which we are pleased.

APPENDIX I.

General Statement of Marriages and Funerals performed among the Rajputs during the year 1899.

		MARRIAGES.																FUNERALS.								
Number.	NAME OF STATE OR DISTRICT.	IN RESPECT OF AGE.				IN RESPECT OF EXPENSES.				IN RESPECT OF TYAG.				IN RESPECT OF RIT.				IN RESPECT OF WEDDING PARTY.				IN RESPECT OF EXPENSES.				
		According to Rule.	Against Rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to Rule.	Against Rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to Rule.	Against Rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to Rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	
1	Ajmer-Merwara	143	1	...	144	140	4	...	144	144	...	...	144	144	...	...	144	144	...	...	...	144	38	...	...	38
2	Alwar	291	2	...	293	290	...	3	293	292	1	...	293	293	...	...	293	288	5	...	...	293	17	...	1	18
3	Banswara	13	3	...	21	21	...	...	21	21	...	...	21	21	...	...	21	17	4	...	...	21	28	...	...	28
4	Bharatpur	6	...	...	6	6	...	...	6	6	...	...	6	6	...	...	6	6	...	...	...	6	24	...	1	25
5	Bikaner	520	4	2	526	514	10	2	526	519	7	...	526	517	9	...	526	522	1	3	...	526	67	...	...	67
6	Bundi	75	...	...	75	75	...	...	75	75	...	...	75	74	1	...	75	63	11	1	...	75	38	1	...	39
7	Dholpur	229	...	...	229	229	...	...	229	229	...	...	229	229	...	...	229	198	31	...	...	229	72	...	...	72
8	Dungarpur	40	1	...	41	41	...	...	41	41	...	...	41	39	2	...	41	41	...	...	...	41	24	...	2	26
9	Jeipur	1,646	4	64	1,714	1,631	8	75	1,714	1,677	2	35	1,714	1,714	...	...	1,714	1,622	41	51	...	1,714	330	2	74	415
10	Jaisalmer	344	4	30	378	332	11	35	378	370	3	5	378	368	2	8	378	375	...	3	...	378	50	1	...	51
11	Jhalawar	81	4	1	86	85	...	1	86	85	1	...	86	86	...	...	86	85	...	1	...	86	37	...	...	37
12	Jodhpur	449	11	2	462	459	2	1	462	460	2	...	462	462	...	...	462	461	...	1	...	462	...	...	...	...
13	Karauli	126	...	...	126	126	...	...	126	126	...	...	126	126	...	...	126	126	...	...	...	126	42	1	...	43
14	Kishangarh	83	...	...	83	81	...	2	83	83	...	...	83	83	...	...	83	83	...	...	...	83	73	...	...	73
15	Kotah	96	7	3	106	104	...	2	106	103	3	...	106	106	...	...	106	90	13	3	...	106	51	2	...	53
16	Partabgarh	30	...	3	33	29	...	4	33	32	...	1	33	31	...	2	33	31	...	2	...	33	12	...	5	17
17	Sirohi	29	10	...	39	39	...	...	39	39	...	...	39	39	...	...	39	36	3	...	...	39	22	...	...	22
18	Tonk	54	...	...	54	54	...	...	54	54	...	...	54	54	...	...	54	53	1	...	...	54	18	...	...	18
19	Udaipur	410	140	14	564	556	4	4	564	544	18	2	564	561	...	3	564	558	5	1	...	564	378	6	4	388
Total		4,670	191	119	4,980	4,812	39	129	4,980	4,900	37	43	4,980	4,953	14	13	4,980	4,799	115	60	...	4,980	1,330	14	86	1,430

APPENDIX II.

General Statement of Marriages and Funerals performed among the Charans during the year 1899

Number.	Name of State or District.	MARRIAGES.												FUNERALS.											
		IN RESPECT OF AGE.				IN RESPECT OF EXPENSES.				IN RESPECT OF TYAG.				IN RESPECT OF RIT.				IN RESPECT OF WEDDING PARTY.				IN RESPECT OF EXPENSES.			
		According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.	According to rule.	Against rule.	Pending.	Total.
1	Ajmer-Merwara.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2	Alwar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3	Banswara	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	...	4
4	Bharatpur	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	Bikaner	61	2	...	63	63	...	...	63	62	1	...	63	63	...	...	63	63	...	...	...	6	...	...	8
6	Bundi	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
7	Dholpur	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
8	Dungarpur	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
9	Jaipur	50	...	...	50	50	...	...	50	34	16	...	50	50	...	...	50	49	1	...	50	12	...	...	12
10	Jaisalmer	21	1	...	22	22	...	...	22	22	...	...	22	22	...	...	22	22	...	...	22	11	2	...	13
11	Jhalawar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
12	Jodhpur	44	...	...	44	44	...	...	44	44	...	...	44	44	...	...	44	44	...	...	44	...	...	...	...
13	Karauli	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
14	Kishangarh	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	Kotah	2	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	4	...	...	4
16	Partabgarh	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
17	Sirohi	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	2	...	...	2
18	Tonk	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
19	Udaipur	10	5	...	15	13	2	...	15	15	...	...	15	15	...	...	15	15	...	...	15	7	...	...	7
	Total	189	8	...	197	193	2	...	197	180	17	...	197	197	...	...	197	196	1	...	197	47	3	...	50

