

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



FOURTEENTH SESSION



ALLAHABAD

January 27 to 31, 1940.

All-India Women's Conference

20110

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FOURTEENTH SESSION



ALLAHABAD

January 27 to 31, 1940

Price including Postage:

India Rs. 1| 8|0

Overseas Rs. 1|12|0



**Begum Hamid Ali,
President, All-India Women's Conference, Allahabad Jan. 1940.**

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PATRONESSES
of the
ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Lady Dorothy Halifax

Her Highness the Dowager Maharani of Baroda

Lady Rama Varma of Cochin

H. H. Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj

Rani Saheba Lalita Kumari of Vizianagram

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi

Mrs. P. K. Ray

Lady Vidyagauri Nilkanth

Lady Abdul Qadir

Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji

H. H. Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi of Travancore

Mrs. M. E. Cousins

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade

**Names of Chairwomen and Hony. General
Secretaries from 1926-1939**

Year	Chairwoman	Hony. General Secretary
1926	—	Mrs. M. E. Cousins
1927	Mrs. M. E. Cousins	Mrs. Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya
1928	Begum Hamid Ali	" " "
1929	Mrs. Huidekoper	" " "
1930	Mrs. Sushama Sen	Mrs. Kamala Devi, Mrs. Sushama Sen and Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade
1931	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade
1932	" " "	" " "
1933	Dr. Mathulakshmi Reddi	" " "
1934	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee
1935	" " "	" " " "
1936	Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee	Mrs. Ammu Swaminadhan
1937	Mrs. Ammu Swaminadhan	Mrs. Dina Asana
1938	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	" " "
1939	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	Dr. Mrs. Malinibai B. Sukthankar

OFFICE-BEARERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE

All-India Women's Conference

President and Chairwoman

Begum Hamid Ali, Camp, Baroda; and Southwood, Mussorie, U. P.

Vice-Presidents

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Anand Bhavan, Allahabad.

Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, 2, Warris Road, Lahore.

Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta, Near Gujarat College, Ahmedabad.

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, 25|1, Rowland Road, Calcutta.

Lady Mirza Ismail, Bangalore City.

Mrs. Hansa Mehta, Dean's Bungalow, King Edward Road, Parel,
Bombay 12.

Honorary General Secretary

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, Cantonment Road, Lucknow.

Honorary Treasurer

Mrs. G. R. Billimoria, Thoburn House, Apollo Bunder, Bombay.

Executive Committee

Begum Hamid Ali, Camp, Baroda, (President).

Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade, Gwalior, C. I. (Patron).

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Manorville, Simla, W. (Patron).

Mrs. Rameshwari Nehru, 2, Warris Road, Lahore (Vice-President).

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, 25|1, Rowland Road, Calcutta (Vice-President).

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, Cantonment Road, Lucknow (General Secretary).

Mrs. G. R. Billimoria, Thoburn House, Apollo Bunder, Bombay (Treasurer).

Mrs. Urmila Mehta, 15th Road, Khar, Bombay 21.

Mrs. Hosain Ali Khan, Umeed Manzil, Somajiguda, Hyderabad (Deccan).

Miss Shantabai Bhalerao, C/o The Servants of India Society, Sandhurst
Road, Girgaum, Bombay.

Mrs. S. C. Mazumdar, 5, Merlin Park, Ballygunge, Calcutta.

Mrs. Hannah Sen, Lady Irwin College, 1, Sikandra Road, New Delhi.

Liaison Officer

Mrs. S. N. Ray, 18, Loudon Street, Calcutta.

Liaison Officer in South Africa

Lady Rama Rau, C/o Sir B. Rama Rau, A. G. in South Africa, Durban

Member-in-charge of Special Subjects

Constitution:—Miss Leilamani Naidu, Hyderabad (Deccan).

Health:—Dr. Miss B. Natarajan, Nicholson Road, Delhi.

General Education:—Shrimati Premvati Thapor, 1/A, Golf Road, Lahore.

Adult Education and Literacy:—Mrs. Urmila Mehta, 15th Road, Khar, Bombay 21.

Harijan Welfare:—Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, 2, Warris Road, Lahore.

Social Problems:—Mrs. J. R. Doctor, Hirji Mansion, 93, Gowalia Tank Road, P. O. Malabar Hill, Bombay 6.

Legal Disabilities:—Miss Shantabai Bhalerao, Servants of India Society, Poona 4.

Legislation:—Mrs. Asaf Ali, Kucha Chelan, Daryaganj, Delhi.

Franchise and Citizenship:—Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade, Gwalior, C. I.

Labour:—Miss Godavari Gokhale, Servants of India Society's Home, Sandhurst Road, Girgaon, Bombay.

Child Labour:—Mrs. Sudha Mazumdar, 5, Merlin Park, Ballygunj, Calcutta.

Indigenous Industries:—Mrs. Kamala Dassappa, P. O. Basavangudi, Bangalore City.

Traffic in Women and Children:—Dr. K. Tarabai, Bunder Road, Karachi.

Indians Overseas:—Mrs. Dina Asana, Opposite Gujarat College, Ahmedabad.

Rural Reconstruction:—Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Anand Bhavan, Allahabad.

Housing:—Dr. Mrs. Malinibai B. Sukthankar, Shantaram House, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Branch Representatives

Andhra—Shrimathi K. Ramasubbamma, President, District Board, Cuddapah.

Assam—Mrs. Shantabai Desai, Lake-Side, Shillong.

Bengal East—Mrs. Mira Nag, S. D. O.'s Bungalow, Saighan Eagan, Ramna, Dacca.

Berar—Mrs. Chandravati Abhyankar, Yeotmal, Berar.

Bihar—Mrs. S. C. Chakravarty, Ram Mohan Roy Seminary, P. O. Bankipore, Patna.

Bombay—Miss B. A. Engineer, Seva Sadan, Gamdevi, Bombay 7.

Calcutta—Mrs Shamsun Nahar Mahmud, Calcutta Police Hospital, 77, Shambhunath Pandit Street, Calcutta.

C. P. North—Mrs. S. N. Elia Tamby, 136, Civil Lines, Jubbulpore.

C. P. South—Mrs. Manoramabai Mudholkar, Civil Lines, Nagpur.

Delhi—Mrs. Hannah Sen, Lady Irwin College, 1, Sikandra Road, New Delhi.

Gujarat—Mrs Dina Asana, Opposite Gujarat College, Ahmedabad.

- Karnatak*—Mrs. Shyamalabai Belgaumkar, Jaikarnatak Press, Dharwar.
Konkan—Mrs. Bhat, C o. Dr. Bhat, Alibagh, District Kolaba.
Maharashtra—Mrs. Durgabai Jog, Datar's Wada, Nagnathpar, Sadashiv Peth, Poona.
Madras—Mrs. Mary Clubwala, Locksley House, Royapuram, Madras.
Malabar—Miss K. E. Sharada, Chalapuram, Calicut, S. Malabar.
N.-W. F. P.—Mrs. Kazi Mir Ahmed, Ahmed Manzil, Peshawar Cantonment.
Orissa—Shrimati Sudhansumali Roy, C o. Capt. K. M. Roy, Ranihat, Cuttack.
Punjab Central—Shrimati Premvati Thapor, 1 A, Golf Road, Lahore.
Punjab East—Mrs. P. L. Sondhi, "Dilkhusha," Jullundur City.
Sind—Dr. K. Tarabai, Bunder Road, Karachi.
Tamil Nadu—Mrs. E. M. David, Agricultural College, Coimbatore, S. India.
U. P. Agra—Mrs. Kamala Kak, "Man Bhawan", 59, Canning Road, Allahabad.
U. P. Oudh—Mrs. Ahmed Shah, Badsha Bagh, Lucknow.

Indian States

- Baroda*—Miss Sushila Kumari Pandit, Arya Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Baroda.
Cochin—Mrs. M. O. Chacko, Railway Bungalow, Trichur, Cochin State.
Gwalior—Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai, 10, J. A. Hospital, Gwalior.
Hyderabad (Dn.)—Mrs. Hosain Ali Khan, Umeed Manzil, Somajiguda, Hyderabad (Dn.).
Indore—Mrs. Jyotsna Mehta, Yashwant Nivas Road, Indore.
Jath—Miss Manorama Khabade, Kanyasala, Jath State.
Kathiawad—Mrs. Saralabai Naik, Junagadh, Kathiawad.
Kolhapur—Mrs. Leelabai Uplekar, 2nd Lane, Shahupuri, Kolhapur State.
Mysore—Mrs. S. R. Mandyam, Shri Nivasam, 170, Visweswarapuram, Bangalore City.
Phaltan—Mrs. Jankibai Godbole, Phaltan.
Sangli—Mrs. Sumatibai Gokhale, Extension, Sangli, S. M. C.
Travancore—Miss Ayesha Bibi, S. N. V. Sadanam, Thycand, Trivandrum, S. India.

Co-opted Members

- Hony. Secretary. All-India Women's Education Fund Association**—Mrs. Sewa Singh Gill, 6, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi.
Hony. Joint Secretary, Women's Indian Association—Shrimati Savitri Rajan, Sheshadri, Royapettah High Road, Mylapore, Madras.
National Council of Women in India—Miss J. K. Zutshi, Saraswati Bhavan, Daryaganj, Delhi.

Organising Secretary, All-India Women's Conference—Mrs. Hajrah Begum
Ahmed, Gurtu Kunj, Annie Besant Road, Allahabad.

Life Associates, A. I. W. C.

Mrs. Bakulabai Abhyankar, Civil Lines, Nagpur, C. P.

Mrs. Vimalabai Jatar, Civil Lines, Nagpur, C. P.

International Alliance of Women

(Since 1935, the All-India Women's Conference has been affiliated to the *International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship*).

President: Mrs. Corbett Ashby, 33, Upper Richmond Road, London, S. W. 15.
England.

**Liaison Officer Between A. I. W. C. and British Women's Societies
In England**

Mrs. Grace Lankester, 62, Plough Lane, Purley, Surrey, England.

League of Nations

Headquarter's Secretary: Mrs. Katherine Bompas, 2, Plantin House,
Wellesley Road, Ashford, Kent, England.

(Since June 1937, the A. I. W. C. has been appointed a "Correspondent Member" of the Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations).

A. I. W. C. Correspondent for the League of Nations: Mrs. Lakshmi
N. Menon. Cantonment Road, Lucknow, U. P.

LIST OF DELEGATES, ALLAHABAD 1939-40

BARODA

Miss Sushila Kumari Pandit
Begum Hamid Ali
Dr. Miss Bana
Mrs. Sarala Mehta

BENGAL EAST

Mrs. S. C. Mazumdar

BIHAR

Mrs. Vidyavati Varma
Mrs. Gayanandni Prasad

BOMBAY

Mrs. J. R. Doctor
Mrs. Urmila Mehta
Mrs. Shantila Desai
Mrs. Ismail
Mrs. Jabir Ali
Mrs. Virvala Dixit
Mrs. Brahmandkar
Mrs. Ramdas Khimji
Miss Godavari Gokhale
Miss Kapila Khandwala
Miss Kamal Wagle
Mrs. Kamal Gupte

CALCUTTA

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee
Mrs. S. N. Gupta
Miss Dolly Basu
Mrs. B. N. Banerjee
Miss Renu Roy
Mrs. S. C. Dutt
Miss Jean Begg
Mrs. S. N. Ray

C. P. NORTH

Mrs. Elia Tamby
Mrs. Harshey
Mrs. Golwalkar
Mrs. Bhate
Mrs. Karandikar
Mrs. Ranade
Mrs. Nawalekar

C. P. SOUTH

Mrs. Monorama Mudholkar

COCHIN

Mrs. Kuruvilla

DELHI

Mrs. Sultan Singh
Mrs. Asaf Ali
Dr. Mrs. M. B. Kagal
Dr. Miss B. Natarajan
S. Hajia Begum
Mrs. Ram Prasad
Mrs. Hannah Sen
Mrs. Basant Lal
Mrs. Pradhan
Mrs. Hari Ram
Mrs. Harbans Lal
Mrs. K. Shiva Rao
Mrs. Haridas
Mrs. Rajan Nehru
Mrs. D. Fremji

GUJRAT

Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta
Mrs. Jayaben Thakore
Miss Nalini Dalal
Miss Vasant Shukla

GWALIOR

Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade
Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai
Mrs. Indira Mathure
Dr. Mrs. Bhonsle
Mrs. P. Madhavan
Mrs. T. Kunzru
Mrs. K. Bhagvat
Mrs. I. Bhagvat
Mrs. P. Dutta

HYDERABAD (DN.)

Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji
Miss Leilamani Naidu
Mrs. H. Taraporevala
Mrs. Hosain Ali Khan
Mrs. Jamil Hussain

Miss Muthu Chenoy
Miss Freny Chenoy
Mrs. Manjūmari Devi
Mrs. P. L. Gupta

INDORE

Mrs. Manjulabai Wagle
Mrs. S. Bhargava
Mrs. S. Oak

MAHARASTRA

Mrs. Durgabai Jog
Miss Shantabai Bhalerao

MYSORE

Mrs. S. R. Mandyam
Mrs. Janakiamma
Mrs. B. K. Narayan Rao
Dr. Mrs. R. Isaac
Mrs. Phadke
Mrs. B. Vasudev Murthi
Mrs. S. Gopala Iyengar
Mrs. S. B. Iyengar
Mrs. A. N. Kalappa
Mrs. D. Subbarao

PHALTAN

Mrs. Janakibai Godbole

PUNJAB CENTRAL

Shrimati Premvati Thapar
Mrs. Sita Suri
Mrs. Ratan Soni
Miss Zulfikar Ali Khan
Mrs. Kamaluddin
Mrs. S. K. Datta
Miss Shah Nawaz
Mrs. Brijlal Nehru

PUNJAB EAST

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
Miss M. Shephard

SANGLI

Miss K. Padalkar
Mrs. S. Kalantec

SIND

Dr. Mrs. K. Tarabai

TAMIL NAD

Mrs. M. Sengodian

Mrs. Z. P. Pereira
Mrs. G. P. Sampson

TRAVANCORE

Mrs. Janaki Charry
Miss Maheshwari Amma
Miss Bhanumati Amma
Mrs. Trowell
Miss Ayesha Bibi

U. P. AGRA

Mrs. Nath
Lady Wazir Hasan
Mrs. Rameshwari Mishra
Miss C. Tripathi
Dr. Thungamma
Mrs. Hajrah Begum
Mrs. B. P. Shrivastava
Mrs. Probha Banerjee
Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani
Mrs. Shamlal
Miss N. Khanna
Dr. Miss R. R. D. Katkipao
Mrs. Uma Nehru
Mrs. Vishnu Devi Bhargava
Mrs. Purnima Banerjee
Miss Williams
Mrs. Tackru
Mrs. Leila Sahai
Mrs. Pathak
Mrs. Sheila Dhar
Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

U. P. OUDH

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon
Mrs. Salamatullah
Mrs. Ali Zaheer
Mrs. R. K. Srivastava
Begum Habibullah
Mrs. Ahmed Shah
Mrs. B. N. Mulla
Mrs. N. Jordan
Begum Aizaz Rasul

A. I. W. E. FUND ASSON

Mrs. Sewa Singh Gill

SPECIAL DELEGATE

Lady Rama Rau

Programme

FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE ALLAHABAD, JAN. 1940.

- Wednesday, 24th January, 1940 Arrival of Standing and Subjects Committee Members.
- Thursday, 25th January, 1940 Subjects Committee meeting at Darbhanga Castle 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
Standing Committee meeting at Darbhanga Castle 1-30 to 4-30 p.m.
Dinner at Mrs. Bajpai's .. 7 p.m.
Mushaira at Pandit Amarnath Jha's 9-30 p.m.
- Friday, 26th January, 1940 Subjects Committee meeting (also Standing Committee meeting if time) at Darbhanga Castle 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
Standing Committee meeting at Darbhanga Castle 1-30 p.m. to 4-30 p.m.
Visit to the Basic Training College and Harijan Ashram.
Arrival of Delegates.
Standing Committee meeting at Darbhanga Castle 9-30 to 11 p.m.
- Saturday, 27th January, 1940 Arrival of Delegates.
Registration of Delegates at delegates camp 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
Batches of delegates to visit the Basic Training College, etc.,
Opening of Exhibition (by Rani Rajwade) 3-30 p.m.
Tea at the Senate Hall Grounds (Mrs. P. N. Sapru, Chairwoman Local Committee and Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Chairwoman, R. C. At Home) 4 p.m.
Guides to present Guard of Honour to President, Begum Hamid Ali 5 p.m.
Opening of the Conference at Senate Hall 5-15 p.m.

Sunday, 28th January, 1940	First Sitting of the Conference (Reading and adoption of reports—Resolutions from the Chair—Formation of the Groups and preliminary instructions to the delegates by the President) at Senate Hall	9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
	First Group sitting (including Group Findings Committee meeting during last half-an-hour) Darbhanga Castle ..	1-30 p.m. to 3 p.m.
	Civic Address	4 p.m.
	Dramatic performance at the University Dramatic Hall ..	6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
	Informal meeting of the Governing Body of the A. I. W. E. Fund Association Dele. Camp. ..	9-30 p.m. to 11 p.m.
	Second Sitting of the Conference (Discussion of subjects taken up by the Groups the previous afternoon) Senate Hall.	8-30 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Monday, 29th January, 1940	Visit to Naini Agricultural Farm, Blind School, Magh Mela.	10-15 a.m. to 12-30 p.m.
	Second Group Sitting (including Group Findings Committee meeting during last half-an-hour) Darbhanga Castle ..	2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
	Public meeting (Ladies only) at the Music Academy	6 p.m.
	Group meeting (if necessary) Darbhanga Castle	9-30 p.m. to 11 p.m.
	Last Day for receiving nominations for office-bearers.	
	Third Sitting of the Conference Senate Hall	9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Tuesday, 30th January, 1940	Polling of Office-bearers ..	11 a.m. to 12 a.m.
	Lunch	12-30 p.m.
	Third Group Sitting (including Groups Findings committee meeting during the last half-an-hour) Darbhanga Castle ..	1-45 p.m. to 3-45 p.m.
	Public meeting at Purushottamdas Park	5-30 p.m.
	Dinner (by Mrs. Kailash Nath	

Wednesday, 31st January, 1940	Katju at the Darbhanga Castle) 8 p.m.
	Farewell Function 9-30 p.m. to 11 p.m.
	Group Photographs (Standing Committee members and Delegates only). 8 a.m.
	Fourth Sitting of the Conference (Discussion of subjects taken up by the Groups the previous afternoon and announcement of election results) at Senate Hall. 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
	Fifth Sitting of the Conference (Concluding Session At Senate Hall). 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Thursday, 1st February, 1940	Departure of Delegates.
	Departure of Delegates. ..
	New Standing Committee meeting (Darbhanga Castle) .. 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
	Standing Committee meeting (Darbhanga Castle) 1-30 to 4-30 p.m.
	Departure of Standing Committee members.

NOTE:—All Standing Committee meetings and Group sittings will be held at Darbhanga Castle.

All Sittings of the Conference will be held at the Senate Hall.

All the meals will be served at the Delegates' Camp, Darbhanga Castle at the following Times:—

Tea and Breakfast	7 to 8-30 a.m.
Lunch	12 a.m. to 1-30 p.m.
Tea	3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Dinner	8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

All Delegates, Standing Committee members and Visitors will be admitted by Badge.

Visitors' Badges will be available at the Delegates' Camp, at 1/- each for all the sittings (including) the Opening Session.

The last day for receiving Nominations for office-bearers is 29th January, 1940.

The Polling of Office-bearers will take place between 11 a.m. and 12 a.m. on 30th January, 1940. All delegates are requested to come in time for voting.

The All-India Women's Conference Exhibition will open from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. from 27th to 31st January, 1940, at the University grounds.

Exhibits from Branches and Sub-Bran­ches will be included.

Tickets for Dramatic performance on 28th will be sold at the Enquiry Office at Rs. 3/-, Rs. 2/- and Re. 1/-

ALL WOMEN ARE URGED TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE

Programme

OF THE

OPENING SESSION

January 27, 1940, at 5-15 p.m.

Welcome Song.

Election of the President—

Proposed by: Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade.

Seconded by: Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee.

Welcome Address—

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit,

Chairwoman of the Reception Committee.

Annual Report—

Mrs. S. N. Ray,

Actg. Hon. General Secretary.

Presidential Address—

Begum Hamid Ali.

Other Addresses—

The Hon'ble Babu Purushottam Das Tandon.

Sir Wazir Hasan.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Mr. Abu Mohammed.

Mr. Amarnath Jha.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

Lady Rama Rau.

Miss Marjorie Sykes.

Vote of Thanks—

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

OPENING DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

Scenes of enthusiasm prevailed at the opening of the Fourteenth Annual Session of the All-India Women's Conference held in the spacious Senate Hall of the Allahabad University, Allahabad. The hall was very tastefully decorated and the whole atmosphere presented a scene of unique interest. **BEGUM HAMID ALI**, President-elect of the Conference, on being led to the dais by the retiring President **Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade**, Patrons and Vice-Presidents of the All-India Women's Conference, the Hon. General Secretary and several members of the Reception Committee, was received by the Chairwoman of the Reception Committee, Standing Committee members of the All-India Women's Conference and distinguished Indian and Overseas visitors and was loudly cheered by the delegates and all assembled. Prominent among the visitors were the Hon'ble **Babu Purushottamdas Tandon**, **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru**, **Mr. Abu Mohammad**, **Pandit Amar Nath Jha**, **Mrs. Sarojini Naidu**, Judges of the High Court, members of the Bar and Municipal Committee and other distinguished citizens of Allahabad and outside. Delegates representing the branches and the sub-branches of the A. I. W. C., all over India had gathered together at one place inspired by the same ideals of improving the condition of the women of India.

The proceedings started at 5-15 p.m. with a welcome song by women students, after which **Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade**, in proposing the President-elect to the Chair, said:—

I welcome you most heartily to this our 14th annual conference. We are meeting in a city which occupies a very high position, not merely in this province but also in India, as one of the chief centres of the nation's political and cultural vitality. I am very glad indeed and very grateful to **Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit** and her co-workers that it has been possible for us to meet here. In no other city perhaps would such an assemblage as we have here tonight have been possible. Looking round this platform tonight I have started wondering whether Allahabad alone might not one day provide India with a ministry of all the talents! Perhaps no

other conference could have achieved such an all-party platform—I am sure this is no mere matter of chivalry on the part of the men present here this evening. It is clearly a tribute to the non-partisan complexion of our organisation. It is, more vividly, a recognition by everybody that women in this country are developing or have developed into equally responsible social constituents with men. It is a development with which our conference has had the closest association for over thirteen years. Today it enters upon a new year and my first wishes are all for it being a successful year full of intensive and purposeful service to the women of India and to India herself.

The year which is just over was more or less uneventful until September when the war started and its repercussions in this country began to be heard. The war came as a shock of deep pain to most of us, for, with it our dreams of a peaceful and reconstructional epoch collapsed and became dust.

I am afraid that our work also slowed down almost everywhere with certain honourable exceptions, and the national attention was anxiously turned towards the situation created in this country by the war. But that was late in the year. Earlier in the year many of our branches were fairly busy with the abolition of illiteracy and with various other items on the year's programme.

In fact the newly quickened consciousness that we stand or fall by the actual service rendered to the masses beat throughout the year in a steady pulse. And wherever I went this consciousness at least was to be felt.

But I must mention one thing here. Our branch organisations came in very handy as agencies of investigation for the woman's role sub-committee appointed by the National Planning Committee. Many of our colleagues in the branches were entrusted with the work of organising groups and these groups have done such speedy and excellent work, that I cannot but express my sense of admiration for it. I have been feeling very strongly for sometime past that the A. I. W. C. should set up a permanent organisation for investigating all the problems relating to women and thus helping for planning in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner for the future. Our members in charge of special subjects can be permanent members of such an organisation. I have felt that one of the most serious drawbacks to any such effort as that of the N. P. C. in the women's world,

is the complete lack of collected facts. Our organisation must undertake a drive—sooner rather than later—to build up as complete a set of statistics on every phase of Indian women's lives as we can possibly make it; that is an urgent need and I hope we shall give our very earnest thought to it. It has been the general experience that voluntary or honorary non-expert agencies are, in addition to not being always available, not always effective if they are not backed up by paid experts. We will have to find paid and expert investigators to organise the work of investigation; but it will, I am persuaded, be money very well spent indeed.

And now I have great pleasure in proposing Mrs. Hamid Ali to the Chair. She has been one of the staunchest and most distinguished members of the A. I. W. C. ever since its inception. Indeed, as you all know, she comes of a family whose staunchness of faith in public service and whose stubborn adherence to the nationalist cause has been almost a landmark in recent history. To that fine tradition Mrs. Hamid Ali herself brings a spirit of devotion, and experience of affairs and an organising talent which are all her own and which in the anxious days that lie ahead of us are going to stand this conference in very good stead indeed. As President of the A. I. W. C. she inherits quite a budget of serious problems to which clear answers must be found. Not the least of these is the war and its incidence on Indian life. Next comes National Planning, adult education, mass contact or rather unity with the masses. But perhaps the problem of problems which she is singularly well fitted to face is that of Hindu-Muslim unity. In the women's world it is not much of a problem: but we have to contribute towards its solution in the larger Indian world and I can almost see the hand of Providence in the fact that Mrs. Hamid Ali with her realist attitude and her firm national vision should have been chosen to guide us to a solution. I am confident that under her leadership this great organisation will grow steadily for the service of the Motherland.

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, in seconding the proposal, said:—

“I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution asking our President-elect, Begum Hamid Ali, to take the chair. It is indeed a matter of great pride for us that we have one, who has worked so devotedly and sincerely for the cause of Indian women, to guide our deliberations today.

“Ever since the inception of the conference in 1927 at Poona, Begum Hamid Ali has served it in various capacities, doing her specially allotted

work with enthusiasm and ability. She has carried our message and translated our ideals, not only to England but also to other countries. To her no discomfort was too great or too serious when it stood in the way of defending the women's cause or placing India's problems before other nations. Daughter of one of the distinguished sons of India, it is not strange that she should have symbolised in herself, those traits of sacrifice and humanity which have made the name of the Tyabji Family an outstanding one in Indian national struggle and history. It was indeed a joy to work with her as a colleague, as her sincere interest, uniform courtesy and kindness of heart, made even the most difficult task seem easy and worthwhile doing. I say with all sincerity that we are looking eagerly forward to her work as President and Chairwoman of the conference."

The distinguished President then took the Chair amidst loud and prolonged cheers and was garlanded on behalf of the conference and the Reception Committee.

MESSAGES

*Messages wishing the Session success from prominent people and numerous friends and organisations in India and abroad were then read out by Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Chairwoman of the Reception Committee. Messages received were from:—

Mrs. Abbas Tyabji.

Mrs. Annapurnabai Deshmukh.

Lady Abala Bose.

Lady Amena Hydari.

Mrs. A. N. M. Saleh.

Mrs. Bakulabai Abhyankar.

Dr. B. C. Roy.

Mr. B. G. Kher.

Mrs. Bhide.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

Sir C. Y. Chintamani.

Mrs. Dina Asana.

Lady Dorothy Halifax.

Mr. Dhulekar.

H. H. the Princess Durrus Shehvar of Berar.

Pandit Govindballabh Pant.

*The text of the messages will be found in the Appendix.

Mrs. Grace Lankester.
 Mrs. G. R. Billimoria.
 Nawab Ismail Khan of Meerut.
 Begum Jahanara Shah Nawaz.
 Miss Janet E. Copeland.
 Mrs. Jayashri Raiji.
 Miss Jean Begg.
 Lady Joshi.
 Mrs. Jyotsna Mehta.
 Srimati Kasturbai Gandhi.
 Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa.
 Rani Lakshmi Devi of Phaltan.
 Dowager Rani Lalita Kumari Devi of Vizianagram.
 Mahatma Gandhi.
 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.
 (Dr.) Mrs. Malinibai Sukthankar.
 Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins.
 Mrs. Marjorie De Mel of Ceylon.
 Lady Mirza Ismail.
 (Dr.) Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi.
 Pan-Pacific Women's Association, New Zealand.
 Mrs. Padampat Singhania.
 H. H. The Maharani Setu Parvatibayi of Travancore.
 Mlle. P. M. Hage.
 Dr. Rabindranath Tagore.
 Mrs. Radhabai Subbarayan.
 Babu Rajendra Prasad.
 H. H. Rani Saraswatibai Saheb of Sangli.
 Lala Shri Ram.
 Col. Shumsher Singh.
 Mrs. Shyamalabai Belgaumkar.
 Mrs. Subhadrabai Pagar.
 Dr. Syed Mahmud.
 Mrs. K. Tarabai.
 Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.
 Lady Vidyagauri Neelkanth.
 Mrs. Vimalabai Jatar.
 Mr. Zakir Husain.



**Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit,
Chairwoman, Reception Committee, Allahabad.**

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Chairwoman of the Reception Committee, then gave her welcome address to the delegates. It was as follow:—

WELCOME ADDRESS

By

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

Chairwoman of the Reception Committee

SISTER DELEGATES,

I am happy to welcome you to Allahabad. This is the second time since its inception that the All-India Women's Conference has met in the U. P. but the world has moved so rapidly of late that we seem to have entered another era and the problems that exist today have little in common with those we sought to solve a decade ago.

Our conference is entering upon its 14th year of life. Fourteenth birthdays are important affairs and must be taken seriously whether in the life of an individual or an organisation. One is leaving childhood behind and entering into a period of greater understanding. There is a thrill of elation at having successfully come through the growing pains of childhood and joy in the thought of what lies ahead and one is apt to enter into the new responsibilities with a light heart. But unfortunately we live today in a world gone mad where avarice and the greed for power recognises no law and where might is rapidly becoming the deciding factor in all disputes. Old ideals and ideas have ceased to have any meaning and the quest for knowledge has ended in the perfecting of methods of torture and destruction. We grope through a mental and spiritual fog seeking in vain for the path that leads into the light. Yet the path is there and we must find it. Our success or failure will be judged according to whether we, like many others, lose our way or whether we are able to march ahead with firm footsteps and undaunted hearts straight out of the fog into the light of the sun carrying with us a message of hope for those whose feet are less firm and whose hearts are less bold.

Many questions will come up before us during the next few days, all of them questions of importance to us as women and it is our good fortune

in having as our president a woman possessing both vision and experience. The conference, guided by her, will, I am confident, approach these questions from the right angle and try to find the correct solution. But the problems of our country are infinite and each one has its own special significance. Added to them are those world problems which also cannot be ignored because each is related to the other in intricate fashion like some delicate piece of filigree work the different pieces of which go to the making of the design as a whole but which breaks up into a hundred bits if any single part be damaged. So we must try to look at the whole world picture rather than a restricted one and fit in our design for living so as to be in keeping with the larger world design.

One of the main questions that confronts us today is the attitude of India's women towards the War. For the last two years this conference has passed unanimously anti-war resolutions expressing disagreement with the methods of war and violence in the settling of national or international disputes. It has stood for a policy of peace. Today the war clouds which threatened for so many years have burst and a large part of the world is wet with mutual blood; murder, which in the case of an individual is admitted to be a crime is being called a virtue because it is committed wholesale. And, most sad of all, no prospect of a just peace exists; for whoever wins will do so because of the greater power and force at their disposal. We have got to ask ourselves whether we intend to go back on all our previous protestations against war and aggression and prove them merely scraps of paper, or shall we declare in clear language that the women of India cannot support the inhuman and barbaric methods resorted to by nations in their greed for power. We are sufficiently far away from the war to be able to see things in their true perspective, let us not be led away by catchwords and subtle propaganda. We can surely see that it is no worse to covet Empire than to cleave to Empire and that broken promises are equally bad whether broken by one nation or another. As women we have a responsibility and as Indian women this responsibility is even greater. Our country has stood for peace through the centuries and even today the world looks Eastward for a message of hope. It is for India therefore to give the lead and oppose all that is wrong and unjust.

In our own country we have our special problems, and our decisions regarding the larger issues will guide us in the stand we take towards our

domestic difficulties. This conference has so far been mainly confined to social and educational problems and has, I think, rightly kept away from politics. There is however a difference between political issues and national ones and we must not allow ourselves to get confused. Our outlook must be national in the right sense of the word and we must try to think in national terms. The conference will have justified its existence if by its work it can show the world that Indian women are working for the betterment of the Indian nation and are not confined within narrow sectional limits.

What requires immediate attention from all thinking people is how to put an end to the growing distrust of each other that is creeping into our midst. It is of vital importance to our growth as a nation that all suspicion of each other should cease. Indian women have proved time and again that they are capable of rising above petty communal hatreds and jealousies. They have recognised the necessity of a united front and have endeavoured to act up to their belief at all times. It is up to them now to endeavour to bring about harmony in the country based on a real understanding and mutual toleration of each other. Towards this end one step is the creation of a civic consciousness in our people and the essential condition for the development of a strong civic spirit lies in the maintenance of the communal life and a spirit of tolerance. As an architect builds to a plan so a nation is fashioned by its dreams and the elements of nationality are civic. The man or woman who will not stir a finger to help his neighbour, is hardly one who will fight for the rights of his or her country. By civic duty we are tested for national responsibility and therefore we must develop the civic sense.

Recently I have been in close touch with local bodies and I have seen the urgent need for reform in their working—here again women must come forward and serve in greater numbers on local Boards. The question of separate or joint electorates is, I know, open to severe criticism, but I have no hesitation in saying that I consider these separate electorates as the greatest stumbling blocks in the creation of a real civic sense and in national progress. So long as we think in terms of separate electorates so long will the seeds of distrust and mutual suspicion remain hidden in our hearts. I feel the time has come for those of us who believe this to have courage to say so, and if opportunity comes to act up to our words.

During the past few months some of the members of this conference have been working on the Women's Sub-Committee appointed by the

National Planning Committee under the Chairmanship of our outgoing President Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade. The Sub-Committee has made an attempt to collect data concerning women from every part of the country and a report based on the findings of this Sub-Committee will soon be ready. An effort has been made to tackle important questions relating to woman's disability in the Social, Economic and legal sphere, and it is gratifying to note how keenly women from all parts of the country have given their co-operation in the collecting of material for this work. Young women particularly have come forward and offered help that has been most valuable because it has shown how the mind of the modern young is reacting to existing conditions. During the last year a growing number of young women have joined the Conference and they put forward the criticism that the Conference is not progressing as rapidly as it should because it is not adapting itself to changing conditions. Whether this is a just criticism or not I shall leave to you to decide but I would like to stress that at this period when world tendencies are favouring the group rather than the individual we should try to enlarge our Conference into a truly representative organisation of the women of India and draw into our midst not only the educated and leisured class but also those less favoured of fortune but more representative of the country. This question is not new and has been considered from time to time but somehow the contacts between the conference and the masses remain exceedingly few. We should, I think, work to increase them and give more encouragement to the work such as literacy, rural uplift, etc., the nature of which will help us to form these contacts. We have also to consider the question of language. There has been an effort to conduct the work of our branches in the language of the province, but even now we rely to a great extent on English. So far as the Central Organisation is concerned I have no comment at the moment but my experience of local work has shown that we are losing valuable workers merely because they cannot follow proceedings in English. This tends to create a complex in those who do not know English and they hesitate to come forward and co-operate. If this conference is to be widened so as to reach the masses and desires to represent them it is an immediate necessity for us to conduct our business in the provinces at least in the language of that province.

Finally I will ask you to remember that the passing of resolutions, however good, is not enough. Having reached a certain stage in our growth let us do everything in our power to translate our words into action

and build up this organisation into something of real service and utility to Indian Womanhood. I would suggest therefore that this Conference take up each year one particular resolution and work it out in each constituency. We might for instance devote one year to literacy in which an organised and effective effort may be made in all parts of the country—another year work in rural areas may be undertaken—again, perhaps active propaganda and work for some legal problem. In this way there will be more co-operation forthcoming from women of all classes and the conference can show results for work done.

I have not spoken to you in the conventional way nor have I asked you to forgive any shortcomings you may have found in our reception because I do not look upon you as guests. We are all units of one big family and when we meet at our annual sessions it is not in a formal way as guests but as comrades working for a common cause. But let me say once again how glad we are to have you with us this year. There is something about this ancient City of Prayag which is conducive to the taking of big decisions. I hope we may be able to take right decisions even if they are not very big ones and go at least one step further along the road to liberty.

* * * * *

Following the Welcome Address, poems specially composed for the occasion were read out by the well-known poet 'Sagar'.

The Annual Report of the All-India Women's Conference for 1940 was read by Mrs. S. N. Ray, Acting General Secretary, in the absence of Dr. Malinibai Sukthankar, Hon. General Secretary:—

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE

Association of the All-India Women's Conference for 1940.

Hon. General Secretary: (Dr.) Mrs. Malinibai B. Sukthankar

Another year has passed by since we met at Delhi last in conference, where the unprecedented and enthusiastic deliberations and its side activities, particularly the All-India Swadeshi Exhibition, were responsible in making our members and Branches take still greater and keener interest in the work that we began thirteen years ago. Last year was an epoch-

making year in the history of our Conference, for, in the year which preceded it, our activities had taken a step forward into the political and economic field of India. The Conference has no desire whatsoever to enter into party politics for we realise that the greatest contribution that India's women can make is to show the path of unity and singleness of purpose but nonetheless we feel and feel strongly that the time has come when the Conference cannot ignore economic adjustments nor the civic administration in our country—as they cannot be separated from the social and educational problems which confront us.

This Association has left no stone unturned to put the system of education in this country on a sounder and more scientific basis and striven hard to make our sisters more conscious about our social and civic needs and defects. We have all along moved our legislatures and powers that be in the Centre, Provinces or States to introduce Bills and pass Acts which would remove age-long obstacles in the way of our emancipation. Propaganda thus carried on, on the platform and in the press, has been of considerable help. A new era has dawned with the entry of a substantial number of women in the various legislatures in this country and a desire for social legislation has received an impetus.

We are meeting today under very extraordinary conditions. The world seems to have changed overnight. Modern civilisation appears to have failed in bringing peace to humanity—rather, greed, force and love for power have got the upper hand in determining the destinies of nations. Some of the most peace-loving countries have been trampled upon by dictatorial powers and in order to check aggression, a terrible war is raging in Europe, and we in this country cannot escape from the effects thereof. In China a war of aggression has perpetrated inhuman atrocities. Notwithstanding these catastrophic events, women in our land have been striving very hard to work for peace with a different ideology altogether. Our resolution on Peace passed last year at Delhi has made a profound impression in all countries. In spite of the difficult times our Liaison Officer is trying her utmost to keep up the link that has been forged between the women of India and of other countries both Eastern and Western. The following resolution passed by the British Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom shows that women in England are

thinking of our problems and are trying their best to bring them before the public mind:—

“We, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom Executive Committee, urge the Government to make clear the terms upon which it would be willing to make peace.

“We urge further that the terms should include the recognition of equality of race, and of the rights and liberties of the individual, and respect for the integrity of small as well as great nations.

“As an earnest of its acceptance of these fundamental principles we urge the Government to make clear its intention of bringing India into free and equal partnership in the family of nations.”

Our connection with the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship continues. An Indian delegation led by Lady Maharaj Singh with two delegates, Dr. Sukthankar and Shrimati Kamala Devi, attended the Triennial Congress of the above Association at Copenhagen in July last. The All-India Women’s Conference has been re-elected a Correspondent Member of the Social Affairs Committee of the League of Nations. We are glad that Mrs. Lankester who has evinced so much practical sympathy for our cause, continues to remain the Liaison Officer in England between the group of representatives of the British Women’s Organisations and the Association of the All-India Women’s Conference.

Educational. In reviewing the work of our Educational Section it must first be mentioned that we are keenly alive to the staggering figures of illiteracy in our country, particularly amongst the women whose percentage of illiteracy is perhaps lowest in the world. Our Branches, accordingly, have been working with the utmost zeal towards the spreading of literacy by opening classes and running schools and making every effort to persuade Provincial Governments and local bodies to introduce free and compulsory primary education where it has not already come in, and impressing on them the necessity of having adult classes of the type opened by our branches, in places where they do not exist. Adult schools for Harijans are also run successfully by some of our branches. Branches vie with one another in turning out a large number of literates. Indore, Maharashtra, Baroda, Punjab Central, East Bengal and Phaltan have been very successful in this respect during the last year, and branches in the

Bombay City have recently inaugurated 50 literacy classes. In one Branch a women's home class has now become a full-fledged High School and the Women's Education Society is contemplating a Girls' High School. Lectures have been arranged in almost all branches where, besides periodical debates advantage has been taken of the presence of experts on different subjects to arrange talks.

Nursery and infant schools are also being run in some branches. Classes for physical training have been opened in several places and efforts are being made to provide for the training of physical instructresses.

The Lady Irwin College. Much interest has been evinced in recent years in regard to the Lady Irwin College which is one of the major tangible achievements of this Association. It is running very successfully but in spite of the fact that this institution has been for over a year in its new buildings in New Delhi increased accommodation is not enough to cope with the increasing number of applications. Inasmuch as teachers trained in Home Science are an asset in the educational world it is sincerely to be hoped that friends of women's education will come forward to help the Lady Irwin College to expand not only its hostel accommodation but also enable it to expand in other ways. A handicrafts and arts section is a very crying need, as also an experimental school on the premises. It is only lack of funds that stops us from doing all that we would like to in the domain of training the right type of women teachers.

Social. Turning to the social side women are as anxious as ever before that they should be freed from disabilities whether legal or otherwise so that they may be in a position to contribute to the fullest for the advancement of their nation. Due to our incessant propaganda an increasing number of Bills for social and legal reform are before the Central, Provincial and States legislatures. Mr. Hegde's resolution for a commission of inquiry in respect of inheritance, Dr. Deshmukh's and Mr. Kazmi's Bills on Divorce, Mr. Motilal's Bill and Mrs. Subbarayan's Bill to prevent polygamy amongst Hindus and several other Bills are some of these. A deputation on behalf of our Delhi branch waited on the Law Member to the Government of India and the Party Leaders in the Central Legislative Assembly in connection with Mr. Hegde's resolution regarding the appointment of a non-official committee to inquire into the legal disabilities of women. The resolution ultimately was passed as amended by Dr.

Deshmukh which considerably curtailed the provisions originally intended by Mr. Hegde, and limited its scope to maintenance and residence rights of Hindu women only, and subsequently a committee has been appointed by the Government of India. Although the Committee's scope of inquiry is very limited as compared with that of the original resolution, the Government have, for the first time, accepted the principle of appointing a committee in response to a non-official demand. The Committee responded to our request and appointed two women on it. It has not yet started its work. We hope, however, that some concrete suggestions will be made by this Committee and consequently a good deal of the disabilities under which the women of this country live today will be removed.

Some of our State Branches reported that their Governments have recognised the right of women to hold Executive positions in Government offices and local bodies and have acted accordingly. In State Legislatures also increased number of seats has been allotted to women. In Mysore State Legislature women have been given 11 seats in the Lower House and 2 in the Upper.

Rural reconstruction is one of the most important items of work on which the Association has concentrated for the last few years and today most of our branches are devoting time to this. Welfare centres in villages, house to house visits to investigate social conditions and spread literacy, establishment of village clinics, propaganda work to remove social evils, such as child marriage and purdah, have all contributed to the success of the work. Delhi did excellent work in giving relief to famine-stricken people in its area mainly through employment of the villagers themselves for village welfare work, such as digging of wells and tanks, distribution of fodder and grain, repair of dwellings, etc.

Rescue and vigilance work is being carried on and in the light of experience amendments are being proposed to Immoral Traffic Acts where they exist. In other places they are endeavouring to have Acts similar to the Bengal Act on Traffic in Women and Children.

Delhi and Simla were instrumental in alleviating the grievances of rickshaw-pullers. A memorandum submitted by the Maharashtra branch before the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee of the Bombay Government was appreciated by it.

The need for trained and paid social workers engages the attention of our Association. Our retiring President's suggestion for starting camps for social service training work has been acted upon by Maharashtra and with great success. Rani Rajwade attended the first Training Camp at Poona where twenty workers were examined and her invaluable advice helped considerably.

The appointment of Rani Lakshuibai Rajwade as Chairwoman of the Women's Role Sub-Committee of the National Planning Committee in recognition of her services to the cause of Indian women has been much appreciated by us. The Sub-Committee's Questionnaire was circulated throughout the country and great keenness was evinced by women who conducted investigations and helped the Committee in arriving at concrete conclusions. Our branches and individual members have also co-operated with the Provincial N. P. C. units in every possible way and some of them were conveners in their respective provinces. Replies received from our branches have been duly forwarded to the Women's Role Sub-Committee's headquarters, and we are looking forward to the Committee with a fervent hope that it will evolve a very practical scheme which, when worked out, will enable our land to develop our industries economically, will stop the huge drain of national resources and, in a word, will make our land happier and stronger.

In conformity with our resolution passed last year four-anna membership has been introduced in many of our branches in order to expand the membership. Whole-time paid organisers are being engaged in some of the areas.

The constitutions of several of our branches have been revised, and the one adopted by Maharashtra needs special mention.

The financial position of our organisation is far from satisfactory, and the proposal for having a permanent central office has been postponed due to lack of funds and so we are making every effort to raise sufficient amount to work this scheme.

The problem of Indians overseas and the unfortunate condition of repatriated emigrants from British Guiana and Trinidad is one in which we have taken considerable interest. We feel that the condition of Indians abroad is one which needs the help and sympathy of the motherland and

We lent our support to our countrymen in South Africa by protesting against the discriminating Transvaal Land and Trading Bill.

During the Hon. General Secretary's absence abroad for more than three months, Mrs. G. R. Billimoria took up the work for which thanks are due to her.

Our Organising Secretary had to resign during the year due to her new appointment by the Servants of India Society which body had lent her services to us. Miss Shantabai Bhalerao worked hard for two years, she was with us and travelled extensively to organise work in branches and to found new ones, particularly in Gujerat and the States of Kathiawar, Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Maharashtra, Bombay, Karnatak and other areas.

Our retiring President, Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade, has travelled extensively during the year to create interest in the work of the Conference. In her circulars she has constantly stressed the need of expanding our work so as to serve the needs of the mass of Indian women. Her unflinching enthusiasm has been a source of inspiration to all. The scheme for the extension of the work of the All-India Women's Conference, prepared by her and presented at the Delhi session, has been of great practical use to the organisation. Her sincerity of purpose and love of work has endeared her to one and all who have met her.

Some of our patrons, particularly, Mrs. M. E. Cousins, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur as well as other pioneer workers such as Begum Hamid Ali, Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, and Mrs. Dina Asana, have also been working hard to reorganise some of our branches and sub-branches. Our Vice-Presidents have made extensive tours during the year and everywhere the message of the A. I. W. C. has been spread by them. One of the Vice-Presidents, Shrimati Kamala Devi, who was for several months in Europe after attending the Copenhagen Congress of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship as a delegate, and the other, Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, ex-Chairwoman and ex-Organising Secretary, who are now touring the United States of America, have been availing themselves of every opportunity of speaking about our organisation, its aims and objects, its contribution and what it desires to achieve. Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, during her tour in the North and in the South of our country, has always spoken to our members and workers in different branches, given them help and advice and has addressed public meetings.

