The **Arya Samaj** has been a growing movement, its organisation presents a record of phenomenal progress. The sect was founded by a Gujarati Brahmin ascetic, Dayanand Saraswati, on the 10th of April, 1875 at Bombay. The Samaj framed its constitution in which some of the fundamentals and rules of conduct were laid down. The three important of these may be noted below:

a) The Arya Samaj shall regard the Vedas alone as independently and absolutely authoritative.

b) Every member shall cheerfully contribute a hundred per cent of money he has earned towards the fund of the Samaj, the Arya Vidyalaya and the Arya Prakash paper.

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1. The word Arya is an Ancient Indian epithet meaning 'noble' and the 'Samaj' means 'society' or assembly. Arya Samaj then means 'society of the noble'. See Chidambra Kulkarni, *Ancient Indian History and Culture*, Orient Longman Ltd., 1974, pp. 34 and 35.


c) The Vedas and the ancient \textit{Aranyakas}, shall be studied and taught in the \textit{Arya Vidyalaya}, and true and right training, calculated to improve males and females, shall be imparted on Vedic lines.

On April 17, 1877, Rayanand went to Lahore on the invitation of several prominent Punjabis. He founded the Lahore Arya Samaj on July 24, 1877 and it prospered so speedily that it totally eclipsed the Samaj at Bombay. A committee comprising Lala Min Das, Lala Jiwan Das and Lala Mul Raj was constituted. The Committee rewrote the creed and constitution of the Bombay Arya Samaj. These new principles were in the form of a Decalogue and it reads as follows:


6. The Bombay Arya Samaj became involved in local politics and was disbanded by the government order. The Samaj also withered from lack of support. \textit{"The Arya Samaj"}, \textit{em. cit.}, p. 158.


8. Kenneth, \textit{em. Jones, \textit{em. cit.}, Appendices}, I, p. 321. It will be noticed that of the ten principles first three which deal with the existence and nature of God end with the doctrine of Vedic scripture are theologically the most important. The theology of the Arya Samaj may be summed up in one word—\textit{The Vedas!} See \textit{A Handbook of the Arya Samaj}, Benares, 1906, p. 21; J. K. Parquhar, \textit{Modern Religious Movements in India}, Delhi, 1967, p. 120.
i. God is the primary cause of all true knowledge, and of everything known by its name;

ii. God is All-Truth, All knowledge, All Sweetude, incorporeal, Almighty, Just, Merciful, Unbegotten, Infinite, Unchangeable, without a beginning incomparable. The support and the Lord of All, All-pervading, Buniscient, Imperishable, Immortal, exempt from fear, Eternal, Holy, and the cause of the universe. So Him alone worship is due;

iii. The Vedas are the books of true knowledge, and it is the paramount duty of every Aryan to read or hear them read, to teach and preach them to others;

iv. One should always be ready to accept truth and renounce untruth.

v. All sections ought to be done conformably to virtue in after a thorough consideration of right or wrong;

vi. The primary object of the Sanej is to do good to the world by improving the physical, spiritual and social condition of mankind;

vii. All ought to be treated with love, justice, and due regard to their merits;

viii. Ignorance ought to be dispelled and knowledge diffused;

ix. No one ought to be contented with his own good alone, but every one ought to regard his prosperity as included in that of others; and
In matters which affect the general social well-being of the whole society, one ought to discard all differences and not allow one's individuality to interfere, but in strictly personal matters every one may act with freedom.

Swami Dayanand believed that the reform of Hindu society could only be effected by reviving Vedic rituals and institutions which had been hidden under the excrescences of the later puranic age. The Arya Samaj introduced reforms of the most revolutionary character in the orthodox Hinduism, believing in the central ideas of monotheism and infallibility of the Vedas which are regarded as God's word. Swami Dayanand preached that every thing worth-knowing in the most recent inventions was alluded to in Vedas. He hammered upon the people the conviction that the Aryans were the chosen people, Vedas the chosen gospel, and India the chosen land.