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF
THE WALTERKRIT RAJAPUTRA HITAKARINI
SABHA AT THEIR 13TH ANNUAL SESSION,
HELD AT AJMER, FROM THE 26TH
MARCH TO 2ND APRIL 1900:—

I.—An application dated the 30th March 1900 was submitted by the Local Sabha, Jodhpur, to the following purport :—

It has been seen that some of the Native States in Rajputana try to recover the expenses of the Local Sabhas from the Zemindars (landholders and cultivators). This action on their part will earn a bad reputation for the Local Sabhas. It would therefore be better to arrange so that the State treasuries only, and not the Zemindars and other subjects, be liable to pay their expenses.

Resolved unanimously.—That the above proposal may be carried into effect.

II.—The Bikaner Local Sabha submitted a copy of some Sabha rules which seem to have been omitted in the last Code of Sabha Rules, and proposed that they may be given a place in the new Code of Sabha Rules.

Resolved unanimously.—That action may be taken as suggested above.

III.—The Local Sabha, Tonk, in an application, dated the 28th March 1900, stated that owing to famine the funeral feasts have for the present been discontinued among the Rajputs of the Tonk State, and are replaced by Brahmbohj feasts to Brahmans) as an act of charity. The Sabha wishes to know if the expenses incurred at the Brahmbohj should be entered in the funeral returns.

Resolved.—That such feasts to the Brahmans, together with the expenses, should find a place in the funeral returns.

IV.—Moved by the Bikaner Sabha :—According to the Sabha Rules every person governed by them is entitled to expend any sum not exceeding Rs. 100 in a marriage, without any consideration to his income. It has also been ruled that the father of a bride may, if poor and moneyless, receive a sum to the extent of Rs. 100 as *rit* from the father of the bridegroom for marriage expenses. It may therefore be clearly laid down whether the bride's father is entitled to spend Rs. 200 under these circumstances.

Resolved unanimously.—That under the circumstances mentioned above, the bride's father is not allowed to spend more than Rs. 100.

V.—Moved by the Bikaner Sabha:—That from the perusal of the cash account it is found that the fund of the Walterkrit Rajaputra Hitakarini Sabha consists of a large sum. The annual subscription from the different Native States may therefore be discontinued for the present, and may be re-levied when necessary.

Resolved unanimously.—That the suggestion may be placed before the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana, and President Walterkrit Rajaputra Hitakarini Sabha, and action may be taken according to the orders which he may be pleased to pass.

VI.—Petition dated the 15th March 1900 from Bhup Singh, Rajput of Gadeli in Jaipur, complaining against Dungji of Nand in Shekhawati for setting up Thakur Fateh Singh of Parasrampura and his Thakurani to quarrel, and praying that the matter may be investigated and tried through the Jaipur Residency.

The petition being read before the Genesal Committee it was resolved that after being submitted to the A. G. G. and President W. R. H. Sabha it may be forwarded to the Local Committee, Jaipur.

VII.—Moved by the Bikaner Sabha :—Resolution No. 4 of 1899 lays down that the half-yearly returns and kaifiats, etc., should be submitted by the different Local Committees in clear and legible handwriting, and in the Devanagari characters and language. It has, however, been observed this year that the returns, etc. from some Local Committees are drawn up in the local dialects and characters of the Native States in Rajputana. It may therefore be pointed out that the returns and kaifiats, etc., should, in future, be submitted in the manner enjoined in Resolution No. 4 of 1899.

Resolved unanimously.—That a strict compliance with the aforesaid resolution should be observed by all Local Committees.

VIII.—Moved by the Bikaner Sabha :—Whether Resolution No. 1 of 1899, which exempts the giver of less Tyag from punishment, is applicable to Rajputs and Charans both or to the former only.

Resolved.—That the aforesaid Resolution is intended for Rajputs alone.

IX.—Enquiry by the Malwa Rajaputra Hitakarini Sabha on the following point :—

In the event of more than one marriage and funeral being performed within a year in the same family, what should be the scale of expenses to be incurred for them ?

Resolved.—That the scale of expenses under the above circumstance cannot be different from that which is already laid down for each separate ceremony.

No enhancement or reduction can be made in the scale owing to the multiplicity of ceremonies.