All our office-bearers including Educational and Social Section Secretaries, Members-in-charge of the Special Subjects and Representatives of branches and sub-branches have given unstinted co-operation in the work during the year and thanks are due to all of them.

The half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee was held this year at the invitation of our Sangli branch through Her Highness the Rani Saheb of Sangli. We are grateful to Her Highness and the members of our Sangli branch for their kindness and genuine hospitality. The meeting was a great success and our members have brought very happy memories of Sangli and its work for women. Some of the pending Social Bills were discussed with expert help—and the new bye-laws of the A. I. W. C. were given a final shape there.

The account given here of the work of our organisation indicates the various types of activity in which we are engaged, but is by no means an exhaustive list of all that is being carried out both centrally and in the branches. The work in different areas varies according to local needs and conditions. The improvement of the status of woman and the extension to her of every opportunity to help her to take her proper place in society and do her share for the welfare of the country is constantly before us. Although every effort is being made to expand the work of the Conference both in rural and urban areas, it will be a long time before we can reach our goal. The progress towards the achievement of our goal lies in steady, selfless, ceaseless work not only in big centres in cities, but in towns and in villages as well. The task is not an easy one but with courage and determination we shall not fail.

It is true that the work of our Conference has the sympathy and co-operation of the educationally and politically advanced men in this country, but they are engrossed with problems of their own, mainly of a political nature. This leads me to refer to the problem now facing all the population of this country, viz., the attitude to be taken by them in respect of the present war. Women, it must be said, are anxious even to a greater degree than men, to see that war is ended as soon as possible, that aggression and prevalence of force and tyranny are put an end to for ever if possible. What attitude the women of India should take in this respect, what active steps they can take to achieve the desired end are matters worthy of our serious consideration. These matters are also engaging the serious attention of men leaders in this country. It appears that the particular poli-

tical status of this country is the main hindrance to its playing its proper part for the achievement of a lasting peace with guarantees against aggression by powerful military nations against their weaker neighbours. Only a free nation can possibly co-operate effectively in securing freedom for others. This seems to be the main stumbling block in India's way to throw her whole weight in the balance to bring about the ultimate goal. In this peculiar position, India has to overcome another problem nearer home, viz., that of communal differences. A united India alone can achieve any goal in the political field, be it with regard to her own self or with regard to other nations like Poland or Finland, and unity is not possible while we are not able to sink our small religious, social, provincial and linguistic differences for the greater cause of national emancipation. I think women of all communities can do a great deal in this respect and if they try seriously, they can effectively bring about unity and harmony among the various forces working in men's activities in this country.

The Fourteenth Session of our Conference is meeting under auspicious circumstances and undoubtedly the contribution of the women of this centre of intellectual advancement, the home of some of our most distinguished leaders, will help to bring us nearer the goal for which we are working unswervingly, namely, the advancement of Indian women and of India in every phase of life. I hope the deliberations at the session which opens today of the All-India Women's Conference will help in making our path clearer and in bringing us nearer to the goal for which we are working.

(MRS.) MALINI B. SUKTHANKAR,
Hon. General Secretary.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

By

Begum Hamid Ali

The President then delivered the following address:—

I am deeply conscious of the honour you have conferred on me by electing me to preside over one of the most important national associations in the country.

That it happens to be a women's association does not detract, but rather adds to its importance, for our ideal is "to serve" and not "to gain."

It is a significant fact that the training gained in educational, social and civic work by the members of this Association is getting due recognition all over India.

The Central and Provincial Governments as well as national institutions are making use of our knowledge and experience. To mention only a few instances, we are happy to note that Rajkumari Amrit Kaur is a member of the Central Board of Education, and Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade is Chairwoman of the Women's Sub-Committee of the National Planning Committee.

Decentralisation of work. The work of this Conference has been growing apace. It is a healthy sign that the number of sub-committees is increasing; as these sub-committees are in charge of members who have made a study of particular subjects, they are a valuable asset to the Conference and they are our competent and trusted guides. It is always advantageous to decentralise and specialise,—we find the Conference is evolving and developing on right lines.

Status of women. The advent of women in our Parliaments has proved to be very useful. It has had a quickening influence, and the women's point of view is not as completely ignored as it used to be. The Provincial Assemblies and Councils have introduced a number of Bills for advancing the backward position of women. We have consistently supported all progressive Bills and enactments—and suggested amendments and modifications whenever necessary. In spite of these efforts, the rights of womanhood in India are still a minus quantity. Obviously, the status of woman can be considered adequately only when she is looked upon as a free and equal partner. When will the men of India realise that it is of no use asking a third party to play fair when they themselves are willing to close their eyes to all the wrongs women suffer, and have mental reservations when freedom is proposed for womanhood? The sons of slave mothers will always remain slaves mentally—whatever their legal position may be. I would remind our brothers that they cannot and will not gain Swaraj until they have set their house in order and given one-half of the population of India its due share of rights and privileges. It will not be out of place here to remind you of what happened in the Central Assembly in 1939 in the course of a debate on the necessity of appointing a committee to look into the legal disabilities of the women of India. A most deplorable lack of understanding on the part of the majority of Councillors, an

utterly unsympathetic attitude on the part of the Government, was the outcome of this historically frivolous debate. I think it will take a century before we women can forgive and forget that episode. When we ask for bread they give us stones steeped in a muddy solution of flour. What else can we say of the whittling down of our demands to an enquiry restricted to one or two aspects of the question? And that, too, for one community alone? Their vision could not reach the all-embracing question that we had raised—so the large view had to be shelved. In spite of these disappointments, we must continue undaunted to educate our countrymen not to look at women's problems merely from a sectarian or a narrow "legal" point of view. Justice is not to be expected when one eye is fixed on the pocket of the men who will have to divide their double share of everything in life and, in future, be content with one-half of all the land and money and exercise of power that they now inherit in double measure. For this is really what it comes to, and this, human nature being what it is, is the main reason why men are unwilling to consider the question of women's rights. Every daughter and wife should get her due share in an honest community, and, judged by modern standards, the son's share would be half of what it is at present. Every woman will be a free agent to earn her living, to live her own life,—in short, to be mistress of her own destiny. She will, if she likes, be free to decline her mistressship of the kitchen. She will bear children or not bear children. She will also be a guardian on equal rights with the father of the children she bears. It is monstrous, it is indecent, that such obvious human rights and privileges are still denied to our women.

We have suffered from many Hitlers in the home in each generation. Let us pray devoutly that Hitlerism in every shape or form may be banished from the world for ever.

Since September 1939, the world has been living in an atmosphere charged with hatred, bloodshed, lust for land and power, recriminations, intensive propaganda and uncertainty of her own destiny in each country of the world, large or small. We have seen enemies become friends, and friends enemies overnight. The world has become a nightmare such as we experienced only in the Great War. We fooled ourselves then into thinking that we had seen the end of ruthlessness, cruelty and bloodshed on a large scale. In reality, the last war was not fought for moral issues—or for some universal principle that the whole world could accept. It was fought by one group of countries against another for prestige and

aggrandisement. The country that lost was left bleeding and torn with its head in the dust. Naturally, it has been working deliberately for two decades to take its revenge. The great problem of our world now is:—Is this war being fought for definite, unquestionable principles, or is it still the fight of lustful countries for building empires and grasping colonies which are the property of neither one party nor another? India has asked a pertinent question and has thrown out a challenge, as we all know. All honest-minded citizens of every country of the world, not barring Great Britain, acknowledge the right of India to demand that clear and unquestionable declaration should be made of the principle for which this war is fought and the policy that will be pursued in future by the Powers who are now fighting against Nazi-ism. If, in truth, the war is waged for upholding democracy, is a guarantee to be given to each country and its peoples of self-government and self-determination, a guarantee that never again will they be exposed to such ruthless ravishing as Abyssinia, Albania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland and Finland on one side of the hemisphere and China on the other have experienced in this decade? Are all countries to get equal treatment or will Europe still pretend to dictate as superior in morality, culture and civilisation? How this hollow boast of superior civilisation has been exploded in the last war, and again in the four months of this war, every Asiatic and African country knows only too well. Such vain boastfulness and empty words arouse unspeakable contempt and despair.

To amuse the world is a great achievement, if intentionally done. Amusing naively has been practised to perfection by one very "civilised" nation which complains bitterly that her victim is not "friendly" to her, and does not behave with "sincerity"; the other "civilised" nation plaintively reiterates all the vows and pledges she has consistently broken and is injured because the victim does not "trust her word." We are bound to be grateful to those who perpetrate such jokes. The tense atmosphere is relieved by such comic interludes.

New Constitution. The outcome of India's admirable frankness is that the little experiment of restricted self-government has come to an end. What follows is still on the knees of the gods. Even in a short period, the trusted men and women who were in-charge of the provincial governments have made a valuable contribution to the welfare of India. The people were looked after as they never had been before, and an atmosphere of

trust and comradeship has been created, which has been lacking for the last two centuries and a half. The gibe that we Indians are unfit for self-government has been proved to be absurd.

We must wait with patience and trust people worthy of our trust to bring about an honourable settlement. But now, as never before, is the need for us women to get together and give a lead to the country, to show a unity which has no mental reservations, to hold the good of the country above any other consideration.

Internationalism. We have also to strengthen the feeling of friendship and the bonds of sympathy, which know no boundaries of province and State, of countries nor continents, but are based simply on humanity, with all the peoples of the world. Our Liaison Group in England, our friends and sympathisers in Geneva, in the Bureaus and committees of the League of Nations, in America, in France, in Holland and Belgium and Norway and Sweden and Spain and Ireland; in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran; in Burma, Ceylon and Java have all to be kept continuously informed of what India thinks, of how India feels,—in short, of what are India's reaction to the day-to-day events of the world. We know that we have their unstinted support, and that many of them look towards India and India's great apostle of peace and non-violence, Mahatma Gandhi, to find a solution which will mean peace for the world. Friendships can never be one-sided. If we expect sympathy and understanding from Europe, Asia, Africa and America, we must be prepared to give them back in full measure faith and trust and friendship. This is how I perceive we can cement our bonds of womanhood and sisterhood, so that women of all countries work together for a common aim. Our Liaison Committee has already made a small effort to draw women from various parts of the world to join us as sympathisers and friends. I envisage a time when this Liaison Committee will be in active correspondence with all the countries I have mentioned. For enlarging our international work, we shall probably have to appoint a Liaison officer for each different group of countries—one for Europe, one for Asia and so on. This will, I hope, also facilitate our study of the legal position of women in all countries. The laws that govern Islamic countries such as Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey and Iran are of immediate importance to a very large number of women in India. The Swiss Code, the Swedish Code, the Turkish and American codes of laws pertaining to marriage, guardianship, inheritance, in fact to

everything dealing with the status of women, are of vital importance to all the women who live in India. We have to study, compare, discard, accept modern evolutions of law in regard to men and women. We, as human beings, must be affected and influenced by all world movements. We either influence others or are influenced by others, if we are not a dead nation. India, thanks be to God, is very much alive, and we are proud to think of what a place she has won for herself in the world, in spite of the manifest disadvantages of being a conquered country, by sheer force of intellectual and spiritual development.

Programme of work. It has been the custom for the Conference each year to plan ahead an intensive propaganda for some one aspect of our work for the coming year. For 1940, I beseech you all, make contacts with women of all shades of political opinion, form friendships with women of the labouring classes, try to become one in mind with every woman who is your neighbour. We have each of us much to give—but ever so much more to receive. We who are literate can spread literacy and so come close to that section of humanity which is deprived of the worldly advantages that we possess, not because we deserve those advantages, but simply because chance has thrown them our way. The call of humanity is there, let us respond to it. The sick, the needy, we have already realised the importance of trying to help, but have we made an effort to come out of our conventional grooves and make our interests in life wider, wide enough to encompass the interests of all women, without any distinction, living in our locality? The Conference has been advocating this, but has each member done her part? We have to examine ourselves very carefully and thoughtfully and honestly. Are we doing as much for our neighbours as we should have them do for us? For instance, take the example of people who are paid to do our work for us, generally known as servants. Do we give them as much of our mind and time and consideration as we give those people we call our friends? If we did, we should be able to raise them to a much higher level of efficiency, to reach them a helping hand to raise their mental and moral status to ours if they are our inferiors, or learn from them if they are our superiors. It is a fact that poverty creates special virtues such as forbearance, patience, tolerance, which affluence tends to diminish. In India, refinement, culture, morality do not depend on literacy, nor are they confined to those who possess book-learning, as happens largely in other countries. We learn and imbibe a great deal through our ears and eyes, and that is why

it is so easy to approach our poorest of poor people, our labouring classes, our Harijans, because they are in their mental outfit very close to us. There is no appreciable class difference nor class warfare in our country. But we must beware of the fact that, in the wake of industrialisation, which is in itself an alien factor in the country, this aspect of western industrialism, viz., class-feeling, also appears. If we, the thinking women, associate with the labouring classes closely, there is much less likelihood of embittered relations marring the quiet and peaceful atmosphere which it will be our endeavour to create.

Hindustani. For creating such an atmosphere I would fain emphasise the necessity of studying Hindustani. The importance attached to a common language is not exaggerated. It is the only means of an inter-provincial approach for the majority of our people. It is true that English has to a very great extent brought about an interchange of thought and speech among the intelligentsia of India. But, considering that to more than 80 per cent of our people the knowledge of English is unattainable, we must devise a simple and easy method of communion if unity built on a solid foundation be our desired object. Undoubtedly, standardised Hindustani must be accepted by all those who belong to Hindi—or Urdu-speaking provinces as a second language in their curricula, and it must be learnt by all those who do not belong to either. The choice of the script must be entirely individual; the Government of each province accepting both the scripts. The teachers will have to take their diploma in both the scripts.

What is Hindustani? Briefly,—Hindustani is the greatest common factor of both Urdu and Hindi. Hindustani is different from the beautiful, sonorous, very cultured Urdu, because it deliberately simplifies the language and inserts simple Hindi words and simple words belonging to the regional languages which come from a common parent stock. Hindustani is different from Hindi inasmuch as it accepts everyday simple Urdu words (of Persian and Arabic origin) and discards unnecessarily Sanskritised, learned language. We are following more or less the principle of Basic English—which has simplified the English language and reduced it to 800 words. I would like you all to study the Basic Scheme.

Hindustani text-books are now written with the intention of being read and understood both by Hindi-knowing and Urdu-knowing children and students. The language is so simple that it can be easily acquired

by non-Urdu or non-Hindi-speaking people. It is our ambition to evolve such a common language that it will be claimed by Urdu as its own and by Hindi as its own offspring. I remind my audience that Hindustani as we see it in the act of developing is not a "tour-de-force" for a certain purpose, but is a language which has been gradually emerging from its parent stock for many decades. Pundit Ratan Nath Sarshar, half a century ago, wrote a model "Hindustani" lesson in his "Fasana-i-Azad." Lovers of this "Fasaneh" will remember that Husn-ara Begum accepts the challenge of a girl friend and writes a thesis of several pages in simplified Urdu, i.e., without many Arabic and Persian words. She wins her bet by writing idiomatic, graphic, beautiful Urdu or "Hindustani" as we would now call it. Half a century later Munshi Premchand, to whom all lovers of Hindustani literature owe a deep debt of gratitude, wrote very many books which can truly be called "national" and classical literature. Not only did he combine the two languages and evolve a beautiful medium which in its simplified form will be our model Hindustani,—but he was wise enough to brush aside the comparatively unimportant question of script. He understood the true values of language and script, and had his books printed both in Nagari and Nastaliq (Urdu) so as to reach a wide audience. Writers of text-books, both for learning and teaching Hindustani, are now, more or less, following his example. The text is identical while the printing is in both the scripts. Many of our writers of prose and poems from the earliest times to the most modern ones have always contributed their mite towards evolving Hindustani, as you will find if you look through their collected writings: Maulana Azad in "Ab-i-Hayat"; Maulana Hali in many of his poems; Maulvi Abdul Haq in his essays; modern poets like Sattar, Hafeez, Mulla and many other young writers in books and occasional poems; Iqbal in his "Hindustan Hamara," and "Naya Shivala"; Chakbast in his translation from "Ramayan"; Khushi Mohamad Chaudhri in some of his poems—have all written either complete poems or essays or stories—or some passages—which help in building up the edifice of the common language "Hindustani." All these writers, as well as our older poets and writers, will always be remembered with affection and honoured as patriots giving the lead to the country in a right direction.

We have such a large programme of very necessary, imperatively necessary work to get through, a programme to which has been steadily added, item after item, each succeeding year, that I do not desire to suggest any addition to it. I hope we may be guided by the All-Merciful to carry

out the programme already so ably chalked out for us. With this one thought illuminating our way, that we must work in Peace and Charity and cultivate the art of living in amity with all mankind in India, our immediate Motherland, as well as in our greater Motherland, the whole world, let us get on to our task with speed and efficiency.

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The Hon'ble Babu Purushottamdas Tandon, Speaker of the U.P. Legislative Assembly and one of the distinguished guests of the evening, speaking in Hindustani, thanked the Conference for the invitation and said that those who wished to serve the country must be willing to go to the masses and speak their language. The most important work for the Conference, he said, was to remove ignorance and illiteracy from among the women and thereby emancipate them from superstition.

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Sir Wazir Hasan, at the request from the Chair, spoke a few words in which he expressed the fear that freedom for women might mean license and concluded by wishing the Conference success.

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Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru then spoke as follows:—
Friends,

If you will permit me to call you so then I would prefer to call you "Comrades" because comradeship is something that includes friendship and also means a common effort for a common end. But I am not so presumptuous as to call you "Comrades." Firstly, because I do not know whether you will like that, secondly because, I do not know that you deserve it.

For many years past I have been watching from a distance the activities of the All-India Women's Conference. I was interested in it because in India any activity that is likely to rouse women of India to deal with their fundamental problems must, inevitably, need our interest. I appreciate much that they did. Sometimes I ventured to criticise something that they did or something that they did not do. During the last few days I have had the opportunity to come a little nearer to this conference, to observe it at least from outside functioning, and today I am indebted to your courtesy for being present here on the first day of the Conference. But I am not going to waste your time or mine in giving you compliments,

because you have met here to consider important problems. They are always important, they ought to be important for you, but today whether you look upon them as such or not, the fact remains that your problems are ours, and have become of terrific importance because of what is happening in India and outside. Public life has been degraded. So we are living in a nightmare.

When we meet here and discuss your various problems what exactly is your objective? You have many objectives of course. I am told that yours is not a political organisation. There are many questions which you have to deal with but somehow I have failed to understand how an organisation which deals with any vital problems can get into compartments or cut itself off from the other vital problems which are inter-related. I think if you consider any problem, even if you start with the nursery, you will come up in politics all the time and every time, because politics today, means the governance of men, means laws—all these are politics. The problems are so inter-related that it is impossible to separate them and inevitably if you are going to be an effective body you must hold effective and definite opinions.

We hear a lot about superstitions in India. Tandonji has been telling us that there is a lot of superstition among the women of India but I think, if I may venture to say so to one whom I respect very greatly that he is very presumptuous to talk of the superstition among the women of India. There is enough superstition among the men of India, and if there is enough superstition among the men there ought to be superstition among the women of India. All over the world, there is enough superstition and prejudice among men with regard to women, for woman has been the prisoner for ages in every country of the world, and when men get up, talk patronisingly what women should do and what they should not do, I feel very irritated.

Whatever problem you touch, whether economic or political, you come to the question of the status and place of women in the body politic. You cannot ignore it. If you think over the question of the freedom of India it is impossible and absurd to think of it, leaving women out of the picture. There are men who give advice of service to women. They tell us of the glorious example of Sati Savitri and Sita. Now service is a good thing. I would not like to say anything against the ideal of service both for men and women. But when men tell women to serve, their words ought to

be suspected. There has been far too much of service of men by women not only in this country but also in other countries. The real and fundamental problems of human life are ultimately relations of man to man, man to woman and man to society. These are the fundamental problems. Everything else revolves round them—whether you call it Economics, Politics, Religion or anything. When we have to face these problems in this world we have to face them bravely and solve them and if you consider them in that way you come up today with a variety and enormity of problems which are overwhelming. Some people take refuge in Indian traditions, maybe in religion; some people do nothing at all in the matter because they think that it is the Will of a Divine Providence that things should be as they are. But there are other people—and a growing number of people—who are not prepared to give it to fate or destiny. They work to better this world, to fight the evil elements in this world. If your Conference has any real strength and vision before it, it will also decide for things and fight for them and be not indeterminate and vague. Take it from me that you will fade in this age when decisions have to be made and when only people who are effective and the organisations which are effective count. If you try to sit on the fence and dare not decide that way others will decide and your Conference will gradually fade away. You have done very good work in this country. It is essential that you, who represent the middle-class of women of this country, should represent the masses.

Now may I say a word about certain remarks what my predecessor, Sir Wazir Hasan, made. I am not exactly of his opinion in this matter. He has fetters for Indian women. Similar arguments are sometimes produced by our opponents in regard to the political freedom of India. Those who are used to dominate are apt to think that freedom on the part of those who have been demanding for it is "license." It is true that if freedom is removed a great deal of trouble may go. I have no doubt that we who seek India's independence will have to face tremendous amount of trouble.

You have to deal with these problems today because the world is directing them before our eyes. Humanity seems to be changing, and I do not know what is going to happen, and I cannot say if the world or any country is going in the right direction or not. Whatever happens, I see

no reason why we should not function bravely and carry on a heroic fight to win our way to go to the place we want to go to. When I say this I am not thinking only of India but also of other countries.

I am taking up more time than I should. I am now referring to the National Planning Committee to which some of the speakers, the President, the ex-President, have referred to. May I express, as President of the National Planning Committee, my gratitude to you as an organisation and to many of your leading members for the immense amount of help that you have given us in the work of that committee. I have stated it publicly and I wish to state it again that of all the sub-committees of the National Planning Committee the sub-committee which has done the most work and which has not only worked as a sub-committee but which has really built up almost a movement for the purpose, has been the Women's Sub-Committee. Now that has come as an eye-opener to many people not because a few women were competent but because it shows how much room there is for such work among the women in India. I hope that when the National Planning Committee's report comes to be prepared I am sure that the women's part will influence a great deal the final report, and when I suggested that a Women's Sub-Committee should be appointed it was more with the intention of making women think of these problems rather than expect anything remarkable from their labours, because the National Planning Committee was dealing with specific problems, specific industries, specific types of national activities, and the idea of a Women's Sub-Committee was not obvious because women are not concerned with all industries and no particular industry lies with them.

Therefore the idea of having a special sub-committee was obviously unnecessary but still we appointed it with a view to make the women consider the social problems. When the Women's Sub-Committee produced a questionnaire I was astounded to see it because it showed that the women in India were dealing with the major problems in a very effective and earnest way. Of course, it would be absurd to imagine that the Sub-Committee or the whole National Planning Committee is going to solve the problem of India, but I do think that this Women's Sub-Committee has done its work which is all essentially important and, from the point of view of National Planning, from the point of view of social economy, that work will actually carry us a long way.

I thank you for the courtesy for listening to me and I trust that the purpose of the criticism that I hinted at will not be taken to mean that I have not appreciated the great work that your Conference has been doing.

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Mr. Abu Mohammad. Expressing gratitude to the Reception Committee for the opportunity given to him for addressing the meeting, he said that the Conference which was non-communal would help to unite Hindus and Muslims. The cause of the women's emancipation, he said, was a national one and not a communal problem. He gave instances from Islamic and Indian history to show that women had never fallen short of their duties and responsibilities. While wishing the Conference every success he hoped that the deliberations would be characterised by wisdom and moderation.

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Mr. Amarnath Jha, Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University, spoke of the manner in which woman is idolised and idealised in literature. The main theme of the discourse, however, was that girls should be trained for wifehood and healthy motherhood and the community should endeavour to educate mothers and prospective mothers so as to increase their competence. Hence he stressed on physical education and education for parenthood both of which he regarded as indispensable if the women of India are to be the mothers of the race that will be strong and fit, able to do and suffer, worthy of the past of which they are the inheritors.

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Mrs. Sarojini Naidu then spoke as follows:—

Terrified as I am of the Speaker of the U. P. Assembly I still venture to speak in a foreign tongue which most people here seem to understand. I do not quite realise why I should be tacked to a series of men, revolutionary and reactionary. I am just a back number of this Women's Conference. All women of my age are back numbers with so many young and dynamic leaders disposing old people taking such a short view of the future.

However I do not think that at this very late hour when our thoughts are turning homeward, I should detain you either to show my English or to show my bad Hindustani or even to dilate upon the future destiny of India. I do, however, want to say a word.

Pandit Jawaharlal said, "Friends, I would like to address you as comrades." Then he said, "I do not know whether you would welcome it," and then "I do not know whether you deserve it." When I speak on behalf of women of this Conference we would like to welcome Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as a comrade of women though we do not know whether he deserves to be our comrade.

Whatever the failing, whatever the weaknesses, whatever remains of dreams unfulfilled and pledges unredeemed, women of this Conference do represent the mind of modern women in India and by the word "modern" I mean modern not in the sense of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's definition, namely, rootlessness but in reaffirming the vitality of the root of the nation. We women of today represent the spring time of the hope of India. We prove that our roots, roots of old days, still feed us, still give us life. We have the courage to make bold decisions, prompt decisions and effective decisions, the courage to repudiate and reject what is not valid to our needs. We have a fair imagination, the faith to create new precedence and new traditions; to be, in the words of Napoleon, "ancestor of the future as well as of the past." This, in one word, is the ideal of this Conference.

We have been accused of being middle-class and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that the middle class inaugurated things. The Conference is a link between the poor who need our services and the rich who need our guidance. It brings into the arena of pulsating life the rich and the millions who are starving in the villages of India. We are creating a new India and a new precedent of true comradeship between man and woman, not in competition, as Mr. Amar Nath Jha, speaking academically like a Professor of English, fears, with each other, but in equality. We are not competitors, we are not rivals. We are helpmates. We are half humanity, and, therefore, our ideal is the ideal of fulfilling the laws of human progress—man and woman hand in hand together, neither as superior nor as inferior, nor with any discrimination, but loyally and bravely each fulfilling his or her share of duty. So sad, the world, so tragic, so broken

today, may be recreated into an image of beauty is our heart's desire. The message of the Women's Conference is love and service of all, freedom and international fellowship and human sense of dignity and destiny that transcends all geographical and historical limitations.

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Lady Rama Rau, Special Delegate to the Conference, was then requested to address the gathering. She spoke as follows:—

I feel that I must in a few words express to the committee and the All-India Women's Conference a sense of gratitude and appreciation for having elected me as a Special Delegate to this very important Conference this year. I have been closely connected with the work of the Liaison Committee in London, which worked in co-operation with the representatives of this conference. During the last year and a half I happened to be in South Africa, I have made contacts with Indian women in that country in all the provinces where Indians live. My suggestion to this conference would be that some sort of link should be created between the All-India Women's Conference here and the Women's Groups that are just beginning to come into working order in the different provinces of South Africa. During the time I had been in South Africa, I had been more and more convinced that the Indians in South Africa should begin to feel very definitely as citizens in South Africa and break the past traditions that still occupy their minds as Indians. They are fighting for establishing citizenship rights in a foreign country that they have accepted as their own. They are not desirous of leaving that country to return to their motherland and I think it is desirous, as far as we in India are concerned, that we should help them to break those links rather than bind them to India, so that they may be able to claim rightly full citizenship in their newly adopted country.

The reason why I desire to see Liaison Groups established amongst the women in South Africa with the All-India Women's Conference, is that I feel that since we are more progressive than any one of the women's organisations that exist in South Africa, we would still be giving certain guidance to those women who have suffered from social barriers of which we do not know in this country at all.

I also like to thank the All-India Women's Conference for having allowed me to attend the meetings of the Standing Committee and their Subjects Committee, considering that I do not really belong to either.

Naturally, not having attended the All-India Women's Conference since 1928, I have had to compare the proceedings of those committees with the work that was done at the conference which I attended last in 1928. I find that it is perfectly true that whereas in the older days we felt that the older leaders were a guide and an inspiration to the younger generation, again and again it has been brought home to me that it is time that the older leaders begin to accept the guidance and inspiration of the younger people. I have been very much impressed with the contribution they have made to this conference. I personally feel that there is still a great deal of work to be done in it.

I congratulate the Women's Conference of which I have always been proud to be a member. I congratulate them on the progress that they have made during the last 10 years I have been away from home. I wish with all my heart a very successful session.

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Miss Marjorie Sykes of Shantiniketan, representing the Liaison Group in England, said:—

I am very grateful indeed for the opportunity of being here as representative of the Liaison Group in England. The activities of the group have already been read out to you and among the references in the speeches this evening, many have emphasised the importance of the international aspect of women's work, and the fact that the Indian Women's Conference will always have an essentially peaceful and international outlook. We in England rejoice in that aspect of the work, as indeed we do in all its aspects, and we would like to emphasise over again the very, very hearty greetings and the special memory and remembrance in which this meeting is being held by many English women whose names are respected in India.

I would like to urge one little practical work. Many of you here, men and women, both Indian and European, will have opportunities from time to time of going to England and it is my desire that such of you should get into touch with the Liaison Groups in London. They publish a bulletin which is devoted to spreading in England such items of Indian news as are almost impossible to get in the ordinary newspapers. If any of you have the experience as I have had of trying to follow Indian news from England by means of English newspapers, you will know how impossible it is; and

any organisation which can disseminate facts about India and pass on to the fully sympathetic people in the West the news they really want to know, is doing very valuable piece of work, and this is the work the Liaison Group in England is doing. So they will greatly welcome strengthening up English women by Indian women and through them give to the women of England real information about the aspirations and plans and achievements of the women of India. That is why I am thankful to be here and I am very thankful to the Committee for so kindly making it possible for me to attend this Conference.

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Proposing a vote of thanks to the President and the speakers of the evening, **Rajkumari Amrit Kaur** said:—

The pleasant task of proposing the vote of thanks has fallen on me. First of all, on behalf of the members of this Conference, those present and absent, I wish to propose a hearty vote of thanks to our ex-President Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade. I know from experience that the lot of a President is not an easy one, especially in an organisation like ours, drawn as it is from women from all corners of India, from all stations and from all schools of thought. The President requires to have patience, courage, tact and understanding in an abounding measure. Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade came to us with a fine background. She belongs to a profession that has "service" as its motto. In addition, she was one of the foundation members of this Conference, and for four years its Organising Secretary. So she is familiar with every branch of its work. The hopes we had when we elected her as President have been amply fulfilled and the confidence which we reposed in her when we chose her has been amply rewarded. I know that though she is no longer our President, she is more than ever one of us and we can always, and will always, count on her for future service.

My next vote of thanks is to the men speakers of this afternoon. I will not claim that men are part and parcel of us but I do most cordially thank the men, busy men, distinguished leaders, who have been gracious enough to come here this afternoon and talk to us. I want to assure them that we appreciate what they have said and we welcome their criticism with open hearts and with receptive minds. Their praise will make us humble. We have our limitations in our organisation, we know we have

shortcomings, we know that we have not fulfilled all that we wanted to do, but we are young still, we have much to battle against; but we have maintained a unity that no other organisation in India can boast of and we do not spare "service" as our motto. We do not want "service" to be interpreted as being slaves of anybody—least of all men—but we shall find our freedom in perfect service. The criticism that we have had, the advice that has been given to us, will only encourage us, will strengthen us, will inspire us for greater service so that we shall not lag behind in contributing what it is our privilege that we should contribute to the people of young India, a free India, an India which not only sons and daughters are proud of, but which will give a lead to the work that stands very much in need.

The meeting then terminated.

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

FIRST SITTING—28th January, 1940, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The First Sitting of the Conference commenced at 9 a.m. with Begum Hamid Ali in the Chair.

As there was some controversy as to the language in which the proceedings of the Conference were to be conducted the matter was put to vote and carried by a majority (40 voting for and 18 against) that the proceedings should be conducted in the English language.

The proceedings of the day commenced with the reading of further messages received from the various parts of India and abroad including one from the Liaison Group in England.

The following condolence resolutions were then unanimously passed all standing:—

- (a) This Conference places on record its sorrow at the death of H. H. the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda. The women of India can never forget the lead he gave, and services he rendered in the cause of social reform.



**Dr. Mrs. Malinibai B. Sukthankar,
Honorary, General Secretary, A.-I. W. C., 1939.**

- (b) This Conference deeply regrets the passing away of Bibi Salima Faiz Tayabji, a woman whose record of public service, courage and devotion to duty were exemplary.
- (c) This Conference deeply regrets the death of Miss Shirin Cursetji who, as a pioneer in girls' education and social reform, rendered valuable services to the country.
- (d) This Conference records its grief at the death of Shri Laxmidas Ruvji Tairsee, the well-known social worker in Bombay.

After this the Annual Report, read by the General Secretary, and the Treasurer's Report, read by Mrs. Doctor, were unanimously adopted.

Then the report of the Social Section for the year 1939 was read out by Mrs. Doctor. Mrs. Akhtar Husain, Secretary, Educational Section, being unavoidably absent, the Education Report was read by Mrs. Ray.

The report of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association was read by Mrs. Seva Singh Gill. The following questions put by some delegates with regard to this Association were answered by Mrs. Hannah Sen, the Directress of the Lady Irwin College:—

1. Why luxurious classes of dancing, music, arts and crafts are run?
2. Why the Branches and Members are asked to contribute?
3. Is the Association self-supporting?

Mrs. Sen said, "In the original scheme known as the Pachmarhi Scheme there was stress laid not only on the domestic science, but on music, arts, crafts, shorthand writing, typewriting, physical culture and so on, and the Governing Body of the Fund Association felt that something should be done to give expression to these as far as it was within their means. Originally indeed, the Lady Irwin College was started for Domestic Science, but, on the pressure brought on the body by some people, there was some attempt made to start classes in painting, music and dancing. These classes are not at all a financial burden on the College authorities. The entire expenditure of those classes is met by those students who can afford to undertake them. There is no expense incurred by the Governing Body or the College authorities or any public body on these classes. The few

students who are interested in those subjects pay for the entire expenses of the classes, so that we have been able to run these classes and meet the demands of various groups of people.

"The second question is as to why we have asked the Branches of the Conference to become members of the Fund Association, which is directly responsible for the running of the Lady Irwin College. We have asked you to give Rs. 5 because we want you to be interested in the running of the College. The Conference has always claimed this College as their first child. We are anxious to keep you closely in touch with our affairs. We want to send you our reports, copies of our minutes; we want to keep you informed of any change in our scheme of work, of any new development and to send the literature to you we have to incur expense, and so we have to ask you to give Rs. 5 towards the expense of typing, stationery, etc. The Rs. 5 is not intended to meet the deficit of the College. It is merely to meet the cost of printing and typing and keep you informed of the affairs of the College, so that you may send your suggestions and criticism from time to time.

"The third question is, 'Is this college self-supporting?' Because we have girls from the upper classes we have had to fix a certain scale of fees in order to make this college self-supporting. No institution can survive if there is a big deficit every year, and we hope that in due course our finances, with the growth of our Endowment Fund, will improve and enable us to reduce the fees so that we can help girls of the lower classes and middle classes to join. Just now our fees come to, on the average, about Rs. 40 every month for each student; that includes tuition fees, board, residence, water, electricity, dhobi, books, stationery and so on. I realise that even Rs. 40 for each student would be much more too high for many of the middle-class families. We cannot reduce the fees unless we are able to increase our Endowment Fund. Recently we have reduced the fees from Rs. 45 to Rs. 40 a month. If our public is generous enough to give more and more money we shall be able to reduce the fees still further and take in more middle-class students."

The President then asked the Branch Representatives read out their annual reports in the following order:—Delhi, Gwalior, Tamil Nadu, C. P. North, Konkan, Sind, Bombay, East Punjab, Sangli, Andhra, U. P. Agra.

For want of time reports from the following Branches could not be read:— Punjab Central, Assam, Phaltan, Bihar, Madras, Maharashtra, Calcutta, Travancore, Berar, Gujarat, Baroda, Cochin, C. P. South, Bengal East, Indore, Kolhapur, Hyderabad (Deccan), Mysore, U. P. Oudh.

GROUP SYSTEM

The President in explaining the Group System of work that was to be followed at the present session said that during the previous year at its Delhi Session the Conference was divided into six groups. At the Standing Committee meeting held at Sangli it was decided that the group method should be given another trial. She then pointed out the difference between the Group System and the Commission System. Whereas under the commission system each commission discusses a specific subject in which it has special knowledge, under the group system, all the different groups discuss the same subjects; as such the idea was adopted more for convenience and freedom of discussion than for any other specific reasons. The subjects chosen for the present session were divided into three groups; *Educational, Social and Economic Reconstruction*. The President said that the groups were empowered to put on the agenda any subject of special interest they would like the conference to discuss.

The President then directed that the Conference should after lunch break into five different groups to discuss the resolutions and subjects on Section III—*Economic Reconstruction*—of the following Group Agenda. After the group sitting, the Secretary of each group was to submit the 'findings' of her group to the "Findings Committee" and the latter would consolidate all the group reports on the subject and submit its recommendations to the open session of the Conference that would meet the next morning. In the same way, Section I—*Educational Reform*—was to be taken up by the groups in the afternoon of the 29th January and the recommendations of the Findings Committee were to be submitted to the open session the next morning. Again, in the afternoon of the 30th January, Section II—*Social Reform*—was to be similarly taken up and recommendations on the subject were to be submitted the next morning to the open session. The names of delegates for the five groups were then announced with the names of the Chairwoman and two Secretaries of each; the personnel of the 'Findings Committee' with the President in the Chair was also then announced. Copies of the Group Agenda for all the three

Sections I, II, and III, were distributed to all the delegates. They were as follows:—

GROUPS

	Chairwomen:	Secretaries:
Group I.	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	Miss Leilamani Naidu Mrs. J. R. Doctor
Group II.	Mrs. Brijlal Nehru	Mrs. Urmila Mehta Mrs. S. C. Mazumdar
Group III.	Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee	Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon Shrimati Premwati Thapar
Group IV.	Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta	Mrs. Taraporvala Mrs. Hossain Ali Khan
Group V.	Mrs. Hannah Sen	Miss Renu Roy Miss Shah Nawaz

(Owing to unavoidable absence of Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta and Mrs. Urmila Mehta, Begum Aizaz Rasul and Mrs. K. Shiva Rao acted as Chairwoman of Group IV and Secretary of Group II respectively.)

FINDINGS COMMITTEE

1. Begum Hamid Ali, President
2. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu
3. Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji
4. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
5. Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade
6. Mrs. Brijlal Nehru
7. Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
8. Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee
9. Begum Aizaz Rasul
10. Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta
11. Mrs. S. N. Ray
12. Miss Leilamani Naidu
13. Mrs. Hannah Sen
14. Mrs. S. K. Datta

GROUP AGENDA

Section I. Educational Reform.

Section II. Social Reform.

Section III. Economic Reconstruction.

SECTION I. Educational Reform

1. Adult Education and removal of Illiteracy.

(a) Citizenship—To consider the desirability of passing a resolution to discuss ways and means for the education of women's electorate making it a part and parcel of our adult education programme.

2. Training of Teachers.

3. Physical Education and Nutrition.

4. Vocational Training and handicrafts.

SECTION II. Social Reform

1. Legal (Bills, etc.)

2. Traffic in Women and Children.

3. Public Health: Maternity, Child Welfare, Sanitation and Hygiene, Training of Midwives, Birth Control, etc.

4. Rural Reconstruction.

5. Housing, etc.

6. Social Contacts.

SECTION III. Economic Reconstruction**A. Labour**

(a) Minimum Wages.

(b) Extension of Maternity Benefits Act to areas where it does not exist and its application to plantations and Mines.

(c) Should there be special legislation for women workers? if so, to what extent?

(d) Children and women in unregulated industries.

(e) Condition of women in Agricultural labour.

- B. **Indigenous Industries.** To consider the advisability of asking the Branches to undertake the sales of a certain quota of khadi every year and to call upon all members to wear and use khadi if not entirely, at any rate to the largest extent possible to the exclusion of foreign and mill cloth.

The Conference adjourned for lunch at 12 Noon.

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SECOND SITTING: January 29, 1940, 8-30 to 11-30 a.m.

The open session of the Conference met at 8-30 a.m. on Monday, the 29th of January, 1940, with Begam Hamid Ali in the Chair.

The following resolutions were put from the Chair:—

1. **Rani of Jhansi Memorial.** This Conference supports the idea of a memorial to honour the memory of Maharani Lakshmibai, one of India's greatest heroines and request the public to actively help the Memorial Trust to collect the requisite sum.
2. **Opium and Drugs.** The Association of the All-India Women's Conference deplores the fact that the proposed all-India legislation for the control of drugs, both imported and indigenous, is still held up by the failure of Sind and Bengal to place before their representative legislatures, the empowering resolution, already implemented by nine provinces, and urges them to take action without delay.
3. **Appeal to Provincial and State Governments for an Annual Donation to the Lady Irwin College.** This Conference strongly supports the request to the various Provincial and State Governments from Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Chairwoman of the Governing Body of the A. I. W. E. Fund Association, for an annual grant to the Lady Irwin College. Inasmuch as this Institution is an all-India one and is training teachers in Home Science, the Conference feels that it is thus rendering a useful service and merits recognition and financial aid.

The Conference is grateful to the Governments of Bombay and Jind State, Punjab, for their annual grants.

Mrs. Uma Nehru (U. P. Agra), moved the following resolution on Communal Unity:—

'This Conference appeals to all sections of the people to sink their differences, discord, mutual fear and suspicion and stand united so that no obstacles may come in the way of India's speedy attainment of Swaraj.'

Speaking in Hindusthani, **Mrs. Nehru** said that the greatest impediment to our progress is the presence of communal differences. The problem of minorities should be solved in the Russian way and minorities should be given every freedom to preserve their language and nourish their culture. She continued, "Sisters, I have only to tell you that this problem before the country is really a great one and we feel every time that unless we solve this problem it is very difficult for us to attain full freedom. Progress of the country is hampered so long as we have no communal unity."

Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji, in seconding the resolution made a fervent appeal to the women of India to unite and deplored the present tendency to establish separate schools for Hindu and Muslim children. She was strongly of opinion that if desired the two scripts of Devanagri and Urdu must be taught but in the same schools. Children of the two communities should be taught to live as brothers and the schools should make a special effort to teach the fundamental unity and ethical basis of the religions of the world. She deplored further the idea of privileges for backward communities and pleaded for fair field and no favour. She concluded by making a special appeal to the women to help each other and bring about communal harmony.

Lady Wazir Hasan (U. P. Agra), speaking in Hindusthani, said that communal discord was the thing that was giving the Government its strength in India and that it was the responsibility of the women of India to strengthen the nation by bringing about unity and harmony.

Mrs. Ismail (Bombay), supported the resolution in Hindusthani and emphasised the need for courage on the part of women to solve the problem.

Mrs. Janaki Charry moved an amendment seeking to substitute the word 'Progress' for 'swaraj' in the resolution.

Hajia Begum (Delhi) pleaded for tolerance and sympathy between the communities.

Mrs. Asaf Ali (Delhi) moved an amendment to the resolution seeking to substitute the word 'Freedom' for 'Swaraj,' as the latter was taken objection to by some State delegates and some Muslim ladies their feeling being that the word 'Swaraj' was associated with a particular political organisation.

Mrs. Hannah Sen (Delhi) seconded Mrs. Asaf Ali's amendment.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur addressed the delegates and told them that 'Swaraj' is no longer a Congress word and it was used years ago by King George V and Governments. In fact today the Congress seldom uses the word Swaraj.

Begum Habibullah (U. P. Oudh), supporting the amendment for 'Progress' said that unity is not a subject for discussion but something which should be translated into action.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur speaking again tried to explain how harmless the word 'Swaraj' was and how it compared favourably with 'Progress' which was a vague term.

Begum Aizaz Rasul (U. P. Oudh) said that the problem was one of communal unity and not a question of words and she was certain that if there was no unity there could be neither progress nor freedom nor swaraj. She was surprised to find that members instead of putting forward useful suggestions for achieving communal unity were fighting over words. She supported the amendment in favour of 'Freedom.'

The President made a special appeal requesting the proposers to come to some kind of agreement so as to enable the Conference to pass the resolution unanimously.

Thereupon Mrs. Uma Nehru accepted the amendment substituting 'freedom' for 'swaraj' and requested Mrs. Janaki Charry to do likewise. As Mrs. Charry refused to accept this suggestion, her amendment was put to vote and was lost, only 14 voting for it. The original proposition as amended by Mrs. Asaf Ali was put to vote and passed by an overwhelming majority.

The Conference then adjourned to the next day.

THIRD SITTING: 30th January, 1940, 9 to 11 a.m.

The Conference reassembled with the following two special resolutions from the Chair, which were adopted unanimously.

1. "The All-India Women's Conference sends its greetings to the women of China and expresses its deep appreciation of the heroic part they are playing in the struggle for China's unity and freedom.

"The Conference condemns the invasion of China by Japanese forces and the brutality and inhumanity that have accompanied it.

"The Conference expresses its solidarity with the cause of China and its belief in its ultimate triumph. The women of India would welcome closer contacts with the women of China in the furtherance of the many ideals and objectives they hold in common, and extends a cordial invitation to the women's organisations in China to send a delegation to visit India. The Conference is of the opinion that, if and when circumstances permit a delegation of Indian women should visit China to convey their sympathy and Japan."

2. "The All-India Women's Conference sends a special message to the women in all the warring countries. It believes that women the world over could not be in tune with the doctrine that might is right. It appeals to them therefore to do all within their power in their respective countries to persuade their Governments to end the war both in the East as well as in the West. In this connection they make a special appeal to the women of Russia, Germany and Japan."

The following resolution on war, as passed by the Standing Committee, was then moved by **Dr. Miss B. Natarajan (Delhi)**:—

"This Conference of Indian women once again expresses its abhorrence of war. It deeply regrets that in spite of the overwhelming desire on their part to avoid war, women failed to exert their moral influence which was necessary to save their respective countries from plunging the world into the present grim struggle. As women we sympathise with the sufferings of the people in the warring countries and pray for a speedy cessation of hostilities and for a lasting peace.

"This Conference is convinced that there can be no world peace so long as any nation remains a subject people. It is of opinion that

Great Britain should declare the terms upon which it would be willing to make peace, and include among those terms the recognition of equality of race and of the rights and liberties of the individual and respect for the integrity of small as well as great nations. The women of India not only demand freedom for their own country, but desire it for all those people who are being exploited, or oppressed, or are the victims of aggression by the armed might of their stronger neighbours.

“This Conference reaffirms its faith in non-violence as the only means of ushering in a new era of peace and goodwill in the world, and calls on all women, in particular Indian women, to try to realise it in their individual as well as their collective lives.”

Miss Zulfikar Ali (Punjab Central), in seconding this resolution, said that the resolution echoed the thoughts of the young women of her province (Punjab) on whose behalf she was speaking. She felt that the time had come for Great Britain which was fighting to restore the liberties of some of the nations of Europe, to make no further hesitation in recognising the right of the Indian people to attain freedom. It was the best way in which Great Britain could prove to the world that it stood for liberty of nations by restoring its liberty to India.

Miss Sushila Pandit supported the resolution and appealed to the delegates to do likewise.