9. In Bengal, Ramakrishna Paramahase and his well known follower Swami Vivekananda led a 'back to Vedas movement' based on the idea of a Hindu Golden Age.

10. A Handbook of the Arya Samaj, op. cit., pp. 21 and 35. The word Vedas means knowledge. It is God's knowledge and, therefore, pure and perfect. Dayanand was also asked by his teacher, Vrijananda, a blind Brahman to preach and teach the Vedas in Bharatvarsha (India). See J. N. Farquhar, op. cit., p. 107; Kenneth, N. Jones, op. cit., p. 31.


Dayanand was more critical of Hindu usages. He discarded a large number of customs, institutions, beliefs and ceremonies. In fighting against the traditional Hinduism with its idol-worship, rites and dogmas, Dayanand may be compared to Martin Luther. 

Luther, the German monk, was a child of European Renaissance and Dayanand, the Gujrati monk, was a child of Indian Renaissance. Luther attacked indulgences, while Dayanand attacked idolatry. The watchword of Luther was 'back to the Bible', the watch-word of Dayanand was 'back to the Veda'.

Dayanand also rejected the hereditary system of caste and did not recognize the authority or even superiority of the Brahmins merely on the grounds of birth. He proclaimed the right of every-body to study the Vedas and other Hindu scriptures. "Even now only that Brahmin is fit to be called a Brahman who is learned and of good habits, and any ignorant man deserves to be called a Shudra." He denounced in the strongest terms the

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worship of gods and goddesses and the worship of idols. He preached that only supreme Being should be worshipped, and only the formless and not the images must be adored.

Arya Samaj encouraged the intercaste marriages but was opposed to child-marriage. The minimum age for girls and boys was fixed respectively at 16 and 25 years. Dayanand was, however, opposed to the marriage of widows. He held that ordinarily neither a widower nor a widow should marry, but this rule may be relaxed in letter or spirit or in the case of both. He, like Plato, held strange views as to the proper relation between the two sexes.

It can be said that both were theorists. Dayanand would permit a childless husband to remarry and a widow to procreate sons by

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16. Swami Dayanand opposed tooth and nail the practice of idol-worship. He revolted against this custom of the Hindus at an early age of 14 years. The epithet mahamuruk (great fool) was often on his lips when he debated with the dependents of idolatory. See Col. Olcott's chapter on Swami Dayanand in Old Diary Leaves, p. 406. Many writers, missionaries in particular, denounced the grossness of Hindu idolatry. See J. A. Dubois, Hindu Manners and Customs, Oxford, 1906, pp. 548, 581 and 590 (f.N.). It is to be remembered that long before in 1473 A.D. a movement arose amongst Jvetambara Jains in Ahmedabad against idolatry. They gave up the idolatory and broke away from the main Jvetambara sect. See J. K. Farquhar, OP. CIT., p. 326.

17. Ibid., p. 123.

18. C. Majumdar, OP. CIT., p. 110.
others according to Niyoga\(^\text{19}\) (Levirate). However, the members of the Arya Samaj have not been courageous in practising Niyoga in the manner prescribed\(^\text{20}\).

The most important features of the Arya Samaj were Shuddhi\(^\text{21}\) and Sanchathan\(^\text{22}\). Shuddhi was the purification ceremony by which those Hindus who had once been willingly or forcibly converted into other religions like Islam or Christianity, could be brought back into the fold of Hinduism. It threw its doors open, which had been closed by the orthodox Hinduism, to the Hindus who had been lost. It is important to mention that the Samaj