X.—By order of the Agent Governor-General and President Walterkrit Rajaputra Hitakarini Sabha the following case was put before the General Committee by the General Secretary:—In 1894 the daughter of the Thakur of

Lawa in Jaipur was betrothed to the Thakur of Jamoli in Mewar. In connection with this betrothal the Thakur of Lawa alleges to have given to the Jamoli Thakur cash-money and property valued at Rs. 2,826-9-6 as Tika, and the latter received it. Subsequently the Jamoli Thakur married another girl. Whereupon the Lawa Thakur asked the Jamoli Thakur to return the cash and property. The two lists of cash and property, submitted by the two Thakurs, do not agree with each other.

In the opinion of the General Committee the gift and acceptance of Tika and marrying another girl in spite of previous betrothal are acts which the Sabha rules do not allow. The Committee has after inquiries come to know that the Lawa Thikana of the Nurukas, formerly connected with Tonk, is now under the Jaipur Residency. No marriage and funeral statements are submitted by this thikana. As Lawa is situated in Rajputana it should submit the marriage and funeral returns, and be governed by the Sabha rules.

Resolved unanimously.—That the Agent Governor-General and President of the Sabha be humbly approached with the request that the Sabha rules may be made applicable to Lawa, and this case may be forwarded to the Political Officer of the state under which Lawa may be considered for the purposes of the Sabha, for disposal. And as Jamoli belongs to Mewar the Local Committee of Udaipur should, after the decision of the case, award due punishment to the person who received the Tika in question.

XI.—Moved by the Pratapgarh Local Sabha:—That at present the Rajputs who go from Rajputana to Malwa for contracting marriages, and also those who come from Malwa to Rajputana for the purpose are required to distribute tyag in accordance with the Malwa Sabha rules, whereby the Charans are put to a great loss. The proper course to be

followed in the distribution of tyag seems to be this, that when a Rajput goes to Malwa for a marriage he should be governed by the Sabha rules of that place, and when he comes to Rajputana the Walterkrit Sabha rules should be applicable to him.

Resolved.—That a rule which is embodied in Resolution No. I of 1897 has already been laid down for the distribution of tyag in cases of intermarriages with Rajputana and Malwa Rajputs, and which purports to the same thing. The said Resolution (of 1897) is not clearly worded, and may therefore be amended accordingly.

APPENDIX D.

The following is a copy of the memorial submitted to H. E. the Viceroy about two months ago and His Excellency's reply thereto.

The humble Memorial of the Hindu Social Reform Association of Madras.

Most Respectfully Sheweth :—

1. That there exists in the Indian community a class of women commonly known as nautch-girls.

2. That the reputed profession of this class is prostitution.

3. That these public women are often employed for entertaining guests at social functions.

4. That European guests, when invited to these entertainments, would seem to have hitherto felt constrained to be present at them out of a sense of delicacy and irrespective of their own sentiments.

5. That a strong feeling is springing up among the more thoughtful of the educated classes of this country against the prevalence of this practice of employing nautch-girls, as tending to lower the moral tone of society and as inconsistent with social propriety and those ideas of self-respect which are coming to be adopted under the influence of modern education.

6. That a movement was started in Madras in 1893 to discourage this practice, and that at the Indian Social Conference, not to mention Provincial Social Conferences, resolutions have repeatedly been passed in condemnation of the practice.

7. That, as a result of the growing feeling against the practice, nautch-girls are not so largely employed at private entertainments as was once the case; and even at public entertainments nowadays in honour of the highest representatives of the State, the nautch has not infrequently been dispensed with.

8. That in the opinion of Your Excellency's memorialists, the time has come when European guests of rank and position may, without violence to Native sentiment, let it be understood, either generally or as occasion may arise, that they would not notice the absence of the nautch, if it should be dropped in any entertainment given in their honour,

9. That your memorialists feel confident, from the noble standard of duty and righteousness insisted on by Your Excellency in the administration of the country, that you will aid, by all proper means, efforts made to remove social evils of the kind herein mentioned.

10. That your memorialists accordingly appeal to Your Excellency to discourage, by such means as may lie within Your Excellency's power, the pernicious practice of employing nautch girls at social entertainments and thus to facilitate the attainment of that social ideal which owes its birth in this country to the moral influence of British rule.

The reform Association has received the following reply to the above :—

CALCUTTA, 22ND DECEMBER 1900.

SIR,

I am directed by his Excellency to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 23rd, October last forwarding a memorial on the employment of nautch-girls at entertainments. The Viceroy is not himself interested in their performances; but

he hardly thinks that the matter is one upon which he is called upon to make any pronouncement or to take any action.

I am, yours faithfully.

(Signed) W. LAWRENCE.

Private Secretary to the Viceroy.