Miss Shah Nawaz (Punjab Central): Friends, I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution. I have specially been asked to speak very moderately. It is very difficult for me to speak very moderately since I am still under 50 years of age. It is also very difficult for me to speak very moderately when this wanton bloodshed is going on. It is very difficult for me to speak very moderately when men of India and men of the province I represent are being sent every day to fight for a cause that is not ours. Japan invaded China, Italy invaded Abyssinia—a black country—only a few years back, but those countries which are today fighting for democracy were not then prepared to fight. How countries today which have deprived other nations of their liberty can say that they are fighting for democracy. When Czechoslovakia was thrown to dogs, Britain and France made the Munich Agreement. Yet today they say that they are fighting for democracy. I do not want to doubt their word, although

it is difficult to believe. I do not doubt their word but I want a proof of it. What better proof they can give than by giving freedom to those people whom they have oppressed and by righting the wrong they have committed by very similar acts of aggression. Therefore, on behalf of the younger generation and on behalf of the ladies of my province, I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution. War is a great hindrance to the progress of humanity. It takes us a hundred years back. Still we are prepared to make sacrifice for a war that is fought for some principle but we are not prepared to sacrifice men and money of our country for the sake of a war that is fought for mere power-politics. So I would ask you to unite together. Europe brings forth this condemnation on us that India cannot be granted her freedom because it is disunited. Indeed, then should Europe be free today because Europe is more disunited than we are? Does Asia want to go to rule Europe because Europe is today more disunited? But since the challenge has been thrown before us, I would appeal to women to meet it. Women are a great force in their homes. We stand for peace in the world. If all the women in the world unite for peace the war would surely end. Therefore, I will also, while supporting this resolution, appeal to you all to unite.

Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade: "It has been very refreshing to hear Miss Shah Nawaz. The issues raised in this resolution have been, as you all know, subjected to a thorough discussion in this country on the platform and the press. All the great parties have defined their attitudes towards the situation resulting from the war: It is not of course merely a question of defining an attitude. If the crisis caused by the Government of India's declaration of war has any significance, personally I feel, it becomes a question not only of attitude but of a course of action which shall have to be followed sooner or later. This Conference although it is bound to feel very deeply on the question of the war and the relation to it of this country yet it is not immediately concerned with anything beyond declaring its definite attitude. We shall await the course which events take and in the meanwhile carry on with our constructive work.

The resolution as it stands speaks for itself. I have only to point out that in framing the resolution pains have been taken to arrive at a sort of highest common multiple of the various groups within this Conference. This has been done with an idea to maintain the common front which this Conference has so far preserved. I know that many of us and I include

myself also among the number—feel deeply on the issues involved—Nazism, International peace, self-determination, India's future, the close connection between Indian self-determination and her participation in the war—and so on. And we might even risk disagreement to express our full convictions. But the whole point is that such a stage has not arrived and above all the resolution as worded embraces all these issues and yet does not antagonise any other prejudices or preferences.

As to the general question of the war and India's participation, to my mind, the only reasonable attitude is more or less along the same lines as those followed in the Congress resolution. It seems to me clear that India should participate only in a war which is based demonstrably on the principle of self-determination and the only demonstration possible is the application of that principle to India. So much seems to be clear. It is also clear that if that is not possible then India must devote herself to her reconstruction effort until self-determination is achieved by our national effort.

With these few words I commend this resolution to you."

Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai (Gwalior), speaking on the resolution in Hindusthani said: We were conscious of the present war that we find today in Europe and it was this reason only that we in our last resolution passed a 'Peace Resolution.' It now seems to me that it is only through the banishing of all greed for possession and by giving freedom to those who are under domination that we can avoid bloody wars.

Miss Chandrawati Tripathi (U. P.), speaking in Hindustani said: The present war has its effects today not only in Europe but all over the world. We find everywhere oppression and exploitation. Large numbers are losing their lives at the war front. Only non-violence can solve this problem. So long as we adhere to the creed of violence, every nation will go on arming itself. Therefore, I appeal to women to unite on the platform of non-violence.

Miss Shephard (Delhi): With the permission of the Chair, I want to say that in the sentence "Great Britain should declare the terms," "Allies" should be substituted for 'Great Britain' as both Great Britain and France are fighting for a common cause.

The amendment fell through for want of a seconder.

The original resolution was then passed unanimously.

The Conference then took up the following resolution for consideration:—

“This Conference is grieved at the recent disaster which has afflicted Turkey, and sends its sincere sympathy to the President and people of that land. It calls on its members and branches to contribute liberally towards the Conference fund for the alleviation of distress in Turkey.”

In moving the above resolution **Begum Habibullah, M.L.A.**, said the following in Hindusthani: On the 26th of December when all of us were sleeping on our soft beds, a severe earthquake shook the whole of Anatolia. It buried underground more than 25,000 lives. The temperature had departed from the normal by 30 degrees. But the misfortunes never come alone. They are always in battalions. The earthquake shock was followed by a severe flood. **Qaide Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Mahatma Gandhi, Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan** have all issued appeals to generously contribute towards the Turkish Relief Fund. I will, therefore, appeal to you all in the name of humanity to contribute as much as you can towards the Turkish Relief Fund.

Lady Rama Rau (Special Delegate) scolded the resolution and said that the Bihar Earthquake and the Quetta Earthquake are fresh in their minds to realise the extent of human suffering that can be created by calamities of this nature. Turkey is entitled to their heartfelt sympathy and she appealed to the Conference to contribute whatever possible towards the Turkish Relief Fund which will in no small measure help to alleviate the sufferings caused in Turkey just now.

Mrs. Fardoonji, supporting the resolution, appealed to the delegates to take up the work of collecting contributions from individual delegates and branches for this fund in relief of Turkey. She said that it was a sympathetic touch that in these days would keep all humanity together.

Miss Vasant Shukla supported the resolution and said that the fact that Turkey is a distant country should not minimise the severity of the calamity to us.

Miss Kapila Khandwala (Bombay) also supported the resolution. The resolution was unanimously passed.

The following contributions by the delegates present to the Turkish Relief Fund were then announced:—

	Rs.
Begum Hamid Ali	250
Mrs. Sarojini Naidu	50
Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	50
Miss Leilamani Naidu	50
Dr. Miss Bana	50
Mrs. Gyanchand	50
Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	30
Lady Rama Rau	25
Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji	25
Mrs. Kamaluddin	25
Mrs. S. N. Ray	25
Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee	10
Mrs. J. R. Doctor	10
Delhi Branch (through Mrs. Asaf Ali)	300
Gujarat Branch	100
Punjab Central Branch	50
Total	1,100

The following nominations for Office-bearers for the year were then announced:—

For six Vice-Presidents.

Mrs. Brijlal Nehru
 Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
 Mrs. J. R. Doctor
 Mrs. Dina Asana
 Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee
 Lady Mirza Ismail
 Mrs. Shardaben Mehta
 Begum Aizaz Rasul
 Mrs. Hansa Mehta
 H. H. the Rani Saheb of Sangli
 Mrs. Asaf Ali
 Lady Wazir Hasan

Mrs. G. R. Billimoria
 Begum Shah Nawaz
 *Mrs. Uma Nehru

For Hon. General Secretary.

*Dr. Mrs. Malinibai Sukthankar
 Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon

For Hon. Treasurer.

Mrs. G. R. Billimoria
 Mrs. Dina Asana

The Conference then adjourned to the next morning.

FOURTH SITTING: January 31, 1940, 9-30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The fourth sitting of the Conference commenced at 9-30 a.m. with Begum Hamid Ali in the Chair.

Before taking up the discussion of the subjects taken up by the Groups the previous afternoon, the result of the election of the office-bearers of the All-India Women's Conference was announced. The following were elected:—

Vice-Presidents:

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit.
 Mrs. Brijlal Nehru.
 Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta.
 Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee.
 Lady Mirza Ismail,
 Mrs. Hansa Mehta.

Hon General Secretary:

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon (unopposed).

*Mrs. Uma Nehru withdrew her name.

*Dr. Mrs. Malinibai Sukthankar's nomination was withdrawn.

Hon. Treasurer:

Mrs. Billimoria.

Begum Hamid Ali, the President of the annual session was to be the President of the Association as well as the Chairwoman of the Standing Committee for the year.

MRS. DATTA'S SUGGESTIONS ON GROUP MEETINGS

The President said: "Before we take up the Findings Committee Report, there are certain suggestions which I would like you to accept in the form of a resolution. It will make our Group meetings easier next year. These meetings are only in an experimental stage and the suggestions will help the working next year."

The President then asked Mrs. Datta to read out her suggestions which were as follows:—

(a) The Groups should be arranged by subjects, e.g., Group I—Labour questions; Group II—Education, etc.

(b) Each Delegation should appoint some of its members to attend each Group, thus ensuring that each Group will be a cross-section of the whole Conference, and that some members of each delegation shall have the opportunity of discussing every subject.

(c) One important problem should be chosen as the main topic of each annual conference.

(d) The agendas for Group discussions should be greatly reduced so as to ensure adequate time for study and discussion of the subject chosen.

(e) The agendas together with full documentation should be issued to the constituencies immediately after the half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee in order that the delegates may be carefully chosen and may have time to study the subjects before coming to the Conference and that the Group Chairman and Secretaries should be appointed at the half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee when the subjects are chosen.

(f) Complete reports of the Group discussions prepared by the Chairwoman and the Secretary of each Group should be presented to a plenary

session of the Conference and the final forms in which these findings are adopted by the Conference in a plenary session should form the programme of work for the ensuing year.

(g) Delegation meetings should be held two or three times during the Conference for consultation and planning.

Speaking on the above suggestions Mrs. Datta said: "It will very greatly facilitate easier and more adequate working of the problem that are before the Conference. It will ensure the passing of resolutions which have some chance of being implemented within a reasonable time. It will also eliminate the necessity of guaranteed reports of 5 different groups on the same subject. Under the new system you will have one report on each subject and the report on each subject will have to be prepared by only two people, the Chairwoman and the Secretary of the Group, instead of large committees of 15 or 20 people."

Seconding the suggestions of Mrs. Datta Lady Rama Rau said: "Mrs. Datta has placed before you the scheme of group working in future. I feel very strongly about the division of work of this Conference. I am absolutely confident that the work of this Conference will advance much further if it is divided not in the way in which we have divided it at this Conference, but in the way that Mrs. Datta has suggested under the heading of various subjects. I personally think that we are beginning now at this day to find among our delegation various specialists with regard to various subjects, and it would be very desirable if each subject were dealt with by its expert. For instance, take the question of labour. We are deeply interested in that question. We would like to have specialised knowledge of this subject before we make our resolutions. You must realise that every question whatever this Conference may take up, whether education, social life and so on, has its special aspects in the various parts of India from which the delegates come. If Groups were divided subject wise the delegates will be in a position to place before the Conference their specialised knowledge which will be very useful. The time has come when this Conference should create specialists in the vast field of the women's work."

The President then said: "You have heard the proposition or suggestion proposed by Mrs. Datta and seconded by Lady Rama Rau as to how the group system should be worked next year. Have you any suggestions to make?"

The suggestions were accepted unanimously.

Before the Conference adjourned for lunch, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu made an appeal for funds for carrying on the work of the Conference. In response to her appeal the following contributions were announced:—

	Rs.
Begum Hamid Ali	200
Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	150
Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade	50
Mrs. Brijlal Nehru	50
Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee	50
Lady Rama Rau	50
Mrs. S. N. Ray	25
Shrimati Premwati Thapor	25
Mrs. Sewa Singh Gill	21
Lady Kailash Srivastava	101
Rani Saheb of Kurwar	101
Mrs. Haridas Shukla	11
Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji	51
Mrs. U. S. Bajpai	50
Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai	20
Mrs. Haksar	101
Mrs. Panna Lal	51
Mrs. Sham Lal (Cawnpore)	25
Mrs. B. P. Srivastava	25
Dr. K. Tarabai	20
Mrs. K. Sapru	5
Mrs. Hannah Sen	20
Mrs. Janaki Charry	11
Mrs. J. Takru	10
Mrs. Kamaluddin	11
Mrs. Mulla (Lucknow)	25
Mrs. Pathak	10
Mrs. Kuruvilla	10
Mrs. Muitholkar	10

The meeting adjourned to 2 p.m.

The report submitted by the *Findings Committee* on each of the three sections, namely, (1) *Educational Reform*, (2) *Social Reform*, and (3) *Eco-*

conomic Reconstruction—was presented at the open session. As the President had allowed freedom to discuss the reports and suggest amendments where necessary, there was considerable discussion of each of them at separate sessions. The following was then finally adopted by the Conference:—

FINDING COMMITTEE REPORT AS FINALLY ADOPTED

Section I

1. LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION

While reaffirming belief in the urgent need of intensive campaign against the appalling illiteracy and general ignorance in our country, we congratulate those Branches that have achieved success in these spheres during the past year, and call upon all members to redouble their efforts. Some Branches may wish to confine their work in the educational field to this one subject for the coming year.

The main difficulties in the way of removing illiteracy among women are ignorance and physical fatigue, the fact that many lapse into illiteracy after instruction has ceased because their interest has not been maintained, and the lack of teachers and others to organise and carry out the work.

Our recommendations are as follows:—

Teachers: The teachers should be, if possible, given a preliminary training and should be paid. Although school teachers will not be the only ones to do this special work, Teachers' Training Colleges and Universities may be asked to include Adult Education in their curriculum.

Methods, Programme and Equipment

The Laubach Method, already being used for this work with good results, is recommended. Other methods should be studied. Local schools or private houses may be used. Both day and evening classes should be arranged so as to cater for women of all occupations. Special literature is required and may include such subjects as health, hygiene, mothercraft, homecraft, co-operative effort, etc. Branch members should be encouraged to prepare suitable literature. The Bihar Government

and other provincial institutions have already produced some literature and the Jamia Millia Islamia has suitable publications in Hindusthani (both scripts). A daily bulletin in very simple language would be of great help if such could be produced. Competitions and free reading circles and free reading rooms would stimulate and sustain interest and thus help to maintain literacy.

Finance: Means suggested for securing the funds necessary for paying the teachers and providing equipment are a 'literacy fee' of Re. 1 per annum from A. I. W. C. members, and collections from the public who may be asked to allot for these purposes some portion of what they usually give to charity.

Governments, Municipal and Local Bodies. Governments, Municipal and Local Bodies may be asked

- (a) to provide suitable literature as has been already done by various Provincial Governments and institutions.
- (b) to make grants (a municipal tax was suggested) as has been done by some Governments and Municipalities.
- (c) to appoint Adult Education Committees including a certain number of women members, to organise this work for men and women.

A. I. W. C. Branches. It is suggested that Branches which decide to undertake this work should formulate a two years' or three years' plan for it starting with a "literacy drive" and should ensure that this is carried through for the full time agreed upon. They may wish to appoint a special member-in-charge for this work. Members should be encouraged to have personal contact with the masses, to study their needs and find ways of arousing and maintaining their interest, e.g., by reading to them, showing them pictures, etc. Branches should find out what other agencies are doing this work in their area and co-operate with them fully. Each member of this Conference is urged to undertake literacy work and each Branch to start at least one centre in the coming year. Branches may encourage students and school children to use opportunities for making adults literate in their homes, and women students particularly may be asked to devote at least one week of their long vacation to literacy work wherever they may be. Statistics of results achieved by Branches should be collected by the Central Office of the A. I. W. C. for record and reference.

SECTION I(a) CITIZENSHIP

We look upon the lack of due civic consciousness in India today as one of the main drawbacks in our national life. Inasmuch as literacy has been made a qualification for women's franchise and the A. I. W. C. has always stood for adult suffrage, it is doubly incumbent on us to train our women to a realisation of their civic responsibility, so that they will at the appointed time exercise the right of the vote in an intelligent and impartial manner. Narrow sectarianism and much of the inefficiency in our local bodies would disappear if the civic sense of women were founded on right concepts.

The Conference is of opinion that the teaching of the meaning of citizenship should go side by side with all literacy and adult education work. All women, not only illiterates, need such teaching. It should include the special significance of the franchise, legal rights and disabilities of women, civic rights and responsibilities, and such other subjects as the postal system, banking, co-operative movement, sanitation, health, hygiene, home-crafts and mothercrafts, etc. Branches should organise this work to be done by both paid and voluntary workers.

Methods suggested are the teaching of civics in all schools, meetings for women in mohallas (invitations given by house to house visiting), posters, lantern slides (Health slides already in existence may be used), lectures, cinema performances, radio talks, etc.

2. TRAINING OF TEACHERS

We deplore the paucity of teachers, the low level of efficiency of the majority of teachers in Primary and Secondary schools and the very small salaries paid to them. Towards the improvement of this state of affairs we ask for an immediate increase in the number of institutions for the training of teachers, together with a raising of the standard of the entrance qualification and of the training given. We suggest that the Governments should ensure that within a period of seven years no teacher shall be employed in a school unless she has received adequate training. Periodical refresher courses and extension lectures should be held, which local bodies should be asked to make compulsory for all their teachers. Better trained teachers will command higher salaries the provision of which we consider imperative.

In view of the fact that handicrafts are becoming an integral part of primary school education and that teaching in citizenship and domestic science are a prime necessity, we recommend that these subjects should be compulsory in all training institutions for women. In all handicraft work attention should be given to the turning out of only such articles as are artistic as well as useful, and therefore more likely to command a ready market.

We would welcome an arts handicrafts section in the Lady Irwin College.

3(a) PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We consider that serious attention should be given to this subject by all educational bodies. Medical inspection with special clinics for treatment should be established in connection with all schools and colleges. Physical training should be made a compulsory subject and provision should be made immediately for trained physical instructresses in all educational institutions, folk dancing and Yoga Asanas being included in the programme. A mid-day meal should be provided (free where necessary) for all school children.

3(b) DIETETICS

Organised efforts should be made by all Governments, local bodies and citizens to guarantee a regular supply of milk, skimmed milk, fruit, sprouted gram, raw vegetables, etc. to children during school hours.

Special efforts should be made to popularise literature on dietetics and to encourage people to adopt a healthy nutritious and balanced diet. Attention is drawn to the researches made by the group of experts working on this subject with headquarters at Coondor, and to Pamphlet No. 8, "Balanced Diet" published by the Bombay Health Week Association, and Health Bulletin No. 23 entitled "Nutritive Value of Indian Foods and Plans of Satisfactory Diets." Demonstrations of a balanced diet and menus might be arranged at the annual conference as well as at Branch meetings which school teachers may be specially invited to attend.

4 VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The necessity of vocational training for girls is being increasingly realised and more institutions for this purpose are required. Instruction

may be given in subjects such as arts and crafts, tailoring, domestic science, hotel keeping, catering, domestic service and house-keeping. Special training should be given to rural workers.

Special schools may be established, whether by local or central authority or by the Conference Branches, to impart instruction to indigent women in handicrafts which would enable them to become economically independent. Where such institutions are established by public enterprise, Government may be asked to grant them every possible aid, financial and otherwise.

Section II

SOCIAL REFORM

1. LEGAL (BILLS, ETC.)

This Conference lends its wholehearted support to such Bills relating to women pending legislation as have been amended in the light of suggestions submitted by the A.-I. W. C. Legal Member, advised by lawyers and experts. We regret that owing to the present suspension of legislative activities, these Bills are being delayed.

We are glad to note the sympathetic response made by the Governments of some Indian States to the demands of women for a revision of their legal rights. While commending a comprehensive survey of the entire subject to all State Governments, we advocate the immediate introduction of legislative measures, wherever they do not exist, to abolish the custom of early marriage.

We are deeply grieved that Dr. Deshmukh's Bill on Hindu Women's Right to Divorce was defeated in the Central Assembly, last year, and that Mrs. Subbarayan's Bill to prevent polygamy was not even introduced into the Central Legislature. We press for an immediate introduction of new Bills on these subjects.

2. TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

A.—Administration.

- (a) This Conference recommends that Provincial and State Governments be urged to form a social questions section within the Government, with a liaison officer, preferably a woman, to co-ordinate and deal adequately with all social problems, and

to provide the necessary information and financial and legislative help.

- (b) Such a social questions section would also direct a more intensive campaign against the traffic in women and children and would help to remove the prejudice against this work.
- (c) Every Branch of the A.-I. W. C. should help to support in each Province
 - (i) a trained provincial woman welfare worker;
 - (ii) a central training house and rescue home with a responsible women's house management committee;
 - (iii) small shelters in each district staffed by women where women and girls in need could be housed temporarily until more permanent plans can be made for them.

Provincial Governments and Municipal authorities should be asked to contribute towards these protective agencies.

B.—Legislation.

- (a) This Conference requests those Provinces and States where legislation against this traffic does not exist to introduce satisfactory measures and also urges more vigorous enforcement (and amendment where necessary) of existing legislation.
- (b) Attention of Governments is drawn to the many societies registered under Act XXI of 1860. We urge that a careful examination of the present aims and work of these societies should be undertaken, so that the Registration Roll may contain only names of satisfactory organisations.
- (c) We strongly urge that legislation should be passed abolishing the system of dedicating girls as 'Devadasis' in temples in all Provinces and States where this system exists.

C.—Children.

- (a) All Provincial Governments are urged to adopt Children's Protection Acts which should include penalties for those who use or employ children as beggars.

- (b) This Conference suggests an inquiry into methods of adopting children and asks for legislation to prevent adoption of children by unsatisfactory people.
- (c) An Act for providing a Board of Inspectors for all ashrams, orphanages and industrial institutions taking women and children as inmates should be locally and centrally passed. On these Boards women with social service experience should be asked to serve.
- (d) The Branches of the A.-I. W. C. should either start Children's Aid Societies or co-operate with existing ones, and well-run children's Cottage Homes should be established.
- (e) This Conference should press for the opening of Children's Courts in every Province and State where such do not exist.

D.—Women Police.

This Conference approves of the appointment of women police for work amongst women and children in cities as well as when travelling, and specially urges their appointment for third class passengers on trains and at railway stations. The training of women police should be undertaken by provincial and State Governments.

3. PUBLIC HEALTH

A.—Maternity and Child Welfare.

In view of the alarmingly high rate of infant and maternal mortality it is imperative that the question of Maternal and Child Welfare be made a matter of primary concern. With this end in view we recommend the following:—

- (a) The ideal to be aimed at is that within a period of ten years there should be elimination of the indigenous Dai and her gradual replacement by the trained Midwife.

In our opinion it is essential that for satisfactory service higher salaries and greater facilities should be offered so as to attract the right type of women to this profession.

- (b) Every mother should be assured of scientific attendance and care at child birth. For this purpose it is advisable to establish both in urban and rural areas, maternity beds in the propor-

tion of one bed for 2,000 of population. Maternity and gynæcological hospitals should also be established in adequate numbers.

- (c) The available number of Health Visitors is quite inadequate. Health Visitors in the proportion of one to every 2,000 of the population should be provided.
- (d) Maternity homes should be in charge of women doctors and trained midwives. Maternal and Child Welfare Clinics should be attached to Maternity Homes and Hospitals, and should be in charge of women doctors, trained midwives and health visitors.
- (e) There should be a clear line of demarcation between the duties and responsibilities of the Health Visitor and the trained midwife. It is absolutely essential to provide the right type and standard of scientific training in rural as well as urban areas, for health visitors and midwives.
- (f) Where the rural area is too small to have a maternity centre it is desirable that a service of travelling dispensaries be instituted to provide medical help and advice.
- (g) We wish to stress the importance of carrying on regular propaganda to make the mothers realise the advantages of scientific care of themselves and their children.
- (h) We urge the authorities to enforce the accurate registration of births and deaths.
- (i) Registration of dais and midwives is essential.
- (j) We ask for a 'Charter of Children's Liberties' by which the State would guarantee to every child proper care and free education upto the primary standard.

B.—Sanitation and Hygiene.

We are of the opinion that there should be a wider recognition of the value of inculcating in children in the home and in the school proper hygiene and sanitary habits.

We call upon members of all Branches to make a special effort through health propaganda and work to improve the hygienic and sanitary conditions in their neighbourhood (possibly by a "Clean the City" campaign), and to co-operate with Municipalities and other local bodies in their endeavours to safeguard the health of their city.

C.—Family Planning.

This Conference is of the opinion that the subject of family planning is of first importance to India's health, and asks that medical officers connected with all municipal and Government women's hospitals, dispensaries, and health centres should be authorised to give advice on spacing the family to married women desiring this.

Where there is opposition from authorities to such work this Conference recommends to the A.-I. W. C. Branches that they should open clinics for it specially in mill areas and poor localities under adequate medical supervision. Branches should undertake propaganda and education for this subject.

D.—Venereal Disease.

The present provision of skilled treatment being grossly inadequate, specially for women and children suffering from venereal diseases, this Conference urges all Health and Civil Hospital authorities to increase their in-patient accommodation fully equipped for these cases. We further recommend Branches to undertake educative propaganda.

E.—Education.

The Branches of the A.-I. W. C. should study the best way of teaching sex hygiene. Special reference is made to Mrs. Bryce's book "Comrades of the Road" (Y. M. C. A. Press, Calcutta) which will shortly be available in Hindi, Urdu and Bengali.

F.—Obscene Films, etc.

This Conference emphatically protests against indecent pictures, cinema shows and stories presented in the name of art, and requests the public to boycott them altogether. We also demand suppression of obscene advertisement.

4. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Detailed suggestions for work in rural areas have been given by the Standing Committee on many occasions and need not be reiterated.

Whilst congratulating those of our Branches that have already initiated work in villages we call upon all working centres to make a resolute endeavour to extend the activities to at least one village each. We recommend to those Branches that are within reach of radio stations to establish contacts with programme Directors and to help with village programmes where these exist or suggest village programmes where they do not exist, for the furtherance of rural reconstruction propaganda.

5. HOUSING

This Conference draws the attention of Local Boards to the lack of good housing conditions for the poor and labouring classes, and requests Municipal and District Boards, Improvement Trusts and Co-operative Housing Societies in all Provinces and States to regard this as an urgent problem requiring immediate attention. We lay special emphasis on the provision of suitable housing accommodation for the low grade employees of the municipalities. Provision of decent housing accommodation for the workers is essential.

We are of the opinion that housing conditions of labourers should be controlled by Governments or local bodies.

Co-operative Building Societies should be encouraged by Municipalities and District Boards to build houses suitable for the middle and lower middle classes.

Each Branch of the A.-I. W. C. should be asked to form a sub-committee to inquire into the housing conditions of labourers in their area.

6. SOCIAL CONTACTS

Believing that social barriers constitute one of the gravest obstacles in the path of India's progress, we make a fervant appeal to all citizens to strive for their removal by

- (a) making social, intellectual and cultural contacts,
- (b) removal of untouchability,
- (c) cessation of communal institutions,
- (d) comparatively study of religions,
- (e) common observance of all great festivals,
- (f) promotion of Hindustani as a common language, and by all such other means.

Each Branch of the Conference might start a relief or help department, with a member-in-charge, whose work would be to receive, and, where possible, secure redress for personal difficulties of women. This would consist mostly in giving advice, or securing legal advice where necessary. Such a department would bring Conference members in contact with under-privileged women and might attract new members. Mohalla meetings, festivals and melas should also be used for making contacts.

SECTION III

ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

A. I.—Labour.

(a) Minimum Wages

The principle underlying the policy adopted in resolution 15 on labour, last year, was reaffirmed—namely, “that labour must be recognised as part owner in industry along with capital”, and that, “this ideal be worked for by more co-operation between labour and capital.”

We recommend each branch of the A.-I. W. C. to undertake to investigate and adjudge the standard of living for Indian women in that area. Further that we urge the Central, Provincial and State Governments to appoint special Investigation Committees with an adequate number of women on their personnel with a view to fix a national minimum wage for all labour. Representatives of working women should find a place on these Committees.

(b) Maternity Benefit Scheme

We are strongly of opinion that the Maternity Benefit Scheme would operate more equitably for women if the money were obtained by Government legislation from the employers according to the total number of men and women employed.

We appeal to the Governments of the Punjab, Bihar, Orissa and of all such states wherein the Maternity Benefit Act is not in force to take immediate steps towards legislation in this direction having regard to the provision of creches as an absolute necessity where adequate number of mothers are employed. We recommend that the Act should apply to plantations and mines and other wage-earning women.

(c) Special Legislation for Women

Until such time as India attains to a high level of industrial organisation and efficiency, we demand that women be guaranteed adequate safeguards through the application of special methods in industries involving heavy night and dangerous labour.

(d) Women and Children in Unregulated Industries

We view with distress the amount of exploitation of women and children extant in unregulated industries and recommend that, on the basis of a detailed survey of present conditions to be undertaken by our branches and the respective Governments of Provinces and States.

- (i) The Factory Act to be extended to all industries where there are five or more workers and where mechanical power may or may not be used. Until such time as this can be effected we suggest that all industrial concerns however small should be registered and allowed to work only on the receipt of a license. This license should impose certain conditions safeguarding the workers and should be able to be withdrawn if these conditions were not fulfilled. Special Inspectress would have to be appointed to supervise these unregulated industries and make inquiries on receipt of complaints.
- (ii) All forms of labour to be included and brought within the ambit of existing and future legislation.

(e) Child Labour

We recommend that investigations of the conditions of child labour should be conducted through our Branches under the close direction of one member-in-charge.

The Conference should agitate for the prohibition of Child Labour, and for the introduction of free compulsory education upto the age of fourteen.

(f) Women in Agricultural Labour

In view of the fact that we have not sufficient data in the matter of women in agricultural labour we recommend that the Standing Committee appoint either a small Committee, or a member-in-charge of subject, with a view to make a close investigation not only of women in agricultural labour but also of the general conditions of life of women in rural areas.

A. II—1. Indigenous Industries

We are convinced of the necessity of the development of Home Industries and would like to stress in particular the importance of khadi in the economic life of women. To this end we recommend our Branches actively to increase the sale of khadi by organising sales depots as well as utilising handwoven and handspun cloth to the largest extent possible in the home. The development and revival of handicrafts and the use of their products is consonant with the progress of women as it has been their special domain the world over.

We urge active support of Home Industries as a potential means of raising the dignity and status of India's womanhood in national life and ensuring to a large number of Indian women their economic independence. While appreciating the interest taken by our Branches in encouraging indigenous handicrafts, we suggest that members strictly adhere to the use of swadeshi goods. We further urge the use of Swadeshi as far as possible to the exclusion of foreign goods.

FIFTH AND FINAL SITTING: JANUARY 31, 1940; 2 TO 5 P.M.

The closing session of the Conference commenced at 2 p.m. with **Begum Hamid Ali**, the President, in the Chair.

The President in winding up the final sitting of the Conference said: Before I declare this Conference closed I would like to tell you how very much we welcome the new pulsating life of India you have brought into the Conference this year. We all appreciate the younger women coming and taking their due share in the deliberations. We had been feeling for the last few years that the Conference was not getting that enthusiastic spirit and those new ideas that we had been having for the first few years. But this year I am feeling so delighted, so happy to see all of you so enthusiastic, so critical indeed as we were in the first year, coming and demanding your share of the work of the Conference. Now I really feel that this Conference is going to live at least for 10 years longer if not for more.

I would like to say that the Group Meetings this year had been a little better and they prove to you that the new manner of discussion is not as insignificant as you thought it was last year when it was the beginning. You will like it better and better and find it more useful as years go on.

If you co-operate with the President and others who send out suggestions and try to save time, we can do much work every year. We want the women all over India to come here and make contacts and friendship. If you do not come we miss you deeply. Through the Conference we get such a stimulation of ideas as last for the whole year. When you return to your homes you will set your minds to carry out as much of the resolutions as we have passed. In this matter I would like to tell all the members of the Standing Committee to see how necessary it is to choose delegates really worthy of coming to this Conference. If you do not choose wisely you will have to go back empty handed.

It has been splendid of **Mrs. S. N. Ray**, our Acting Honorary General Secretary to have carried on the work of this Conference, always laughing, always keeping cheerful, setting an example to all of us how faith in the Conference and its work undertaken with courage will make it really successful. We hope she will very soon be an Honorary General Secretary for several years.

On behalf of all of you and personally I thank **Mrs. Pandit**, Chair woman of the Reception Committee, for the very loving care and attention she has given to us. She has been the secretary and a member of all the committees she has organised. I hope that you will think this a worthwhile Conference for two other things also. **Mrs. Pandit** and all her co-workers have become our friends and we appreciate every kindness that they have given to us.

I have very great pleasure in thanking the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University, the Exhibition Committee, the Dramatic Society, the Friday Club, for this beautiful hall, the exhibition and the entertainments given to us.

It is not possible for us to thank every one. But we do thank all those who took charge of the Delegates and all those members of the Reception Committee who gave generously for the funds of the Reception Committee.

I must also thank the volunteers for the great service they have rendered to this Conference.

I am leaving out more names than I am including. My thanks are due to **Mrs. Purnima Banerji** for the very great enthusiasm with which she has been working for this Conference, moving about like a nymph, radiating joy like the full moon to everyone who may come in contact

with her. Her night and day duty has been very much appreciated. She represents a kind of selfless service which might be emulated by all women.

If I have left out any body the deficit will be made good by the Acting General Secretary.

The Municipality has been extremely kind in giving us the Civic Address. That is the chief honour that can be bestowed on a body like ours in any city or town we visit. Now the municipalities have made it a custom of giving civic addresses wherever we go. It brings us directly in touch with the women of the town we visit, otherwise we would be confined to knowing only the women of the place where the Conference is held.

Mrs. S. N. Ray said: First I want to bring certain matters to the notice of the delegates and I hope they will not take it amiss. In any case you can put it down as the defect of the Acting Secretary and not blame the office-bearers as such for what I am going to say. We are all aware of how much the Reception Committee has done for us. For myself I must say that I was not aware or perhaps did not appreciate to the full extent in the past the arduous nature of the work and deputising the Secretary this year has brought me a more complete realisation of it. It is our duty to lighten the very difficult work the Reception Committee has to perform. I must say I felt very ashamed when delegates notified their time of arrival, and the Reception Committee members went with cars and buses to meet them, and they failed to turn up. I only mention it because it happened in quite a number of instances this year. I know that it was unthinkingly done but I do request you to consider the matter next year and not change your timings unless you can notify in time. In the same way there are many other points, trivial in themselves, where we can show our consideration. One other thing I would like to suggest. Year by year, we speak of the necessity of reduced expenditure by the Reception Committee but as each branch who invites us wishes to give of their best, and show their hospitality, the expenditure incurred continues to be a heavy item. I would like to suggest that the Standing Committee should ask the General Secretary to inform the Reception Committee, well ahead, what expenses are necessities. If the Committee has any extra money to spare it would be welcomed in the form of donations for our Central work as well as it could be used for the work of the branch which invites the Conference.

The President has already rendered her vote of thanks to all. I would specially like to emphasise our gratitude to the **volunteers** both boys and

girls. They are the custodians of our future and the spirit of service they have demonstrated is an augury of bright prospect. I do not know in what words to express our gratitude to our able and distinguished President. Personally her guidance has helped me at every time and without her help and that of **Rani Rajwade**, our out-going President, I should have been unable to carry on the work of the General Secretary at so short a notice. To the Reception Committee and the Standing Committee I also like to add my personal thanks for all their help.

One last word, if during this session, you feel that there have been any defects and mistakes, you can put it down to the inadequacy of one who is only acting and remember that if our General Secretary, Dr. Sukthankar herself could have been present this would not have occurred. I thank you one and all for your co-operation and understanding.

Lady Rama Rau then spoke as follows. I would be grateful to you to permit me to express to you on my own behalf and on behalf of all the Delegates here assembled our very great appreciation at the way in which you have presided over this Conference. We are indeed grateful to you for the consideration, the charm and the tact with which you have handled the many varying problems that have appeared on the platform from the day that you have started work. Madam Chair, I claim the privilege of a long friendship with you. I have known you for some years not only in India but also abroad. I realise, and would like telling my sister delegates, the ability and the affection with which you met wherever you travelled. Both in London and here I have been present at the great receptions you have had, and I have seen with what affection—real honest affection—you have been met wherever you have moved, and I have had the joy of entertaining you in my own humble way in London. Believe me, it is a real joy to offer you a hearty vote of thanks for the work we have made you do for us in this Conference. Apart from the able manner in which you have handled the very difficult problems with which we have been faced right through the Conference, believe me Madam when I say that each time we have been faced with a very complicated and intricate question that we have tried to solve without success, each time we have been in distress about one thing or the other, we had only to address our eyes to look towards you and we felt relief and cheer at once. Not only at the Conference but even at the social functions it has been a real pleasure to see your charming personality. I know, I am voicing not only my own senti-

ment but also of so many other sister delegates in wishing you deep, genuine and sincere vote of thanks.

Before, however, I close my remarks I would also like to offer my vote of thanks to Rani Rajwade. Without her able guidance along with the guidance of our President this year we would not have been able to conduct the work, to solve the great many problems, that we have been able to do with their guidance.

We had a large number of young and able delegates in this Conference. In fact, I was struck by them from the first day. I realise that these young and enthusiastic people will have to seek inspiration from all those elder and wiser leaders who, for many years yet, will help to guide our footsteps in the work before us which you must have seen is no easy task. I know women's work is most difficult. Our greatest opposition comes from women themselves. Where men can be helpful women can be most obstructive. They will have to turn to the elder and wiser leaders that sit here to seek their aid, their advice, to guide us safely from the difficulties which come in our way. May you live long to help in the work that is before India!

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu then spoke as follows:—

FRIENDS,—I was sent for in a hurry. I thought there was a duel going on here. I find that it is to second Lady Rama Rau's vote of thanks. So my nerves are little cooled down. Lady Rama Rau has been so exhaustive in her thanks to everybody that I can only say things in inverted commas and not in my own way. Mrs. Purnima Banerji has voraciously whispered in my ears that I have got to thank the Municipality, I have to thank the Friday Club, they have given Rs. 800 for us, we have got to thank the Reception Committee and if you knew the feat that the Reception Committee has performed you will offer a double vote of thanks. The fact that the Women's Conference was going to be held at Allahabad came to be known to them only 20 or 21 days before and it I think, speaks a great deal for the courage of the organisers, the spirit of team work, that made it possible for this Conference to be held successfully in Allahabad. It is invidious to mention any names. I won't mention any name. Of course, I also deserve a little vote of thanks for arranging the Conference here. If any member of the Reception Committee feels that she has been ignored she has only to look towards my eyes and find a hundred, a thousand votes of thanks reserved for her.

We have to thank Amarnath Jha, Amarnath Jha is a kind of son of mine. I adopted him 27 years ago, really 30 years ago. I can claim him as my son. If he had not co-operated with us, he and his University authorities, so gladly, so generously, we should have been put to some difficulty to find this spacious and beautifully decorated hall and this lovely ground for us.

I do not know who provided us with conveyances. I think it is some member of the Congress Committee. So we thank the member of the Congress Committee for the buses. We also thank the Raja of Darbhanga for giving us his beautiful castle.

Thanks are due to Rani Rajwade. In 1918 I christened her 'Spirit of India'. She is still the Spirit of India.

If any is left out it is not out of ingratitude but through my ignorance. I see, I must not forget the talented little group of volunteer girls, some volunteer boys also. To these young volunteers our heart goes out. They have shown you how they can serve the elders. They are learning to serve through giving service, so encouraging and so efficient.

I suppose I better say something about the delegates. Women have much better sense of proportion. They can make life pleasant beginning with borders of their saris and ending with their hairpins. The delegates think that they have taken a great deal of trouble to come. If they liked they may not have come. But they have participated in the deliberations of this Conference and so we had better thank them also. I hope, when you go back you will go back pledged to be interpreters of the great ideal of the emancipation of women.

As to our President, you have only to look towards her eyes and they will speak for themselves though they are silent. These women who occupy a seat on the dias are the humblest of women and the humblest of servants. It is their service, their pledge of service, their prophecy of service in the future that puts them there.

All the retiring secretaries and Standing Committee members may find really long rest after their long labours. But those who are going to be returned will not have rest. I am sorry for them because they will have to work and follow the example of those who preceded them.



Purnima Banerji,
Secretary, Reception Committee, Allahabad.

Before I conclude my remarks I would like you to realise that under all those shining garments which you are seeing and behind all the smiles you have noticed, the President has carried a very heavy and anxious heart. It was very heroic of her to have come here at all today because last night she received the very sad news that her mother's condition was extremely dangerous. Most of us would have neglected our duties and run away. But this woman inherits great traditions of her family, great ideals of duty that must be put before personal joys and fame. Instead of leaving all work unfulfilled she came here, she conducted the work, she smiled when it was necessary to smile, all the time wondering if the next moment would bring the news whether her mother was alive or not. You have a President who in herself gives such proof of courage and devotion of duty. I think we shall be able to, in our turn, emulate her example and put duty—national duty—before our personal ambitions and feelings. Therefore we offer her a double vote, a hundredfold vote of gratitude. We have learnt a lesson today. Don't let us forget, this year we have worked with her; let us all co-operate with her, give support to her. She did not lie down but continued to preside over the Conference in such anxious moments, telling us, guiding us, showing how noble a woman can be, how she deserves to command, to guide.

Mrs. Rustomji Fardoonji then spoke as follows: I am here only to say a word. I want to express and tell you how delighted I am to see Mrs. Hamid Ali presiding over this Conference. We started work together and she is my first colleague and I wanted her as the President of our Conference for some years. Now that she has gone there at a critical time like this, it makes difficult for me to say anything about her. We all know how noble she is. May God help her and keep her mother alive for many more years!

After Vande Matram the Conference terminated at 5-30 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT ALLAHABAD

1. CONDOLENCE RESOLUTIONS

- (a) This Conference places on record its sorrow at the death of H. H. the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda. The women of India can never forget the lead he gave, and services he rendered in the cause of social reform.
- (b) This Conference deeply regrets the passing away of Bibi Salima Faiz Tayabji, a woman whose record of public service, courage and devotion to duty were exemplary.
- (c) This Conference deeply regrets the death of Miss Shirin Cursetji who, as a pioneer in girls' education and social reform, rendered valuable services to the country.
- (d) This Conference records its grief at the death of Shri Laxmidas Ruvji Tairsee, the well-known social worker in Bombay.

2. WAR

This Conference of Indian women once again expresses its abhorrence of war. It deeply regrets that in spite of the overwhelming desire on their part to avoid war, women failed to exert that moral influence which was necessary to save their respective countries from plunging the world into the present grim struggle. As women we sympathise with the sufferings of the people in the warring countries and pray for a speedy cessation of hostilities and for a lasting peace.

This Conference is convinced that there can be no world peace so long as any nation remains a subject people. It is of opinion that GREAT BRITAIN should declare the terms upon which it would be willing to make peace, and include among those terms the recognition of equality of race and of the rights and liberties of the individual and respect for the integrity of small as well as great nations. The women of India not only demand freedom for their own country, but desire it for all those people who are being exploited, or oppressed, or are the victims of aggression by the armed might of their stronger neighbours.

This Conference reaffirms its faith in non-violence as the only means of ushering in a new era of peace and goodwill in the world, and calls on all women, in particular Indian women, to try to realise it in their individual as well as their collective lives.

3. COMMUNAL UNITY

This Conference appeals to all sections of the people to sink their differences, discord, mutual fear and suspicion and stand united so that no obstacles may come in the way of India's speedy attainment of freedom.

4. SYMPATHY TOWARDS THE TURKISH NATION

This Conference is grieved at the recent disaster which has afflicted Turkey, and sends it sincere sympathy to the President and people of that land. It calls on its members and Branches to contribute liberally towards the Conference Fund for the alleviation of distress in Turkey.

5. OPIUM AND DRUGS

The Association of the All-India Women's Conference deplores the fact that the proposed all-India legislation for the control of drugs, both imported and indigenous, is still held up by the failure of Sind and Bengal to place before their representative legislatures, the empowering resolution, already implemented by nine provinces, and urges them to take action without delay.

6. APPEAL TO PROVINCIAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS FOR AN ANNUAL DONATION TO THE LADY IRWIN COLLEGE

This Conference strongly supports the request to the various Provincial and State Governments from Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Chairwoman of the Governing Body of the A. I. W. E. Fund Association for an annual grant to the Lady Irwin College. Inasmuch as this Institution is an all-India one and is training teachers in Home Science, the Conference feels that it is thus rendering a useful service and merits recognition and financial aid.

The Conference is grateful to the Governments of Bombay and Jhind for their annual grants.

7. RANI OF JHANSI MEMORIAL

This Conference supports the idea of a memorial to honour the memory of Maharani Lakshmibai, one of India's greatest heroines, and requests the public to actively help the Memorial Trust to collect the requisite sum.

8. SYMPATHY WITH CHINA

The All-India Women's Conference sends its greetings to the women of China and expresses its deep appreciation of the heroic part they are playing in the struggle for China's unity and freedom.

The Conference condemns the invasion of China by Japanese forces and the brutality and inhumanity that have accompanied it.

The Conference expresses its solidarity with the cause of China and its belief in its ultimate triumph. The women of India would welcome closer contacts with the women of China in the furtherance of the many ideals and objectives they hold in common and extend a cordial invitation to the women's organisations in China to send a delegation to visit India. The Conference is also of opinion that if and when circumstances permit a delegation of Indian women should visit China to convey their sympathy and goodwill.

9. APPEAL TO WOMEN OF WARRING COUNTRIES

The All-India Women's Conference sends a special message to the women in all the warring countries. It believes that women the world over could not be in tune with the doctrine that 'might is right.' It appeals to them, therefore, to do all within their power in their respective countries to persuade their Governments to end the war both in the East as well as in the West. In this connection, they make a special appeal to the women of Russia, Germany and Japan.

REPORT OF ORGANISING SECRETARY'S WORK

(Inserted by the Hon. General Secretary)

The Conference was fortunate in securing the services of Miss Shantabai Bhalerao for another seven months as its Organising Secretary. Her work during the period was devoted to the reconstitution of our branches in Karnatak and Bihar and the formation of Conference branches in the districts of these old constituencies, and those in Assam and Orissa. Four months of intensive travelling and active reconnaissance work enabled her to bring new life into the work of these areas. Her work has been appreciated by the women of these areas and the office received letters expressing the same. In Karnatak she visited, organised meetings and did propaganda for the Conference in Dharwar, Gadag, Karwar, Sholapur, and Jamkhandi. In Bihar she visited Patna, Ranchi and other smaller districts. Pioneer work was done in Assam where five sub-branches were formed in Jorhat, Silchar, Sylhet, Dibrugarh and Nowgong. Besides, she visited industrial places like Digboi as also the Surma Valley. In Orissa Branches were formed in Cuttack and Puri. We are glad to note that our Organising Secretary not only did her routine work, but has made a thorough study of the conditions of women and women's organisations and the existing educational facilities for girls in the places she visited. Her suggestions, based on observation and critical understanding of the situation, have been very valuable to this office.

SECTIONAL REPORTS AND REPORTS ON SPECIAL SUBJECTS

1939

REPORT OF THE EDUCATIONAL SECTION

Mrs. D. B. Akhtar Husain

The year under review is of considerable activity in the educational section of the Conference, in the furtherance of its aims and objects. A widespread effort has been made to carry out the educational programme of the Conference; this is borne out by the reports of the various branches; Aurangabad, Baroda, Bihar, Cochin, Delhi, Gujarat, Hyderabad, Indore and Mysore have sent reports of their work,

At the Delhi session great stress was laid on adult education. I am glad to say that all the above mentioned Branches have devoted their attention to this. Baroda's achievement in having made 120 people literate is particularly laudable. While so much has been done for the adults, primary education has also received due attention. The five schools at Hyderabad have shown marked improvement while those in Bihar and Aurangabad are maintaining steady progress. Delhi, Indore and Gulbarga have opened new schools during the year under review.