\(^{19}\text{Niyoga may be described as a virtual recognition of free love, sanctified by a temporary arrangement. A man or a woman could enter into the Niyoga connection only if the husband or wife was incapable of producing issue through disease etc; when the husband had been absent from home longer than a given period of time; when the children born of her do not live long and if she begets girls only. It is regrettable to say that the Samaj allowed a man or a woman to enter into free love with eleven women or men one after the other. }\text{I}^{\text{11b} \text{D} \text{u} \text{c} \text{h} \text{h} \text{i} \text{R} \text{e} \text{m} \text{s} \text{h} \text{i} \text{N} \text{a} \text{n} \text{t} \text{a}, \text{The} \text{A} \text{r} \text{y} \text{a} \text{S} \text{a} \text{m} \text{a} \text{j} \text{.} \text{L} \text{e} \text{n} \text{o} \text{r} \text{e}, \text{1997}, \text{p. 34. The practice of Niyoga was prevalent in India since ancient times, but it could not be practised by others because of the diminishing potency of the later ages. See }\text{P. C. M} \text{a} \text{j} \text{u} \text{m} \text{d} \text{a} \text{n}, \text{The} \text{C} \text{l} \text{a} \text{s} \text{s} \text{i} \text{c} \text{a} \text{l} \text{A} \text{g} \text{e}, \text{Vol. 111, B} \text{o} \text{m} \text{b} \text{a} \text{y}, \text{1962, (reprint), p. 343.}}\text{11b D u c h i R e m S a h n i , The A r y a S a m a j. L e n o r e , 1 9 9 7 , p . 3 4 . T h e p r a c t i c e o f N i y o g a w a s p r e v a l e n t i n I n d i a s i n c e a n c i e n t t i m e s , b u t i t c o u l d n o t b e p r a c t i s e d b y o t h e r s b e c a u s e o f t h e d i m i n i s h i n g p o t e n c y o f t h e l a t e r a g e s . S e e }\text{P. C. M a j u n d a r , T h e C l a s s i c a l A g e , V o l . 1 1 1 , B o m b a y , 1 9 6 2 , (r e p r i n t ) , p . 3 4 3 .}\)

\(^{20}\text{A r y a P a t r i k e , S e p t e m b e r 2 7 , 1 9 0 2 .} \)

\(^{21}\text{The Shuddhi movement of the Arya Samaj was not liked by the Muslims. Attempts were being made by the Muslims to murder those Hindus involved in Shuddhi movement. See }\text{T r i b u n e , M a r c h 1 3 , 1 9 9 7 , p . 5 ; C e n s u s o f I n d i a , K e s a m i r , 1 9 3 1 , p . 2 0 .} \)

\(^{22}\text{U. D. S h a r m a , H i n d u i s m t h r o u g h t h e a g e s , B o m b a y , 1 9 5 6 , p p . 9 8 a n d 9 9 .} \)
threw its membership open to all the creeds and castes even to Muslims and Christians. However, Muslims and Christians had to undergo a ceremony of purification. The programmes and policies of Arya Samaj were communal in character. It made open attacks on Muslim and Christian movements. It widened the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims, already created by the Britshers. However, Dayanand's stinging taunts gave birth to retaliation and defensive organisations among the Sikhs, the Jains and the Muslims. But on the other hand this policy of the Arya Samaj

23. The conditions of membership were implicit faith in Vedic scripture and belief in the canons of Vedic interpretation laid down by Swami Dayanand. The minimum age for membership was eighteen years. Max. Muller, op. cit., p. 175.

24. Ibid.


26. Ibid.


28. Ibid., p. 329.

29. Ibid., p. 251.
made it very popular among the Hindus and as a result the
Samaj enrolled a good number of followers to its fold.30

The other distinctive features of the Samaj were social
services like famine relief and the spread of English education.31
The Samaj opened a number of schools and colleges in various
parts of the country particularly in north India32. Besides it
opened a number of branches in almost all parts of the country.
By the time of the death of Swami Dayanand in 1883, the movement
had gathered sufficient strength and the number of its branches
in India had exceeded 300.33

"The Arya Samaj in 1901 had over 32,000 professed adherents.
It showed an increase of 131 percent in the decade proceeding
the last Census. By 1907 Arya Samaj probably had a membership
of over 1,00,000.

31. Prior to the foundation of the Arya Samaj Dayanand had
founded several schools. The curriculum was confined to
early Sanskrit literature in the hope that the pupils
trained in Sanskrit would become missionaries of his ideas,
but the teachers did not teach the new ideas and the work

32. The death of Swami Dayanand was followed by a division
of the Arya Samaj into sections. One was the college party
and the other Mahatma party. But the educational work of
each party was carried on in harmony with its special theory.
The college party was running the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic
College while the Mahatma party on the other hand has an
institution at Hardwar known as the Gurukula. C. C.
Majumdar, Op. cit., p. 110; J. N. Farquhar, Cult., Customs and
Superstitions of India, 1908, pp. 152-166; J. N. Farquhar,

arya samaj in kashmir

The Jammu and Kashmir state, being situated on the
Lunjab border, came under the influence and impact of the Arya
Samaj as back as the last decade of the 19th century.34 Earlier
the conditions in the state of Jammu and Kashmir were not conducive
to socio-religious reform movements. The attitude of the Dogra
government towards socio-religious movement was not favourable.
It is evident from the ban that the state government had put on
the formation of all types of socio-religious movements.35 However,
with the introduction of modern education the conditions began to
change, though gradually.

The first branch of the Arya Samaj was established in
Jammu in 1891.36 The road on which its office was located has
now been named "Arya Samaj Syanand Sarqi" For a long time it
remained confined to Jammu province.37 There it had branches at

34. Harish Chander Viderthy, Jammu and Kashmir: Ein Arya Samaj
Ka Itihas, Jammu, 1978, p. 18; R. C. Arora, Kashmir, Ladakh
and Gilgit, p. 5.

35. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No. 242/ p. 38 of 1912,
Old English Records.


37. "it has been brought to the notice of the Resident that
the Arya Samaj has recently shown much activity in prosely-
tising the Megha and Doms of Sialkot District. The Resident
has also heard that the society has during the last few
months been very active in Jammu." Letter from Captain
French, Resident in Kashmir to Dewan Amir Nath, Chief
Minister to Maharaja, 16th September, 1910, Jammu and Kashmir
Archives, File No. 215 of 1910, Political Department.
At the beginning of the present century Kashmir also came under the influence of the Arya Samaj. A branch of the Arya Samaj was established at Amira Kadal in Srinagar. The founding members of this Samaj were mostly Punjabis in the state-service and some of them carried on their private business. It is important to mention that the Arya Samaj in Kashmir was a branch of Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, which was registered on 24th December, 1905 under the Act XXI of 1860. The objects of the Sabha were:

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42. Harish Chander Vidyarthi, _K.,_ p. 71.
44. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File Nos. 2/4-163 of 1921, Political Department and File Nos. 115 of 1920; National Archives of India, Home Department, Political, April, 1910, Nos. 69-70.
(a) To establish a Vidyalale for teaching of the Vedas and the ancient Sanskrit classic for the preparation of Aryapadeshak.

(b) To establish a library for the general public.

(c) To publish tracts and books for the purpose of reviving the teachings of the Vedas; and

(d) To arrange for the preaching of the Vedic Dharma in the Punjab, Kashmir, W. W. F. Provinces, Sindh, Baluchistan and other places.

To begin with, the Kashmiri Pandits did not join the Arya Samaj. Kashmiri Pandits being obscurantist were ridden with superstitions and dogmas. They opposed the movement because it was dominated by non-Kashmiri Hindus who had been patronised by the then Maharaja Pratap Singh. So the Kashmiri Pandits started propagating the view that to become an Arya Samajist was to lose one's faith. Besides, the Janata Dharam Sabha, which was started at Maharaja Kanbir Ganj Bazar, Srinagar, opposed the expansion of the Arya Samaj activities in Kashmir. They published a pamphlet criticising the Arya Samaj. This caused a great resentment among...

46. The Secretary, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab to the Chief Minister, Jammu and Kashmir, 1st October, 1921, Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No. 115 of 1920, Political Department.