The spread of Hindustani as the *lingua franca* of India has been the aim of the Conference for many years, and I am glad to find that its importance has not been overlooked by the branches. Cochin, Delhi, Mysore and Gujarat report work done in this direction.

A hopeful beginning has also been made with regard to our Nursery Schools resolution. Aurangabad, Hyderabad and Mysore are maintaining Nursery schools of their own, while Delhi is giving active help to the local Nursery School Association. Aurangabad in addition runs a creche.

Lectures on Educational and Social subjects have been a feature of this year's work and Aurangabad, Baroda, Bihar and Delhi have arranged some very interesting and instructive lectures by a number of good speakers. Baroda organised lectures with magic lantern slides in mohallas.

Hyderabad is the only branch to have organised debates and the others will do well to follow their example, for, debates are an excellent means for the clarification of ideas and for the propagation of new thoughts and ideals. Besides Baroda and Hyderabad, Calcutta has now started a hostel for College girls.

The Baroda branch has given publicity to the ideals of the Conference by writing about them in the local magazines.

Tripunithura, a sub-branch of Cochin, has been encouraging art and music by helping the local Literacy and Art school. It has given scholarships to deserving students of this school.

Girl guiding is a part of the activities of the Mysore branch and has been making steady progress there.

The Gulbarga sub-branch has opened a domestic science training centre for girls where instruction is given in cooking, sewing, house-keeping and handicrafts.

In the field of health also there has been some activity though very limited. Mysore has been conducting three Ante natal and baby clinics which are very popular. Hyderabad has continued to support their welfare centre.

Mysore has encouraged rural cleanliness by offering prizes for the best kept houses. They also organised a baby show. First aid and home nursing classes are being conducted in Bihar, Delhi and Gulbarga. Thirty-two women have so far obtained their certificates in Delhi.

I regret to report that no branch has taken any special steps towards the promotion of physical culture. This neglect is particularly deplorable, as physical culture should be considered as one of the foremost of our activities, for on our physical fitness depends our capacity for work and the future of our race. There is no mention of medical inspection for school children in any of the reports. I hope the branches are not neglecting this important item of work. Sex education for children too seems not to have attracted any attention. As none of the reports give any mention of it.

With regard to the special work entrusted to me by the Standing Committee, I have to say that I collected from the various provinces all the necessary material to prepare a report on Vocational Education and have studied all the relevant literature about it. I regret however, that I have not been able to write the actual report as, for almost throughout the year, I have been in very bad health. I shall get the report ready if the Standing Committee wishes and gives me more time for it.

With reference to the desire of the Standing Committee that a scheme be prepared for Secondary Education, I have to state that the subject is too vast and controversial to be dealt with by one person single handed. There are diverse systems of Secondary Education in force in this country and scores of ideal schemes suggested for it. I am of the opinion therefore, that if the Committee pursues this matter, they should appoint a sub-committee for it.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the President, the Secretary and the Members of the Standing Committee for their kind co-operation without which the work accomplished by the educational section of the Conference during the past year should not have been possible, particularly in the exceptional circumstances of my ill health.

SOCIAL SECTION REPORT, 1939**Mrs. Gulbanu J. R. Doctor**

It is a matter of satisfaction to note that the women of India have been roused to their sense of injustice in all matters intimately connected with their lives, especially in the field of social, legal and educational disabilities. The A.-I. W. C. was started with the object of evolving plans for their removal. Within a short period of a dozen years we have achieved our object of giving wide publicity to the disabilities under which women in India suffer, and have tried to propose and support measures to eliminate the same. Unfortunately, the opposition offered by the interested and the orthodox section of the public to the legislative measures for the removal of the disabilities has been powerful enough to defeat some of the attempts of legislators, in both Central and Provincial Legislatures. Yet we are glad to note that more and more legislators are coming forward with bills for the removal of women's hardships, and these last three years there has been an influx of bills introduced into our Assemblies. Rights of inheritance, rights to hold and dispose of property, right to divorce in extreme and unbearable cases, enforcement of strict monogamy, prevention of unequal and child-marriages, and last but not least, bills to prevent the pernicious system of giving and taking of dowry, and criminal waste of money at funeral feasts,—and these have engaged the attention of our legislators, and are very strongly supported by women's social reform associations all over India.

It is sad to note that some of these bills were not accepted in the legislatures under various pretexts. Divorce bills were mercilessly criticised as giving undue liberties to women, while two bills were so curtailed as to bring the minimum of benefit through them. All this hurts us terribly, but we women shall not be disappointed. We shall go on agitating for the reforms we have sought for, and since a section of the public is conscious of the absence of adequate and equitable laws for women and is eager to help us in our efforts, we are assured of success in this direction in the near future.

A careful survey of the disabilities of women, of attempts made for their removal, and counter-attempts for their frustration, makes a sad reading for India. Women are asking for nothing more than just and humane treatment, and to be liberated from their disabilities. Even

Turkey, formerly the stronghold of strict purdah and other handicaps for women, took the first opportunity of discarding old customs and usages, and enfranchising their women and freeing them from their disabilities. It succeeded wonderfully because in that country men and women worked as a whole nation and not as two unequal parts of a nation.

Mr. Dabhi's bills in the Bombay Assembly, seeking the suppression of the dowry system and of funeral feasts, have created a strong public opinion against these pernicious customs, and we note with satisfaction that similar legislative measures have been introduced in other Provincial legislatures. Owing to the unfortunate impasse in the Provincial legislatures these bills are suspended, but we hope, only for the time being. We are glad that the Indore State enacted a law, about nine years ago, forbidding expensive funeral feasts.

The evils of beggary and especially of the child-beggar, have been tackled by many Branches, and suggestions have been made for their removal. In our demands for equitable legislation for women, we must not forget the hardships of children,—the beggar child, the delinquent and the mentally deficient child, the orphan and homeless and the helpless child. It is necessary to strictly enforce the Children's Act wherever it exists, and that agitation is carried on for its enactment where it does not.

But neither Governments nor Municipalities can afford to tackle the problem of the child-beggar without monetary support from the people. In Bombay our dream of a Children's Home has materialised, through the admirable efforts of the then Home Member and the public of Bombay who contributed handsome donations towards its expenses.

There is practically no adequate provision in any Province for the mentally deficient child. His plight in an ordinary school is pitiable,—which he is also soon compelled to leave—and in the absence of a suitable institute, the mentally deficient child grows up a mentally deficient man, and passes a most miserable and unhappy life. The A.-I. W. C. should spare no efforts in taking up the cause of the unfortunate child in all its aspects as enumerated above, because the child of today is the citizen of tomorrow.

Bills pertaining to the removal of the disabilities of women have been fully dealt with in the report of the Member-in-charge of the subject. She has made strong propaganda in favour of the Bills. The Member-in-

charge of Legislation has done good lobby work to get the members of the Central Legislature interested in the various Bills and to obtain their support for them, when they were discussed.

We are glad to note that with the attempts in the Provincial as well as Central Legislatures to introduce Bills for social legislation, the ones in the Indian States also are introducing Bills for the removal of the legal disabilities of women.

Encouragement of Cottage Industries and the use of Swadeshi has been undertaken by some of the Branches. Harijan welfare work is progressing and several Branches have organised classes and welfare centres.

All the Branches and Members-in-charge of various subjects have carried on their work satisfactorily. As they are giving their detailed reports, the following points only are worth mentioning here:—

Short Report from Branches

Delhi has appointed sub-committees to deal with the problems of famine-relief, rural reconstruction, education, traffic in women and children, and have started a Rescue Home. The work there is progressing very satisfactorily. In co-operation with the Member-in-charge of Legislation, they waited on the Party Leaders in the Central Legislative Assembly and the Home Member on a deputation, to urge the need for a committee to inquire into the legal disabilities of women. The Branch drafted replies to the N. P. C. Questionnaire. In order to give every encouragement to the use of swadeshi articles the Branch organised a Swadeshi bazaar for indigenous articles.

Indore is interested in Harijan and Rural Uplift Work, and Mass Literacy. Annual donation is given to an orphanage, women labourers are helped to get maternity benefits. A deputation waited on the Prime Minister with a request to give adequate representation to women on all public bodies. A Birth Control Clinic is attached to the Local hospital. A Khadi Exhibition was organised. The Branch hopes to have a Bill introduced in the State Assembly for the Hindu Women's right to Divorce. Protest has been made against the bogus institutions in the State under the names of girls' hostels, rescue-homes, etc. A report on the Questionnaire of the National Planning Committee was drafted.

Baroda is carrying on the work with five sub-branches. A representation was made to the Government with regard to the reforms urgently

needed. Adult education classes for women were conducted regularly. Women's Hostel and Needlework Guild are flourishing. A report was drafted on the N. P. C. Questionnaire.

Cochin with its three sub-branches is very active. Classes in Hindi are conducted. Efforts are made to improve the Baby Welfare Work, and to introduce Cottage Industries. Encouragement is given to vocal and instrumental music and dancing.

Mysore. The Annual Conference was held at the headquarters of one of the districts. The Branch is interested in the spread of literacy, ante-natal and baby clinics, rural work, health problems, industrial classes, and girl-guides. Through the efforts of the Branch eleven seats in the Representative Assembly and two on the Legislative Council have been granted to women.

Gujarat Branch organised a Women's Week in February, which provided diversion to women and was of great educational value. Visits were paid to the Sub-branch at Broach, and three visits to Surat by the same member resulted in opening a new Sub-Branch at Surat. A meeting was arranged in support of Mr. Hegde's Bill, and another to meet Shrimati Kamala Devi. Literacy classes and talks on Hygiene are conducted, as well as a sewing class, and a class for teaching Hindi. Report was drafted on the N. P. C. Questionnaire.

Hyderabad (Deccan) reports steady progress in the work of the A.-I. W. C. The permanent activities of the Branch are several Committees—Schools and Hostels, Vigilance, Health, Legal Disabilities, Citizenship and Publicity. Welfare Centres and Nursery Schools are conducted at the Branch's expenses. A shelter for women and children is maintained. Bills in legislatures were discussed and opinions drafted thereon. As a result of persistent demands for civil rights, the women of Hyderabad have got two seats allotted to them in the Legislative Assembly. There are four sub-Branches all actively engaged in the above programme.

C. P. North is mainly concerned with Adult Literacy and Cottage work. Propaganda was made against the Dowry System.

Assam. Miss Bhalerao's visit resulted in the opening of four Sub-Branches. Village welfare classes are conducted and the members are working for the Maternity Benefits Act. The Sylhet Sub-Branch is taking

steps to remove the lack of provision against infectious diseases. Literacy and First-Aid classes are conducted. A child marriage and the marriage of a minor girl with an old man were prevented through the intervention of the members.

Travancore reports of a local Bill for the prevention of child-marriages which has gone through two readings. A survey has been made at cottage industries employing women and facilities given for marketing the goods. Classes in Hindi and Child-Welfare and Health are conducted. Care of Animals and Poultry and Bee-Keeping are taught. The management of a Nursery School is in their hands, and the Branch is working up for the passing of a Children's Act.

Bombay has two sub-Branches which carry on the work through several sub-committees. During the first half-year five literacy classes were organised, now the number is fifty. A successful Swadeshi Exhibition was held along with the local Conference. Bills in Legislatures were supported and opinions drafted thereon.

Gwalior has started a Nursery School. Demands have been made for bettering girls' education, and a petition has been presented to His Highness the Maharaja Saheb for the removal of women's legal disabilities.

Jath has organised literacy classes and carries on the work through sub-committees on education, handicrafts, health, and athletics.

Konkan has had talks and lectures on various subjects, and given scholarships. Sewing classes are conducted.

Andhra has opened new Branches and is doing propaganda work.

Punjab East. The Health Centre is flourishing.

Simla. The Ladies' Park has proved a success, use of Swadeshi articles is encouraged. Propaganda for Temperance is carried on, grievances of Harijans removed.

Ranchi has a Primary school for girls. Women prisoners in the local jail are taught Hindi.

Tamil Nad. The Local Conference of the Branch was held at Coimbatore which roused immense enthusiasm amongst thousands of women workers in the Spinning Department of the Cotton Mills. One of the Mills

held a reception for delegates who were given an opportunity to meet the women workers. Civic addresses of welcome were presented to Dr. Reddi and Mrs. Cousins.

Moradabad carries on special, educational, health and village uplift work. Maternity and Child Welfare Centres are conducted, and women in Hospitals and in Jails are visited.

Berar. Active work is done in all sub-branches, especially in Adult and Girls' Education.

Maharashtra. Adult literacy classes for women has gained recognition from the Municipal School Board in the shape of a grant. The Labour Committee submitted a Report to the Government Textile Inquiry Committee's Questionnaire. Also drafted a Report on the Questionnaire of the National Planning Committee.

Phaltan is concentrating on Adult Literacy and Child Welfare and Home-Crafts. A women's Co-operative Stores has been opened.

Central Punjab. Conducts classes, in co-operation with the Red Cross, in First-Aid, Home Nursing and Adult Literacy. The Branch is actively working for the Prevention of Traffic in Women and Children. Tours are organised for lectures on Social Problems. A report was drafted on the Questionnaire of the N. P. C.

Faridpore. The local Mahila Samaj has formed itself into a Sub-Branch of East Bengal. A local Baby Show was organised. Visits were paid to women's wards in the Hospital and linen and clothes were supplied. A small exhibition of Needle-Craft was held. Women in Jail were visited.

Madras. Rural Uplift and Child Labour problems are attended to, and representatives have been sent to various local Bodies. A report was drafted on the N. P. C. Questionnaire. Hospitals were visited. Bills on social welfare were discussed.

U. P. Agra. Held its Branch Conference at Cawnpore which is a big Industrial town, to facilitate the study of the problems of women labourers. It is actively co-operating in Red Cross and Jail reform work.

C. P. South. Work has been carried on for reviving old sub-Branches and opening new ones. Visits are paid to Child Welfare Centres and Jails.

Sind. (Dr.) Mrs. Tarabai, the Branch representative, with the help of the members, has been able to prevent several marriages punishable under the Sarda Act and has instituted cases of flagrant breach of the Act. She feels that there is still a great scope of stiffening the provisions of this Act and the work of prevention of marriages of young girls by old men should at once be taken up by our legislators in the Centre and in the Provinces.

Sangli organised a Training Camp for Social Workers, which proved a great success.

Four-Anna Membership. Several Branches have enrolled and others are working to enrol Four-Anna Members.

On the whole the various Branches and Sub-Bran­ches have been very active with their work regarding the Welfare of Women and Children in all aspects of life.

LIAISON REPORT 1939-1940

Begum Hamid Ali

As War broke out early in September 1939 all communications were stopped for about a month. We have practically done nothing more than suggest names of distinguished visitors, who might be invited for the Conference. By the end of December War conditions made it impossible for any overseas visitors to accept our invitation except those who happen to be in our country. We welcome them most heartily to the Conference.

I have had very few letters from Europe, as letters and papers either do not reach at all, or reach very late on both sides.

Letters from Miss Andrews, Chairman, and Dr. Georgina Sweet, Hon. President Pan-Pacific Women's Association inform us that the 5th Pan-Pacific Conference planned for 1940 at Wellington, New Zealand, has been indefinitely postponed.

Miss Harrison in her letter dated October 12 says:—"We shall have to depend for our Bulletin on straight news from you and others." She informs me that Miss Myrtle Wright will edit the Bulletin in future. Mrs. Lankester and Miss Harrison will continue to help.

The British Section of the Women's International League for Peace passed the following resolution in the first week of October 1939, which

shows their interest, sympathy, and understanding of the present crisis in India:—

“We, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Executive Committee, urge the Government to make clear the terms upon which it would be willing to make Peace.

“We urge further that the terms should include the recognition of the equality of Race, and of the rights and liberties of the individual, and respect for the integrity of small as well as great nations.

“As an earnest of its acceptance of these fundamental principles we urge the Government to make clear its intention of bringing India into free and equal partnership in the family of Nations.”

Madame Baer, Jt. Chairman of the same League writes on 11th December 1939, “We hope that India will soon find a solution for her problems in accordance with the wishes of her people, whose dignified non-violent struggle remains an example to Europe.”

The following resolution was adopted by the Executive Committee of the League in Geneva on December 5:—

“The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom earnestly hopes that the Government of Great Britain will soon recognise the claim of India to enter on a footing of equality into the Comity of Nations in accordance with the Conception of Freedom and Justice expressed in Parliament by its Statesmen.”

Mrs. Lankester (who I am glad to say will continue to be our Liaison Officer for 1940) writes that the Liaison Group is anxious to keep their contacts with India. In view of the situation in India at the moment there is a greater need for understanding and holding together. She writes,—
“We want you to realise how much we feel this and the Committee expressed the earnest hope, that you at your end would sent us all the information that you could and keep us in touch as far as possible. We especially want to hear of the activities of women and the A.-I. W. C. in particular. We hope to publish the Bulletin, if not at regular intervals, at least as often as we can. We shall be very anxious to have full reports sent to us of the Annual Sessions by some of your members. I had to report to the Committee how hard I had found it in the past to get contributions from

Indian Women themselves though I had continually asked them to send me something, even if it were only notes. If we can get our information only from newspapers we must not be blamed if we do not always put the right emphasis on things. If this idea of a Bulletin for Foreign Circulation issued at your end materialises then we should be very glad to send this out together with our Bulletin, which would then, perhaps, assume smaller proportions."

I have the Social Workers' Bulletin from the Egyptian Association for Social Studies, which includes interesting articles on:—

- (a) Medical Social Work,
- (b) A short study of juvenile delinquency in Egypt,
- (c) Child guidance Clinics,
- (d) Social legislation and the competition of Armaments,
- (e) Handicapped children,
- (f) Labour problems and education.

It shows that the problems of India are the same problems all the world over. While reading the Bulletin one forgets that it is about Egypt and not India. Shrimati Kamaladevi visited Egypt and made some contacts with Egyptian women. She gave a talk about India at Port Said and had a public reception at Cairo where an address was read to her on behalf of the women of Egypt. She requested the audience to delegate some women to attend the annual session of the A.-I. W. C.

At Alexandria Shrimati Kamaladevi emphasised the need of closer co-operation between the two countries.

The Thirteenth Congress of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship was attended by—

- (1) Kunwarani Lady Maharaj Singh (Leader of the delegation),
- (2) Shrimati Kamaladevi (Vice-President, A.-I. W. C.),
- (3) Dr. Malinibai Sukthankar (Hon. General Secretary, A.-I. W.C.).

They have sent in reports of the Congress and some suggestions for our future connection with this International Organisation to the President Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade—which I have no doubt will be placed before you for consideration.

The Bulletin of Indian Women's Movement, edited by our Liaison Officer, lays great stress on the value of keeping "contacts with India".

"In spite of all obstacles our links with India must not be broken", as they are, "more than ever important during a time of tension." The Bulletin gives the information that Indian representation on the corresponding committee of the Women's work of the International Labour Organisation is to increase shortly by the appointment of six Indian Women, namely—Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Krishnabai Wagh (Bombay), Mrs. Anusuyabai Kale (Nagpur), Mrs. S. C. Mazumdar (Faridpur), Dr. K. Tarabai (Karachi), and Mrs. E. G. Currimbhai (Bombay), in addition to Shrimati Anusuya Sarabhai (Ahmedabad) already on the Committee. The committee was set up by the I. L. O. in 1932 to give opinion on the social and economic aspect of questions relating to women's work.

REPORT OF THE LIAISON GROUP OF BRITISH WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS

**Mrs. Grace Lankester (Liaison Officer),
On behalf of the Liaison Group Committee.**

In presenting the report of the work of the Liaison Group during the past year, the Committee would reiterate its regret, expressed in its special message, that no personal representative of the Group will be able to be present at the annual session. The sense of loss through this break in direct contact, after five years, is acute, but the Committee is confident that the links forged will not be easily broken. It will look forward eagerly to receiving reports of this annual session from those who were there, and only in this way will the loss be diminished.

The tragedy of the war cast shadows on much active work even before its actual declaration in September last, and it will be understood that there is not so much to report from the Liaison Group as in previous years. We have been fortunate in having as a visitor to our country the Honorary Secretary of the A.-I. W. C., Dr. Malinibai Sukthankar, and the Committee was delighted to make contact with her and to bring her in touch with various forms of social activities. It was also a great pleasure to welcome one of the distinguished Vice-Presidents, in the person of Mrs. Kamala Devi, whose ability and charm captured many hearts. We only regretted that these two friends were here during the holiday season, and just before the outbreak of war, which made it difficult to arrange for adequate meetings, such as would have been held in happier circumstances.

Mrs. Kamaladevi left us to go on tour in U. S. A. and we are glad that two of our members, Mrs. Corbett Ashby and Miss Harrison were able to help her in establishing contact with many leading Americans, prominent in both the women's movement and in international work. Our latest news is that Mrs. Kamaladevi, through these introductions, has been invited to attend the important 'Cause and Cure of War' Conference in January and that she is hoping to extend her visit so that she can be present.

Earlier in the year a meeting was arranged by the Group in order to hear from Miss Mary Dingman an account of her visit to India, and especially her report of the annual session which she attended as a special visitor. Miss Dingman thrilled her audience by her vivid description of the invasion of Delhi by the Conference members and of the very successful session, as well as giving her impressions of active work that she had seen in various parts of India. She was deeply impressed by an interview she had had with Mahatma Gandhi, and she valued this and other opportunities which were given her during her short visit, of getting to the heart of movements in India.

The Liaison Group eagerly awaited the return of Miss Agatha Harrison, their special representative at the last annual session, and has heard much from her subsequently of the developing work of the Conference, and also of the general situation in India. It was extremely fortunate that at the large meeting in London, which was held in June to welcome her back, both Dr. Malinibai Sukthankar and Kunwarani Maharaj Singh were able to be on the platform, and the audience had the opportunity of hearing two excellent speeches from these Indian women leaders, which made a deep impression. Lord Sankey presided over the meeting.

The Bulletin, issued by the Liaison Group, continues to circulate, although the last number had to be abbreviated and appeared in duplicated, instead of its usual printed form. The Committee was grateful to Miss Myrtle Wright, who attended the last annual session of the Conference as a visitor, for editorial help.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby continues to give the Committee her help as Chairman, and Miss Todhunter has acted as Secretary while Mrs. Lankester continues to be the Liaison Officer, though she hopes that a permanent editor may be found for the Bulletin. The representatives of orga-

nisations on the Committee are as follows:—Miss D. S. Solomon for the British Commonwealth League, Miss E. Maitland for the Six Point Group, Miss Agatha Harrison for the British Section of the Women's International League and Miss F. A. Underwood for the Women's Freedom League. Miss Maitland has kindly taken over the treasurership of the funds of the Group.

During this tragic period of the war, much constructive work in many parts of the world, may be frustrated, but the Liaison Group in Great Britain earnestly hopes that the links which bind the women of this country with the women of India may not be weakened. We would once more confirm our belief that India has a contribution of unique value to bring to the family of nations, now sundered by hatred and strife, and the women of India have special treasures of their own for the enrichment of an impoverished world. We look forward to the day when India, rejoicing in her own freedom, will join with other nations who value justice and liberty, in building up a better world on surer foundations than those which seem now to have fallen in ruins. Already, putting aside despair, we must together begin to plan for a happier future, when nations will learn to respect and co-operate with each other for the common good, and discard for ever the methods of violence and aggression.

REPORT OF MEMBER FOR CONSTITUTION 1939-40

Miss Leilamani Naidu

Articles: In overhauling the A.-I. W. C. Constitution, a year's study and debate led, in January 1939, to a final ratification by the Body General of the ARTICLES as revised and amended with a view to reshape the structure in accordance with the expanding work and ideals of the organisation. These Articles were issued as a Yellow Pamphlet in February and reprinted in the Delhi Report. The main facets of the revision were the stabilising of the A.-I. W. C. as an Association with branches and membership, a reorientation of the Policy whilst retaining the essence of the original, and an amplification of the Aims and Objects.

Bye-Laws: As more than a cursory glance at the proposed changes to the BYE-LAWS was not found possible at Delhi, the Standing Committee invited Rani Laxmibai Rajwade to resubmit her draft at the half-yearly meeting. This draft was presented in reprint (White Pamphlet) and discussed clause by clause at Sangli in July 1939. Difference of opinion

arose mainly in regard to the Branches and Sub-branches—their formation, composition, membership, functioning, and relation to the Central.

The revised BYE-LAWS, as eventually modified and accepted by the majority present at Sangli, were circulated by me in November (Saffron Pamphlet), with notice to the effect that the section dealing with Branches would, before its technically required inclusion as part of the Articles, be placed before the General Body at the next session of the A.-I. W. C.

On January, 25, 1940, the Standing Committee at Allahabad, under the chairmanship of Rani Rajwade, directed the Constitution Member and a group of members selected from the Standing Committee to subject the Sangli version of the Bye-laws to a fresh analysis and make their recommendations to the new Standing Committee, to be held under the chairmanship of Begum Hamid Ali, on February 1. It was also found expedient to postpone a full dress debate on the Branches Section until a workable synthesis were evolved from the plurality of views existing on the question.

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REPORT OF MEMBER FOR HEALTH

Dr. Mrs. M. B. Kagal

During the year under review I made efforts to collect information on certain aspects of health and the results of my inquiries are given in detail later in this report. Only six replies have been received to my questionnaire and of these two are from Delhi, the other four being from Hyderabad (Deccan), Shillong, Moradabad and Bihar.

Branches: I have no intimation as to whether other centres had occasion to consider the questionnaire or any other aspect of health, either through the Members of the Sub-Committee or through any other means.

I received the following communications from the Provinces. One was from Agra forwarding a copy of resolutions on health. These recommended measures for limitation of families and for providing Health Centres for rural areas in the Provinces. A resolution from Calcutta Branch recommending women of the Province to take intelligent interest in dietetics. From Cochin came a request for the supply of a balanced diet chart suitable for a rice consuming area.

Family Planning: I had considerable correspondence with Mrs. Datta, Organiser for India, International Sub-Committee of the Family Planning

Association, with its Headquarters in London. As a result of inquiries arising out of this correspondence it appears that our constituent groups are not doing any work in this connection.

National Planning: The questions on Health in the questionnaire issued by the National Planning Committee on "Women's Role in Planned Economy" were considered and replied to. These questions included amongst others the subjects of

- (1) Medical Certificate by Law before marriage, and
- (2) Early marriage, premature motherhood and purdah, with special reference to health and statistics.

The questionnaire also invited suggestions and views on the highly controversial subjects (their principles and practice) such as,

- (i) Sterilisation of the unfit or incurably diseased,
- (ii) Abortion of the unwanted embryo, and
- (iii) Compulsory dissolution of marriage on the occurrence of permanent lunacy or on contracting certain diseases.

Nutrition: I took up the question of nutrition and issued a questionnaire to elicit information and views on the subject from the constituent groups as well as to stimulate interest in the subject. A Chart on balanced diet prepared by Major W. H. Crichton I.M.S. Chief Health Officer, Delhi Province, was circulated to the constituent groups with the author's permission. This chart deals with the needs of the body in the form of proteins vitamins, etc., describes their functional importance in the body in simple language, and indicates the source from which the requirements can be obtained. A typical balanced meal for a non-vegetarian has been shown in the chart. Changes to suit a vegetarian diet in Cochin, a rice consuming province, were suggested by me on inquiry.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire was:--

- (1) What is the staple article of food in your Province—Wheat, Bajra, Rice, etc.?
- (2) What is the average price?
- (3) How much per head of this article is consumed?

- (4) What is the average price of milk per seer (1) In the Urban area and (2) in the Rural area?
- (5) How much milk per capita per day is consumed?
- (6) What kind of fat is generally used by the middle class and poorer classes of people for cooking?
- (7) How much per head per day is used?
- (8) Are green vegetables available throughout the year in the rural area?
- (9) Is fruit available throughout the year at a reasonable price in the urban areas so that the lower middle class people can afford to buy?
- (10) In what way do you consider the diet of your Province deficient?
- (11) What are the chief deficiency diseases in your Province?

The response, I regret to say, was not very encouraging. But the few replies that were received give a fair insight into the existing conditions. The replies came from far off Shillong in the East, Hyderabad (Deccan) in the South, Bihar in the Centre and Delhi in the North. They indicate:—

- (1) That fruit and green vegetables are generally available throughout the year except for a couple of months depending on the season and the locality.
- (2) That ghee and mustard oil is largely used for fat content.
- (3) That in the rice consuming areas the diet is deficient in fat content, protein and vitamins.
- (4) That the price of milk except in Hyderabad (Deccan) and Moradabad, is moderate and should be within the reach of the poor.
- (5) That diets that are predominantly vegetarian lack in proteins, fats and certain vitamins. The deficiency is particularly marked in rice consuming areas, and where the winters and summers are particularly severe.

- (6) That in spite of milk and vegetable being available in fair quantities throughout the year at moderate prices, the prevailing deficiency diseases indicate that both these important articles of diet are not consumed in sufficient quantities.
- (7) While these dietary defects are noticed in urban areas they are particularly marked in rural areas, partly owing to poverty and partly due to customs which prevent the sale of these commodities by the producers in their own villages.
- (8) The above is particularly prevalent in villages bordering on urban areas where transport facilities and temptation of monetary gain induces the villager to take his products to the urban areas for sale.
- (9) The adulteration of ghee is very common and the practice appears to be on the increase.
- (10) The use of unpolished rice is not popular with the result diseases arising out of the use of polished rice are common in rice consuming areas.
- (11) That balanced diet charts require to be prepared for separate Provinces to suit the poor classes and that these would vary very considerably from Province to Province.

Conclusion: I have purposely abstained from reproducing the replies received in connection with the questionnaire *in extenso*, in order to maintain the proportion of this report. The constituent groups can however obtain further information from the General Secretary or from me, on application. The answers from Hyderabad (Deccan) are fairly complete while information for the Delhi Province is also available in detail.

Suggestions: Cheap balanced diet charts are under preparation

- (1) and any information and suggestions from the constituent groups on this subject would help the satisfactory completion of this work.
- (2) the work of the Health Section is proposed to be divided in the following recognised sections:—

- (1) Community Health,

- (2) Personal Health and Hygiene, and
- (3) Health Propaganda.

Community Hygiene: This work is mainly carried out by the Health Departments and the work of the members of the All-India Women's Conference would be to examine critically the existing facilities and to suggest improvements where and when necessary. This activity should find a prominent place in the programme of the workers of the Health Section.

Personal Health and Hygiene Nutrition: Nutrition is the most urgent problem connected with personal health. The work started during the year in collecting data should be carried forward to completion by the preparation of balanced diet charts for the different Provinces. These should be examined by a special expert committee, and after the experts have finally approved them they should be printed in large numbers and made available to the public.

Housing: Although this is a subject which can be grouped under community health I have particularly selected it for classification under personal hygiene. The habits of the people, the mode of living and use of accommodation affect the health more than the actual accommodation available. This is particularly noticeable in the rural areas. On the question of housing, the National Planning Committee has already started work, and has issued a questionnaire. This was examined and replied to by a Committee of the Delhi Branch. The All-India Women's Conference should await the report of the National Planning Committee and take up work after examining the recommendations contained in the report. To start work before the publication of the report is likely to lead to unnecessary duplication of work.

Propaganda: The best medium for useful, effective, and lasting propaganda is to carry it through the educational institutions by preparing the next generation to understand health in all its aspects. Critical examination of the school curricula to see if a suitable number of health hours are included would appear necessary. Graded books on health problems for primary school children is an urgent necessity and this work needs to be taken up as early as possible.

Maternity and Child Welfare: This is, or at any rate should be, the most vital problem for the Health Section of the All-India Women's Con-

ference. Being largely a question of community health it is not advisable to work in this direction except in the advisory and consultative capacity. But even in this direction there is considerable scope. It is for the constituent groups to examine and decide standards which can be attained and put in practice, depending on the all important financial considerations. For this purpose strong and energetic Sub-Committees should be formed at each Branch and their reports of work, efforts, achievements and suggestions should be placed before the Echo meetings for their consideration and information.

To give a lead to the Provinces and Branches the All-India Women's Conference should collect and disseminate information, data, and minimum standards accepted by the League of Nations. There is no objection to our laying down minimum standards to suit Indian conditions, but my earnest suggestion is that a beginning should be made and that too without delay.

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HARIJAN WELFARE

Mrs Rameshwari Nehru, Member-in-Charge

In July, 1939 the greatest event in the history of the Harijan movement took place, namely, the sacred temple of Minakshi-Sundareshvar at Madura was opened to the Harijans. Immediately after that a few temples in Tanjore, Kuttalam and certain other places were also opened. This was achieved as a result of an intensive campaign conducted by the Harijan Sewak Sangh. At numerous meetings, held all over Tamil Nad, over which I had the privilege to preside, thousands of caste Hindus gave their support to the cause of temple entry. These temples were opened with the full support of the worshiping public without the pressure of any law. Later on the Temple Entry Act was passed by the Madras Government safeguarding the workers from legal prosecution. An ordinance was also passed by the Governor with the same object.

In the education line good work was done during the year as practically all the Congress Governments increased their grants for this purpose. The number of boys taking advantage of educational facilities both in schools and colleges is increasing. But the girls' education is still far behind.

There was all round good progress and distinct signs of the public social conscience getting awakened to the evils of untouchability, are visible.

I am glad to report that the work of the branches of the All-India Women's Conference this year has been much better than other years. As many as fourteen branches have mentioned work done in this connection. Such interest was not taken before. Following are the names of the branches:

- (1) Bihar, (2) Faridpur Sub-Branch, (3) Punjab Central, (4) Baroda, (5) Maharashtra, (6) Tamilnadu, (7) Simla, (8) Delhi, (9) Konkan, (10) Calcutta, (11) U. P. Agra, (12) Indore, (13) Mysore and (14) Gujerat.

Of these Delhi and Calcutta have well maintained their old schools. Bihar, Baroda, Coimbatore, U. P. Agra have started new schools for the children. Central Punjab branch has started a girls' school where sewing is also taught. Maharashtra, Baroda, and Gujerat are running literacy classes for adult women. Indore has given stipends for girls for prosecuting studies. Mysore helped the needy students with reading and writing materials. Mysore and Faridpur held successful baby shows. Simla helped towards the maintenance of a Night School. They also appealed to the authorities and have obtained the promise of new quarters for Harijans as well as redress of grievances in the matter of pay and clothing for Harijans in Municipal employ. Some literacy work was also undertaken. In the Health Centre, Harijan women are provided with wool and taught how to knit pull-overs for their children. Successful temperance work was also done amongst them. This affected nearly 200 men. Harikirthans and kathas were held in Harijan Mohallas in Lahore, where caste Hindus were also invited. In Konkan mixed functions were held on festivals. Baroda put up a radio set in a Harijan mohalla. Maharastra has done some relief work. Delhi got a well dug with the help of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Indore in collaboration with the Harijan Sevak Sangh did very creditable service in the literacy campaign organised by the Sangh. One of the members collected Rs. 1,000 for the purpose. Maharastra helped in the collections of Thakkar Bapa Jayanti Fund.

All this is very encouraging and I hope that the year 1940 will show even better results.

REPORT OF THE MEMBER FOR OPIUM

Begum Hamid Ali

The world's annual production of opium is estimated at about 2,300 tons excluding the quantity produced in areas over which no sort of check can be kept. Opium has now become the favourite narcotic, and by the discovery of a new method of taking it, is rapidly supplanting the hashish of former times. Until a year or two ago, opium was smoked or chewed, chewing being a method which might conceivably be pursued for years without producing an uncontrollable habit or destroying health. Today crude opium is boiled in water, and the resulting concoction is injected by means of a hypodermic syringe.

Thirty-six Egyptian whole-sale dealers sold 74,334 syringes and 414,000 needles last year. Of this at least 49,000 syringes were sold to the non-professional public, so rapid has been the spread of the new fashion. It is even reported that nurse maids are putting their troublesome charges to sleep with a weak solution of morphine from boiled opium, drops of which they put on their fingers for the baby to suck. Palestine was formerly merely a transit country for the drug trade between Syria and Egypt but it is now rapidly becoming a market for the drugs. Men of all nationalities are eager to engage in the drug traffic. Donkey cart-wheels, hollow sandwich loaves, galvanising plants, priests' robes, sacks of potatoes, the soles of shoes, Turkish sweetmeats, a consignment of dried apricots, a pail of dirty water, and the space under the nickel-plated cover of a sparewheel fixed on the back of a car, are among the hiding places used by the smugglers to bring the drugs across the frontiers. The trafficker's methods of distribution are as interesting as those used for smuggling. Here is an instance: Evangelo kept a type-writing bureau which served as a cloak for the retailing of heroin and morphine. A buyer would call at the shop, pay the amount required and then be told to go to a certain street. One of the sons would then ride a cycle to get the stuff from the house or the wholesale dealer, make it up into a small packet and drop it in front of the buyer as he passed him on the bicycle. When the police raided the house, the younger son who was keeping watch, at the end of the street recognised the plain-clothed constable, entered a grocer's shop nearby, and sent a packet of potatoes by a servant to his sister at home. She returned it saying "We do not need potatoes today". At the same time she gave the boy something written in Greek on a piece

of paper. The raiding party met the boy and read the note. In the home the officer found a piece of paper which tallied with the note and read "It is with the potatoes; take it"; true enough with the potatoes was a parcel containing with other things 27 grammes of heroin and some morphine. (Extracts from the London Times Weekly). Very recently the Nizam's Railway police discovered two trunks with false bottoms labelled "utensils" which contained a maund of opium. According to the report of the Collector of Excise, Calcutta, the consumption of charas or hashish is increasing in Calcutta. This dangerous drug is mixed in pan or bidis or cigarettes and is eaten or smoked, mostly by students, to an alarming degree. We appeal to the public to help in the campaign against this insidious evil. Bengal has now superseded Bombay by importing the largest amount of liquor into India. But there is a welcome decrease in the number of opium shops, illegal trafficking and sale of opium due no doubt to the vigilance of the authorities. It is good to see that the Government of Sind has completely prohibited the sale of 'charas' from October 1939. Although the Government of the United Provinces has been very active in its prohibition policy (they had a number of temperance meetings in the Farrukhabad district alone in November) we see how helpless any Government can be unless the people of the whole province co-operate with it. In Lucknow (quoted from the Statesman) Aishbagh was the paradise of opium eaters on the second day of Id. Sitting in small groups, the addicts passed cups of opium round, to the accompaniment of music from the sitar or sarod, and revelled in sleepy ecstasy, relating stories of the time when Oudh was ruled by kings and opium eating was so popular. This quaint custom of fraternisation among opium-eaters is believed to date back to the days of the kings of Oudh. A large crowd of spectators watched this queer old custom revived. The prohibition movement is growing stronger in India (in spite of such occasional lapses) having public opinion generally behind it. The exercise of the introduction of prohibition on the part of the Governments of the various provinces and states does not mean a mere crude exercise of power, but it signifies that the men at the head of Government are carrying out the wishes of the majority of the people. A strong prohibition sentiment based on the knowledge of the social evils of drink, opium, charas, ganja, and other narcotics exist in India.

There are three kinds of harmful stimulants which are included in all prohibition legislation: (a) Alcohol made out of the fermented juice

of cereals or fruit or flowers or sap of fruit trees made in all countries of the world; (b) Opium and opium-manufactured drugs which are produced from poppy. Opium is either drunk or smoked or eaten. Taken in excess, it is dangerous in all forms. Opium smoking often leads to lunacy. It is grown largely in Asia. Charas and Ganja and bhang are grown mostly in India; (c) Cocaine is made of Coca fruit and is grown chiefly in the Malay States.

The policy of prohibition has a world wide support. A manifesto signed by the medical professors of Great Britain and India affirms that it has been proved by scientific experiments and confirmed by experience that;—(1) Alcohol, cocaine, opium and othe intoxicating drugs such as bhang and ganja are poison. (2) Even a moderate use of these is harmful especially in Tropical countries like India. They are of no avail permanently to relieve physical and mental strain.

How the use of drugs can be abused is evident from the report of the Chinese delegate on the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium at Geneva, (London Times, June 9, 1939). He stated that drug addiction has become so common among Japanese soldiers that the Japanese Head Quarters has been obliged to issue an order prohibiting the use of drugs in the Army. Even so there were in Nanking hospital 1,000 Japanese soldiers under treatment for drug addiction. The Japanese Government proposed to collect 300 million dollars in revenue from the drug traffic in the occupied provinces of China. We deplore the fact that the proposed All-India legislation for the control of drugs both imported and indigenous is still held up by the failure of two provincial governments to place before their respective legislatures the empowering resolution, already implemented by nine provinces. The two lagging behind are, we understand, Bengal and Sind. So far the following provinces have made a serious effort to introduce prohibition in their areas in spite of the great loss in revenue. (Assam, Bihar, Bombay, C. P., U. P., Madras, Bengal, N.-W. F. P. and Orissa). The Smritis which are our written Hindu law prescribe the maximum price of intoxicants, the Quran too denounces the use of intoxicants as strongly as any other religious code. Under the circumstances all provinces should forego this unrighteous source of revenue. Hyderabad is making amends for its past sins by a well-conducted state propaganda for temperance. A free reading room and library have been opened and monthly magazines are issued in Telugu and Urdu. The

Committee is also making arrangements to open more playgrounds and to establish a temperance colony of 50 houses which are offered on low rent to persons abstaining from drink. (Indian Temperance news). The Abkari report of Hyderabad State 1937-1938 reports decrease in number of rationed shops but the increase in the consumption of opium, ganja, and other hemp drugs is deplorable. We are glad to note that under the opium and Intoxicating Act of 1924 the cultivation of poppy is prohibited. And for the sale of cocaine and morphia special license and permits are required.

In the N.-W. F. P., Dera Ismail Khan district went dry in April, 1938 and partial prohibition was introduced in two other districts.

REPORT OF MEMBER FOR LEGAL DISABILITIES

Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta

Mrs. Asafali willingly joined this committee, and the help I received from her and Our President, Rani Rajwade, made my task quite smooth.

It is really a matter of great satisfaction to find that since the last two or three years legislators in the Centre, as well as in the Provinces and States are paying a great deal of attention to the question of removing legal disabilities of Women in India. The All-India Women's Conference has tried to persuade legislators to bring forward bills to improve the present position of women regarding marriage, divorce, rights of inheritance and maintenance etc., to bring about a wholesale change in the status of women suited to the vast progress, the country has made during the last two decades.

In the beginning of February, 1939, a Bill further to amend the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, 1937, was introduced by Mr. A. C. Dutt in the Central Legislative Assembly. The subject of this Bill was to give a daughter that right of inheritance to which she is entitled under the text of Yagnavalkya, Vishnu and other exponents of Hindu law, and to which she is entitled in equity and justice. Mrs. Asafali, member-in-charge legislation A.-I. W. C., and our President Rani Laxmibai Rajwade asked me to circulate the details of the Bill along with whatever expert opinion I could get on it. I approached Sir Govind Madgaoker in Baroda. Sir Madgaoker's opinion was that the question of the right of inheritance of a daughter in Hindu Society is a very complicated one, so long as the system of joint family exists. However, he said that every movement which conferred greater rights on women should be supported by educated

women; and clear case should be made for a gradual and cautious approach to the problem. I consulted other eminent lawyers of Baroda and Ahmedabad and sent the amendments to the new Bill for consideration to the mover of the Bill and other authorities concerned and circulated the whole Bill with the suggested amendments in my first circular amongst our members.

Dr. Deshmukh's Bill seeking to grant Hindu women the right to divorce was to be discussed in the Central Legislative Assembly on the 11th of April. Hence I issued a circular to be sent round to the Standing Committee Members requesting them to hold emergency meetings of their executive committees to pass resolutions to support the principle of the Bill and to ask for incorporation of clauses 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Shrimati Radhabai Subbarayan's Bill to "Prevent Polygamous Marriages" in Dr. Deshmukh's Bill and also urging upon the Central Assembly to refer it to a Select Committee of both the Houses of which Shrimati Subbarayan must be a member. Although aware of the fact that during the course of the last year and a half the branches had held several meetings and passed resolutions to the same effect, the request was made on the assumption that it was essential that on the eve of the introduction of the Bill in the Assembly the opinion of the A.-I. W. C. must be before the eyes of the members of the Assembly. Accordingly, telegrams were sent to the authorities concerned by most of the branches. Press propaganda in the mother tongue was made by many of the branches. Unfortunately, Dr. Deshmukh's Bill was taken up in the Assembly at a time when the House was very thin and even Dr. Deshmukh was not able to attend the session of the Assembly; the result was that it was thrown out before being sent to a select committee.

In my circular 2, a copy of a resolution moved by Shri Jinaraja Hegde was sent to the Standing Committee Members with a request to launch a very vigorous campaign immediately against the attitude of the Government taken up at the time of the introduction of the resolution and also to request all the members of the Assembly to help the cause of the Indian Women and to make all efforts to have Mr. Hegde's resolution passed. Mrs. Asafali, Member-in-charge, Legislation, and some other members, suggested that a deputation consisting of the office-bearers of the A.-I. W. C. should wait on the various political groups of the Central Assembly as well as on the Government and that a publicity campaign should be carried on

Committee is also making arrangements to open more playgrounds and to establish a temperance colony of 50 houses which are offered on low rent to persons abstaining from drink. (Indian Temperance news). The Abkari report of Hyderabad State 1937-1938 reports decrease in number of rationed shops but the increase in the consumption of opium, ganja, and other hemp drugs is deplorable. We are glad to note that under the opium and Intoxicating Act of 1924 the cultivation of poppy is prohibited. And for the sale of cocaine and morphia special license and permits are required.

In the N.-W. F. P., Dera Ismail Khan district went dry in April, 1938 and partial prohibition was introduced in two other districts.

REPORT OF MEMBER FOR LEGAL DISABILITIES

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Mrs. Lilavati Munshi's Bill on the prevention of polygamy and Mr. Bhogilal Lala's Bill for dissolution and nullity of marriage among Hindus were circulated to the Standing Committee members, as the Secretary to the Bombay legislative Assembly had sent copies to the A.-I. W. C. office for eliciting opinion. Several Branches sent their replies to me, and I consulted some of the eminent lawyers in Ahmedabad and Bombay. Mrs. Asafali sent a number of suggestions and changes to be made in the Bill.

My third circular referred to Mr. Kazmi's Bill to grant Muslim Women the right to seek dissolution of marriage, and giving the information that the Bill was passed in the Central Assembly with the suggested amendments. The Standing Committee members were requested to circulate copies of this bill throughout their branches and sub-branches and to draw the attention of Muslim women to this salutary law and thank Mr. Kazmi—the mover of this Bill, Syed Ghulam Bhik Naizang, M.L.A., and the Hon. Sir Zafarullah Khan, and the leader of the Congress Nationalist Parties in the Assembly for enacting this much-needed piece of legislation.

At the half yearly meeting at Sangli the two Bombay's Bills were very thoroughly discussed. The Chief Judge of the State very kindly helped the members with his valuable suggestions on the subject. The considered opinion of the Standing Committee was sent to the sponsors of the Bills and also to the Secretary to the Legislative Assembly and also to the Secretary of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly, Bombay. These Bills are still pending in the Legislative Assembly on account of the resignation of the Congress Ministry due to the crisis in the political situation.