47. Chulam Hasan Khan, H. Cite, p. 51.

the members of the Arya Samaj. They approached the problem with a view to securing the suppression of the pamphlet under the state press Regulations, one of the chief doctrines of the Sanatan Dharam Sabha which the Arya Samaj criticized was 'Kashmir for Kashmiris'—which meant "the exclusion of Punjabis and other non-Kashmiris from the state appointments and sole employment of Kashmiri Pandits". However, the opposition notwithstanding, the Samaj opened its offices at Amira Kadal, Maharaj Ganj, Huzuribagh and Rainawari at Srinagar. It had also opened its office at Baramulla. With the passage of time some enlightened Pandits thought in terms of the Arya Samaj. They desired to free the society from the Brahminical domination, and from the prevailing social evils and customs. The change in the attitude of these Pandits was due to the spread of western education among them. Around 1915, the Kashmiri Pandits joined the Arya Samaj and extended their support to its social work. But meanwhile some differences arose between

49. J. Manners, Resident in Kashmir to J. H. wood, 1st September 1917, National Archives of India. Home Department, Political, September, 1917, Nos. 6.

50. Harish Chander Viderth, Or., cit., p. 18.

51. Census of India, Kashmir, 1921, p. 62.

Kashmiri Pandits and Punjabi Hindus. As a result, Kashmiri Pandits decided to organise an independent socio-religious movement. It was the time when His Highness the Maharaja had issued orders that no society can be opened without the previous permission of the government. So the Kashmiri Pandits made an application to the government for grant of permission to start an organisation named Kumar Sabha. The government at first rejected their application but finally Arya Kumar Sabha was established at Rainawari Srinagar. It derived sustenance from Hinduism.

However, in due course, Arya Kumar Sabha became a part and parcel of the Arya Samaj, Srinagar which was a part and parcel of Arya Rritinidhi Sabha of Punjab. Arya Kumar Sabha was the Youth Wing of the Arya Samaj. It was affiliated with the Arya Samaj, Maharaj Gunj and Arya Samaj Amirakadal. The Arya Kumar Sabha worked as a part of the great Vedic movement in the Kashmir province.

55. Ibid., Mohdvi Yasin and A. G. Raffi, J&K City, p. 51.
The main aims of the Kumar Sabha/Arya Samaj in Kashmir Valley were:

(a) To propagate Vedic principles;
(b) To fight against the caste system;
(c) To raise the status of women;
(d) To educate the women;
(e) To oppose the evil institution of child marriage; and
(f) To promote the marriage and protection of widows.

The lead in the activities of the Arya Samaj was taken by Mahesh Khushal Chand, editor of the Daily Milap, Lahore. He put his life and soul together to convey the message of Swami Dayanand to the Kashmiri Pandits. Even after becoming a Sanjasi, he maintained constant touch with the educational activities of the Kashmiri Samaj, in which he had taken a prominent part. Among others who were associated with the Samaj were Rameshwar Koul Abha, Pandit Janki Nath Bhat, Pandit Madhav Joshi, Pandit Dinesh Nath Koul, Pandit Chaman Lal Koul, Pandit Chaman Sunder Vaid, and Jagar Nath Arya. Among the outsiders associated with the

59. Interview with Sh. M. Kak, on May 5, 1985 at Srinagar.
60. Shulam Hassan Khan, [Ref.], p. 140.
Kashmir Arya Samaj were Vishu Bandhu, Mahatma Hans Raj, Bhagwat Dutt and Swami Shri Shiv Nathendra Ji Sarasawati.

The reformist activities of the Arya Samaj extended to the removal of social evils and prejudices. It preached the marriage of young widows whose number was appalling. "Many of them were young and innocent girls exposed to temptations and often led unhappy lives."

Commenting on the sad plight of widows, Viscoe remarks, "As there was no restriction to early marriage there were number of child widows who were obliged to live in their father-in-law's house, and do as they were told. I came to know of the cruelties practised on these girls, especially by the Brahmin priests, who were often the fathers of drowned babies. The infants were thrown either in the river or to pariah dogs at night so that the Hindu religion should not be disgraced."

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64. "widowhood was such a cruel custom in Kashmir that even a child widow, of perhaps seven years of age, could in no case make a second marriage. She widow had to live in her deceased husband's house." Sir Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, London, 1895, pp. 266 and 267.