In my circular No. 5, Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit's Bill, for better provision for the Control and Supervision of Orphanages, Widows' and Rescue Homes and Marriage Bureaus in the U. P., was circulated. A measure of this kind should be passed in all the provinces and Indian States. Two bills were sent forward by the Bhopal Government for getting public opinion, one relating to child marriage restriction and the other on restricting the expenditure on ceremonials and festivities in connection with births, marriages and deaths. The A.-I. W. C. has all along been requesting all the States to enact child marriage restraint Acts on the same lines as the Sarda Act and it is very gratifying to find that the state of Bhopal has taken up the matter.

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of the A. I. W. C. was drafted and released to the press by the President on the 11th April, 1939. Copies of this statement were circulated to all the members of the Central Assembly. The suggestion made by me that a deputation on behalf of the A. I. W. C. should wait on the Government and the Party Leaders in the Central Assembly did not appeal to the Standing Committee. The Delhi Branch of the A.-I. W. C. was, however, persuaded to depute some of its members to approach the Government and the Party Leaders as it was felt that a personal approach was essential. The deputation waited on all those concerned and urged them to support the Resolution. The Leader of the Muslim League Party was entirely in agreement with the demand contained in the Resolution provided the enquiry was restricted to Hindus only, since in his opinion the Muslim women were satisfied with the Shariat Law. The Leader of the European Group stated that he would support the demand if the representatives of the communities concerned did not oppose it. The Leader of the Congress Party while in agreement with the demand that the legal position of Hindu women should not be such as to militate against their interests, maintained that any changes which upset the framework on which the Hindu Social System was based, would lead to chaos. He was of opinion that a Committee as envisaged in the Resolution would not be able to cope with the problem. On the other hand, he felt that if women could state in what respect in their opinion the law needed a change, any lawyer well versed in Hindu Law would be able to do the needful. The Leader of the Congress Nationalist Party would not commit himself but had no objection to members of his party voting as they liked.

Since the fate of the Resolution appeared to depend entirely on the attitude of the Government of India, the deputation also interviewed Sir N. N. Sircar, the Law Member. The deputation placed the point of view and the demands of the women of India before him and were surprised to find him not only sympathetic, but willing to prove that his objections to the resolution were based on grounds of practical and statutory difficulties. He was willing to concede that the position of Hindu women in regard to the right of separate residence and maintenance was very unsatisfactory and that if Sri Hegde was willing to limit the scope of the Resolution to cover this point alone he would not only accept the amended resolution but would see to it that the Government appointed a Committee to inquire into this aspect of the problem.

Since the alternatives to the Law Member's proposal would in all pro-

bability have meant the defeat of the original resolution or led to Government's refusal to appoint the Committee, Sri Hegde and the Leader of the Congress Party agreed to amend the Resolution as suggested by the Law Member. The amendment was moved by Dr. G. V. Deshmukh and the amended Resolution was accepted and subsequently a Committee appointed. Although the Committee's scope of inquiry is very limited as compared with the original resolution, the Government have, for the first time, accepted the principle of appointing a Committee in response to a non-official demand.

3. The position with regard to Dr. G. V. Deshmukh's Bill to grant Hindu women the right of divorce which came up for discussion on the 11th April 1939, was a complicated and difficult one. The A. I. W. C. had supported the principle of the Bill and urged that this right should be mutually shared with men, while the Government's attitude in opposing it was on the further ground that it was not comprehensive enough and could not be altered in the Select Committee for technical reasons. The Bill was defeated in the Autumn Session of the Central Legislative Assembly owing to the absence of the Congress Party Members. At my request, our President issued a statement to the press on the 22nd March, 1939, stating the A. I. W. C.'s point of view regarding the Divorce Bill.

4. Mrs. Subbarayan's Anti-Polygamy Bill did not secure a place in the ballot. Owing to her continued absence from the Assembly, it is not possible to say when it will be re-introduced.

5. Mr. Kazmi's Bill, to consolidate the Provisions on Muslim Law relating to suits by married Muslim women for dissolution of marriage, was finally passed on the 13th February, 1939, in the Council of State, after very salutary changes had been made by the Select Committee. The measure has removed a long-felt disability of the Muslim women.

6. The Bills pending in the Council of State, namely, Mr. S. K. Roy Choudhury's Bill to regulate polygamy in British India and Mr. G. S. Motilal's Bill to amend the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, are still awaiting their chance in the ballot. The Bill further to amend the Hindu Women's Property Act of 1937 in the Central Legislative Assembly will be discussed in the Budget Session of the Assembly.

7. Letters were addressed to certain members of all the Provincial Assemblies and Councils asking them to furnish the Member for Legisla-

tion, with a copy of the Private Bills on Social Reform introduced in their respective Houses. Members of the Assam, the United Provinces, N. W. F. Provinces, Sind, C. P. and Bihar Assemblies and Councils have not yet complied with the request. Replies from the remaining provinces have been forwarded to the Social Section Secretary for her information.

The canvassing and lobbying required in the Provincial and State Legislatures will eventually have to be entrusted to the representative of each branch. So long as political conditions in India remain disturbed, the Legislatures will not be functioning normally and the work of the Legislation for Social progress will, therefore, have to await the return of more stable and settled times.

REPORT OF THE MEMBER FOR LABOUR Miss J. E. Copeland

Maharashtra, Bombay, Bengal, the U. P. and Delhi have shown interest in labour questions. The U. P. took up the question of women and child workers in unregulated industries, Bombay that of shop-assistants, Maharashtra that of women textile workers. In Delhi the conditions of work of the newly permitted rickshaw-pullers was the subject of a protest, welfare work was done among the Simla rickshaw-pullers and other coolies, temperance propaganda and literacy work was carried on.

The Labour Member who had interviewed the Delhi Improvement Trust regarding the provisions, not merely of essential services, but of actual houses of labouring class families, is glad to report that in Hire-Purchase Scheme to provide one, two and three-roomed houses for families earning less than Rs. 30 per month is now in process of being carried out—the model houses are already built and arrangements completed for the financial side of the Scheme. This is the first of its kind anywhere in India.

REPORT OF THE MEMBER FOR INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES Shrimati Jayashri Raiji

It is gratifying to note the useful work done for the development of indigenous industries during the last year by the various Branches and Sub-Branched of the A. I. W. C. The Cottage Industries Sub-Committee of the Trivandrum Women's Conference made an excursion with the help of Mrs. Cousins for the survey of Cottage Industries. The party started for the town of Cheryangil. It happened to be the day of the annual

Temple Festival of that Taluka. Many temporary stalls had been erected and these exhibited products of local industry. Brass and copper vessels, vessels from Challai, Mats and Baskets, Pottery of artistic shapes, toys for children were displayed for sale. They saw men and women employed in Coconut industry, preparing various articles out of coconut, such as coir, ropes, etc. The Sub-Committee also in their report says that in response to the request of their Committee the Trivandrum Municipality has bought for uniforms 100 yards of Khadi cloth made from yarn spun at Kottayam which the Committee visited in their last survey excursion.

The Delhi Women's League informs that the Hindusthan Industrial Museum has been given the financial and moral support of the League and members and office-bearers have helped to popularise the Museum. The Annual Fair organised by the League which is known as the Mina Bazar was organised on a large scale on the occasion of the Annual Session of the All-India Women's Conference, and attracted an average crowd of nine hundred women daily for five days.

Many Branches passed resolutions on Swadeshi at their Annual Conferences. The U. P. Agra Branch of the A. I. W. Conference passed the following resolution on Swadeshi:—

“This Conference appeals to the public, and more specially to women, to use only Swadeshi cloth and articles in their homes so that Indian Industries may flourish and the question of unemployment may be solved.”

The Bombay Branch and many other Branches have made it a feature to organise a Swadeshi Exhibition at the time of their Constituent Conference.

The National Planning Committee appointed by the Congress President last year, in response to representation made by the Conference of Ministers of Industries in Congress provinces will take into consideration all aspects of the country's development in the programme of planning. Industrial development may loom large in the picture. It is gratifying to note that due weight will be given to Cottage Industries in the Scheme of National Reconstruction. The Provincial Governments, it is understood, have already called for information from the Indian Trade Commissioners at London, Hamburg, Milan and Japan, about 15 small industries in these countries. These industries are mechanical toys, rubber balloons, wooden

toys, pottery, hosiery, knitted goods, cutlery, articles of stationery (excluding papers) that is, fountain pens and stationery filaments, lead pencils and crayons and inks, celluloid toys, celluloid articles other than toys, buttons, toilet requisites, glassware including glass bangles, clocks and watches, bicycles and tricycles and smoking requisites. The Trade Commissioners are to be asked to secure information on the following points:—

- (1) How are these industries organised, whether as Cottage industries or as Co-operative Societies or as small factories?
- (2) How do they secure raw materials required? Do they secure direct in the market or through some special organisation?
- (3) How do they effect sales of finished product, each concern individually, or, through a collective or co-operative marketing organisation?
- (4) How are they finished?
- (5) How do they secure technical advice and assistance?
- (6) To what extent and in what direction does the Government help these small scale industries?

The Government of India have invited the Provincial Governments and certain Indian States to the Eleventh Industries Conference at Bangalore. One of the items on the Agenda is "War and the industrial situation in India," with particular reference to shortage and minor industries. The specific points to be considered in respect of shortage are in what directions it is manifesting itself; what steps have been taken in the provinces and States to overcome it; what, in the opinion of the Conference are the matters which require urgent investigation; and what is the best machinery which can be devised for the purpose.

The last Great War gave great fillip to Indian Industries and it can be almost said to have ushered in new industrial era in India. Similar results are expected to follow from the present hostilities in Europe. The war may have been a hindrance to new and contemplated industries, but will be a great fillip to existing industries. The stoppage of imports into India and the consequent lack of competition should prove of enormous advantage to existing industries which will now have the brake which they have long waited for. Thus bright future for our Swadeshi industries is before us. It rests with us to patronise the commodities manufactured

by our countrymen and countrywomen even if we have to pay a little more. The stoppage of these indigenous industries would mean unemployment and subsequent starvation to many people.

REPORT OF MEMBER FOR 'INDIANS OVERSEAS'

Mrs S. N. Ray

As I have already mentioned in my half-yearly report, the special subject of "Indians Overseas" was taken up by the A. I. W. C. at its last Annual Session at Delhi in response to an appeal made by Mr. C. F. Andrews. It was decided that one member should be in touch with the problems of Indians Overseas and that an effort should be made to remedy the miserable plight of returned Indian emigrants settled at Matiabruz, Calcutta.

The Calcutta Branch of the A. I. W. C. convened a public meeting with the help of Mr. C. F. Andrews and the Y. M. C. A., on the 11th March, 1939, at which the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, Rev. C. F. Andrews, Mrs. P. Chaudhuri, Mr. H. K. Mukherjea and I spoke. The resolutions on the following lines were passed. Firstly, that the Government of India should be approached to arrange for colonial born Indians to be returned to the colonies. Secondly, that no further ship-loads of destitute emigrants should be sent back to India, but they should be given land instead of free passages. Lastly, some provisions should be made outside Calcutta, if possible, where a colony of those emigrants, who cannot go back, should remain.

In regard to the first two resolutions I wrote to our Standing Committee Member at Delhi, Mrs. Asaf Ali, who went to see Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai to place the difficulties before him. Mr. C. F. Andrews also was in Delhi at that time. Sir Girija pointed out that Mr. Tyson who was representing the Government of India in British Guiana, Trinidad, etc., had already been instructed to impress upon the respective Governments to substitute the grant of free land for free passage and that the emigration problem may not continue to be so acute as it is now. As regards the proposal of sending back colonial born emigrants to the colonies, Sir Girija gave reasons why our suggestions could not be accepted. He pointed out that it would considerably weaken the position of Indians abroad if the Government of India made the suggestion to the colonies as it would be tantamount to admitting that they were actually happier in the colonies

and would thus weaken the case of securing better places for Indians abroad. He also said that these returned emigrants had been offered colony in Mirzapur but they refused to settle down.

The problem of these returned emigrants at Matiaburuz is really an extremely difficult one. It is true that they are living under a very miserable condition but they are totally unwilling to be absorbed under Indian conditions. I had a long interview with Col. Thakur who used to be in charge of emigrants in Calcutta and took a great deal of interest as regards their welfare. He told me that they have tried again and again to obtain jobs for them and they are unwilling and have left these jobs because they wanted higher wages than conditions in India will allow. They have also been settled down in colony but they returned to Matiaburuz as their one object is to get back to the colonies. It is not possible for the Calcutta Branch of A.-I. W. C. to do much about it except perhaps to help in the individual cases. Every effort is being made to disillusion them regarding their chances of getting back to the colonies but so far it has not had much effect.

I have already reported on the position of Indians in South Africa in my half yearly report. The Transvaal Act has been passed by which Indians' rights to hold land and their trading interest have suffered so much. This has had repercussions throughout South Africa. A member of the South African Cabinet resigned during its passage but to no avail. Many of our branches passed resolutions declaring their sympathy and asking the Government of India to take up a strong attitude. Due to the war the whole matter has been kept pending and there does not seem to be an early prospect of the proposed Round Table Conference between the Government of India and the Union Government of South Africa which was to have been called at the instance of the British Parliament.

There was a good deal of agitation amongst the Lascars in England which resulted in many of them being thrown into prison. However, it is fortunate that they have received increased wages.

The position of Indians in Ceylon and Burma continued as it was.

The whole problem of Indians overseas is a part of the deeper problem of the Status of Indians at home. We can not say that the present Government of India has shown no interest but if the prospect of the Dominion Status in the air turns into reality it will be easier to deal with the problem of the Indians abroad.

**REPORT OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S EDUCATION FUND
ASSOCIATION AND THE LADY IRWIN COLLEGE FOR 1939**

In presenting the Report for 1939 I am glad to say that some of our anticipations were fulfilled. The importance of Domestic Science studies, carried out in well equipped laboratories, was more fully recognised, and this led to a sudden rise in the number of applications from students desiring admission. We had with regret to refuse over 50 such for lack of accommodation.

Our College has already out-grown its present premises and facilities. The hostel is full and admission in the next academic year will be very restricted indeed, being limited in number to those students who are likely to leave, probably not more than 15 in all. If a larger number of admission is desired, additional hostel accommodation must be provided. The case is strong also for increasing the staff which consists today of the Directress, whose work is mainly administrative, 3 full time teaching members, and one part time teacher. There is in addition a Matron who supervises the work of the students in the hostel, accompanies them when they go out marketing or when they visit places of educative value. She is in-charge also of the Civics course and thus does some teaching. Approximately, therefore, there are 4 full time teachers in-charge of four classes: First Year Section A, First Year Section B, Second Year and Third Year.

Parallel to the growing demand for seats there has been a greater demand for Domestic Science teachers. Requests for such teachers were received frequently during the year and a good many of them could not be met because there were not enough qualified students to fill all the vacancies.

With the increase in the number of students one practising cottage is proving insufficient. As the Directress has stressed in a previous Report, more practising cottages, graded according to the economic needs of the different social classes, are necessary and it is hoped that in the ensuing year at least one such cottage will be built.

The Students.

Early in September, when the College reassembled for the next session, there were 76 students on the roll, of whom 60 were residents their division into classes and provinces was as follows:

Classes

First Year	..	..	..	..	..	..	49
Second Year	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
Third Year	..	..	..	..	..	..	8

Provinces and States

Ajmer-Merwara	..	..	1	Madras	..	..	..	4
Baluchistan	..	..	1	Mhow	..	..	..	1
Bengal	..	..	4	N.-W. F. P.	..	..	..	1
Bihar	..	..	1	Orissa	..	..	..	2
Bombay	..	..	2	Punjab	..	..	..	32
Central Provinces	..	..	1	Rajpipla	..	..	..	1
Delhi	..	..	7	Rajputana	..	..	..	2
Gwalior	..	..	1	Sind	..	..	..	3
Hyderabad	..	..	3	Travancore	..	..	..	2
Jodhpur	..	..	1	United Provinces	..	..	..	6

The students admitted for the 1939-40 session appeared on the whole to be better qualified than those admitted in previous years. Among them were 2 graduates, 14 who had either passed the Intermediate Examination or read up to that standard and 10 who possessed Senior Cambridge Certificates. Of the students in the second and third year classes as many as 18 were only Matriculates, 4 had passed the senior Cambridge Examination, 5 possessed Intermediate certificates and one was an M.A. This admixture, in the same teaching unit, of students of different academic levels, raised obvious difficulties and it was to the credit of the staff that their work was carried on with their usual willingness and efficiency; and, despite the added strain imposed by the larger numbers, they continued to perform, with ungrudging readiness, their extra curricular functions of librarian, warden, games mistress, etc.

Extra Curricular Activities.

Following the precedence of earlier years the staff and the students alike maintained their former interest in the many leisure hour activities for which arrangements existed—Ranger guiding, games, debates the co-operative stores, joint celebrations of important communal festivals and Hindustani Classes.

To the rural work undertaken by the students a new feature was added in the shape of rural camps in the villages of Najafgarh, Chawla

and Dandasa, based on the scheme of rural studies prepared by Mrs. Kagal.

At the time when famine conditions caused great distress in the country side, the students visited several of the rural centres and finally took one under their special care. The particular significance of this lay in their desire—to quote from their journal *Jagrati*—"to become village minded and donate their little bit, directly or indirectly, towards a development and fuller awakening of village life." The adoption of a definite village, they felt, would "import a more balanced view of life and a better set of values; for the gain would be not merely to the villager but also to the highly urbanised students who came into contact with him."

The adoption of a child belonging to the Children's Aid Society was another piece of social work undertaken by the students. This entailed a monthly subscription of Rs. 5 towards his expense in the home, and a "god—mother's" interest in his welfare. Previous to this adoption the students arranged a concert and donated the entire net proceeds—Rs. 346-8-3 to the funds of the Society.

Due to the closing of the Delhi School of Indian Music, conducted by the Delhi Women's League, the College had to make its own arrangements for the teaching of Music (instrumental and vocal), Indian dancing, painting, arts and crafts. Shorthand and typing too were later included in this list of extra curricular classes. The number of students per subject was:

1. Singing	.. .. 8	2. Instrumental Music	.. 12
3. Dancing	.. .. 13	4. Painting, Arts, and Crafts	8
5. Shorthand	.. .. 2	6. Typing	.. .. 5

In addition to the talks given in connection with the rural scheme mentioned earlier, the students attended courses of lectures on the care of livestock in India, humanity in relation to dumb creation, some special features of social service organisations, temperance work in India, Indians in South Africa, the Muslim view of life, the Christian view of life, the work of the National Planning Committee, the Wardha Scheme of Education and rural economics. Among those who spoke at the College were Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade, Lady Lloyd, Lady Rama Rau, Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, Miss Meliscent Shephard, Mrs. Tobit, Sir Andrew Clow, Professor I. H. Qureshi and Mr. J. C. Kumarappa.

Extension Classes.

A new experiment was tried at the end of the year to further supplement the normal teaching of the College. The first of a series of extension classes in Cookery was held, with Mrs. W. Hindle in-charge. It proved both successful and popular and in a small way added to the income of the College.

Examinations.

The Diploma Examinations of the College were conducted as before by an ad hoc Committee consisting of R. B. N. K. Sen (Registrar, University of Delhi), R. B. S. N. Mukerji (Principal, St. Stephen's College), Dr. B. D. Laroia (Professor of Chemistry, University of Delhi) and Mrs. Sen (Directress); and examinations in First Aid, Home Nursing and Mothercraft were arranged by the St. John Ambulance Association. The results were as follows:—

Examinations	Candidates	Passed
Home Science Diploma ..	10	9—One gained distinction
Teachers' Training Diploma ..	9	9—Four gained distinction
First Aid	66	54
Home Nursing	29	27
Mothercraft	30	14

Other Points of Interest.

1. The cost of feeding a boarder at the College during the year under review was a little over Rs. 12 a month. With the rise in the prices of food commodities, due to the war, some increase in the monthly recurrent expenditure is expected.

2. The Text Book on Domestic Science, written by the staff, was given to Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. for publication. The staff then undertook the preparation of simple needlework and diet charts for use in schools.

3. At the request of some girls' schools for recognition, a High School Certificate in Domestic Science was instituted, so that students of the Matriculation standard might have a further incentive for taking up a more complete and practical course of domestic subjects. The

Mahubia Girls' School in Hyderabad presented 31 candidates for our examination and Mrs. Tara Bai conducted it on behalf of the College. As a fee of Rs. 8 per candidate was charged, the income of the College benefitted to the amount of Rs. 248. We learned towards the end of the year that other schools too wished to send up candidates for our Certificate Examination.

4. Encouraging information was received of a Bursary of the value of £27 a year for three years, generously offered by the Association of Headmistresses of Secondary Schools in England, for the purpose of training a girl as a Domestic Science Mistress, the Bursary to be tenable at the Lady Irwin College.

5. The College was inspected during the year by officials of the Education Department, Delhi Province, and by members of the Re-organisation Committee appointed by the Governing Body.

6. The schools where facilities for practice in teaching were available included the Queen Mary Girls' High School, the Indraprastha Girls' High School, the St. Francis High School for Muslim Girls, the New Delhi Municipal Girls' School and the Arya Kauya Pathshala, New Delhi. We thank the heads of these institutions for their ready co-operation.

7. Report was recently received of a Domestic Science School started in Tirinala (Travancore) by Saramma Eapen who took her training at our College. The School is planned on simple lines in keeping with the requirements of middle class and humbler houses. Soon after the school opened, about 30 students joined; since then the number has increased appreciably.

Concluding Remarks.

Judging from the number of visitors taken round the College during the year, public interest in the College seems to be growing, and since the last session of the All-India Women's Conference, the members of that organisation too have become more deeply concerned about the welfare and progress of the College and have freely expressed their views in regard to the future policy and shape of the College. To give these opinions and suggestions due and proper consideration, the Governing Body during the year appointed a Re-organisation Committee, consisting of:—

- (1) Dr. S. K. Datta (Principal, Forman Christian College, Lahore) as Convener.
- (2) Miss Mrinalini Chattopadhyaya (Principal, Sir Ganga Ram High School, Lahore).
- (3) Dr. A. N. Jha (Vice-Chancellor, Allahabad University).
- (4) Dr. Mujib (Professor, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi).
- (5) Mr. G. Kaula (Honorary Treasurer, All-India Women's Education Fund Association).

The Committee was authorised "To examine and report on the working in all its aspects of the Lady Irwin College as organised at present and to advise what reform, if any, should be made therein with a view to formulate a sound educational policy calculated to satisfy, within the existing scope of its finances, the educational aspiration on national lines of the constituents of this Association."

The Report of this Committee, with its constructive recommendations, is awaited eagerly, for it will contribute in no small measure to the further development and expansion of the educational work undertaken by the Association. Doubtless, more funds will be required for the new schemes and we would once again urge the generous public, and particularly our women, to spare no effort in bringing our ideas nearer towards their realisation. Some friends of the Association, including our Chairwoman, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, have already responded to our appeal, and details of their generosity are given in the financial section of this Report. Our Chairwoman has not only given ungrudgingly from her own purse, but has also induced others to subscribe. To her active interest we owe also the sum of Rs. 392-8 realised from the Lantern Lecture on Chinese Central Asia so kindly delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. C. P. Skrine. The money has been added to our allotment for the wants of needy students.

The need for money has become more pressing because of certain new expenses which have to be incurred in connection with:

- (a) Our Diploma examinations. Since April, 1939 the Examiners are paid at the usual rate allowed for such examinations.
- (b) The Rural camp organised to give our students more intensive training in Rural work.

(c) Additional scholarships sanctioned for needy students.

It is the earnest desire of the Association to have a handicraft section which would enable teachers trained at our College to take their place in the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education. But here again funds are needed. No development is possible without money. Members must, therefore, forgive me for my importunity and help us to get the funds which we so urgently require, for existence as well as for future expansion.

As simple a life as is possible is advocated in the college and the response to this change on the part of our students augurs well for those who will go out from here to serve the poor. It is felt that more and more emphasis must be laid on homecrafts such as can be had by the poorest in the land. Experiments in washing clothes with our own indigenous soaps, berries in dyeing, cooking bread and sweets with our own grains and sugar, in reviving old embroideries and generally turning waste into wealth, are all helping us to grow from within rather than copy blindly from the west. All suggestions for further alignment along national ideals will be sincerely welcomed.

It might not be out of place to mention the assistance the college staff has given to educationists from various parts of the country and even Ceylon, in the shape of detailed information connected with the starting and working of Domestic Science classes. Some of the places and institutions that have thus benefitted are, Punjab, Hyderabad, The Women's University in Bombay, The Agricultural College in Allahabad, The Hindustani Talimi Sangh at Wardha and Colombo.

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, ALLAHABAD.



Members of the Standing Committee, 1939.

**MEMORANDUM OF
IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

1. EDUCATIONAL

A. Primary Education

1. This Conference demands that the new Constitution of India should guarantee to every child within the country, free instruction in reading and writing up to a prescribed minimum standard, as a fundamental right of Indian citizenship.

2. This Conference is strongly in favour of compulsory primary education for girls as well as for boys; it recommends all Local Governments and Local Bodies to take immediate steps to introduce compulsory education in urban, suburban and rural districts in such a way that at all district headquarters and towns the scheme shall be in full working order within five years and shall be universal within twenty years. This Conference is of opinion that this compulsory education should be made free in all schools provided by public authorities to all those unable to pay for it.

3. In order to carry out Compulsory Primary Education efficiently this Conference is of opinion that:

- (a) More Rural Training Centres should be opened where teachers drawn from rural areas should be trained under conditions such as they will meet in their work. These teachers should, in every case possible, be of secondary grade, and the employment of all teachers of lower grade should ultimately cease.
- (b) Residential quarters for women teachers should be provided in all teaching centres.
- (c) In order to assist poor parents in compulsory areas creches and nursery schools for the care of children under school-going age should be established near schools.
- (d) Only clean, dry, airy and well-ventilated buildings with adequate playgrounds should be used as schools.

- (e) The sanitary code for secondary schools should be extended to elementary schools and rigidly enforced in view of the high percentage of diseases borne by contaminated water.
- (f) School texts should be related to the psychology and environment of the child.
- (g) More women should be trained as specialist teachers in domestic science so that the teaching of the subject may be progressive and efficient. It is essential that the foundation of such teaching should be firmly laid in the elementary schools.
- (h) Nutrition Bureaus should be established in every Province where the much needed research work on the value of the food-stuffs available in the Province should be carried out and where all information regarding suitable dietaries could be obtained.

4. One of the first essentials for improving primary education is that the scale of salary for primary school teachers be raised. The standard required for the entrance examination for training institutions should also be raised and a better training should be provided. Well-educated men and women should be invited and given opportunities to act as honorary teachers while the supply of trained teachers is inadequate.

5. As far as possible women teachers should be engaged in the earlier stages of education, both of boys and girls; these early stages should in fact be wholly the concern of women.

6. Every educational institution for young children should make full provision for Kindergarten, Montessori or other similar classes.

7. This Conference feels that in the poorer districts a mid-day meal should be provided in the schools for those pupils who would otherwise have nothing to eat, and that the Government should be asked to make a special grant to such schools for this purpose. In these poorer districts ladies should come forward and by their own work and money organise the provision of meals.

8. This Conference is of opinion that:

- (a) Priority should be given to the claims of girls' education every scheme of educational expansion.

- (b) Primary education should be made compulsory for girls as well as for boys.
- (c) It protests against the omission of girls from schemes of compulsory education.
- (d) It urges that compulsory education should be enforced wherever it has been established, and that public co-operation should be secured to ensure the regular attendance of pupils until their 12th year,

because it realise that educated mothers are a sure guarantee of the education of the coming generation and an essential factor in the advance of a nation.

9. **Compulsory Education:** This Conference is of opinion that girls should be included in all schemes of compulsory Primary Education and particularly supports the resolutions of Constituencies of Madras Presidency that the new Committee formed by the Madras Government to draft a Scheme of Compulsory Elementary Education should do so not only for all boys, as are its terms of reference, but for all girls and boys of elementary school-going age.

10. **Primary Education:** This Conference urges the universal introduction of free and compulsory Primary Education without further delay. With this purpose in view we request the authorities:

- (a) To provide for properly trained teachers the majority of whom should be women.
- (b) To request the Government of each Province and State to make adequate provision for this item in the budget for the next year.
- (c) To make provision for the re-orientation of such education with special stress laid on training in handicrafts.
- (d) In order to effect economy, "the shift system" be introduced, where possible, and boys and girls be taught together.
- (e) In rural areas, where necessary, "seasonal" education be arranged for.
- (f) That buildings however simple, with playgrounds and adequate sanitary arrangements be provided in suitable localities.
- (g) That medical Inspection and treatment begin at this stage and

be made compulsory by legislation, and care should be taken to appoint efficient and responsible doctors.

- (h) That all Primary Education should be on a non-communal basis. (Nagpur 1937).

11. **Voluntary Service:** This Conference urges all educated men and women to further the cause of education on the following definite lines:—

- (a) To organise well-run Nursery Schools for children between the ages of 3 and 6.
- (b) To form Care Committees to follow up in a practical manner the work of medical inspection and treatment.
- (c) To provide buildings, however simple, for schools.
- (d) To make special efforts to promote adult education individually and through organisations.
- (e) That Co-operative Societies be formed to raise money for investing in buildings for schools, the interest on the capital thus raised, being paid by the rent which in its turn must be collected by private effort if not contributed by Government. (Nagpur 1937).

B. Secondary Education

1. The Vernacular should be the medium of instruction. English being a compulsory second subject; Hindi or Urdu should be included in the curriculum as an alternative to the classical languages, one of which should be compulsory.

2. Alternative courses should be established to suit the needs of girls who do not intend to take up College Education. These should include Domestic Science, Fine Arts, Handicrafts and Industries.

3. It is desirable that Sex Hygiene be taught in all Secondary schools and colleges, by competent teachers.

4. **Secondary Education:** This Conference is of the opinion that Secondary Education for girls be remodelled so as to include subjects such as Home Craft, Home Nursing, First Aid, Dietetics, Needle Craft, Cookery, Laundry, which should be made optional, one at least being compulsory. (Nagpur 1937).

5. Separate Middle Schools and High Schools for girls should be established in places where a demand for them exists and where there are no such schools.

6. Whereas in many parts of India the problem of obtaining suitable buildings for girls' schools is becoming more and more acute, the

Conference calls upon its Standing Committee to consider:

- (a) The advisability of launching a propaganda campaign in its many Constituent Areas in order that companies may be formed on the lines of the Girls' Public Day School Company in England whereby in that country a sufficiency of Girls' High Schools was established.
- (b) The recommending of such a campaign to the All-India Women's Education Fund Association as part of its work in the coming year.

7. This Conference recommends that the inspecting staff of girls' schools should consist of women only, and that the Chief Inspectress should be considered as Deputy-Directress of Inspection.

8. This Conference supports the Resolution of Central Punjab Constituent Conference and draws the attention of the Government to the condition of women's education in the North-West Frontier Province and requests that a High School for girls be opened there at the earliest possible date.

C. College Education

1. The following subjects should be added as optionals to the present curricula: Fine Arts, Advanced Domestic Science, Journalism, Social Science, Architecture.

2. Special encouragement in the way of Scholarship should be offered to women students to attract them to take their Degrees in Law, Medicine, Fine Arts and Social Science.

3. **Hostels:** This Conference reiterates its demand that sufficient number of recognised Hostels should be established for women students by the authorities concerned and that they should be efficiently supervised by experienced and responsible women as Inspectresses.

(Nagpur 1937).

4. This Conference urges the Educational authorities in India to make adequate Hostel arrangements for women students in all important centres of education.

It further calls upon them to make such arrangements on non-communal lines. (Ahmedabad 1936).

5. Lady professors should be appointed (to act as adviser) in all colleges where there are women students.

6. This Conference recommends to the University of Bombay and to other Universities where such facilities do not exist:

- (i) that vernacular should be allowed, optionally with classical languages in the curricula at *every stage* in the University course.
- (ii) that Domestic Science, optionally with Physics, should be allowed in the First Year in the Arts Examination.

7. This Conference regrets that the condition of affiliation of colleges to Universities regarding the provision of lodging accommodation of students has in some instances remained a dead letter, so far as women students are concerned, and it requests the Senates to see that all colleges affiliated to their respective Universities are suitably provided with hostels or approved lodging accommodation of their women students, and to direct their Syndicates to ask the inspecting committees of the affiliated colleges to report as to whether this condition has been fulfilled.

8. This Conference is of opinion that, in view of the long hours and strenuous nature of the work which the Medical Course entails, hostels for women students in the *immediate* vicinity of the medical Colleges are a necessity and this Conference recommends that such provision should be made by college authorities.

9. This Conference congratulates the A.-I. W. E. F. Association for having established in Delhi a Central College (Lady Irwin College for Women) to teach Home Science in all its branches. It calls upon all its Constituencies to collect funds for the creation of at least two local scholarships for girls who after completing the Home Science Course at the Lady Irwin College would be expected to teach that subject for a stated number of years. It also requests the public to extend financial aid towards this most useful and unique Institution.

10. **University At Poona:** This Conference urges the Government of Bombay to take all necessary steps to give at an early date statutory recognition of the S. N. D. Thackersey Indian Women's University which has been doing useful work for the higher education of women for the last 20 years. (Nagpur 1937).

11. The All-India Women's Conference congratulates the S. N. D. Thackersey Indian Women's University and thanks the Government of Bombay for recognising the degrees of this University as equivalent to the degrees of other universities for the purposes of Government service. It urges other Provincial Governments to grant them similar recognition. (Delhi 1938).

12. **College for Girls in the N.-W. F. P.** This Conference supports the demand of the women of the North-West Frontier Province for a Girls' College and urges the authorities to take steps for its establishment at an early date. (Ahmedabad 1936).

13. And it further urges that Home Science be introduced as a compulsory subject in high schools and as an optional course in colleges for women.

D. Training

1. This Conference recognises the imperative need of a greater number of Training Schools and urges upon the Government and the Local Bodies to take immediate steps to start such schools in every centre where they do not exist.

2. This Conference is of opinion that centres for special courses to train teachers for rural areas should be opened, and that courses should be arranged for teachers already working in rural areas.

3. This Conference recommends that branch committees similar to the Bengal Branch of the Indian Women's Education Society be formed in the different provinces of India to help the Bengal Committee in the selection of a scholar to undergo training abroad.

4. This Conference recommends that immediate steps be taken to carry into effect the repeated Resolution that Central College be founded to train graduates and matriculates in order to secure a higher standard of Kindergarten and secondary teachers and that the Fund Association be requested to allot money for founding and endowing such a college.

5. This Conference places on record its dissatisfaction with the policy of the Government in reducing the number of students admitted to the Training College and strongly desires that their numbers should be increased.

6. This Conference regards the standard accepted by the Government of 50 per cent of trained teachers in primary schools as a very low one and suggests to all Municipalities and Local Boards to engage only trained teachers.

7. This Conference considers that the present course of training for Matriculate and non-matriculate teachers is very unsatisfactory, and that the standard of examination should be raised and better provision be made for the actual training.

E. Literacy, Mass Education and Adult Education

1. Literacy

This Conference reiterates its former resolutions deploring the

appalling illiteracy in the land, and believing that unless a concerted and intensive campaign is organised the moral and material progress of the land is bound to be hampered, appoints a Sub-Committee,

- (a) To study the question in all its bearings.
- (b) To keep in touch and co-operate with all work in the cause of literacy amongst adults.
- (c) To initiate practical schemes of work.
- (d) To report on all work done in this direction to the next Conference. (Trivandrum 1935).

2. Mass Education

As all claims to democracy and citizenship will fail to receive recognition so long as the masses of India remain illiterate, this Conference emphatically repeats its demand for:

- (a) The efficient introduction of **COMPULSORY EDUCATION** throughout India.
- (b) The extension of **ADULT EDUCATION** especially with a view to the expansion of vocational training and the general uplift of the masses.

3. University Extension Lecture Scheme should include special courses for women.

4. This Conference recommends that Industrial Homes for women be established where possible and that provincial Governments be approached to give sufficient grants to run such institutions in an efficient manner.

5. This Conference reiterates the importance of tackling the problem of Adult Education in every way possible and urges the Government, Municipal Councils, Local Bodies and Women's Associations to organise classes and centres for the promotion of literacy and general education among adult women and suggests the establishment of cinemas, moving libraries and publication of suitable books and magazines in the vernaculars.

6. This Conference, realising the vital need of educating the masses of the country, urges that the speediest possible measures be adopted for the spread of adult education and suggests the use of the Radio and Broadcasting as one of the means to achieve this object.

7. Adult Education

(a) *Literacy*: With a view to intensify the campaign against illiteracy, this Conference recommends that each Constituency should appoint a special sub-Committee to carry on the work, and to report progress every half-year to the Conference through the proper channels.

(b) *Mass-education*: This Conference views with satisfaction the work that is being done for the promotion of adult education, particularly in the rural areas of the country, by our constituencies and by other public and private organisations.

It urges the constituencies to make further earnest efforts to organise such work wherever required and to co-operate with other associations doing similar work.

(c) *Broadcasting*: This Conference strongly appeals to the Broadcasting authorities in India to promote mass education in every possible way through the medium of the Radio. It suggests the authorities concerned to have representative committees, with women, in every province to draw up practical schemes for this purpose. (Ahmedabad 1936).

F. Common Language

1. Recognising the urgent need of a universal language for India, this Conference appoints a sub-committee,

- (a) To report on means and methods that could be adopted for the realisation of this ideal.
- (b) To compile a comprehensive vocabulary of words commonly used in India in order of frequency of use.
- (c) To co-operate with other associations engaged in similar work. (Trivandrum 1935).

2. **Common Language**: This Conference resolves that it is desirable that in order to promote cultural unity and harmony amongst the people of India, Hindustani be made the common language the script used being either Devanagri or Persian. With the purpose in view it calls upon

- (a) all Constituencies of the A.-I. W. C. to help by starting work in this direction.
- (b) that Hindustani be taught as an optional second language in Primary Schools. (Delhi 1938).

3. Hindustani

- (a) This Conference recommends that earnest efforts be made in all constituencies to encourage the study of Hindustani so that it may soon become the common language of India.
- (b) It requests all educational authorities to promote the teaching of Hindustani in schools.
- (c) It further requests the Universities to include Hindustani in the syllabus for the Matriculation Examination and other University Examinations where it may not be so included.
- (d) It is the opinion of this Conference that the language should not be over-Sanskritised or over-Persianised, and that the script used may be the Devanagri, Urdu or Roman.

(Ahmedabad 1936).

G. General

1. This Conference defines Education as training which will enable the child or the individual to develop his or her latent capacities to the fullest extent for the service of humanity. It must therefore, include elements for physical, mental, emotional, civic and spiritual development. The course of study arranged for this purpose must be so flexible as to allow of adaptation to the conditions of the individual, the locality and the community.

2. At every stage of education the spirit of social service should be inculcated.

3. Moral training, based on spiritual ideals, should be made compulsory for all schools and colleges.

4. In all education of girls, teaching in the ideals of motherhood, and in making the home beautiful and attractive, should be kept uppermost.

5. Agriculture should be included in the curriculum as a compulsory subject in schools in rural areas and as an optional subject in all other schools and colleges.

6. Girls' schools should be inspected both by women having general and also by those having technical qualifications.

7. This Conference is of opinion that the undue importance given to examinations has greatly hindered the educational progress of pupils and it recommends that investigation be made into the problem of testing progress.

8. This Conference approves of Cinema Films being used for educational purposes in schools generally and in rural schools in particular.

This Conference in its Memorandum has emphasised the necessity of reforming and enlarging the conception of education in Universities, training colleges and schools. It views with interest the progress that has been made and joins with the Constituent Conference in reiterating the importance of the inclusion in the curricula of study of:

- (a) Sociology, Home and Domestic Science in all its branches.
- (b) Fine Arts, (Music, Painting, etc.).
- (c) Specifically Indian Culture, including the Vernaculars and Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian.
- (d) Physical Culture.

(i) This Conference reiterates the vital necessity for public parks and playgrounds for children in cities, and gives its whole-hearted support to all schemes for the extension of physical education in schools and colleges.

It hopes that the example of Bengal in the formation of a 'Fresh Air League' will be followed by other Constituencies.

(ii) This Conference strongly protests against the recent cuts in grants-in-aid to educational institutions, particularly primary schools, and urges the educational authorities to see that all such grants are immediately restored.

10. This Conference reiterates its former Resolutions—

- (a) that in all educational institutions there should be compulsory physical training for children from the primary stages by qualified physical instructors;
- (b) compulsory medical inspection with after-care treatment;
- (c) and it also calls upon Municipalities and Local Boards to provide an adequate number of public parks and play-grounds for women and children.

11. This Conference requests the authorities of the Allahabad and Benares Hindu Universities to remove the bar against co-education and urges those schools and Universities where co-education does not exist to introduce and encourage the same.

12. This Conference feels that there ought to be a re-orientation of the entire system of education in this country and is of opinion that Government and private institutions should introduce vocational training immediately in schools and colleges.

13. This Conference, mindful of the interests of the youth of this country, appeals to the Government of India to exercise rigid control over all cinema films and posters and requests it to appoint women on every Board of Censorship.

14. **Literature, Etc.:** This Conference lodges its emphatic protest against the publication and circulation of obscene literature, pictures and films throughout India and demands that instances be reported immediately to the authorities concerned who are urged to take drastic action.

In this connection this Conference proposes that sex education be imparted by suitable teachers.

15. **Health:** This Conference is emphatically of opinion that the health of children and specially of school children and college students, is of vital importance to the well-being of the country. It therefore considers it essential that matters connected with

(a) School hygiene and sanitation;

(b) Medical Inspection of school children.

(c) School Clinics and Care-Committees;

(d) Health education in schools;

(e) Physical Culture;

(f) Adult Classes for the study of Child Welfare and Child Hygiene, and

(g) Dietetics, with special reference to children's food, should receive special attention, and appoints a Sub-Committee to study the questions and to report to the Conference at its next session.

16. **Medical Inspection.**—This Conference demands legislation for compulsory Medical Inspection and treatment in all schools.

(Ahmedabad 1936).

17. Special schools for defectives (whether physical, mental or moral) should be established and private enterprise in this direction should be encouraged and aided by the Government.

18. **Mal-Nutrition.** (a) That every person responsible for the education of children should study and understand the principles of dietetics and nourishment and spread knowledge in this direction.

(b) To combat the evil of mal-nutrition the authorities should make every effort to supply suitable nourishment to such children as need it.
(Nagpur 1937).

19. This Conference calls upon the Government to withhold its grant from any school which excludes any particular community from it, in all cases where no other provision for that community already exists.

20. This Conference recommends that Government recognition should be given to successful educational institutions which have been working on experimental lines advocated by this Conference (such as the Indian Women's University and others) which deserve such recognition.

21. This Conference recommends that women should be given adequate representation on all Educational Boards which control Primary, Secondary, and University Education and all Text-Book Committees.

22. This Conference reiterates the importance of educating girls of all communities in the same schools in order to promote mutual understanding and a common cultural unity.

23. This Conference is totally opposed to the infliction of corporal punishment in schools and institutions for boys and girls and it calls on every one to report instances to the authorities concerned and on the latter to see that the laws forbidding such acts are strictly enforced.

24. Co-education.

In the opinion of this Conference, the proper encouragement of *co-education* would help greatly towards the solution of various social and economic problems confronting the country. The Conference therefore urges strongly that:—

- (i) Co-education be introduced in primary schools and colleges.
- (ii) A large proportion of women teachers be always appointed on the staffs of Co-educational Institutions, particularly those of primary schools.
- (iii) At least one of the supervisors employed by the Local Self-governing Bodies be a woman.

25. Parental Co-operation.

Realising how gravely the progress of Education in the country is hampered by the lack of *co-operation* between teachers and parents this

organisation of women appeals to all parents and guardians to help in this direction.

26. Debating Society.

In support of the recommendation of the Educational Committee, this Conference advises the immediate formation in each Constituency of a *debating society* to serve as a training ground for:—

- (a) the stimulation of discussion on matters of public interest;
- (b) the efficient expression of thought and speech.

27. **Differentiation between the Matriculation and the School-Leaving Examination.** This Conference considers that the combination in one and the same Matriculation Examination of two different tests, one an entrance to the University, and the other a completion of Secondary Education, is not calculated to accomplish either of those two aims satisfactorily; and therefore, calls upon all Departments of Education and Universities to take immediate steps for the separation of these two tests into two distinct examinations. (Ahmedabad 1936).

II. SOCIAL

A. Child Marriage Restraint Act.

1. This Conference emphatically condemns the unnatural and devitalising custom of allowing immature girls to become wives and mothers, as it robs them of their right to education and freedom and arrests their mental, moral and physical growth. This meeting demands that the legal age of marriage be fixed at 16 and 21 for girls and boys, respectively.

2. (a) This Conference expresses its satisfaction at the passing of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, and congratulates Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarda and those who helped in making it the law of the land on their achievements.

(b) It further urges that:

- (i) In order to make this Act effective, it is necessary to form Sarda Committees to prevent, and to bring to light, breaches of the Law.
- (ii) In order to give effect to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, it is imperative to take immediate steps to provide adequate machinery for the registration of marriages and to ensure the correct registration of births, in accordance with the recommendation of the Age of Consent Committee.

- (c) It condemns the agitation started by certain classes against the Child Marriage Restraint Act and condemns the proposed Bills asking for exemptions from the operation of this Law.

3. This Conference once again condemns all attempts to repeal the Child Marriage Restraint Act and is opposed to the exemption of any section or community from its provisions.

It urges upon the Government not only to enforce the Act more stringently but also to amend it so as to make child marriage impossible.

4. This Conference views with dismay the frequent violation of the Sarda Act. It calls upon the Constituencies to educate public opinion against the custom of child-marriage.

- (i) by holding public meetings denouncing the evil results of child-marriage;
- (ii) by distributing leaflets containing information about the existing legislation and the necessity of drastic measures and effective amendments to the Act;
- (iii) by supporting Bills in the Legislatures amending the Child Marriage Restraint Act, e.g., Mr. B. Das's Bill before the Legislative Assembly and the Bill before the Travancore Legislative Assembly;
- (iv) by appealing to the Indian States to introduce similar measures for the restraint of child marriages as soon as possible.

5. This Conference supports Sir Hari Singh Gour's Age of Consent Bill and demands that the age be raised to 16 and 18 for married and unmarried girls, respectively.

6. This Conference gives its support to the "Bill to further amend the Special Marriage Act of 1872."

7. This Conference is of opinion that marriage should not be made compulsory for every girl and urges upon parents the necessity of recognising the rights of sons and daughters to decide their own career in life.

8. This Conference recommends that unequal marriages of old men to minor girls should be forbidden by law.

9. **Polygamy:** This Conference strongly disapproves of Polygamy and appeals to women not to marry, and to parents, not to give their daughters in marriage to any man who has a wife living.

10. (a) This Conference is grateful to Sir Hari Singh Gour for having taken up the question of Hindu marriage and recommends that his Marriage Dissolution Bill may be amended on the lines of the Baroda Hindu Divorce Act.
- (b) This Conference is of opinion that the prevalent practice of divorce among Mahommedans, in so far as it allows an arbitrary power to the husband to divorce his wife at his mere caprice, is not in accord with the true interpretation of Islamic teaching, and places on record its considered opinion that the right to divorce as conceded by the Islamic Law to Muslim women be recognised by the British Courts.

11. In view of the fact that the **Child Marriage Restraint Act** has proved ineffectual so far, this Conference re-iterates its opinion that Mr. B. Das's bill amending this Act should be passed into Law without further delay.

It strongly advocates that anti-child marriage propoganda work be redoubled throughout the country with particular emphasis in the villages. (Ahmedabad 1936).

B. Inheritance

1. (a) This Conference places on record its opinion that there should be complete equality between the sexes in the matter of inheritance and control of property.
- (b) As a step towards this goal the Conference supports the following measures which are pending in the Legislative Assembly.
- (i) "A Bill to declare gains of learning by a Hindu to be his separate property." (Mr. Jayakar.)
- (ii) "A Bill to make better provision for certain heirs under Hindu Law especially with regard to women regarding their rights of inheritance." (Mr. Jogiah.)
- (iii) "A Bill to secure share for Hindu Widows in their husbands' family property." (Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarda).
- (iv) "A Bill to remove certain existing disabilities in respect of powers of adoption among Hindus." (Mr. Jayakar.)
- (c) In order to ensure the rights of inheritance to Muslim women in accordance with the laws laid down in the Koran, the current customary law as practised in some parts of India be not recognised by the Courts.

- (d) The Conference further extends its cordial support to the committees, appointed in Mysore and Baroda, for investigating the Hindu Laws of Inheritance with a view to making them more equitable to women.

2. Legal disabilities of women

- (i) This Conference strongly protests against the existing discriminations in Hindu Law against the rights of women; it demands that existing laws should be so amended as to make them just and equitable and that an All-India Non-official Commission be appointed to consider the removal of the legal disabilities of women as regards inheritance and marriage.
- (ii) **Legal disabilities**

- (a) We give our whole-hearted support to all the bills introduced into the Provincial and Central Legislatures, such as the Bill on the Hindu Women's Inheritance Rights (by Hon. Mr. P. C. D. Charry, before the Council of State) and welcomes the bills passed by a Sangli and Mysore Darbars on Hindu Widow's Property Rights, which seek to remove the legal disabilities of women in so far as they are in accord with our principles. We further support Rao Bahadur Kale's Bill in the Bombay Council, on the Hindu Widow's Property rights.
- (b) We record our strong protest against Mr. Desai's Bill to amend the laws of Adoption before the Bombay Council, as it is a decidedly retrograde measure.
- (c) We urge once more on Government the necessity of appointing a Commission with an adequate number of women on its personnel to enquire into the whole question of the legal disabilities of women. We regret that Government has so far not acceded to a demand in which we have been united from the very beginning. The recent public meetings all over India are conclusive proof that we have a large backing amongst our men and we confidently hope, therefore, that the Government will accede to our request.
3. (a) This Conference resolves that a Special Committee with power to co-opt lawyers and experts should be appointed to enquire into and suggest adequate remedies for the legal

disabilities of women; the Sub-Committee to appoint Branch Sub-Committees in the different provinces and Indian States to consider questions of local interest.

- (b) This Conference records its sense of gratitude to the movers of the Bills in the Central and Provincial Legislatures which aim at improving the legal and economic status of women. Further it congratulates the Bombay Legislative Council for having rejected Mr. Desai's Adoption Bill.
- (c) This Conference urges the early enactment of legislation penalising the practice of polygamy. It recommends to our Special Committee to draw up a rational system of marriage laws which will include divorce.

4. This Conference strongly urges that the mother should have equal right of guardianship with the father over her children and that a widow should have preferential right of guardianship over them.

5. **Statement on Legal Disabilities of Women.** This Conference empowers the Special Committee on Legal Disabilities of Women to draw up a comprehensive statement on the lines of the Baroda and Mysore enactments which can later be introduced in the form of a Bill in the new Legislatures. (Ahmedabad 1936).

6. **Removal of Legal Disabilities of Women.** This Conference urges upon the various Governments to introduce a bill making the following additions and alterations in the existing Hindu Law as it affects marriage and divorce:

- (a) That monogamy should be made compulsory.
- (b) That the custody of the child should be given to the mother unless there is just cause for withholding the same
- (c) That the age of marriage should be raised to 16 for girls and 20 for boys.
- (d) That there should be suitable provision in the Hindu Law for divorce on the following grounds:—
 - (i) Desertion, (ii) Lunacy, (iii) Cruelty, (iv) Adultery,
 - (v) Drunkenness, (vi) Leprosy. (Nagpur 1937).

7. Support of Bills Pending Legislation

- (a) While this Conference lends its support to the following Bills pending in the Legislative Assembly.
 - (1) The Hindu Inter-caste Marriage Bill

- (2) The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Bill
- (3) The Arya Marriage Validation Bill
- (4) The Bill for the removal of social disabilities amongst certain classes of Hindus

in so far as they help to improve the status of women, the Conference feels that the time has come for such piecemeal legislation to be replaced by comprehensive legislation on equitable lines affecting the rights of the people of the country as a whole.

- (b) This Conference regrets that Dr. Deshmukh's Bill on the Hindu women's right to property which has been referred to a Select Committee, has been whittled down in favour of widows only, ignoring the rights of daughters and other female heirs.
- (c) This Conference regrets that none of the Social Reform Bills which were before the Legislatures for consideration last September has made any headway. It appeals to the Government as well as to all the members of the Assembly to try their utmost not to delay the passing into law of such measures as will constitute a real step forward in the life of the nation.

(Ahmedabad 1936).

8. **Bills Pending Legislation.** This Conference supports Mr. Rajah's Bill for removing the disabilities of depressed classes. (Nagpur 1937).

9. This Conference supports the amendments proposed by Mr. B. Das and Mr. Lalchand Navalrai in the Central Legislative Assembly to the Sarda Act and expresses its opinion that an additional clause should be added to the Act, so that people who celebrate child marriages outside British territory in order to evade the consequences of the Act, though residents of British India, may be punished and that this Act should be so amended as to declare all marriages performed in contravention of the Sarda Act null and void. (Nagpur 1937).

10. This Conference congratulates His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar for having so graciously accorded his consent to the "Hindu Widow Remarriage Bill."

11. This Conference congratulates H. H. the Maharajah of Travancore for so graciously giving his assent to the Hindu Widow Remarriage Bill recently passed by both Houses of Legislature in the State.

12. This Conference congratulates the Government of H. H. the

Maharajah of Travancore for appointing, for the first time in India, a woman to the Judiciary of the State.

13. This Conference congratulates the Government of H. H. the Maharaja of Gwalior for passing into law the Wodow Remarriage Act.

C. PURDAH

1. This Conference condemns the custom of enforced seclusion of women and entreats all Hindus, Muslims and other communities which observe this custom, to take practical steps to educate public opinion towards abolishing it as soon as possible.

D. HEALTH

1. This Conference realises with great concern that drugs and medicines sold in India are generally impure and of inferior quality as disclosed by the evidence of eminent doctors and chemists before the Drugs Inquiry Committee.

(a) It therefore supports the proposition that an All-India Drug Act be enacted for the proper control and check over the import, sale and manufacture of all drugs and chemicals.

(b) It urges all Constituencies to use every means in their power to discourage and prevent the indiscriminate use of opium and other detrimental drugs.

2. This Conference strongly recommends to Municipalities the need for the strict enforcement of the Food Adulteration Act.

3. **Compulsory Registration of Dais and Midwives.** With a view to check the inordinately high rate of Infant and Maternal Mortality in India, this Conference urges the need of Legislative measures for compulsory registration of dais and midwives and periodic supervision by qualified supervisors.

4. **Birth Control.** This Conference reiterates its former resolutions supporting the necessity for instruction in methods of Birth-Control through recognised clinics and calls upon all the Constituencies to make a special effort to induce Municipalities and other organisations for maternity and child welfare to open centres to impart such knowledge to those who stand in need of it.

5. **Birth control clinics.** This Conference believes that it is the duty

of medical departments and local authorities to take immediate steps to put an end to the advertisement and sale of birth control remedies by quacks which ruin the health of women in many cases. It appeals to medical departments and municipalities to educate men and women in birth control methods from the point of view of their ill health, mental weakness and economic considerations. Such clinics should be specially opened in labour areas. (Nagpur 1937).

E. STATUS OF WOMEN

1. This Conference reiterates its firm conviction that women should be adequately represented:

- (a) On the Central and Provincial Legislatures.
- (b) On District, Municipal and other local Bodies.
- (c) On Commissions and Committees affecting women and children.
- (d) In the interest of women and children this Conference recommends to the Government of India to include women in their delegations to the League of Nations and to other International Assemblies.

2. **Women in Departmental Services.** This Conference urges that no sex disqualifications should be shown for debarring women from services in any department of Government. (Nagpur 1937).

3. This Conference fully adheres to the stand it has taken in regard to the question of Franchise in all its bearings as pertaining to the status of women in the future Constitution of India. It expresses its firm belief in perfect sex equality and demands that women shall possess equal citizen rights with men. No disability either legal or social shall be attached to women on account of sex, or in regard to public employment, office, power or honour and in the exercise of any trade or calling.

4. This Conference congratulates Mrs. Anna Chandy on her appointment as the first woman Munsiff in India, in Travancore State.

(Nagpur 1937).

5. This Conference stands united:

- (i) in its protest against the Communal Award as touching the womanhood of India, and
- (ii) in its demand for a system of Joint-Electorates, and further resolves

- (a) that a representative Committee of ten persons including the Chairman and the Organising Secretary of 1932 be appointed and authorised to formulate detailed proposals in regard to the enfranchisement of women and their representation in the future Constitution of the country;
- (b) that the above-mentioned Committee of ten or a lesser number chosen from amongst themselves shall be its representatives at the joint meetings of the three Women's Organisations (A.-I. W.C., N. C. W. I. and W. I. A.);
- (c) that the National Council of Women in India and the Women's Indian Association be requested to appoint their similar Committees and that the Joint Franchise Meeting be postponed until after the return of the members of the Round Table Conference and publication of the decisions of His Majesty's Government on the subject.

6. Franchise

- (a) This Conference reiterates its demands regarding franchise and the status of women in the future Constitution of India as placed before the Joint Parliamentary Committee in London by our elected representatives, and fully endorses the statements made by them before the same Committee.
- (b) A cable to the above effect be sent to the Secretary, Joint Select Committee, and the Secretary of State for India.
- (c) A special Session of the Conference to which representatives of the National Council of Women in India and the Women's Indian Association be invited, shall be called after the publication of the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, to determine what the attitude of the representative womanhood of India should be in case their repeated demands are ignored.

7. This Conference expresses its profound indignation and disappointment at the omission of the right of Franchise or of candidature for election to the Legislatures of the following Provinces:—

Bengal, Assam, North-West Frontier Province, Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara, and strongly recommends that these omissions be removed forthwith.

8. **J. P. C. Report:** Whereas the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report on the White Paper, as a whole, and in particular where its recom-

recommendations concern the status of women in the new Constitution fall far short of our demands, we do hereby state in unequivocal language our strong disapproval of and inability to accept the same. We give reason for our dissatisfaction in the appended statement

Statement

We feel that the Joint Parliamentary Committee was animated by a genuine desire to bring women in greater numbers on the electoral roll and give them a definite place in the legislatures of the new Constitution. For this spirit of sympathy with us, as also for their unqualified recognition of the part that women must play in the public life of the Country, we place on record our sincere appreciation. At the same time, however, we feel constrained to express in no uncertain terms our inability to accept the recommendations, as they stand, for the following reasons:

- (a) We claim that there should be a declaration of rights in which the removal of sex disabilities should be clearly stated. We draw attention to the fact that the word "Sex" has been omitted from "Eligibility for holding Public Office, etc." vide para 367, Vol. I (Part I). While feeling keenly this omission as a grave injustice to us in spite of our repeated demands in this connection, we hope that the same may even now be rectified.
- (b) The greater number of women enfranchised under the recommendations are going to be the wives and widows of property holders and to this number have also been added the wives of men with the military service qualification of the vote and the pensioned widows and mothers of military officials and soldiers. Our reasons for our strong objection to this method of enfranchisement have been stated in clear language on more than one occasion. They still hold good and we regret that in spite of our protests the qualification wholly unacceptable to us is being sought to be imposed on us. We reiterate our belief in equitable methods of election and attach equal importance to the quality as well as the quantity of the women's vote. We object strongly to the doubling of the vote for any vested interests as being against all canons of justice for the poor who constitute India's main population and against all democratic principles. We again urge the acceptance of our proposals for the introduction of adult suffrage in urban areas for purpose of increasing our electoral members.

- (c) In our opinion far too much weight has, from the outset, been laid on administrative difficulties where women are concerned. This opinion is practically strengthened by the numbers of "Pardah" women who went to the polls in the recent Legislative Assembly Elections. We protest strongly against the invidious differentiations that have been made between the provinces in regard to literacy and property qualifications. "Application" conditions and other details including the omission of the wives and widows of those holding the educational qualification if the "Wifehood qualification" is unreasonably persisted in.
- (d) We have not swerved from our conviction that we do not, on principle, approve of reservation of seats in Legislatures for ourselves or for any particular interest. Nevertheless, seeing that this expedient may unfortunately be imposed on us during the transition period, we deplore the entire omission of women from the Assemblies of several Provinces and the total exclusion for whatever reason, of women of the North-West Frontier Province, from all citizenship rights including Franchise. We feel very strongly that in the case of these provinces where women may be said to be less vocal, the exclusion of their representatives from the Legislatures constitutes a grave omission and neglect of the very causes for which we stand. We also claim that no disabilities shall be attached to women in any province that may be newly created.
- (e) If certain selected Provinces are definitely to be burdened with Second Chambers we see no reason whatsoever why women should not be accorded a *definite* place in all these as well as in the Council of State. We regard such as our inherent right and must, therefore, protest against this omission.
- (f) With Lord Lothian we are "Unrepentant believers in a system of direct election" and we, therefore, object with all possible emphasis to indirect election at any time and for any one. We refuse, likewise to accept nomination for the Legislature for ourselves, knowing by bitter experience that the "safeguards of nomination" have been ineffective and useless in the Legislative Assembly.

Conclusion

While mentioning the above details we wish to make it quite clear that if we had secured or secure for ourselves all that we had wished or wish to secure, and if, at the same time, we felt that the recommendations, as a whole, were not in the true interests of India, we would, as women, the natural guardians of future generations, feel it our bounden duty to deny all special privileges for ourselves for the sake of the common good. In the light of general criticism of the Report we know that the recommendations are not acceptable to all shades of representative opinion in the country. We therefore join in this widespread protest and still hope against hope that a new Constitution may eventually be created such as will meet with general approbation.

9. This Conference reiterates its disapproval of the following franchise qualifications for women provided under the Government of India Act and urges their modification in accordance with its previous memorandum at an early date (a) Wifehood qualification; (b) Application condition.

10. In recording once again its sense of disappointment at the electoral proposals, this Conference continues to stand by its former demands for:—

- (a) Direct Election;
- (b) No separate electorates for women;
- (c) Non-reservation of seats on a communal basis. It further notes with regret the discrimination made between the different provinces as regards the literacy qualification, e.g., Bengal, N.-W. F. P., and Orissa.

11. While we are convinced that the new powers given to women by the India Act are not adequate, this Conference exhorts all women to use to the fullest advantage such powers as they have obtained at present.

12. (a) This Conference is emphatically of opinion that the time has come when woman should take her legitimate share in the Government of her country, Central, Provincial and Local.

(b) While we are opposed on principle to the reservation of seats for women in the Legislatures, we emphatically protest against the differentiation made in this matter in the Frontier Province and Assam and suggest that this error be rectified forthwith. (Ahmedabad 1936).

13. **Women in legislatures.**—This Conference congratulates all women M.L.A.'s and members of the Upper Houses, and hopes that they will work

for women's cause and sponsor bills on urgent social reform in the legislatures. It feels particularly gratified that the U. P. Assembly have taken the lead in appointing Mrs. Pandit as the first woman Minister and also congratulates other Provincial Legislatures who have appointed women as Deputy Presidents and Parliamentary Secretaries. (Nagpur 1937).

14. Representation of Women.—This Conference requests the British Parliament to safeguard the interest of women by making provision in the Instruments of Instructions that are to be framed for the Governor-General and the Governors, that women should be given chances of association in the administration of every province as well as in the Central Government especially in the departments of Health, Education and Labour. Provisions should also be made for at least one woman to be appointed to each Provincial Public Service Commission. It calls upon the Government to establish Women and Children's Bureaus in every province.

15. This Conference reiterates its demand for an Indian woman elected by the principal Indian Women's Organisations to be included in the Government of India Delegation to Geneva.

16. In view of the fact that the Council of the League of Nations has decided to invite the Government of India to be represented on the Advisory Committee for the protection and Welfare of Children and Young people for a period of five years and as this is pre-eminently a sphere where women can make a valuable contribution, the Government of India should be approached by the A.-I. W. C., the N. C. W. I., and the W. I. A., jointly with a view to the appointment of an Indian woman of our choice on this Commission.

17. Status of women in India. This Conference is of opinion that the status of women in India should be included in the inquiry on the Status of women by the League of Nations.

18. This Conference places on record its high appreciation of the truly enlightened action taken by H. H. the Gaekwad of Baroda in passing Hindu Women's Divorce Act and also for legislating for the removal of the Legal Disabilities of Hindu Women.

19. (a) This Conference is of opinion that for any enactment concerning the welfare of women and children, the Government should consult representative women's organisations in India with a view to ascertain the true merits of such enactments.

(b) It is also of opinion that women's organisations should be similarly consulted by Government in the matter of Memoranda etc., bearing on matters affecting women and children, sent abroad or published by them.
(Ahmedabad 1936).

F. PREVENTION OF TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

1. In view of the legislation pending and affecting the education of girls—such as Child-marriage and Devadasis—this Conference urges Government to nominate without delay at least two women to the Central Legislature.

2. This Conference supports all efforts that are being made in the country to suppress immoral traffic in women and children, and in particular it supports the Madras Brothels Bill and Prevention of Devadasi Dedication Bill and all other Bills on similar lines. It is also of opinion that women should be equally penalised with men for keeping brothels.

3. This Conference congratulates the States of Travancore and Cochin on the abolition of Devadasi service in temples and gives its whole-hearted support to Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty's Bill for the prevention of dedication of women and girls to service in Hindu temples. It calls upon all Constituencies where this practice exists to educate public opinion against it.

(a) This Conference congratulates the Portuguese Government on passing a law forbidding *Shesh Vidhi* (i.e., a mock marriage which initiates girls into an immoral life) and urges the Government of India and all Provincial Governments to take similar steps immediately.

(b) This Conference appeals to its own members and to the public to aid in every way in establishing;

(i) Rescue Homes for each Province;

(ii) In educating public opinion against traffic in women and children;

(iii) In taking steps to bring in legislation where necessary for the closing of brothels and in asking Government to appoint women officers for the proper enforcements of the Acts already in existence.

4. (a) This Conference requests the authorities to take more rigid steps towards the prevention of traffic in women and children and urges the necessity of a much larger number of rescue homes,

(b) This Conference views with grave concern the increased number of cases of abduction of women and as a practical measure to check this evil urges, the Railway authorities to appoint women officers at Railway Stations who may render assistance to women travellers.

5. **Immoral Traffic.**—This Conference whilst appreciating the efforts already made to suppress the traffic in women and children in India, calls upon its Constituencies—

- (i) to study the legal, moral, educational, and rescue questions concerned, in their local areas.
- (ii) to promote, where necessary, adequate and effective legal penalties against brothel-keeping and procuration and legal protection for women and children; where the local bills are not satisfactory, to introduce and secure wide support for the needed amendments.
- (iii) to urge upon parents the duty of giving graded instruction as to the moral and social uses of the creative instinct so that boys as well as girls may be adequately taught and thus helped to make right choices in life.
- (iv) that where rescue work has not yet been started, a real attempt should be made to secure and train workers and start homes, using the help of experienced women already serving in the moral and social hygiene field for such training.
- (v) The urgent need of women to offer for service as probation officers, moral welfare workers and magistrates is also emphasised by the Conference.

6. **Abduction of women.** In view of the appalling number of cases of abduction of women and children, this Conference strongly urges the Government and the general public to take vigorous steps to eradicate this evil.

- (a) **Legislation.** This Conference supports all bills and amendments which, in every Province of India, aim at the prevention of immoral traffic in women and children.
- b) It strongly urges upon its Constituencies the study of local conditions in connection with cases of trafficking and segregated brothel areas.
- c) When facts have been obtained, a vigorous protest against such crimes, by approach with the facts to the Governments, Municipal or Local Government Authorities or persons concerned in responsible positions. Where Legislation does not exist, the

same to be promoted, with adequate punishments effectively enforced.

(d) **Moral Education.** Realising that the survey above suggested and adequate legislation against trafficking in women and children will not, of themselves, effectively remove the danger to health and morals arising from commercialised vice, this Conference stresses that the education of individuals in their moral and social responsibility is essential.

(e) This Conference urges that in each Constituency a co-operative attempt shall be made during the coming year, to secure such progressive health and moral welfare education as shall tend to a higher standard of personal conduct as well as a high standard of public opinion in these matters.

7. (a) This Conference requests the authorities concerned to take more rigid steps towards the prevention of traffic in women and children and urges all Provincial and Local Governments and the public to make immediate provision for Rescue Homes where such do not exist.

(b) **Brothels at Fairs:** This Conference expresses its emphatic protest against the practice of opening brothels in Sind and elsewhere during Melas (fairs) as these have a degrading effect on the morals of the people, and urges the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to suppress them. (Ahmedabad 1936).

8. **Traffic in women and children.**—This Conference is of opinion that Acts for the suppression of traffic in women and children be introduced in all Provinces and Indian States, where they do not exist, and to provide for suitable amendments to such Acts in the provinces, where they are in force, to make them stricter and more effective, and urges the Legislatures to introduce such Acts and amendments at an early date, for establishment of Remand and Rescue Homes for Women and Children, so that the Acts can be effectively enforced. (Nagpur 1937).

9. This Conference congratulates the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore for having placed on its Legislature the 'Act' for the suppression of immoral traffic in women and children. (Nagpur 1937).

10. **Crimes against children.**—This Conference urges that separate Children's Courts should be established for trying juvenile offenders and in these courts at least one Magistrate should be a woman.

(a) This Conference urges women to come forward to undertake this work.

- (b) It recommends that special provision be made for children sentenced for short periods.
- (c) This Conference is of opinion that an All-India Children's Act on the lines of the Bombay and Calcutta Acts is necessary to give protection to all children under the age of 18 and it further urges upon all women to study the question of Juvenile Delinquency in all its aspects and co-operate in establishing clubs, shelters and Homes for the reformation of these delinquent and destitute children.
- (d) This Conference expresses its keen regret at the attitude of the U. P., the Mysore, and the Frontier Councils towards the Bills for the care of neglected, destitute and feeble-minded children, and urges upon the members of those Councils to promulgate such legislation as will punish traffickers in vice and rescue minor girls from houses of ill-fame.
- (e) It congratulates the Madras and Bombay Councils for having passed and enforced the Act for the closure of houses of ill-fame and the Calcutta Council for having appointed a Select Committee to consider further amendments to the Bill in order to make it more effective.

11. Protection of Children.

- (a) This Conference impresses upon the authorities the necessity for the introduction of Children's Acts in all Province of India where such Acts are not in existence.
- (b) This Conference urges upon all individuals and organisations engaged in Social welfare work to take all possible measures for the care of neglected, destitute and feeble-minded children.

(Ahmedabad 1936).

12. **Child protection.** This Conference is emphatically of opinion that Children Acts should be introduced at an early date in places wherever they do not exist, both in the Province and the States. (Nagpur 1937),

G. Harijan Work:

1. This Conference supports all efforts that are being made in the country to remove untouchability and supports Mr. Jayakar's Bill to remove disabilities affecting the untouchable classes of Hindus, pending in the Assembly.

2. This Conference notes with profound sorrow that in spite of active

propaganda, the treatment meted out to Harijans continues to be so inhuman, and calls upon its constituencies to co-operate with all agencies striving for the abolition of untouchability within the country.

3. This Conference gives its whole-hearted support to Mr. R. K. Shunmukham Chetty's Bill to remove disabilities affecting the untouchable caste of the Hindu community, and calls upon—

- (a) The members of each Constituency to educate public opinion in favour of the removal of Untouchability:
- (b) This Conference congratulates all the States that have opened their temples to the so-called untouchables and makes a special appeal to Travancore to follow their good example and thus give the lead to South India.
- (c) This Conference requests the Zamorin to open the temple of Guruvayur to the so-called untouchables.
- (d) This Conference whole-heartedly supports the Anti-Untouchability Bill to be introduced in the Assembly and the Madras Council by Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer and Dr. Subbarayan respectively, and appeals to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Government of India to give their immediate assent to the same.

4. This Conference congratulates H. H. the Maharaja of Travancore on the noble step taken by him in the cause of the freedom of the Harijans. It also conveys a special message of joy and gratitude to H. H. the Maharani Setu Parvati Bai that this step should have been taken during her tenure of office as our President. It earnestly appeals to all other Indian States and those in authority over temples in British India to follow the courageous lead of Travancore. (Ahmedabad 1936).

H. Indigenous Industries and Rural Reconstruction.

1. This Conference urges that in view of the poverty of the country the public be requested to encourage and support indigenous industries and calls upon the Government to open industrial centres and to give special grants to such institutions as provide industrial training for girls and women.

2. This Conference while reiterating all its former Resolutions on Indigenous Industries, is firmly of opinion that the encouragement of such is essential for the industrial and economic development of the country and appeals to the public to use *swadeshi*.

3. **Swadeshi.**

This Conference is strongly of opinion that it is essential for the industrial and economic development of the country to encourage indigenous industries and appeals to the public to use swadeshi articles, in particular Khaddar (hand spun and hand woven fabrics).

4. **Village work and Swadeshi.** This Conference strongly appeals to every one of its members to take an increasingly active part in rural work and to restrict all their purchases to Swadeshi and products of cottage industries. (Ahmedabad 1936).

5. **Encouragement of Swadeshi.** It is the firm belief of this Conference that women can help tremendously the economic progress of the country by using and advocating the use of Swadeshi articles.

(Nagpur 1937).

6. This Conference views with grave concern the conditions of life in general in Indian villages particularly in regard to education and sanitation and exhorts its Constituencies and other Women's Organisations throughout India to form Local Committees to consider practical projects for rural reconstruction.

7. (a) In as much as on the economic, hygienic and moral uplift of the villagers of India depends the real progress and prosperity of our Country, this Conference welcomes the formation of the All-India Village Industries Association and resolves to co-operate whole-heartedly in this work. We call upon all, and in particular women, to devote as much time and energy as lie in their power to the work of this Association and we confidently hope that the Government will also do everything possible to further a cause which all well-wishers of India have at heart.

(b) Realising that our work in general suffers greatly owing to a lack of wholtime workers, we appeal to local self-governing bodies as also public spirited persons to form and maintain Training Centres in every Province for social workers and thereby recognise social service as a definite branch of work for the uplift of the masses.

8. (a) While we are glad that some of our Constituencies have taken practical steps for the amelioration of the condition of the rural population we feel strongly that our efforts should be redoubled in this direction. We exhort every Constituency to carry out a constructive programme of village reconstruction in one of its villages at least during the year.

(b) Industrial development of the country is an essential factor in relieving the great problem of unemployment. It is necessary, therefore, for the Government as well as the people to help in every way to develop the indigenous industries in the country. With this end in view, the Conference urges the women in India to encourage Swadeshi by using articles made in the country as far as they are available.

(c) As a means of implementing the popularisation of Swadeshi articles each Constituency shall appoint one member on its permanent Sub-Committee who shall be in communication with the Secretary of the Indigenous Industries Sub-Committee and with the similar member of the Committee in each constituency to make a report every three months as to the Swadeshi articles available in each Constituency.

9. **Rural Uplift.** This Conference views with grave concern the conditions of life in general in Indian villages particularly in regard to education and sanitation. We confidently hope that the Government will do everything possible to further the cause which all well-wishers of India have at heart, and support the request of the Karachi Constituency to enable it to carry out the constructive programme which it has in view about the Chanesar village by extending the help sought for by the local workers of the A.-I. W. C. (Nagpur 1937).

I. Miscellaneous

1. **Beggar Problem.** This Conference, while strongly disapproving of the prevalence of professional begging, urges legislation for its prevention, and calls upon:

(a) the public to co-operate by diverting their charities in this sphere towards the creation and support of institutions and for the provision of Beggar Homes, Work Houses, Infirmaries and Leper Asylums;

(b) the local bodies to provide such Homes where they do not exist and to enforce any legislation for the eradication of this evil.

2. This Conference wishes to record its great appreciation of the munificent donation made by H. H. the Maharajah of Travancore, from his privy purse, towards the foundation of a home for the destitutes in Travancore.

3. **Legislation for Beggars.** This Conference strongly disapproves the prevalence of professional begging and urges legislation for its prevention, and calls upon the public to co-operate by diverting their charities in this

sphere towards the creation and support of institutions, and for the provision of Beggar Homes, Work Houses and Infirmaries and enforce legislation for the eradication of this evil. (Nagpur 1937).

4. **Women in Jails:** This Conference draws particular attention of the various provincial Governments to the extremely unsatisfactory condition of women in jails and calls upon them to take effective measures for their mental and moral uplift. (Nagpur 1937).

5. **Abolition of Capital Punishment.** This Conference whole-heartedly supports Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's Bill now before the Assembly for the abolition of Capital Punishment.

6. **Cinema Films.**

(a) This Conference reiterates the urgent necessity of a far more rigorous censorship of films and Posters.

(b) It resolves that it is essential to have rigid censorship of films relating to India manufactured in India or outside India and shown abroad in as much as some of these create a wholly wrong impression on foreigners of our civilisation and are detrimental to the interests of our Country.

(c) It calls upon Local Governments to appoint at least one woman as member of every Board of Censors.

7. **Restriction of Sale of Opium.** This Conference strongly protests against indiscriminate sale of opium and suggests a register should be kept of addicts to opium, and opium supplied only on medical certificate—as it is done in other countries.

8. **Legislation Enforcing Prohibition.**—This Conference whole-heartedly supports the policy of prohibition initiated by seven provinces.

(a) It calls upon its branches and members to render all help they can towards the attainment of this desirable goal.

(b) It appeals to the remaining provinces and all Indian States to follow this lead and bring in the necessary legislation in their areas also.

(c) It is of opinion that the policy of prohibition should be enforced also in the case of ganja, opium, cocaine, and all other drugs of recognised harmfulness. (Nagpur 1937).

9. **Opium and other Harmful Drugs.**

(a) This Conference resolves that the Government of India be asked

- to undertake an inquiry and find out the exact amount of opium needed for medical purposes in India with a view to the curtailment and gradual reduction in poppy cultivation, and also for reporting to the League of Nations which is preparing for an Opium Conference in 1939-1940.
- (b) Registration of opium addicts and smokers must be undertaken in each Province by a Provincial Government Department created specially for registration of opium addicts and opium smokers.
 - (c) Each person desiring to be registered should be certified by a doctor appointed by Government.
 - (d) A minimum dose to be fixed, and sealed packets of different weights to be made up by a Central Government Department administered in the same manner as the postal and revenue stamps department. No dose to be given to an uncertified person; any person wanting to have more than the standard dose—to be certified by a Board of Directors appointed by Government.
 - (e) Licensed opium shops to be abolished and Government opium depots to be opened.
 - (f) In case of smokers no prescribed dose of opium be given unless and until the dross from the previous dose is returned. Medicated Opium according to the League of Nations prescription should replace opium sold in its present form.
 - (g) The allotment of the doses of opium to addicts should be under the direct supervision of a Medical or Health Department created specially for this purpose, with instructions to reduce the dose gradually and to refuse to give any more to those who have reached the minimum. Such persons may be kept under observation in a special central sanatorium for a prescribed time and prophylactic treatment may be given to them.
 - (h) That each unit of the A.-I. W. C. should consult a panel of medical practitioners to find out the exact amount of opium necessary for medical needs for that particular area. That such information should be sent to the Convener of the Opium Sub-Committee of the A.-I. W. C. That Government should

also undertake to register charas, bhang and other dangerous drug addicts and take the same measures for restriction of sale and gradual elimination of production of these drugs.

(Nagpur 1937).

10. This Conference demands that in future all Conferences and Commissions appointed to deal with questions of the national welfare of India should include women representatives well acquainted with Indian conditions.

11. This Conference calls on the organised political parties to put up women candidates at each election.

12. In view of the widespread awakening in the outlook of women this Conference considers it imperative to form:

- (a) Centres for the practical training of Social workers in both rural and urban areas;
- (b) Centres for Social work.

13. **Hardships of Third-Class Railway Passengers.** This Conference notes with concern and extreme regret that in spite of repeated requests from the general public the condition of Third-Class Railway passengers, particularly women, remains a matter of little concern to the Railway authorities.

It is high time that steps were taken to provide even an elementary standard of comfort for those passengers who constitute the large majority of the travelling public.

(Ahmedabad 1936).

14. **Facilities for Third-Class Railway Passengers.** This Conference requests the railway authorities to add more third-class carriages to avoid unhealthy over-crowding of passengers in third-class compartments and appeals to the railway companies to make separate arrangements for issuing tickets for men and women 3rd class passengers on railway stations, especially on stations of pilgrimage where the necessity is very great. Besides, wherever it is possible, women ticket officers and ticket examiners should be provided for, and there should be separate entrance and exist for women on railway stations.

(Nagpur 1937).

15. (a) **Protest against the drama entitled "The Rani of Jhansi".** This Conference records its emphatic protest against the attempt made by one Mr. Philip Cox who in his drama entitled "The Rani of Jhansi" has cast serious aspersions on her moral character. This is in direct variance with all admitted historical facts. This Conference takes writings of this nature

as an insult to the womanhood of India, and exhorts the Indian public to carry on country-wide propaganda against all such mean attempts so that foreign writers may not dare to distort historical facts to suit their malicious ends.

(b) This Conference emphatically protests against the statement made by Miss Sorabji in her letter to the London Times on the subject of child marriage. It considers it most objectionable as expressing views which are not held by Indians and regrets that Miss Sorabji continues to misrepresent her own country in a manner which is detrimental and degrading to herself and the nation.

(c) This Conference also calls upon the Government and the women of foreign countries in particular to use their authority and influence in disallowing unfair and nefarious propaganda from being used against us whether in the Press by way of news or articles in Journals or books or by the showing of films. (Ahmedabad 1936).

16. **Obscene advertisements and publications.** This Conference emphatically protests against various newspapers and magazines publishing obscene advertisements and literature as these constitute an insult to womanhood. It appeals to the press as a whole to see that this pernicious practice is abolished. It also urges the Government to take more drastic steps to make the provisions of the Indian Press Act sufficiently effective to put down this demoralising aspect of the Press. (Ahmedabad 1936).

17. **Obscene literature and advertisements.**

- (a) This Conference lodges its emphatic protest against the circulation, overt, as well as covert, to obscene literature throughout India.
- (b) We have cause to believe that such obnoxious literature is provided by small bookstall holders for the younger generation, that is, to students of schools and colleges and of both sexes.
- (c) We therefore request the authorities concerned to take drastic and immediate steps into the matter and stamp out the evil as soon as possible and give every encouragement to the publication of better literature.
- (d) We further request the public and Government to censure all such journals and newspapers that continue to indulge in the pernicious practice of publishing obscene and outrageous

articles and advertisements which constitute an insult to womanhood in general and violate all the laws of decency in a manner that cannot be tolerated by any civilised nation:

(Nagpur 1937).

18. **Compulsory Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths.** This Conference desires to impress on the Government of India and the States the necessity for the immediate introduction of Bills for the compulsory registration of births, marriages and deaths. (Ahmedabad 1936).

19. **Recording of Marriages, Births and Deaths.** This Conference recommends that all Municipalities and local authorities in British India and the States should pass rules and regulations for compulsory official recording of all marriages and deaths. (Nagpur 1937).

20. **Evil Social Customs.** This Conference expresses the emphatic protest against such evil social customs, as undue expenses on occasions of marriage and death, sale of brides and bridegrooms, dowry, prejudice against widow remarriage, polygamy, intensive intracaste marriages, and purdah. (Nagpur 1937).

21. **Cruelty to animals.**

(a) This Conference expresses its disapproval and disgust at all forms of cruelty to domestic and other animals in India, not only on humane but also on economic grounds, and because of the psychological effects such cruelty has on the minds and character of children, and recommends that some of the small books and pamphlets published by various Animal Welfare Societies in several vernaculars should be introduced as Readers in Rural Schools and distributed by Rural Reconstruction and Village Uplift Societies.

(b) This Conference urges Government to take legislative steps to protect milch kine in India, regard being had to the fact that India is mainly an agricultural country, and that sufficient supply of cow's milk is not available. (Nagpur 1937).

III. LABOUR

1. (a) This Conference recommends to its Standing Committee Members to inquire into the agricultural and indigenous industries of their areas and to get into touch with Co-operative Societies and in other ways to foster such industries and report to the Sub-committee appointed by the Conference to deal with this question.

(b) This Conference recommends to its Standing Committee to inquire into the conditions of women and children employed in organised labour areas and report to the Sub-committee appointed by the Conference to deal with this question.

2. In all factories where there are a considerable number of women employed, this Conference resolves that the following are essential:

(a) The employment of a woman doctor to ensure ante- and post-natal care and attention during child-birth for the mother and medical care of the children.

(b) The establishment of Maternity Homes and an adequate supply of trained help.

(c) The establishment of creches and nursery schools.

3. (a) This Conference reiterates the need for the immediate appointment of at least one Woman Factory Inspector for every large Industrial area, with full powers under the Act.

(b) This Conference considers that these Inspectors need not necessarily be doctors but should have a thorough knowledge of workers and requests agencies engaged in the training of social workers to consider the question of providing special training, at least until there is a body of experienced women Inspectors available.

4. **Housing Facility for Labourers.** This Conference is of opinion that the labouring population should have healthy dwelling-houses with plenty of air and light, facilities for water and its disposal and proper sanitary arrangements. (Nagpur 1937).

5. Since the whole standard of family life is dependent to so large an extent on housing conditions, mill-owners and local bodies in co-operation are urged to see that the workers are housed with adequate regard to health and decency. This Conference considers that a separate cooking place and a verandah or courtyard besides the living room are minimum necessities and anything falling below this standard does not fulfil the above conditions.

6. In view of the urgent necessity of removing illiteracy from the industrial population in the shortest possible time this Conference urges:

(a) That part-time education be made compulsory for all half-timers up to the age of 15 years, and where conditions make it desirable millowners should co-operate with the local authorities in the provision of such education.

(b) Mill-owners are urged to give greater attention to adult education which should be specially suited to adults and need not necessarily follow the curriculum of ordinary schools.

(c) Local authorities are urged to provide playgrounds in all industrial areas.

7. Since the States have often led the way in matters of social reform, the Princes and their Councils are urged to enforce in their territories at least as high a standard of factory conditions and legislation as that obtaining in British India.

8. This Conference desires that a thorough inquiry should be made into the condition of women mine-workers and urges the Standing Committee to take early steps in the matter.

9. This Conference calls upon the Government of India to take necessary steps immediately to implement the Report of the Whitley Commission with regard to labour conditions of women and children in India.

10. This Conference expresses its regret that the Assembly had failed to ratify the International Labour Convention to fix the minimum age of Indian children in non-industrial occupations and urges on the Government of India and the Assembly the need in India to legislate against the employment of Indian children under 12 in regulated non-industrial occupation.

11. This Conference fully supports the Bill prohibiting the pledging of child labour in regulated and unregulated industries and requests that persons besides guardians and parents who pledge child labour or act in collusion with parents and guardians be penalised.

12. The All-India Women's Conference approves of the provisions of the Bill introduced by the Government of India in the Legislative Assembly to regulate the payment of wages to classes of persons employed in industry.

13. This Conference approves of the provisions of the Bill to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act subject to the following modification that to the list of the dependents of a workman entitled to claim compensation be added widowed daughter-in-law and brother's widow.

14. This Conference is emphatically of opinion that a woman representative on behalf of the women workers in factories, mines, plantations and other industries be deputed by the Government of India as a delegate or an adviser to the International Labour Conference to be held at Geneva.

15. This Conference draws the attention of the Government of India

to the following recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour and urges for early legislative measures.

- (a) Rigorous action should be taken against those factories where conditions in regard to humidification are worst.
- (b) First aid boxes should be provided in all the factories using power and in departments of factories employing over 250 persons.
- (c) Comprehensive Public Acts should be passed in all Provinces.
 - (i) Where pipe-water supplies are not available, special precautions as to purity should be taken.
 - (ii) Where Industry begins to develop in a new area, it should be the duty of employers to provide suitable water to their workers.
- (d) Naikins (women jobbers) should be excluded from the engagement and dismissal of labour.
- (e) Every Factory should be compelled to maintain separate and sufficient latrine accommodation for males and an adequate staff to keep them clean.
- (f) Creches should be provided for children up to the age of six years where considerable number of women are employed. This requirement should be statutory for places employing 250 women or more. The Factories Act should embody this with discretionary power to Local Governments in regard to factories with fewer women. The organisation of factory creches should be the duty of the women inspectors.
- (g) Women factory inspectors should be appointed in every province. They should be of Indian domicile and not less than 25 years of age and their pay should be adequate to attract the right type.
- (h) Maternity benefit legislation should be enacted throughout India on the lines of the schemes operating in Bombay and Central Provinces.
 - (i) The scheme should be non-contributory.
 - (ii) In the first instance, the entire cost of the benefit should be borne by the employer.
 - (iii) The rate of benefit given by the Central Provinces Act is suitable for general application.

- (iv) The maximum benefit period should be 4 weeks before and 4 week after child-birth.
- (v) Administration of the Act should be entrusted to the factory inspection staff and wherever possible to women factory inspectors.
- (i) Maximum daily hours of work for children should be five hours.
- (j) Employers should arrange to give children at least one rest interval.
- (k) No child who has been employed full time in a factory should be allowed to work overtime or to take work at home after factory hours.
- (l) No child under the age of 14 years should be permitted to work in or about the mines.

16. This Conference strongly supports the Minority view of the Royal Commission on Labour in India as regards raising the minimum age of employment in factories from 12 to 13 years for a period of 5 years and thereafter to 14 in conformity with the standard laid down in Article II of the International Convention.

17. Owing to the increase of unemployment by the closing down of several mills and factories, this Conference feels the necessity of appointing a Committee to look into the hardships suffered by women and children in these areas and inquire and report as to what measures are advisable for relief especially in the case of children of unemployed labourers.

18. (a) We agree with the recommendations of the Investigation Committee that it would be a retrograde step to go back to employing women underground and as recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour this process of elimination be completed by 1939.

(b) We also urge that simultaneously, the women who are being deprived of work be found other employment on the surface, on the lines suggested in the report of the Committee.

19. Recommendations of the Mining Enquiry Committee:

(a) We note with great regret that no action has been taken by the authorities in the mining area regarding recommendations made by the Investigation Commission of the All-India Women's Conference which visited the mines last year.

(b) We regret that no action has been taken to discontinue the Outstill System in Bihar and urge that this system be abolished as soon as possible.

- (c) In continuation of the resolutions passed last year regarding the women in the mines we recommend that the Conference should support a woman organiser for one year to study the situation caused by the elimination of women from underground work, and the possibilities of alternative employment.

20. **Women workers eliminated from mines.** This meeting of the All-India Women's Conference strongly urges the Government and the authorities concerned to take immediate action for the provision of suitable employment for women workers eliminated from mines and the fixing of adequate minimum wage for men mine workers whose family income has been reduced by such elimination. (Nagpur 1937).

21. We regret that the recommendation of the League of Nations regarding the minimum age of child labourers has not been acted upon by the Government of India in the Factories Act, and record that in our opinion no child under 14 years should be employed as a labourer.

22. As the newly amended Factory Act does not make the provision of creches compulsory for employers of women labour and as it is now believed by authorities that much of the infant morality in India is due to the neglect of children of working mothers, we strongly urge the Government to remove this important defect so that creches are made compulsory throughout India.

23. As women are sometimes forced to carry heavy loads which is detrimental to their health, it is desirable that a maximum load should be fixed for them by the Government. We therefore recommend that investigations should be made regarding this maximum weight, and legislation enacted accordingly.

24. **All-India Maternity Benefit Act:** This Conference is of opinion that an All-India Maternity Benefit Bill on the lines of those passed in Bombay, C. P. and Madras be introduced in the Legislative Assembly. It further recommends that the Constituencies in the different Provinces work for the passage of such a Bill.

25. (a) This Conference while advocating the introduction and passing of Maternity Benefits Acts throughout India regrets that, where such do exist, the application of them in practice is causing unemployment amongst women labourers. It calls upon the authorities concerned to look on this matter in a humane rather than in a mercenary spirit and upon

those in charge of these measures to find ways and means of so framing the provisions that the danger of the unfortunate results now obtaining may be eliminated.

(b) The Conference further urges the immediate introduction of an All-India Maternity Benefits Act. (Ahmedabad).

26. This Conference also congratulates the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore for passing the "Maternity Benefits Act" by which women working in factories are given leave on full pay for four weeks before and four weeks after confinement. (Nagpur 1937).

27. **Minimum age and hours of work.** This Conference whole-heartedly supports Mr. Bakhale's Bill introduced in the Bombay Legislative Council to prohibit the employment of children under 12 in shops and urges that All-India legislation on similar lines limiting the hours of work and fixing a minimum age of employment of children in non-industrial undertakings be introduced.

28. **Unemployment:** This Conference is of opinion that the relief of unemployment should invite the serious attention of the Government of India and that in formulating any schemes for the amelioration of this long-standing evil, an effort should be made to utilise the labour resources of India for the supply of the necessaries of life at a cheaper price to the workers themselves. (Ahmedabad).

29. **Social Insurance:** In view of the suffering, industrial workers undergo, due to loss of income on account of sickness, maternity, death of wage-earners, occasional unemployment etc., this Conference recommends that schemes of Social Insurance should be introduced in British India and the States as early as possible. (Ahmedabad).

30. **Unregulated Industries.** This Conference urges upon the Government the necessity of introducing legislation to regulate the condition of hours of work in unregulated industries.

IV. GENERAL

1. Believing that the welfare of nations and classes depends on the building up of a new order:

(a) We lend full support to all efforts that are being made and will be made in the future for the surmounting of barriers of race,

creed, caste, nationality and promoting the spirit of international reconciliation and good-will.

- (b) We desire to express once more our condemnation of war as a crime against humanity and our whole-hearted sympathy with all those men and women who are striving honestly for world disarmament.
- (c) We dedicate ourselves in our own homeland to the supreme task of creating around us a spirit of true patriotism and love of humanity so that rising above the narrow confines of communities and provinces we may see fulfilled the vision of a larger India ready to take her rightful place in the world comity of nations.

2. **International Peace:** In the name of humanity the All-India Women's Conference hopes earnestly for the establishment of a permanent World-Peace by the speedy restoration of international relations based on mutual tolerance and harmony.

3. This Conference, realising the vital importance of Disarmament for the peace and the happiness of the world, urges the women of India to give their whole-hearted support and sympathy to the World Disarmament Conference to be held in Geneva in February, 1932, and calls upon all Governments to reduce their Army and Navy.

4. **Protest against wars of aggression.** While the memory of the cruel rape of Abyssinia is still fresh in our minds, and the horrors of the fratricidal warfare in Spain continue to haunt us, Japan's ruthless aggression against China has come, as it were, as a further blow to shatter all our hopes of peace. We are bitterly disappointed at the incapacity and inability of all the so-called great powers of the world to put an end to the injustices consequent on the oppression of the weak and poor. We are convinced that increasing armaments of warfare by land, sea and air, and the harnessing of the knowledge of science for the purpose of destruction are not going to bring peace to a troubled and stricken world. We feel that it is through the weapons of love alone that a new order can be ushered in. Standing on the threshold of another year we dedicate ourselves to non-violence in thought, word and deed, and appeal to women throughout the world to join hands with us, for we are confident that this doctrine

alone can quell the desire for possession, can save the nations from racial jealousies and communal strife and protect humanity from oppression and exploitation. (Nagpur 1937).

5. This Conference calls upon all communities in India to live together in amity and work in harmony with one another for the common welfare of the country and appeals to all women to make special endeavours to achieve this object.

6. **Peace Resolution:** Conscious of the gravity of the situation today in the world and believing that a new order is an imperative need we wish to stress once more our abhorrence of war as a solution of any problem. We declare ourselves in utter and eternal opposition to all oppression and exploitation. We have been pained and horrified at the betrayal of Austria and Czechoslovakia, at the abetment from outside and continuance of the internal strife in Spain, at the merciless persecution of the Jews, at the deplorable interference and cruelties in Palestine and at the unjustifiable aggression in China. The inability of the so-called Great Powers of the world to put an end to all this woe and misery is proof enough of the futility of their methods of approach. We are convinced that it is only through the banishing of all greed for possession that the shadow of war and armed conflict itself can be removed. We, therefore, protest against the mad race in the building of armaments that continues unabated. We appeal to the women of the world to unite on the platform of non-violence and actively demonstrate that by this power alone can the forces of hatred and the desire for possession be brought under control and a real and lasting peace established. (Delhi 1938).

7. **Istanbul Resolution:** The Conference supports whole-heartedly the following resolutions passed at the Congress of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship at Istanbul 1935.

- (a) **Legal Rights:** That a Woman unmarried or married should have full personal and civil rights, including the right to the use and disposal of her property; that she should not be under the tutelage of her husband and should have the same rights over her children as the father; that she should have the same rights as a man to retain or to change her nationality.
- (b) **East and West Co-operation:** Where this Congress believes in the interest of true progress, the women of every country must advance on the lines of equality and justice, it pledges its hearty support to all the women of the West as well as of

the East whether they struggle for the eradication of their special legal, social and economic disabilities and for the recognition of their rights to equal citizenship in their respective national units or whether they are in danger of losing these legal, political, and economic rights which they have achieved.

Welcoming the co-operation of the women of all parts of the world, the value of which has been strongly emphasised by this Congress, it expresses the wish that the women of the East and of the West be linked by ties which will grow closer and consequently serve the interests of Universal peace.

8. (a) This Conference endorses the decision of the Standing Committee for the establishment of a Permanent Central Office at Delhi at the earliest possible opportunity.

(b) It therefore makes a special appeal to the general public to contribute liberally and to the constituencies to do all in their power to raise funds for the early realisation of this project. (Ahmedabad 1936).

9. This Conference puts on record its appreciation of the recent circular issued by the President of the Indian National Congress directing the Parliamentary Committees to put up women candidates for the general seats. (Ahmedabad 1936).



STATEMENT REGARDING REGISTRATION

The All-India Women's Conference has been duly registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 on the 18th July 1930.

Memorandum of Association of the All-India Women's Conference

1. The name of the Conference shall be "The All-India Women's Conference."
2. The Conference shall not engage in party politics but unite on such points as affect women and children.
3. The objects of the Conference shall be:
 - (a) To promote in India the education of both sexes at all stages;
 - (b) To deal with all questions affecting the welfare of women and children.

Signatures of Witnesses :

(Sd.) Sarojini Naidu
" Sushama Sen
" Margaret Cousins
" Rameshwari Nehru
" A. L. Huidekoper
" Sharifah Hamid Ali
" Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya

4. The Standing Committee Members become the Governing Body of the Association.



THE CONSTITUTION OF A. I. W. C.

ARTICLE I.

Name :

The name of the organisation shall be "The Association of the All-India Women's Conference," hereinafter to be called the "A. I. W. C."

ARTICLE II.

(a) Policy :

The A. I. W. C. shall not belong to any political organisation nor take an active part in party politics, but shall be free to discuss and contribute to all questions and matters affecting the welfare of the people of India with particular reference to women and children.

(b) Aims and Objects :

1. To work actively for the general progress and welfare of women and children.
2. To inculcate in women and children the ideals of true citizenship.
3. To promote education along right lines.
4. To work and press for social reform.
5. To strive to establish equal rights and opportunities for all.
6. To work for a united India.
7. To set and demand a high moral standard in all departments of life.
8. To stand for international goodwill and world peace.

ARTICLE III.

Composition :

(a) Patrons

(b) Office-Bearers

(c) Standing Committee

(d) Branches

(a) Patrons :

- (i) Past Presidents
- (ii) By special invitation of the A. I. W. C.

(b) Office-Bearers :

- (i) President and Chairwoman
- (ii) Six Vice-Presidents

Note: A Chairwoman of the Standing Committee shall be elected for the year from amongst the Vice-Presidents in case the President does not desire to fill the office.

- (iii) Treasurer
- (iv) General Secretary
- (v) Organising Secretary
- (vi) Sectional Secretaries (if required).

Note: No paid officer of the A.-I. W. C. shall be entitled to vote.

(C) Standing Committee :

- (i) The Office-Bearers
- (ii) Members-in-charge of Special Subjects
- (iii) Branch Representatives
- (iv) The Liaison Officer in India
- (v) The Secretary of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association
- (vi) Conveners of Sub-Committees whenever such Sub-Committees are appointed
- (vii) Members co-opted for special purposes.

(D) Branches :

Areas in Provinces and States, as decided on by the Standing Committee from time to time.

Note: Patrons shall be entitled to attend the Conference of the A.-I. W. C. and to vote at the open sessions.

Life Associates under the old Constitution will have the right of attending the open sessions of the Conference and voting as hitherto.

ARTICLE IV

Agencies of Work :

The work of the A.-I. W. C. shall be carried out through

- (i) The Standing Committee and its Executive;
- (ii) The Branches, Sub-Branchees and their Committees, by means of
 - (a) Conference
 - (b) Meetings
 - (c) Correspondence
 - (d) Publications.

ARTICLE V**Conferences :****I. The All-India Conference :**

- (a) Conferences of the A.-I. W. C. shall be held periodically, at a time and place fixed by the Standing Committee.
- (b) The following shall be entitled to attend:
 - (i) Patrons
 - (ii) Standing Committee Members
 - (iii) Branch Delegates
 - (iv) Reception Committee Delegates
 - (v) Special Delegates (by invitation by the Standing Committee)
 - (vi) Visitors (not allowed to participate in the deliberations).

Note: Life Associates under the old constitution will have the right of attending the open Sessions of the Conference and voting as hitherto.

II. Branch Conferences :

Public Conferences shall be convened annually by all the Branches and Sub-branches of the A.-I. W. C.

ARTICLE VI**Branches :**

1. Each Branch shall carry out the ideals of the A.-I. W. C. and work under its direction.
2. Each Branch shall frame its own Rules and Regulations in conformity with the Articles, Bye-Laws and Regulations of the A.-I. W. C. such Rules and Regulations and any alterations thereto being subject first to the approval of the Standing Committee.
3. Each Branch shall be responsible for its own finances.

ARTICLE VII**Finance :**

1. All moneys received shall be held in deposit by the Treasurer, at a Scheduled Bank, in the name of the A.-I. W. C.
Cheques shall be signed by any two of the following Office-Bearers:
President, Treasurer and General Secretary.

2. Each Branch shall send annually to the Treasurer, before July the 1st, a minimum affiliation fee of Rs. 25|.-.

ARTICLE VIII

I. Bye-Laws :—

1. The Standing Committee shall have power to make Bye-Laws and Regulations for carrying out the work of the A.-I. W. C. and to alter them and add to them from time to time as occasion may require.
2. These Bye-Laws and Regulations may not be altered or added to except by the Standing Committee, at one of its meetings, by a two-thirds majority of the members present, and provide that
 - (a) notice of such proposed alteration or addition shall have been sent in writing, by registered post, to every member of the Standing Committee at least three months before the meeting, and
 - (b) the Bye-Law in question has been in existence for at least a year.

II. Alteration of Constitution:

The Constitution of the A.-I. W. C. may not be altered except at a Conference Session by a two-thirds majority of the members present, provided that a notice of such proposed alteration shall have been sent in writing, by registered post or under certificate of posting to every member of the Standing Committee at least three months before the conference.

* * * * *

The Bye-Laws will be published after the final revision to be made by the Standing Committee at the next half-yearly meeting.

DRAFT BUDGET

For 1939—40 (Ending 31st October, 1940)

ESTIMATED INCOME	ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE.
Balance on 1st Nov., 1939 ..	By Reception Committee
Fixed Deposit in the Bank of India, Ltd. 2 856 12 0	Expenses 710 0 0
Fixed Deposit in the National Bank of India, Ltd. 630 0 0	Hon. General Secretary's Office Expenses .. 2,890 0 0
With the National Bank of India 7,838 8 0	Printing of Annual Report 1,000 0 0
With Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta 15 15 0	Social Section Secretary's Expenses 100 0 0
With Mrs. J. R. Doctor .. 56 12 0	Educational Section Secty.'s Expenses 100 0 0
With General Secretary .. 348 8 0	Expenses for Organising Secretary:
Contribution of Reception Committee, Delhi .. 773 15 0	Pay Rs. 600/-
Do. of Allahabad .. 350 0 0	T.A. Rs. 300/- 900 0 0
Registration Fees of Delegates 1,420 0 0	Expenses of Members-in-charge 300 0 0
Estimated Donations .. 2 000 0 0	Hon. Treasurer's Expenses 25 0 0
Affiliation Fees .. 750 0 0	Affiliation Fee to International Alliance .. 28 0 0
Vice-Presidentship Fees .. 60 0 0	Bulletin Expenses .. 200 0 0
For extra copies of Circulars 100 0 0	Bank's Commission charges 15 0 0
Sale proceeds of Annual Report 50 0 0	Contingencies .. 200 0 0
Interest on Bank's Current Account 40 0 0	
Interest on Fixed Deposit 60 0 0	
Miscellaneous Receipts .. 10 0 0	
Total Rs. .. 17,360 6 0	Total Rs. .. 6,468 0 0

LIST OF DONORS OF RS. 10/- OR OVER IN 1938-39 (1st November, 1938 to 31st October, 1939)

	Rs.	a.	p.		Rs.	a.	p.
Mr. G. D. Birla through Rajkumari Amrit Kaur ..	500	0	0	Hyderabad (Dn.) Branch for Spanish Refugee Children's Fund (£10-15-5) ..	144	14	7
Messrs. India Cine Pictures Ltd., Bombay, through Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	500	0	0	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade ..	100	0	0
				Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee ..	100	0	0
Through Mrs. Sarojini Naidu —balance of donation (Rs. 500) promised at Nagpur:				H. H. the Rani Saheb of Sangli	100	0	0
(a) From Maharaja of J e y p o r e State Rs. 150				Shrimathi Ammu Swaminadhan	90	0	0
(b) From the Dowager Maharani of Vizianagaram Rs 100	250	0	0	Shrimati Premvati Thapor ..	50	0	0
Calcutta Branch ..	200	0	0	Mrs. D. G. Rai ..	50	0	0
Bombay Branch ..	200	0	0	H. H. the Rani Saheb of Sangli towards Mr. Andrews' Fund for repatriated Indians ..	50	0	0
Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (Rs. 100/- for Conference Funds and Rs. 50/- for Central Office)	150	0	0	Rani Lakshmibai Raiwade for Mr. Andrews's Fund ..	50	0	0
				Gwalior Branch ..	25	0	0
				Punjab East Branch ..	25	0	0
				Dr. Mrs. Mainibai Sukthankar ..	25	0	0

THE ALL-IND

Receipts and Payments Account for t

	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.
To Balance on 1st November, 1938:—				
Fixed Deposit in the Bank of India Ltd.	2,807		10 0	
Fixed Deposit in the National Bank of India Ltd.	620		0 0	
With the National Bank of India Ltd.	7,073		9 6	
With Hon. General Secretary	293		2 9	
With Convener, Special Committee on Legal Dis-				
abilities of women			6 12 0	
With Hon. Treasurer	22		0 6	10,823
„ Registration Fees of Delegates				1,760
„ Donations for Expenses of the Conference				2,315
„ Donation towards Central Office Fund				50
„ Donation towards Mr. Andrews' Fund for Repatriated				
Indians				100
„ Subscription for Spanish Refugee Children				144
„ Subscription towards Education Fund Association				25
„ Affiliation Fees:—				
For 1936-37	30		0 0	
„ 1937-38	330		0 0	
„ 1938-39	645		0 0	1,005
„ Constituencies and sub-constituencies:—				
For extra copies of circulars				240
„ Vice-Presidentship Fees:—For 1937-38	10		0 0	
For 1938-39	30		0 0	40
„ Sale Proceeds of Annual Reports				37
„ Sale Proceeds of Visitors Tickets				459
„ Proceeds of Dramatic Entertainment				835
„ Interest on Bank Current Account				39
„ Interest on Fixed Deposits				59
„ Miscellaneous Receipts				1
Total				17,935

Examined and found correct.

SORAB S. ENGINEER & CO.

Incorporated Accountants,

Registered Accountants.

Hon. Auditors.

Bombay, 14th December, 1939.

MEN'S CONFERENCE

ending 31st October, 1939.

	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Reception Committee Expenses		880 0 0
Hon. General Secretary's Office Expenses*		2,535 6 9
Central Office Expenses:—		
Miss Bhalerao's salary	782 11 0	
Miss Bhalerao's travelling, postage and other expenses	221 5 3	1,004 0 3
		<hr/>
Printing and Stationery		1,061 5 0
Social Section Secretary's expenses		115 14 0
Education Secretary's expenses		59 4 0
Hon. Treasurer's expenses		22 0 6
Affiliation Fee to International Alliance of Women's Suffrage		27 12 6
Bulletin expenses		84 11 0
Mrs. Asafali for Legislation work		21 0 6
Office International Pour L'Enfance as subscription for Spanish refugee children		144 14 7
Miss Bhalerao on account for travelling expenses, etc.		200 0 0
Mrs. Seva Singh Gill as subscription towards Education Fund Association		20 0 0
Bank Commission charges		12 5 0
Balance on 31st October, 1939:—		
Fixed Deposit in the Bank of India Ltd.	2,856 12 0	
Fixed Deposit in National Bank of India	630 0 0	
With the National Bank of India	7,838 8 0	
With Mrs. Mehta (Social Section)	15 15 6	
With Mrs. Doctor (Social Section)	56 12 0	
With Hon. General Secretary	348 8 0	11,746 7 6
		<hr/>
Total		17,935 1 7

Details of the Office Expenses of the Hon. General Secretary:—

Salary of Personal Assistant	1,348 5 0
P. A.'s Travelling expenses	187 2 0
Printing and Stationery	286 9 0
Postages	402 9 0
Telegrams	95 13 0
Registration	11 7 0
Repairs to Typewriter	4 2 0
Printing and Stationery	286 9 0
Cost of shifting office from Ahmedabad to Bombay	93 4 0
Advertisement charges	70 13 0
Miscellaneous expenses	19 12 9
	<hr/>
Total	2,535 6 9

**ASSOCIATION OF THE
ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.
PROVISIONAL TIME TABLE FOR THE YEAR 1940.**

- Feb. and March.** "Echo Meeting" for explaining the work of the annual Session held at Allahabad, to be held any time in February and March, but not later than the end of March.
- May 31.** One nomination from each Branch and from each of the other members of the Standing Committee not representing Branches, for the Presidentship of the Fifteenth Annual Session of the Conference, to be held in December 1940, to reach the Hon. General Secretary before the 31st May, 1940. **No nominations received later than 31st May, 1940 will be considered.**
- June 15.** Items for the Agenda for the half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee to be sent by the Standing Committee members to the Hon. General Secretary latest by 15th June. Half-yearly reports also to reach the Hon. General Secretary by 15th June, 1940.
- July 1.** Voting Papers will be sent to the Standing Committee Members and they will send their votes for the Presidentship for the Fifteenth Session by Registered Post so as to reach the Hon. General Secretary on or before the 15th July. **No Voting Paper will be considered valid after that date.**
- July 20-25.** Half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee to be held provisionally at Ranchi (Bihar) at any time between 20th and 25th July, 1940.
- August 25.** All resolutions relating to alterations and amendments to the Constitution and Bye-Laws and Regulations of the Conference, if any, suggested by the Standing Committee members, to be sent to the Hon. General Secretary before the 25th August, 1940.
- September 15 to November 8.** Branch and Sub-Branch Conferences should be held before 8th November as far as possible.
- November 15.** Resolutions passed at the Branch and Sub-Branch Conferences to be sent to Hon. General Secretary on or before the 15th November, 1940.
- Names and addresses of delegates and Substitutes, New Branch Representatives and a member on the Subjects Committee, if necessary, to be sent to the Hon. General Secretary on or before the 15th November, 1940.
- Items for the Agenda for the Annual Standing Committee meeting in December, to be held at Mysore, to be sent to the Hon. General Secretary, latest by the 15th November, 1940.
- Branch and Sub-Branch Conference Reports also are to be sent to the Hon. General Secretary by the 15th November, 1940.
- December.** The Fifteenth Annual Session of the All-India Women's Conference will be held at Mysore during the last week of December.

N.B.—In order to facilitate work, it is requested that the final list of delegates for the Annual Session should reach the Hon. General Secretary, and the Secretary of the Reception Committee, 15 days before the Session at the latest.

Any change in the above Provisional Programme will be notified in time.

LIST OF BRANCH AND SUB-BRANCH CONFERENCES — (Continued)

Name	Branch	President	Secretary	Date
Ramachandrapuram (East Godavari Dt.)	Andhra	Shrimathi B. Kamakshamma Garu	{ Sm. T. Anasuya Devi Sm. Annapurnamma	6-12-39
Tapeswaram	"	N. Raghavamma Garu	M. Mahalakshamma	18 - 3-39
Baptala (Guntur Dt.)	"	A. Bhaskaramma Garu	{ K. Varalakshamma U. Lakshmikantam	28-10-39
Proddutur	"	K. Ramasubamma Garu	T. Sita Maha Lakshamma	20-11-39
Bezwada	"	T. Raja Rajeshwaramma	S. Subhadramma	28-11-39
Nandyala (Kunnoor Dt.)	"	N. Subhalakshamma	{ A. Subbaratnamma V. Venkataramamma	23-11-39
Kovvur	"	M. Chukkamma Garu	M. V. Tayaramma Garu	29 - 9-39
Cuddapah	"	Begam Mir Amiruddin	{ Mrs. N. Krishnarao Mrs. Kumudum Bhagi	16 & 17-12-39
Shillong	Assam	H. H. Dowager Maharani of Mayurbhanj	Mrs. Shantabai Desai	7-10-39
Comilla	Bengal East	Mrs. B. B. Dutt.	Mrs. Sudha Sen	5 - 1-40
Diglas	Berar	Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale, M.L.A.	Mrs. Buva	19-11-39
Patna	Bihar	Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale	Mrs. S. C. Chakravarty	
Bombay	Bombay	Lady Vidyagauri Nilkanth	Miss Godavari Gokhale	3 & 4-11-39
Dadar	"	Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale	Mrs. Indirabai Dhadphade	21-10-39
Khar	"	Mrs. Hansa Mehta	Mrs. Bhanumati Bhat	1 to 7-10-39
Calcutta	Calcutta	Shrimati Indira Devi Chaudhuri	{ Mrs. Saudamini Mehta Mrs. B. Chakravarty	
Bara Bazar	"	Mrs. Saudamini Mehta		
Jubbulpore	C. P. North	Mrs. Golwalkar	Mrs. Elia Tamby	3 to 7-10-39
Arvi	C. P. South	Mrs. Krishnabai Mote	Mrs. Vimalabai Deshpande	4 & 5-11-39
Delhi	Delhi	Lady Rama Rau	Mrs. Asaf Ali	16-12-39
Simla	"	Mrs. C. P. Skrine	Miss J. E. Copeland	21 - 9-39
Muzaffarnagar	"	Mrs. V. Swarup	Mrs. N. Haldar	Nov. '39
Ahmedabad	Gujarat	Mrs. Hansa Mehta	Mrs. Dina Asana	

LIST OF BRANCH AND SUB-BRANCH CONFERENCES — (Continued)

Name	Branch	President	Secretary	Date
Dharwar ..	Karnatak ..	Sm. Krishnabai Panjikar	Mrs. Shyamalabai Belgaumkar	1-11-39
Mangalore ..	..	Mrs. Rodrhigs	Mrs. Lilabai E. Rao	5-11-39
Garag ..	..	Mrs. Sitabai Karandikar	Mrs. Annapurnadewi Amargol	25-10-39
Bijapur ..	..	Mrs. Alhal	Mrs. Laxmibai Desai	13-10-39
Bellary ..	..	Sm. Dhanalaxmi Bala-sundramma	{ Mrs. Sushilabai Mrs. Jayalakshmi	{ 18-11-39. 27-11-39
Kolaba ..	Konkan ..	Mrs. Chinmulgund	Mrs. M. Vaidya	
Kirloskarwadi ..	Maharashtra ..	Sm. Gangubai Patwardhan	Smt. Shantabai Bhalerao	28 & 29-10-39
Madras ..	Madras ..	Mrs. Rukmani Lakshmipathi,	Mrs. Mary N. Clubwala	9-12-39
Lahore ..	Punjab Central	Mrs. Brijlal Nehru	Shrimati Premwati Thapor	9 & 10-12-39
Jullundur ..	Punjab East ..	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	Mrs. P. L. Sondhi	
Karachi ..	Sind ..	Miss B. Carey	Miss H. J. Sethna	8 - 1-40
Coimbatore ..	Tamil Nadu ..	Dr. Muttulakshmi Reddi	{ Mrs. Sangodian Mrs. Pereira	{ 24 & 25-12-39
Salem ..	..	Mrs. Hemavati Subramaniam	Mrs. Kamakshamma	15-10-39
Erode ..	..	Dr. Pollard	Mrs. Mamrasseh	16-10-39
Tirupur ..	..	Mrs. Ashar	Mrs. Ashar	17-10-39
Tanjore ..	..	Begum Amiruddin	Mrs. Pandian	28-10-39
Madura ..	..	Mrs. Lakshmi	Dr. Pichumuthia	19-10-39
Pollachi ..	..	Mrs. Chaudri Kunthiraman	Dr. Eapan	4-11-39
Koilpatti ..	..	Dr. Gomatiammal		18-11-39
Cawnpore ..	U. P. Agra ..	Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	Mrs B. P. Shrivastava	Oct. 1939
Lucknow ..	U. P. Oudh ..	Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	Mrs. Salamatullah	Oct. 1939
Moradabad ..	..		Mrs. N. Jordan	
Baroda ..	Baroda ..	Miss Indumati Mehta	Mrs. Vatsalabai Ambe-goankar	4 & 5-12-39
Ernaculam ..	Cochin ..	Mrs. B. K. Menon	Mrs. E. V. Mathew	25-11-39



MAP OF INDIA

SHOWING CONSTITUENT AREAS
OF THE
ALL INDIA WOMEN'S
CONFERENCE



BOMBAY

NOTES

-  B. I. AREAS.
-  INDIAN STATES-AREAS.

CONSTITUENT AREAS.

B. INDIA	PUNJAB E.
AJMERE	" C.
ANDHRA	" W.
ASSAM	SINDH
BENGAL E.	TAMIL NADU
" W.	UTKAL
BERAR	U.P. AGRA
BIHAR	STATES
BOMBAY	BARODA
CALCUTTA	BIKANER
C.P. NORTH	COCHIN
C.P. SOUTH	DHAR
DELHI	GWALIOR
GUJERAT	HYDERABAD
KARNATAK	(DECAN)
KONKAN	INDORE.
MADRAS	JAIPUR
MAHARASHTRA	KASHMIR
MALABAR	KOTAH
N.W.F.P.	MYSORE
KOLHAPUR	SANGLI
	TRAVANCORE

A. D. P., GWALIOR.

LIST OF BRANCH AND SUB-BRANCH CONFERENCES

Name	Branch	President	Secretary	Date
Trichur ..	Cachin	Sri M. Karathiyani Amma	Mrs. Lily Poullose	18-11-39
Tripunithura ..	" ..	Sri V. K. Lakshmikutty Naitiyaramma	Sri T. Bharathi Amma	22-11-39
Gwalior ..	Gwalior ..	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai	25 & 26-11-39
Hyderabad ..	Hyderabad (Dn.)	Pasha Hazrala Lady Vicar-ul-Umra	Mrs. C. B. Taraporvala	13-10-39.
Aurangabad ..	" ..	Lady Tasker	Mrs. L. Dasan	27 - 9-39
Gulbarga ..	" ..	Mrs. Bargaonkar	Mrs. Fazal Ahmed Khan	2 - 9-39
Warangal ..	" ..	Lady Tasker	Mrs. J. C. Hardikar	12 - 9-39
Indore ..	Indore ..	H. H. Maharani Indirabai Holkar	Mrs. Jyotsna Mehta	1-12-39
Mysore ..	Mysore	Mrs. McGan	Mrs. Gopala Ayengar	6-11-39
Mandya ..	" ..	Mrs. B. S. Ragavendra Rao	Mrs. B. M. Krishnaswami	23-11-39
Hassan ..	" ..	Mrs. T. Ramiah	Mrs. B. Nanjamma	21-11-39
Tumkur ..	" ..	Mrs. A. Venkata Ramiah	Mrs. K. Srikantiah	28-10-39
Shimoga ..	" ..	Mrs. M. Sheshadri	Mrs. Lakshmamma	23-11-39
Chitaldrug ..	" ..	Mrs. Sheriff	Mrs. A. V. Radhabai	22-11-39
Chikmagalur ..	" ..	Mrs. E. V. Ganapati Iyer	Mrs. Shantabai Sanur	6-11-39
Davengere ..	" ..	Mrs. C. Rangappa	Mrs. B. Sundaramma	24-10-39
Kolar ..	" ..	Mrs. G. Sundara Rao	"	
Phaltan ..	Phaltan ..	Rani Laxmidevi of Phaltan	Mrs. Shantibai Likhite	4-11-39
Sangli ..	Sangli ..	H. H. the Rani Saheb of Sangli	Mrs. Sumatibai Gokhale	29-11-39
Shahapur ..	" ..	Mrs. Lele	Sm. Lakshmibai Talwalkar	29-10-39
Mangalwedha ..	" ..	Mrs. Sathe	Sm. Kamalabai Bhagwat	28-10-39
Terdal ..	" ..	Mrs. Phadnis	Sm. Gangubai Balol	27-10-39
Shirhatti ..	" ..	Mrs. Lagu	Mrs. Santubai Pawar	25-10-39
Kavathe ..	" ..	Mrs. Kulkarni	Mrs. Godbole	30-10-39
Trivandrum ..	Travancore ..	Mrs. Abraham Varughese	Sy. K. Bhanumathy Amma	2-12-39

APPENDIX C

List of Presidents and Secretaries of Branch Committees

Branch	President	Secretary
Andhra	Ch. Chandramathy Garu	Shrimati K. Ramasub- bamma.
Assam	Lady Reid	Mrs. Shantabai Desai. Mrs. Denneby.
Bengal East	Mrs. Abdul Hafeez	Mrs. Mira Nag.
Berar	Mrs. Hardas	Mrs. Sushilabai Pandit.
Bihar	Lady Imam	Mrs. S. C. Chakravarty.
Bombay	Mrs. Urmila Mehta	Miss Godavari Gokhale.
Calcutta	Sm. Indira Devi Chou- dhuri.	Mrs. Monica Gupta.
C. P. North	Mrs. Harshey	Mrs. Bhat.
C. P. South	Mrs. Ramabai Kedar	Mrs. Vimalabai Deshpande.
Delhi	Lady Bajpai	Mrs. Asaf Ali.
Gujarat	Lady Vidyagauri Nilkanth	Mrs. Dina Asana.
Karnatak	Mrs. Satyawatidevi Tawde	Mrs. Shakuntalabai Nand- awar.
Konkan	Mrs. Chinmalgund	Mrs. M. Vaidya.
Maharashtra	Rani Lakshmibai Raj- wade.	Smt. Shantabai Bhalerao.
Madras	Mrs. Rukmani Lakshmi- pathi.	Mrs. Mary Clubwala.
N.-W. F. P.	Mrs. Kazi Mir Ahmed	Mrs. S. Aslam.
Orissa	Shrimati Sarala Devi	Sm. Sudhansumali Roy.
Punjab Central	Mrs. Brijlal Nehru	Mrs. Wattal.
Punjab East	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	Mrs. P. L. Sondhi.
Sind	Miss B. Carey	Miss Homai J. Sethna.
Tamil Nadu	Mrs. Coelho	Mrs. E. M. David.
U. P. Agra	Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	Mrs. Kamala Kak.
U. P. Oudh	Begum Aizaz Rasul	Mrs. Salamatullah.
Baroda	Mrs. Subhadrabai Pagar, P.A.	{ Mrs. Indirabai Vaknis. } Mrs. Aparna Deshpande.
Cochin	Mrs. E. T. Kuruvilla	Mrs. M. O. Chacko.
Gwalior	Lady Dhanvanta Mehta	Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai
Hyderabad (Dn.)	Begum Wali-ud-Dowla	Miss Nergish S. Bharucha.
Indore	Princess Savitribai Saheb	Mrs. Jyotsna Mehta.
Jath	Shrimant Dowager Rani Saheb of Jath.	Miss Monorama Khabade.
Kolhapur	Mrs. Kamalabai Subanis	Mrs. Lilabai Uplekar.
Mysore	Mrs. McGan	Mrs. Gopala Iyengar.
Phaltan	Rani Lakshmidevi of Phaltan.	Mrs. Shantabai Likhite.
Sangli	H. H. the Rani Saheb of Sangli.	Mrs. Sumatibai Gokhale.
Travancore	Mrs. A. Gopala Menon	Mrs. Janki Charry.

A SCHEME
for
THE EXTENSION OF THE WORK OF THE A.-I. W. C.

(Prepared by Rani Lakshuibai Rajwade)

Introductory.—

We all realise the necessity of extending the scope of our ministry in social and educational matters. As many of us have insisted we must now attend increasingly to the needs of the women of the working classes both in the villages as well as the towns: for, the A.-I. W. C. will take firm root only when the lives of the working women are encompassed by its activities and organisation. Here the aim is twofold: the extension of the A.-I. W. C. activities and with it the extension of its membership and its sphere of influence. I feel that village work is too specialised and remote a field to be easily accessible to all of us. I think it is the general experience that village work can best be accomplished only by those who dedicate their lives to it and who go and live amongst villagers. The knowledge, the temperament, the sacrifices required for it are, in the present conditions in the villages, of a special type. Some workers have that equipment and are in a position to undertake this very important work in the villages: and the fact that in this scheme we are concerning ourselves exclusively with the towns need not be taken as any discouragement to those who are working and wish to work in the villages.

Many of us, however, can effectively undertake similar social work among the women of one's neighbourhood in the towns and cities where we live. I am presenting here a scheme by which such work can be undertaken within the scope of our organisation. To begin with, the work will be done by voluntary workers, though later on paid workers and the necessary funds to pay them will have to be found. Most of these workers will have to be the trained workers, although some of the work will be done by members of the A.-I. W. C. who need not be specially trained.

The work, during the first few years at any rate, will consist mainly of a course of talks, demonstrations, excursions, entertainments, organised activities covering as many items of social hygiene and civics as may be possible.

The unit to which the work will be referred and limited will be the Mohalla or roughly a Municipal constituency in a town and in big cities like Bombay areas corresponding to the sub-divisions of the wards.

Where a given Mohalla is small, one centre of work may suffice but where,

as in large cities, a given Mohalla encompasses a wide area it will be necessary to organise several centres in each. Each centre should cater for from 20 to 30 grown-up women.

The teaching is to be free or a nominal fee may be taken: but this will depend upon local conditions, chiefly financial. There should be two persons in charge of a given centre; one of whom should devote her whole attention to the spread of literacy while the other should undertake the rest of the subjects. These two workers should change work every month, so that the one who has taken the literacy portion takes the rest of the work, while the second takes over the literacy section of it.

I. Organisation.—

- (1) The existing Local Committees of the A.-I. W. C. will initially select a voluntary worker whom they will send to a training centre (see para IV—10) for the necessary training.
- (2) The Local Committee will appoint a sub-committee to be known as the Sub-Committee for Mohalla Work. The trained worker will be either the Secretary or an ordinary member of this committee. (It may perhaps be found necessary in big towns to have small committees or sections of workers—one for each Mohalla or Municipal constituency. In that case the work of all these smaller committees will be supervised and co-ordinated by the Sub-Committee for Mohalla Work of the whole area.) The size of the Sub-Committee should be determined by the Local Committee. The Sub-Committee will report to the Local Committee twice a year.
- (3) The Sub-Committee for Mohalla Work will collect all the data for and personally supervise and co-ordinate the work of the voluntary workers in each Mohalla. The trained member of the sub-committee will actually direct the work in all the Mohallas. The sub-committee will exist not only to supervise and co-ordinate but also to render any help necessary including, on occasion, financial help. Its composition should be decided also from this point of view. Women of influence and leisure, women experts in various subjects should be included along with women devoted to social work. I also think that influential local men may also be co-opted on this committee. In places where there is only the Sub-Committee for Mohalla Work and no smaller committees, the workers in all the Mohallas should be asked to attend monthly co-ordinating meetings of the sub-committee. Where

there are more than one committee for each Mohalla the workers should also meet once a month at some place in the Mohalla to compare notes, get difficulties solved, etc., etc.

II. The Trained Member.—

- (4) Otherwise the sub-committee should function mainly through the trained member so far as the actual work is concerned. Supervision, suggestions, financial and other help, outlining the year's work, general policy will, of course, be matters which will be the concern of the sub-committee as a whole. But apart from these the actual work—all dealings with the workers—will be through the trained member. Because, the trained member will be a volunteer and an expert.
- (5) This twofold authority attaching to the trained member will have to be recognised and expressed in the distribution of work and authority as between her and the rest of the sub-committee.
- (6) The trained member will have received special training for this kind of work either in an A.-I. W. C. Training Camp (see para IV—10) or at any other training centre recognised for this purpose by the A.-I. W. C.
- (7) Although she will be a voluntary worker her training expenses and then whatever conveyance charges she incurs in the course of her actual work in the Mohallas should be paid out of the local funds.
- (8) She will train the workers who will do the actual work in the Mohallas. She will prepare the year's plan of work and put it before the sub-committee. She will explain the work to them and see that they do it in the proper way. She will receive their demands for help, etc., and put them, if necessary, before the sub-committee. The training of the workers may be arranged for by the trained member organising local training camps.

III. The Workers.—

- (9) They will be voluntary and honorary at least for some time to come. They will be trained locally or at their own expense at any of the training centres organised or approved by the A.-I. W. C. I think we should have educated local women even on a basis of only 6 months' or a year's voluntary service.

IV. The Training Camps.—

- (10) For a country so vast as India a Central All-India Training Camp

will be impracticable and unprofitable. For the sake of standardisation and economy of training the biggest unit possible is the province (a province means either a British India Province or a State). Even these will be found very difficult to organise. Perhaps the most convenient basis will be linguistic areas. Each such area can organise a training camp, say, for a month every year, where workers may be sent by the local committees in the area. The expenses of the camp may be equally shared by all those who may have participated in it. For starting this scheme and for the initial camps we shall have to have people coming forward offering to organise these initial camps in as many areas as may, with the help of the local experts, be possible.

V. Finances.—

- (11) Local Committee funds will have to suffice. These must be supplemented by a separate locally levied fund for this purpose. It will have to be further supplemented by income from entertainments, etc., arranged by the Mohalla work organisers.

The expenditure will consist of the following items mainly

- (a) training of the trained members;
- (b) printing of the pamphlets to be used;
- (c) conveyance charges;
- (d) charges incidental to demonstrations, excursions, entertainments, etc.;
- (e) miscellaneous.

At a much later stage, if the work proves useful and extends itself, perhaps the collection of an All-India Fund may be undertaken by the A.-I. W. C.

VI. The Work.—

- (12) The work among Mohalla women will not be as continuous, direct and intimate or fundamental as in the villages. At any rate in the beginning the work, although very wide in range, will be done mainly through the reading and explaining of pamphlets, demonstrations, excursions to places and institutions dealt with in the pamphlets (to see their actual working), the organisation of common activities with reference to the subjects of those pamphlets and lastly entertainments. I realise that this is not enough. But our chief aim is not so much reform as the awakening of interest in reform and in the whole environment. The last clause in this scheme gives a rough idea of the subjects that these pamphlets and demonstrations will deal with.

- (13) To begin with, it will suffice if the women of the Mohalla meet about three times in the week for this purpose. They are extremely busy: and the workers too will be voluntary, so that meetings more than three times in the week will not be possible nor desirable. Of course, if a demand is created for a daily social centre in the Mohalla so much the better: and means should be found to satisfy that demand. The time and place will be locally settled of course: but the earlier part of the afternoon seems to be the best time unless the evening is definitely found more convenient.
- (14) Usually only one pamphlet should be dealt with at one meeting, although 2-3 allied subjects can also be discussed. The worker reads the pamphlet aloud and explains it: then answers questions. This is where the trained worker herself can be useful: in fact, I think these questions and answers will be the really effective part of the whole process.
- (15) Clause VII of this scheme gives the subjects with which the pamphlets will deal. The pamphlets themselves will be very short—each about 2-3 printed octavo pages—and very simple, elementary and precise. They must be written for the average working class woman's capacity to understand and for *her* needs. I have with me copies of 4—5 model pamphlets. A group of about 10-15 people—I have such a group in view—might undertake the writing of these pamphlets. Some of these will have to be written inevitably by the local people as the information will need a great deal of local reference as, for instance, a pamphlet on the working of the municipality. But the others should be uniform—written in one language and translated into the rest. The translations can be locally made by the trained workers or their assistants.
- (16) **The Pamphlet.—**
Information will be supplemented by
- (a) Demonstrations (all sorts from hospital treatment to buying a stamp or a ticket).
 - (b) Reading of newspapers.
 - (c) Magic lantern.
 - (d) *Kirtans*: readings from classics.
 - (e) Knitting and sewing classes.
 - (f) Baby shows, etc.

- (g) Excursions and picnics.
- (h) Visits to institutions, industrial centres, all sorts of public places like the zoo, the museum, etc., etc.
- (i) Organising Mohalla days when some activity of common interest may be carried out.

VII. The Pamphlet.—

- (17) These will cover roughly the following headings and sub-headings: I expect there will be about 160-175 such leaflets. These may be serially printed in the A.-I. W. C. Journal and later on in book form. The list given here is by no means either exhaustive or absolutely exact. The sub-headings which will be more or less the headings for leaflets may be altered: their grouping may be changed. But the broad outline is as follows:—

(N.B.—Literacy—one hour should be given at each meeting to the spread of literacy).

I. Personal Hygiene.—

- (1) Cleanliness of the body; care of the hair; a little beauty culture.
- (2) Cleanliness of clothes and other personal belongings; use of soap.
- (3) Common diseases which result from uncleanliness—itch, ring-worm, pyorrhœa, etc.
- (4) Destruction of common vermin.

II. (A) Domestic Hygiene.—

- (1) How dirt, dust, darkness or damp in the house or around it cause disease and how to remedy them: use of cheap disinfectants where possible.
- (2) Cleaning utensils—cooking and others, furniture, children's clothes, bed clothes, etc.

(B) The Home and its Environs.—

- (1) The domestic budget: *accounting*.
- (2) Shopping.
- (3) Cooking (some new recipes).
- (4) Mending clothes.
- (5) Care and beautifying of the house: gardening.
- (6) Care of domestic animals.

III. Mohalla Sanitation and Cleanliness.—

- (1) Every woman's responsibility in keeping the Mohalla clean (arrange Mohalla cleaning weeks or days).

IV. Municipalities: a Visit and Demonstration,—

- (1) Civic rights.
- (2) Water supply.

(3) Fire Brigade.

V. General Hygiene and Health.—

- (1) Maternity (2 pamphlets)—visit maternity homes.
- (2) Some physiology—models, charts, etc.
- (3) Common epidemics, care of the body: exercise.
- (4) Prevention of diseases.
- (5) First aid, home nursing, homely remedies.

VI. Care of Children: Baby Weeks.—Particularly Child Psychology (Elementary).

- (1) Health and growth (a children's dress sample).
- (2) Training.
- (3) How children are taught: where to put the child to school.

VII. Food.—

- (1) General.
- (2) Different kinds of diet: nutrition and food values.

VIII. Neighbourliness and Co-operation.

IX. The Law Courts: a Visit.

X. The Police.—

- (1) Explanation of the exact position of the police.
- (2) The rights and duties of citizens in relation to the police: a visit to police lines, perhaps demonstration of traffic control.

XI. The Secretariat or Kacheri: a Visit perhaps.

XII. The Post Office.—

- (1) Explanation of its work: (a visit) ordinary mail, money transactions, parcels (actual demonstration).
- (2) The Telegraph and the Telephone: demonstration.
- (3) The Savings Bank.

XII. (a) Railways and Buses.

XIII. Banks.

XIV. Industry.—

- (1) General explanation.
- (2) Follow the whole process of the manufacture of 2-3 common articles like cloth or soap or nibs, etc.—visits to mills and factories.
- (3) The crafts local—weaving, basket making, spinning.
- (4) The arts—visit to museum (2 leaflets, dealing with the various fine arts).
- (5) Conditions of pay and life in the big industries.

XV. Swadeshi.—

- (1) Its necessity and place in the economic life of the Nation.

XVI. Government: Politics.—

- (1) The most elementary outline: the constitution.
Where the money comes from: taxes and revenues: how it is spent.
- (2) The various political parties.
- (3) The franchise: how to vote in elections.
- (4) Local Government.
- (5) The Local Member—what help to expect of him.

XVII. Laws.—

- (1) Why and how they are made.
- (2) Women's legal rights and disabilities.

XVIII. Marriage and Family.—

- (1) Child marriage: why undesirable.
- (2) Marriage customs, good and bad: expense of marriage.
- (3) How to live happily together (the right to be happy).
- (4) Birth control.
- (5) Prohibition.
- (6) Purdah.

XIX. Religions and Untouchability.—

- (1) What is religion?
- (2) Various religions: tolerance.
- (3) Religion and custom.
- (4) Festivals: costly religious rites.

XX. Books (arrangements for readings from Literature)—circulating libraries.**XXI. Newspapers (arrangements for weekly or bi-weekly reading of newspapers—chiefly through borrowing)—**

- (1) Importance of Newspapers: visit to a Newspaper Office or Press, if possible.
- (2) Printing.

XXII. Radio.—

Explanation and demonstration, if possible.

XXIII. Cinema.—Visits.**XXIV. Theatres, Fairs, etc.—Visits arranged.****XXV. Indian History.—**

- (1) General outline—4 pamphlets (including some local history to be done locally).
- (2) Famous incidents. (Historical *Kathas* or ballad singing to be arranged).

XXVI. Current Topics in India.—Eminent Indians (on newspaper days).**XXVII. Current Topics in the World.—on newspaper days,**

XXVIII. Countries of the World (bare outline).—

- (1) Geographical.
- (2) Historical, political and racial.

XXIX. Some World Personalities.**XXX. Local Personalities.—(Arrange their visiting Mohalla).****XXXI. Prominent local institutions.—Visits.****XXXII. The Earth.—**

- (1) Some geographical facts.
- (2) Continents, oceans, etc.
- (3) Climate: seasons, weather forecast, local climate.
- (4) The moon's phases: eclipses.
- (5) The sun and the stars: if these can be so simplified.

XXXIII. Indian Geography.—

- (1) Natural features, climate, people.
- (2) Provinces, places of importance and big cities.

XXXIV. Every-day Science.—

- (1) Simple machinery: flour mills, etc., etc.
- (2) Heat and cold effects, light, electricity, etc.

XXXV. Natural History.—

In the form of a visit to the zoo and park, common Indian birds, trees and flowers.

XXXVI. Some occupations.—

- (1) Agriculture.
- (2) Mining.
- (3) Building houses, ships, bridges, etc.
- (4) The Army.
- (5) Sailors and fishermen.
- (6) Metal working.
- (7) The professions.

XXXVII. Some raw materials and their origin: cotton, wool, jute hides, oil seeds, crude oil, metals, rubber.**XXXVIII. Some manufactured articles:****XXXIX. Some aspects of the town or city.**

- (1) Public Parks
- (2) Hotels
- (3) Streets
- (4) Temples and mosques.

XL. Some Occupations with which they come into daily contact.—

१ तेली २ दूध वाली ३ बनियां ४ मंडी ५ बजाज

Oil monger, milk woman, grocer, vegetable vendor, tailor, carpenter, mason, goldsmith, etc.

XLI. Spare time Activities.—

Pastimes, entertainments, pictures, etc.

The subjects which will be supplemented by demonstration or practical activities are not exhaustively shown because most of the leaflets can be so supplemented.

This is the broad outline of the scheme. The subjects have not been either exclusively or exhaustively arranged. Obviously if the A.-I. W. C. wants to take it up, it will have to ask one or two of its members to take charge of it and work it out in detail and then launch it. The A.-I. W. C. will, I think, do well to do so.

Existing women's institutions in a big city should co-operate in this scheme by sending workers to be trained and later by organising similar work themselves. It must be made clear that such women's institutions will be entirely free to carry on their own line of work. Their co-operation will be sought only for the purposes of this scheme.

N.B.—The *Harijan* numbers dated the 29th October, 5th November and 19th November, 1938, contain a very valuable note on the methods adopted for the spread of mass education in China, a perusal of which will be found both interesting and useful.

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APPENDIX I

SUGGESTED GRADES FOR THE TRAINING OF WORKERS

The General Efficiency Grades are:—

JUNIOR DIVISION

Elementary.—

(These must be prescribed exactly, and in detail).

(i) Personal Hygiene, *viz*:

(ii) Games, *viz*:

(iii) Gardening, *viz*:

(iv) Needlecraft.

Advanced.—

(i) Domestic Hygiene (elementary), *viz*:

(ii) Elementary care of children.

(iii) Physical exercises, *viz*:

SENIOR DIVISION**Elementary—(Badge).**

- (i) First Aid and precautions against sickness.
- (ii) Care of animals.
- (iii) Personal health and exercise.

Intermediate—(Badge).

- (i) A craft—gardening or spinning (elementary).
- (ii) Practical dietetics (suited to local conditions).
- (iii) More advanced needlecraft.
- (iv) General knowledge (practical tests, e.g., how to send telegram, money-order, Savings Bank account, etc.).

Advanced—(Badge).

- (i) Social hygiene (including birth-control).
- (ii) Elementary civics (practical).
- (iii) Care of infants, children and nursing mothers.
- (iv) A definite piece of work for Mohalla or village.
- (v) Household management.

There will also be Special Proficiency tests of a more advanced standard in each individual subject. These tests may only be taken by those who have passed the Intermediate Grade of the Senior Division. A member who has passed the Advanced Grade and in addition passes the Special Proficiency tests in two subjects, shall be entitled to a badge—to be decided upon.

APPENDIX II

The suggested Code of Honour is:—

- (1) **Duty:** to help the Motherland by working for the uplift of her women and children.
- (2) **Beauty:** to embody the beautiful in my life and my environment.
- (3) **Health:** to maintain personal purity, improve personal health, and work for hygienic surroundings.
- (4) **Truth:** to uphold the highest standards of my religion and my conscience.

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE. ALLAHABAD.



Delegates to the Fourteenth Session, January, 1940.

THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S EDUCATION FUND ASSOCIATION

(As the All-India Women's conference is strongly represented on the Governing body of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association, which came into existence through the Conference after its first Delhi session, it recommends this Fund to all those interested in the development of girl's education along the lines of its Memorandum).

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

1. The name of the Association is "The All-India Women's Education Fund Association."
2. The objects for which the Association is established are:—
 - (1) The management of the Fund known as "The All-India Women's Education Fund."
 - (2) The promotion of the education of women and girls of India including—
 - (a) The aid of any schemes for the furtherance of education in all its branches, of the women and girls of India as may from time to time be recommended by the Conference known as the All-India Women's Conference or under such other name as the Conference may hereafter be registered (hereinafter and in the Rules and Regulations of the Association referred to as the All-India Women's Conference).
 - (b) The institution of propaganda for the education of the women and girls of India.
 - (c) The increase of the supply of better trained teachers, having particular regard to the inclusion of training in domestic subjects.
 - (d) The encouragement of the production of better text-books and attractive and suitable literature in the vernacular.
 - (e) The exploration and initiation of schemes for the education of children of Kindergarten age, for the extension of suitable education amongst children in rural areas, for the support where possible of approved schemes which already exist, and for the provision of suitable housing accommodation for women teachers, especially in rural areas.

- (f) The extension of facilities in existing educational institutions for courses of training in home-craft, fine arts, domestic science, physical culture and other suitable subjects.
- (3) The purchase or acquisition on lease, or in exchange, or on hire or otherwise, of any real or personal property, and any rights of privileges necessary or convenient for the purposes of the Association.
- (4) The erection, construction, alteration and maintenance of any buildings necessary or convenient for the purpose of the Association.
- (5) The sale, improvement, management and development of all or any part of the property of the Association.
- (6) The promotion and establishment of branches and of other societies or associations with similar objects particularly in the constituent areas of the All-India Women's Conference, and the affiliation or amalgamation of such societies or associations with this Association.
- (7) The doing of all other such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. MEMBERSHIP

1. There shall be the following grades of members of the Association:—
 - (a) President. (b) Patrons. (c) Vice-Patrons. (d) Life Fellows.
 - (e) Life Members. (f) Members.
2. The President shall be elected at a General Meeting for a period of three years.
3. The Patrons of the Association shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to not less than Rs. 20,000, and such other distinguished persons as the Governing Body may think proper to appoint. Every patron shall be at liberty to appoint a representative to attend and vote at the General Meetings of the Association on his or her behalf.
4. Vice-Patrons shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 10,000. Life Fellows shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 500. Life members shall be donors of sums of not less than Rs. 100.
5. Members shall be persons who pay an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 5, such subscription shall be due in advance on the 1st November in every year.

6. The Governing Body may elect any person to honorary membership of any grade in recognition of services rendered to the Association.

7. The Honorary Secretary of the Association shall maintain a register of members of the Association and this register shall be open to inspection.

II. GENERAL MEETING

8. (a) The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held once a year at Delhi at an interval of not less than 10 and not more than 15 months. The Executive Committee, however, shall have power to alter the venue for any special reasons. (Notice of such Annual General Meetings shall be given at least one month before the date fixed, and such notice shall specify the business to be transacted. Members of all grades shall be entitled to attend and to vote on any question that may be submitted to the meeting for determination.)

(b) At such Annual General Meeting the report and balance sheet for the past year, and the budget for the next year, shall be presented and an Auditor appointed for auditing the account of the next year. Any other business may be brought forward with the assent of the Chair.

9. (a) An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association may be convened at any time by the President for any purpose connected with the Association and shall be convened on the written requisition of at least 30 members stating the object of such meeting.

(b) At least 18 days' notice shall be given of such meeting, with the agenda to be brought before it, provided that accidental omission to give such notice to any member shall not invalidate any Resolution passed at such meeting, and no business other than that specified in such agenda shall be transacted.

10. (a) All General Meetings of the Association shall be presided over by the President or in her absence by the Chairwoman of the Governing Body, or in absence of both by some other person elected by those present.

(b) All questions shall be decided by the votes of the members present, taken by show of hands, but anyone present may demand a division which shall forthwith be taken and the result declared by the officer presiding.

(c) In case of equality of votes, the officer presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

THE GOVERNING BODY

11. (1) The Governing Body of the Association for the purpose of the Act XXI of 1860 shall consist of the President and 21 members including an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, all of whom with the exception of the Honorary Treasurer, shall be women.

(2) From and after the Annual General Meeting of 1938 the Governing Body shall consist of:—

(a) the President, the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer.

(b) nineteen members of the Association elected triennially as follows:—7 elected by the Association and 12 elected by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference of whom 2 shall be from Indian States.

(3) The members of the Governing Body shall all be members of the Fund Association.

(4) Casual vacancies among office-holders or members of the Governing Body shall be filled by the Governing Body and any person so chosen shall retain his or her office so long as the vacating member would have retained the same if no vacancy had occurred: In the event of a vacancy or vacancies occurring among those members elected by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference, the Governing Body shall fill it or them from among names submitted to them by the said Standing Committee. No action of the Governing Body which may be otherwise valid, shall be rendered invalid by reason of any such vacancy remaining unfilled, provided, however, that the number of vacancies so remaining unfilled shall not at any time exceed 3 (three). An absence of 12 months out of India shall constitute a vacancy.

(5) The Governing Body shall have power, when necessary, to co-opt persons having expert knowledge in any Branch of the Association's work. The number of persons so co-opted shall not at any one time exceed five. Any co-optation shall cease at the will of the Governing Body.

12. The Governing Body shall hold their Annual Meeting on the same day and at the same place as and immediately after the Annual General Meeting of the Association or at such other place and time as the Executive Committee may decide. The Governing Body shall, at the Annual Meeting, elect from among themselves a Chairwoman who will preside in the absence of the President and a Vice-Chairwoman who in the absence of the Chairwoman shall conduct her duties and exercise her powers. In the absence of both at any meeting, such meeting may elect its own Chairman from those present. Any vacancies in these offices shall be filled up by the Governing Body.

13. Ordinary meetings of the Governing Body shall be held at such place and time as may be fixed by the Executive Committee. The annual budget and report of the Association shall be considered at one such meeting in each year.

14. An extra-ordinary meeting of the Governing Body may be called at any time by the President or Chairwoman.

15. Upon a requisition in writing made by any five members of the

Governing Body stating the object the President or Chairwoman shall call an extraordinary meeting.

16. Eighteen day's clear notice of any meeting of the Governing Body, specifying the place, day and hour of the meeting and the general nature of the business to be transacted shall be given to every member of the Governing Body by notice sent under postal certificate, provided that the failure to give such notice to any of the members shall not invalidate any resolution at such meeting.

17. At a meeting of the Governing Body six members must be present in person to form a quorum.

18. If no quorum is present within an hour of the time fixed for a meeting of the Governing Body, the meeting shall be held after an interval of 24 hours. If there again be no quorum, only urgent business may be transacted, and at such meeting three members shall form a quorum.

19. In the event of an equality of votes at any meeting, the presiding officer shall have a second or casting vote.

20. (1) The Governing Body shall at their annual meeting elect the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer. They may also appoint an Honorary Assistant Secretary and an Honorary Assistant Treasurer. These shall not, ex-officio, be members of the Governing Body but in the event of the absence from any meeting of the Secretary or Treasurer they shall act in their respective offices as members of the Governing Body. Persons holding these offices shall be eligible for re-election. Any vacancies in these offices occurring during the year shall be filled up by the Governing Body.

(2) All other appointments shall be made by the Executive Committee.

21. The Governing Body, subject to these Rules, shall have general control of the affairs of the Association with authority to make standing orders regulating its own procedure, the procedure of the Executive Committee, and the powers and duties of its officers. In particular it shall provide for a proper record of all proceedings, and for an accurate account of all receipts and payments to be opened to the inspection of the auditor.

22. In addition to the powers and authorities conferred on them either by Statute or Rules of the Association, the Governing Body shall have power to do all such acts as are to be done by the Association, with the exception of those which by these Rules or by Statute are expressly directed to be done by the Association in General Meeting.

IV. COMMITTEES

23. The Governing Body shall at their annual meeting elect an Executive Committee of eight members besides the office-bearers. Any vacancies

in the elected members of the Executive Committee occurring during the year shall be filled by the Executive Committee.

This Executive Committee will perform the current duties of the Association and such other duties as the Governing Body may prescribe. The transactions of the Executive Committee shall be duly recorded and laid before the Governing Body at its next meeting for information or confirmation. In case of emergency the Executive Committee may perform any duty and exercise any power of the Governing Body. The Executive Committee may appoint any sub-committee and delegate to it any powers which may be necessary, but the proceedings of such sub-committees shall in every case be reported for information or confirmation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall meet at such time and in such places as they think proper and at all their meetings four shall form a quorum.

24. The Chairwoman, Vice-Chairwoman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary shall be ex-officio member of all Sub-Committees (In the absence of either Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer their Assistants, if any, shall act as members of the Executive Committee and any of Sub-Committee).

25. (1) All matters affecting the finance of the Association shall be referred to the Executive Committee before being determined by the Governing Body.

(2) The Executive Committee shall scrutinise the accounts of the Association and shall consider the Report of the Auditor. It shall also prepare the annual budget and submit it through the Governing Body to the General Meeting of the Association.

26. When a Branch of the Association is formed, or any other body having for its objects the purposes for which the Association is established, desires affiliation, the case shall be examined by the Executive Committee before being submitted to the Governing Body, and no such branch shall be recognised or body affiliated without the vote of the Governing Body. It shall be a condition of recognition or affiliation that each such branch or body shall have a regularly constituted committee, and shall pay an annual affiliation fee to be fixed by the Governing Body, and that its accounts be audited by an auditor approved by the Governing Body.

27. Unless otherwise desired by them, branches and affiliated bodies shall remain independent in the administration of their funds and in the conduct of their operations, but they shall furnish to the Governing Body such reports and information as may be required by the Governing Body and shall assist by correspondence and conference in the furtherance of their common

objects. The Governing Body shall have power, subject to the Rules to assist branches and affiliated bodies in such manner and to such an extent as it may consider to be conducive to the objects of the Association.

28. The Governing Body shall be at liberty to appoint sub-committees for such purposes and with such powers as they may think proper.

V. GENERAL

29. All moneys at any time standing to the credit of the general account which shall not be required for current expenses, and which the Governing Body shall not determine to transfer to the Building or any other account, shall be invested by the Honorary Treasurer, with approval of the Executive Committee in securities authorised by law for the investment of trust funds.

30. The Bankers of the Association shall be the Imperial Bank of India and also if necessary the Central Bank of India Ltd.

31. The Executive Committee shall provide a seal and also provide for its safe custody, and the seal shall never be used except by the authority of the Executive Committee previously given and in the presence of two Members of the Executive Committee who shall sign every instrument to which the seal is fixed, and every such instrument shall be countersigned by the Honorary Secretary or some other person appointed by the Executive Committee.

32. If any corporation, firm, school, college or body of trustees makes any subscription or donation to the Association, the privileges which such subscription or donation carries shall be exercised by a person whom the above-mentioned may from time to time nominate for a period not exceeding ten years to be determined by the Governing Body.

33. (1) None of these Rules shall be repealed or altered and no new Rules shall be made except by Resolution passed by majority of not less than three-fifths of the members of the Governing Body present at an ordinary meeting and confirmed by Resolution passed by a subsequent General Meeting of the Association.

(2) Interpretation of these Rules shall be vested entirely in the Governing Body.

Bye-Laws for the Election of Members to the Governing Body.

1. The Executive Committee shall conduct all elections to the Governing Body.

2. Every candidate for election to the Governing Body shall be a member of the Association and shall be nominated by a member of the Association. Nomination forms for membership for the Governing Body shall be posted to each member of the Association in such form and at such time

as the Executive Committee may think proper. No person can nominate herself or himself.

3. The nomination forms must be returned to the Honorary Secretary of the Association by the date fixed for that purpose accompanied by the consent in writing of the candidate nominated.

4. All nominations shall be scrutinised by the Executive Committee who shall have absolute discretion to reject any nominee. Notice of the names of all candidates so nominated together with voting papers in the form approved by the Executive Committee and instructions as to voting shall be posted to each member of the association. The voting papers must be returned to the Honorary Secretary in special envelopes provided only for this purpose by the date fixed in the notice.

5. The voting papers shall be opened and scrutinised at a meeting of the Executive Committee or by the Honorary Secretary and two scrutinisers appointed by the Executive Committee. The votes for candidates will be counted separately and the candidate or candidates, as the case may be, receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of two or more candidates for one vacancy heading the poll with the same number of votes, the chairwoman of the Executive Committee shall exercise a casting vote.

6. The declaration of the Chairwoman of the Executive Committee declaring the candidates elected shall be final, and shall be reported to the Association at the Annual General Meeting. Successful candidates shall be notified immediately of their election.

7. If, during the interval between the posting of the nomination papers and the counting of the votes, a candidate, nominated by a member of the Association, is elected to the Governing Body by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference her name shall be removed from the voting paper.

8. The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference shall have power to nominate not more than 3 (three) names for each vacancy occurring during any year in the Governing Body among its representatives. In the event of these nominations not being sent in to the Honorary Secretary of the Association within one month of the request for such nominations, the Governing Body shall fill the vacancy or vacancies themselves.

9. In order to simplify elections for office-holders of the Executive Committee nominations for these should be sent in by the members of the Governing Body to the Honorary Secretary at least 3 (three) days before the Annual General Meeting.

HISTORY OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

1. Origin of the All-India Women's Conference.

The All-India Women's Conference owes its origin to a circular letter from Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins who, in the autumn of 1926, as Secretary of the Women's India Association, Adyar, Madras, addressed an appeal to women all over the country to form local committees and hold Constituent Conferences in each of the Provinces and in certain other clearly defined districts and Indian States, for the purpose of declaring their views on problems of education.

The original stimulus which gave rise to Mrs. Cousins letter was an appeal made by the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, at the Prize-Giving function of the Bethune College, Calcutta, in which he called on Indian Women to "tell us with one voice what they want, and keep on telling us till they get it." Mrs. A. L. Huidekoper, an ex-Principal of the Bethune College (who, we are glad to say, is still one of our very active members), made use of this appeal as the basis of two articles which were published in *Stri Dharma*, the monthly magazine of the Women's Indian Association, and it was after this that Mrs. Cousins took up the matter in the way just described. Her appeal met with a wide and enthusiastic response, and Constituent Conferences were held in 22 places during the months of September to December, 1926, and the First All-India Women's Conference was organised to take place at Poona, where it was duly held from January 5th to 8th 1927, under the distinguished Presidentship of Her Highness the Maharani Chimnabai Saheb Gaekwar of Baroda,—Mrs. Cousins being the first Honorary Organising Secretary. The Resolutions passed at that Conference related almost without exception to education, ranging from matters concerning Primary Schools up to those relating to College and Adult Education. The sole exception was a Resolution condemning the practice of early marriage, as it interfered with education and supporting Sir Hari Singh Gour's Age of Consent Bill, which was then about to come before the Legislative Assembly.

2. The Second Conference.

In 1928, the Second Conference was held in Delhi under the Presidentship of Her Highness the Begum Mother of Bhopal, the proceedings being opened by Her Excellency Lady Irwin (Lady Halifax). In addition to reaffirming most of the Resolutions of the First Conference, notable Resolutions were passed relating to Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarda's Bill for the restraint of

Early Marriage, which was at that time under consideration, as well as urging the Government to give representation to women in the Central Legislature, so that they might be able to express their views on pending measures affecting the interests of women and girls. The Second Conference was noteworthy also as the origin of All-India Fund for Women's Education.

3. The Third Conference.—

The Third Conference, that of 1929, was held at Patna, with Her Highness the Dowager Rani of Mandi as President. It was on this occasion that the scope of the Conference was definitely widened to include Social Reform and a separate Section for Social Reform was created to work on lines parallel to those of the Section concerned with Educational Reform. Three Sub-Committees of the Educational Reform Section were appointed to carry on work throughout the year in the following directions:—

- (a) The drafting of a special curriculum for schools, based on the ideals underlying the Resolutions passed by the Conference.
- (b) The revising and creating of new text books.
- (c) The investigation of the conditions of the training of teachers in all parts of India. Under the Social Reform Section also a Sub-committee was appointed to carry on the campaign to raise the age of marriage.

4. The Fourth Conference.—

By 1930, when the Fourth Conference was held in Bombay under the Presidentship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the increased efficiency of the organisation had become very noticeable: and the Honorary Organising Secretary, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, was able to report the accomplishment of a large amount of very effective work done by the Constituent bodies in many parts of India. Prominent among the list of reforms effected through the support of the Conference and its members was the passing of the Sarda Act which, (while in the opinion of the Conference the age-limits specified in the Act were much too low, and the Act possessed some other obvious defects) was yet a bold step in the right direction. Following up that success the Social Reform Section of the Conference took a very active part in the agitation for Reform of the Laws of Inheritance as affecting women, while on the educational side an immense amount of useful constructive work, in addition to propaganda, was done by local members and committees of the Conference and its Constituencies, in such directions as the opening of new Girls' Schools, Industrial Schools, Schools for children of the Depressed Classes, Adult Education, Prison Visiting, Relief to Women passengers on the Railways, and Child Welfare and Maternity work. A new field of work, that in connection with female labour, was opened up through the opportunity of giving

evidence before the Labour Commission, while by the delegation of distinguished members to International Conferences, such as the Berlin International Congress of women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, the work of the Conference became known to women of other countries and *vice versa*.

It was in 1930, that the Committee of the Education Fund which had been registered the year before as "The All-India Women's Education Fund Association," decided to make a full inquiry about a suitable education for girls. An All-India Committee was appointed to investigate this matter. The members of the Committee made inquiries in their own provinces at first and then met together at Pachmarhi, C. P., in July and made their Report.

5. The Fifth Conference.—

The Fifth Conference was held at Lahore, in 1931 with Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi as President. Although the year 1930-31 had been one of great difficulties owing to the pre-occupation of the country with political matters, it was nevertheless a year in which the work of the Conference made great forward strides. The number of Constituencies had by this time risen to 33, and many more schools, hostels and centres for adult education were reported as having been started through the efforts of members. The institution of the observance of March 1 as 'Women's day,' and the holding of meetings in almost all the Constituencies on that day to popularise and explain the work of the Conference, was another noteworthy innovation. Vigorous and well-timed propaganda was carried on with a view to safeguarding the Sarda Act from amendments designed to nullify its usefulness; work was continued, in the direction of getting the laws of inheritance amended, and new work was undertaken in Baroda towards getting the State to lead the way in putting on the Statute Book a Divorce Act for Hindus. There were increasing signs all over the country that the propaganda of the members of the Conference in their various Constituencies was beginning to bear fruit in the changed attitude of the public towards the amelioration of the conditions of women in general, their better education, their proper representation in legislative and administrative bodies, and in the judiciary as Honorary Magistrates. The question of abolition of untouchability began to be tackled, too, in some Constituencies, notably in Madras, and while the attempt to deal with Labour questions (for which the formation of a special Conference had been contemplated) suffered a temporary setback owing to the disturbed conditions of the times, the keenness of members to tackle that among the other many difficult problems of the day, was intensified rather than diminished.

6. The Sixth Conference.—

It was in 1932, when the Conference had Madras as its venue, and its

President was Mrs. P. K. Ray, that it was clearly seen that although the constitution of the Conference debarred it from taking part in *Party* politics, it could not, if it were to perform its function of establishing women in their rightful position in the state and in society, avoid concerning itself with politics in the widest sense of the term. The status of women in the new constitution of India, particularly in relation to their fundamental rights, their representation in the various bodies and the conditions of their enfranchisement, was a matter of vital importance not only to politicians, but to the whole country: and it was overwhelmingly felt that every opportunity must be taken before the constitution was actually drawn up in details, to impress upon those concerned in framing it, the views of nearly half of those who would have to abide by it when framed. To this end, in April 1931, a representative meeting was held in Bombay, under the Presidentship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the outcome of which was that the All-India Women's Conference, the Women's Indian Association, and the National Council of Women in India, conjointly drew up a Memorandum to be placed before the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. In May this Memorandum was submitted to all the Constituencies, with an invitation to them to give their considered opinion upon the views stated therein, and again in its final form, before it was actually submitted to the Franchise Committee, the Memorandum was circulated to the Constituencies, from which no dissentient opinion was received. I need hardly remind you that the essential points which were decided to press in the Memorandum were as follows:

- (1) Equal rights and obligations of all citizens without any bar on account of sex.
- (2) No disability to attach to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.
- (3) Adult suffrage.
- (4) Women to fight elections on equal terms with men, in mixed general electorates.
- (5) No reservation of seats for women as such, nor special nomination or co-optation.

A deputation of ladies belonging to the All-India Women's Conference also waited on His Excellency the Viceroy, in May, and presented a Memorial asking for women to be represented on the Round Table Conference.

The Social Reforms Section was kept busy again this year in agitating against the attempts to amend the Sarda Act. Rai Saheb Harbilasji Sarda's Bill to secure a share for Hindu Widows in their husbands' family property

was very widely supported in the Constituencies. The year was also noteworthy for the number of laws passed in Indian States, safeguarding women's rights, or enhancing their status.

The work of the Education Section went forward with unabated vigour on the usual lines, progress being made with the scheme for opening a Women's College for Home Science, Educational Research, and Training of Teachers. The Text book Sub-Committee made considerable progress with its arduous labour, as did also the Sub-Committees on Labour, and Indigenous Industries.

7. The Seventh Conference.

The Seventh Conference met at Lucknow in 1933 under the Presidentship of Lady Ramanbhai Nilkanth. In the work of the preceding year, that of representing the viewpoint of Indian Womanhood on the constitutional question had remained uppermost, owing to the fact that the Indian Franchise Committee was occupied with its labours in India during the cold season of that year, and the Standing Committee of the Conference felt it obligatory that it should continue to press the views laid down in the Memorandum presented the year before to the Round Table Conference. Nine members of the All-India Women's Conference gave evidence at various centres, that of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (Chairwoman of the Standing Committee) being specially noteworthy for the firm stand which she made upon the principles laid down in the Memorandum in spite of the fire of searching cross-examination. From the point of view of immediate results, however, those efforts were, alas! in vain, and the publication of the Communal Award was the signal for an outburst of protests from our Constituencies.

The work of the Social Section went on apace; in many Constituencies the earnest practical efforts towards the removal of untouchability and caste restrictions proved conclusively, to those who have eyes to see, that women are not—as they are usually supposed to be—the custodians of orthodoxy and conservatism. In many of the State Constituencies as well as those of British India there was a strong movement in favour of providing for divorce in Hindu society, and its equalisation for men and women among Muslims. The promotion of the cause of Swedeshi and of indigenous industries was also a very important feature of the year's work, as was also the number of instances in which members of the Conference were successful in contesting on terms of equality with men, elections for seats on Municipal Corporations and academic bodies of Universities.

The opening of the Lady Irwin College for women, at Delhi, on November 10, 1932, was the event of the year in the Educational Section,—concrete evidence of the value of the work which had quietly and steadily been proceeding since the starting of the Education Fund four years ago. Important

as was that event, however one must not allow it to overshadow all the other less spectacular day-to-day work of members in the Constituencies, for without that real underlying zeal for the educational uplift of women, throughout the land, in villages as well as in towns in quiet and devoted care and service, as well as in laying of foundation-stones and presiding over public meeting, our Conference would have never grown into the solid organisation that it now is.

8. The Eighth Conference.—

Our Eighth Session was held at Calcutta, Lady Abdul Qadir being the President on that occasion. The most prominent feature of the work of 1933 had again been the political one. Owing to the publication of the White Paper in which it was seen that the attempt made by our representatives in 1931 and 1932, to gain equal status had completely failed. It became necessary therefore to frame a second memorandum in which while it was reiterated that the proposals contained in the first Memorandum provided the only satisfactory solution, the White Paper proposals were examined and a clear statement made as to how far they could be regarded as even an adequate 'second best' or not. This Memorandum was submitted to the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the British Parliament, and later, three elected members representing our Conference, as also the National Council of Women in India, and the Women's Association, were invited to London to give evidence before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Suffice it to say here that through Memorandum II and the firm stand taken by our delegates in giving their evidence, we showed that, while willing to adopt an accommodating attitude in regard to details during the period of transition we stood immovably for the principle of equal status and against that of communal and special representation.

One very useful outcome of the political work outside India has been the many contacts that our delegates made with women's organisations of other countries and with institutions of international scope including the various organisations connected with the League of Nations.

Wider and wider though the scope of our activities has become, it must not be thought that this had the effect of making the current of local work flow more sluggishly. On the contrary, the work of the Educational and Social Reform Sections grows even more intensive as it grows extensive. As a whole our Movement gathers force every day from new streams of local enterprise.

9. The Ninth Conference.—

The Ninth Session of the All-India Women's Conference held its sittings in December 1934 at Karachi under the Presidentship of Mrs. Rustomji

Faridoonji. Practical achievement was the key-note of the Conference in the year 1934—for, in spite of many handicaps particularly of funds and workers the reports of work in the various Constituencies showed that a distinct advance was being made due to the unbounded enthusiasm of the members. For Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund the Constituencies of the Conference itself raised over thirty thousand rupees, apart from the fact that they helped in the collection of other Central Funds.

The extracts relating to women in the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee were studied in detail by the Conference, and deep disappointment was felt that the clear demands of Indian women were being ignored and it was decided that even at that eleventh hour efforts should again be made to impress on the British Parliament the united desire of Indian women for a non-communal electorate for women at least and their dislike of the wife-hood qualification which was being imposed on them. A resolution to this effect was forwarded to the Secretary of the Joint Select Committee and to the Secretary of State for India through the Liaison Officer, and this resolution was re-iterated unanimously at the Half-yearly meeting.

A successful effort was made during the course of the year to create a widespread demand for the appointment of a Commission on the legal disabilities of Indian Women, which would suggest reforms in the light of modern conditions. An All-India Day was held on November 24, 1934 when meetings were held in every Constituency, and thousands of signatures were collected to support this demand. Until there is success in obtaining a more equitable system of laws, this work will be continued, as the members of the Conference feel that they cannot carry out their duties as citizens as long as they are hampered by legal restrictions both personal and civic.

The interesting report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to investigate the conditions in mines, and its suggestions regarding the women eliminated from underground work aroused great interest in the conference and the desire there evinced to help the unfortunate women miners showed clearly how real was the claim that the conference aimed at improving the condition of women of all classes.

A notable feature of this year was that for the first time a permanent contact was made with the British Women's Organisations. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was appointed as the Liaison Officer for the Conference to keep in touch with Mrs. Lankester the Liaison Officer of the British Women's Organisations appointed for the same purpose. The presence of distinguished Special Visitors like Dr. Maude Royden and Mrs. Corbett Ashby during the Conference session was a proof of the great interest evidenced by women in the ideals and problems of each other.

Year by year the activities of the Conference are increasing and the success with which it is tackling every new problem is abundant proof that the women of India are not only conscious of their duties but intend to contribute their due share in the task of nation-building.

10. The Tenth Conference.—

The Tenth Session was held in Trivandrum in December 1935 under the presidentship of Her Highness Setu Parvati Bayi Saheba of Travancore. Her guidance and keen interest in the proceedings of the Conference and in the discussions made this one of the most successful sessions.

It was the first time that the Conference was held in an Indian State, a State where the percentage of literacy amongst women is higher than in any other part of India, where the purdah system is unknown and where women have equal rights and privileges,—in other words where women's rights are recognised.

An important feature of the year's work was the tremendous increase in the number of constituencies which have taken up village up-lift work in earnest and have already achieved considerable progress. Rural-work, Maternity and Child welfare centres have been organised and systematic course of lectures on sanitation and health arranged.

The Sub-Committee on the Child Marriage Restraint Act did good work during the year. A Bulletin was issued giving the statistics of child marriages in our country. A good deal of propaganda was done during the year through the Press to create public opinion in favour of amending the Sarda Act. It is a matter of pride to note that Mr. B. Das was given permission to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Assembly to amend the Sarda Act and most of his amendments were based on the suggestions made by the Conference.

The immediate necessity for a common language for India was recognised by the Conference. A Sub-Committee was appointed to report on the ways and means that could be adopted for the realisation of this ideal. Another Sub-Committee was appointed for the spread of literacy in the country. It was realised that unless a concerted and intensive campaign against illiteracy is organised, the moral and material progress of the land is bound to be hampered.

The work of the Liaison Group which was appointed for the first time last year has gone on well during the year. The establishment of this contact with the British women's organisations has been of great service to the Conference. The Group as a whole, worked increasingly to press the demand of the Conference concerning franchise and did their best to educate public

opinion in England. The Group also arranged busy programmes for Conference members during their stay in England. This gave them an opportunity of speaking about the Conference. Ample publicity was given in English Newspapers to all they said and did on behalf of the Conference.

The Constituencies had collected funds in the previous year for relief of people in Bihar stricken by the earth-quake; this year also funds were raised in the same way for the Quetta Earthquake Relief. Special mention must be made here of the organised help that was given by the members of Constituencies in Central Punjab, Sind and North-West Frontier Province to the refugees in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and other places.

With regard to franchise there was nothing much left to be done. All efforts to alter the qualifications for franchise mentioned in the Government of India Bill were of no avail; repeated demands, representations and statements met with but little success and the Government of India Bill was passed into an Act. A resolution was passed reiterating the disapproval of the Conference of the franchise qualifications but urging on the women to use the powers granted to them by the Act, however inadequate they may be.

There was a lively discussion on the question of Birth Control during the proceedings of the Tenth Session. The Conference was fortunate in having Mrs. Sanger, one of the prominent workers in the United States of America, whose vast experience and knowledge was helpful. The Conference passed by a large majority the resolution supporting the necessity for instruction in methods of Birth Control through recognised clinics.

Notable visitors from foreign countries, U. S. A., England, Japan and China were present at this Session. It was a source of great encouragement and inspiration to all. The women's cause is the same all over the world and it gave one an opportunity of exchanging ideas and learning one another's experiences.

The number of Constituencies and members had been increasing during the year. The reports of the work done in the different constituencies show that women are taking a much greater interest in social work. The activities had increased and most constituencies had undertaken practical work in some direction.

11. The Eleventh Conference.—

The Eleventh Session of the A.-I. W. C. was held at Ahmedabad in December 1936 under the Presidentship of Mrs. M. E. Cousins. We entered this year into the second decade of our work. It is gratifying to note from the work of the past ten years that the A.-I. W. C. has now taken its rightful place as a representative and fully established women's organisation in India. This year more concentration was given to the need for medical inspection in schools and to

the opening of hostels for girls and for the removal of illiteracy by starting even night schools. The year 1936 should be mentioned for the outstanding event of the year, viz., the opening of the State Temples of Travancore to all classes of Hindus by H. H. the Maharaja of Travancore, when H. H. Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi, his illustrious mother, was our President. A great deal of propoganda work was carried out by our Constituencies by holding meetings and enlisting public support for the Social Bills introduced in the Legislative Assembly—e.g., Dr. Deshmukh's Bill to amend the Hindu Law governing Hindu Women's Right to Property, Mr. B. Das's Bill to amend the Sarda Act in order to make it more stringent, Dr. Bhagwan Das's Bill seeking recognition of inter-caste marriages, and Mr. Hafiz Abdullah's Muslim Personal Law Application Bill,—and to urge their adoption by the Assembly.

Our Constituencies also tried to introduce improvements with regard to sanitation, health and education in the villages and this year was also devoted to the uplift of Harijans. Leper relief, tuberculosis work, maternity and child welfare, encouragement of indigenous industries were dealt with during the year. The Special feature of this year was the work done by our Franchise Sub-Committee for the enrolment of women voters for the new Legislatures, Municipalities and District Boards. At the request of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, a Memorandum on the Political, Legal, Social and Educational Status of Women in India was submitted to the League of Nations and the Government of India. The question of a Central Office to meet the expansion of our work was also considered and a scheme for the same was also prepared. We had this year Special Visitors from England, Australia and other visitors from U. S. A. and Holland who attended the conference.

12. The Twelfth Conference.—

The Twelfth Session of the All-India Women's Conference was held at Nagpur in December 1937 under the Presidentship of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

The most notable feature of the year 1937 was the inclusion of about 60 women in the Legislatures of the various provinces, which was possible on account of the facilities given to women to contest elections held under the Government of India Act 1935. One of these, namely, the Hon'ble Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit was elected to be a Cabinet Minister which shows the gigantic strides made by the women's movement in the country. A few of our women have been elected as Deputy Speakers of various Legislatures and some have been appointed Parliamentary Secretaries.

More constructive work was undertaken by the Branches. The Standing Committee considered the draft curriculum of girls' primary schools in India, and the suggestions made by us were considered helpful by the Educational

Commissioner to the Government of India. Some of the Constituencies have started conducting village schools and also other useful village work, such as, adult classes, night schools, etc. A scheme has been prepared by the Convener of the Common Language Sub-Committee, which is expected to be useful for solving the common language problem.

The Standing Committee prepared a programme of legislation for improving the social status of women and the same was forwarded to the Prime Ministers of the new Provincial Governments and to the new women members of the Legislatures. Also brochures dealing with such vital problems as child marriage, birth control, temperance, etc., have been prepared in different vernaculars and forwarded to local committees. Much propaganda was done and meetings were held regarding the legal disabilities of women and resolutions expressing public opinion in the matter were forwarded to proper quarters.

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, an ex-Chairwoman of the Standing Committee, was appointed by the Government of India as Indian delegate to the Conference of the Central Authorities of the League of Nations in Eastern Countries for combating traffic in women and children, held at Bandoeng, Java, in February 1937. An excellent report on the women suffrage movement was prepared by Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade, which is expected to educate women on the subject.

Mr. Ekstrand, Director of Opium Traffic and Social Questions Section of the League of Nations, visited India on his way back from Java and gave lectures under the auspices of the A.-I. W. C. stressing the work to be done for children suffering from physical and mental congenital defects and some of our Constituencies have started work on the lines suggested by him.

Propaganda against child marriage was vigorously carried on and steps were taken to file complaints and to prosecute cases against offending parents and priests, with some measure of success.

Mrs. Grace Lankester, our Liaison Officer in England, was present at the Nagpur Session. It is gratifying to note that our Liaison work is getting on satisfactorily. There has been increasing contact with other countries in the world and an invitation was received from British Guiana to attend the Centenary Celebration of the Indian Emigration.

Untouchability work has been pushed ahead, and as a result some Municipalities have thrown open tanks and wells to Harijans. One of our Constituencies is running free Harijan School. Following the example of the Travancore State, some other Indian States have allowed Temple entry to all Hindus. Some members of our Constituencies are paying regular visits to Jails and provincial and State Governments are being urged to take steps to improve the condition of women prisoners, as also to provide suitable occupations for women labourers eliminated from the mines.

Swadeshi Exhibitions were held in many Constituencies and there was a large sale of swadeshi articles. A directory of swadeshi articles has been prepared. The Indigenous Industries Sub-Committee prepared a Scheme which was forwarded to the Director of Industries in various provinces and states. A Scheme for unregulated industries is in hand.

New Sub-Constituencies have been opened at Bhusawal, Kirloskerwadi, Bijapur, Belgaum, Patan, Mehsana, Visnagar, Navsari, Amreli, Surat, Broach and Rajpipla. This brings the list of sub-constituencies to more than 100. There are now 38 working Constituencies.

The most important development this year was the Resolution tabled at the Session at Nagpur for widening the scope of the Conference by amending Article II of the Constitution so as to enable the Conference to take part in the progressive welfare of the people of India in all directions and not merely in educational and social spheres. To this resolution several amendments were tabled. For want of the necessary four-fifths majority required for changing the Constitution, the question remained undecided. But the discussion showed a keen desire amongst the members to widen the scope of the activities of the conference.

13. The Thirteenth Conference.—

The Thirteenth Session of the All-India Women's Conference was held in Delhi in December 1938 under the Presidentship of Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade. The Conference had distinguished visitors, Miss Mary A. Dingman, President of the Peace and Disarmament Committee of the International Women's Organisations, Mlle. P. Hage of the International Labour Office, Geneva, Mrs. Ali from Japan, Mrs. Harlow from the United States of America, Miss G. F. Greig of Australia, and Miss Agatha Harrison. Most active work was done in the removal of illiteracy and this was not restricted to towns but was extended to the villages as well. Schools have been started for Harijans and practical knowledge on subjects of sanitation and hygiene given. The Conference studied in detail the Wardha Education Scheme and a practical scheme of working Nursery schools was drawn up.

A Common Language Sub-Committee carried its work and suggested a constructive scheme which was followed by many Branches. The social work of the Conference has been extensive. Public opinion was created regarding bills introduced in the Provinces and in the Central Legislature in particular dealing with Divorce, Monogamy, Restraint of Polygamy and the Legal Disabilities of women.

Exhibitions of the products of agriculture and of various industries, such as home-craft, painting, leather-work, clay-modelling, needle-work, etc., were held.

Considerable attention was given to maternity and child welfare. Several of our Branches conduct maternity and child welfare clinics. The Health Sub-Committee devoted itself to improving the sanitary conditions prevailing in the schools of their Province and persuaded the authorities to improve conditions of living of the workers. Indigenous industries were encouraged by helping the sale of the products of cottage industries by canvassing orders for them.

Another important feature was the promotion of inter-communal harmony by the formation of what is called the 'Family Circle' which includes men and women of all castes and creeds and communities.

Propaganda against child marriage continued as before.

The Liaison Group in England continued its work of giving publicity to the work of the A.-I. W. C. abroad.

The newest venture however is the publication of a journal belonging to the Conference.

The work of the Conference has extended and there are now 40 Branches and 150 Sub-Branches. New Branches were opened in Jath and Kathiawad during the year. Work in several other Branches was reorganised through the services of an Organising Secretary.



MESSAGES

"We pray Conference highly successful."

Mrs. Abbas Tyabji.

"Best wishes for success to Conference."

Mrs. Annapurnabai Deshmukh.

"Be hopeful and have faith; Vande Mataram."

Lady Abala Bose.

"Wish to the All-India Women's Conference great success under your able Presidentship."

Lady Amena Hyderi.

"I do hope the Conference will be a great success."

Mrs. A. N. M. Saleh.

"Regret absence wish Conference success."

Mrs. Bakulabai Abhyankar.

"Wish A.-I. W. C. all success. May Conference succeed in solving problem of women's sphere in National reorganisation."

Dr. B. C. Roy.

"Hope Conference will lead Indian women on the path of country's service and freedom."

B. G. Kher

"Wish Conference every success."

Mrs. Bhide.

"Warmest good wishes to the All-India Women's Conference."

Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

"I have repeatedly expressed my admiration of the work of your Conference and I wish your present session brilliant success."

Sir C. Y. Chintamani.

"Regret unavoidable absence. In these days of storm and strife and warring creeds at home and abroad, may we, the women of India, realise our responsibilities and with Love, Reason and Forbearance as our guiding stars, meet the great task of reconciliation that lies ahead of us. Wish deliberations brilliant success."

Mrs. Dina Asana.

"I only wish I could have been present, and I hope you had a very successful and useful session."

Lady Dorothy Halifax.

"Wishing Conference success."

Mr. Dhulekar.

President, Rani Jhansi Memorial Trust.

"Please convey my sincere good wishes for the success of the Conference. I pray for the progress, enlightenment and welfare of the women of India and

my confidence in their effort and achievement to attain a united goal of peace and happiness remains unshaken."

H. H. The Princess Durru Shehvar of Berar.

"The deliberations of the All-India Women's Conference have been always inspired by patriotism and knowledge of a high order. We are almost on the threshold of the New Era. At this critical juncture the women's Conference will, I am confident, prove equal to the occasion so that the women of India with their disciplined energy and mellowed humanity may make their full contribution towards this supreme and noble endeavour."

Pandit Govind Ballav Pant.

"With happy memories of Nagpur, 1937, I send my love and greetings to members of the A.-I. W. C. assembled in annual session at Lucknow, 1940."

Mrs. Grace Lankester.

"The Liaison Group of British Women's Societies sends its warm greetings and good wishes to the All-India Women's Conference, regretting more than they can say that this message cannot be given in person. We realise now more than ever how necessary it is for women to be bound together if a peaceful world is to be built out of this chaos.

"We view with dismay and sadness the present impasse between your country and ours. In so many lands links that bind women together have been broken. This must not happen between India and Great Britain. We value the understanding and co-operation that has always been the basis of the contact between your Conference and our Group; this maintains. And we hope that by the time your Conference is in session that a just and lasting solution of the present deadlock may have been found."

Mrs. Grace Lankester.

Liaison Officer in England.

"Wishing Conference all success"

Mrs. G. R. Billimoria.

"The A.-I. W. C., has in its brief existence, rendered good service to the women of this country, who for generations have been labouring under serious political and social disabilities, not only by expressing their cause and strongly advocating it, but also by taking practical steps for the removal of some of those disabilities. I wish the Conference every success. May I hope that the Conference will also do something towards mitigating the communal and political aspirations."

Nowab Ismail Khan.

"Extremely sorry unable leave Lahore am with all my sisters in spirit wish Conference every success."

Begum Jahanara Shah Nawaz.

"Regret cannot attend; wish Conference success."

Miss J. E. Copeland.

"I wish the Conference every success."

Mrs. Jayashri Raiji.

"National Committee of Y. W. C. A. sends greetings and good wishes for successful Conference."

Miss Jean Begg.

"Wish Conference every success."

Lady Joshi.

"I wish all success to the Conference."

Mrs. Jyotsna Mehta.

"Wish Conference success and hope women would go with confidence that they are inheritors of a great past and would build up a great future."

Shrimati Kasturbai Gandhi

"Greetings on this momentous occasion."

Mrs. Kamalamma Dassappa.

Mahila Seva Samaja, Bangalore.

"Please accept my best wishes. I feel sure this session will take great decisions and lead to great results under your eminent guidance. Regret inability attend owing unavoidable reasons. Wish all success."

Rani Laximidevi of Phaltan.

"Distance and circumstances prevent me from partaking in the proceedings of the 14th Session of the A.-I. W. C. I heartily wish every success to the Conference."

**Dowager Maharani Lalita Kumari Devi of
Vizianagaram.**

"I have already pointed out the royal road to Swaraj to my sisters, where they can go ahead of their brothers. By traversing this road they can achieve fulfilment."

Mahatma Gandhi.

"I pray Women's Conference may lead to well organise systematic endeavour for promoting moral, physical and intellectual advancement of women of India. Women are mothers of our race and upon their health and strength moral and intellectual equipment depends future of motherland. Women can form splendid army for work of uplifting vast mass of their sisters and daughters and I hope Women's Conference will help to bring about such an organisation."

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya

"I regret my inability to be present on the occasion. I wish the Conference every success."

Dr. Mrs. Malinibai Sukthankar.

"I regret that I cannot attend this year's session. I shall be there in spirit, for I realise that our Conference has a special view of its own in the bewildering circumstances of our Indian problems set in shifting international conditions. The greatest effort of our women during the coming year must be to unite all the Indian communities by cultivation of friendship with them in their home circles and using the cement of the heart to hold together any sections of society which move towards disunion for any reason. Such is my message to the Conference."

Mrs. M. E. Cousins.

"Wishing the All-India Women's Conference continued success in its endeavours for the welfare of Indian women and children."

Mrs. Marjorie De Mel.

"Every good wishes for successful Conference."

Lady Mirza Ismail.

"While wishing the Conference every success, we, of the Women's Indian Association, feel that we should congratulate the Standing Committee on their happy choice of the President of this year.

"Let the All-India Women's Conference declare through its worthy President, Begum Hamid Ali, in no unmistakable terms the unity among our ranks!"

Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi,

President, W. I. A., Madras.

"My good wishes for the success of your own Conference in January."

Miss E. E. Andrews.

New Zealand Committee of

Pan-Pacific Women's Association.

". . . I wish the Conference every success."

Mrs. Padampat Singhania.

"I regret I am unable to attend the Conference to be held at Allahabad. Please accept and convey my best wishes for the success of the Conference."

H. H. Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi of Travancore.

"Cordial greetings to your colleagues on the Committee and to other friends in your Conference."

Mlle. P. M. Hage of the International Labour Office.

"I send with pleasure my greetings and good wishes to the All-India Women's Conference. May your meeting record progress and inspire new effort for that well-being of womanhood on which the true prosperity of our country so largely depends."

Rabinranath Tagore.

"Greetings and best wishes to yourself and delegates."

Mrs. Radhabai Subbarayan.

"During the last twenty years or so we have seen a remarkable awakening

among them and in our struggle for independence they have had an honourable part. May this awakening deepen and may their contribution be even greater than it has been in the past is the wish and prayer of one who has always felt that where women are respected, there alone the gods reside."

Babu Rajendra Prasad.

"Under your very able guidance wish every success to Conference."

H. H. Rani Saraswatibai Saheb of Sangali.

"The test of a country's civilisation is the status of woman in the social life of its people. The All-India Women's Conference has set itself to the noble purpose of rousing women to a greater consciousness of her natural rights and to a clearer appreciation of her proper place in society, and all who have the welfare of the country at heart will pray that success may attend the labours of the Conference."

Lala Shri Ram.

"Fraternal greetings to the representative Conference of India's women under your guidance on this momentous occasion. May all success attend your united efforts in adoption of a progressive policy for country in all fields of national endeavour."

Col. Shumshersingh.

"Regret inability attend, wish Conference grand success under able guidance of Begum Hamid Ali."

Mrs. Shyamlabai Belgaumkar.

"Heartiest congratulations. Wish you all success."

Mrs. Subhadrabai Pagar.

"Wish you every success, hope Conference will not neglect backward Muslim sisters special efforts needed to rouse them."

Dr. Syed Mahmud.

"My hearty congratulations. May great success attend you in your work."

Dr. K. Tarabai.

"With your aims and aspirations for the improvement of the women's status not only in the social and political life of the country but in respect of 'legal' rights, I am in complete sympathy."

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

"I wish every success to this session of the Conference and future prosperity."

Lady Vidyagauri R. Nilkanth.

"Wish all success."

Mrs. Vinlabai Jatar.

"Women's Conference association activities great contribution struggle for freer and richer life cultural advance communal friendship attainable only by Indian womanhood; may Conference be guiding light to unity and peace."

Mr. Zakir Husain.