65. *The Census of 1921 shows that widows formed twenty-two percent of the female population of the Pandit community.*


Arya Samaj took a bold step in this direction. But the Kashmiri Bandits, who were outside the fold of the Samaj, and orthodox sections of the Brahmins in the state greatly opposed the proposal of widow-marriage. They made attempts to insult and abuse the reformers. It is said that Hem Chander Abhay was greatly opposed and even attempts were made on his life. However, with the support and due co-operation of some enlightened Bandits the Samaj was able to carry on propaganda in favour of widow-marriage.

In 1928, Lala Lajpat Rai came to Kashmir. He was one of the leading lights of the Arya Samaj in India. He delivered a speech on 2nd of June, 1928 at Srinibagh where he discussed the problem of widow-marriage and child marriage. He also talked about Shuddhi and Hindu Sangathan. As a result, the Samaj celebrated some widow-marriages in Srinagar and did its best to break down the opposition. However, the pace was slow.

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68. Ishaq Khan, "cit. p. 114.
70. Ibid., p. 114.
71. Hafiz Mohammed Isma'il 'Personal Diary, 1907-1950, (Manuscript unpublished), June 2, 1928, Item 3, (Kashmir University).
The Arya Samaj launched a campaign to mobilise public opinion against child marriage and its evil effects. The marriage of immature girls and boys was the rule rather than the exception. The Samaj stood firmly against such marriages. It made the government issue orders, preventing infant marriages in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The government realised the evil effects of the child marriage and passed Infant Marriage Act in 1929 A.D. The marriage of boys under 18 and of girls under 14 years was prohibited by this Act even before the Sharda Act was promulgated in British India. In 1931 widow marriage was also allowed in the state.

Arya Samajists advocated the abolition of caste restriction in the matter of marriages. They also persuaded the Kashmiri Pandits to curtail expenditure on marriage ceremonies.

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77. Ibid.,
They advocated the adoption of the marriage rituals in
the Sanskar Vidhi instead of the more elaborate and expensive
forms of popular Hinduism. But, unfortunately, the Kashmiri
Kandits who were opposed to any kind of social change appeared
as a "rock of Gibraltar" in the way of the reformists. They
believed that reduction in expenditure of marriages would lower
their social status.

Arya Samaj made education the chief plank of its programme
of reforms. It ran a girls school named Arya Putri Pathshala of
the middle standard in a building of its own at Nazir Bagh,
Srinagar. It attracted a good number of students and in 1931,

79. The Ranbir, January 15, 1940; Daughter's of Sita Devi,
OR. CIT., P. 253.

"The system of dowry seems to be largely a result of
rapid progress of western education among the Kandits;
for a young man who had done well at college was a most
desirable, bridegroom, and naturally the price had tended
to rise as steady as the demand. The tyrannical custom
which compelled a father to spend huge sums upon feasts,
processions and dowry on the occasion of a daughter's
wedding, pressed heavily on the poor. Most fathers were
compelled to borrow huge sums of money and in consequences,
passed the remainder of their lives in debt and worry."

80. Kenneth, M. Jones, OR. CIT., P. 98.

Political Department. Copy of a letter Nos. 30 dated 19th
October, 1917 from Pandit Madhav Kans, Srinagar.

82. Census of India, 1931, Kashmir Part I, p. 297; Ishaq Khan,
OR. CIT., P. 115; Nacin Bazar, OR. CIT., P. 30.
there were as many as 100 students on its rolls. It also ran a Vanitha Ashram at Rainawari, where widows were given lessons in three R's and were also taught embroidery and weaving work to enable them to earn a living. The Arya samaj, besides giving modern education, propagated Hindi and Sanskrit among Kashmiri Pandits. It had also opened a reading room where its members were required to read religious literature and to discuss various aspects of the Hindu religion and evils of Hindu-society. The point is noteworthy in the sense that when educated Kashmiri Pandit youngmen could not get government jobs to the extent they used to get previously, the Christian missionaries in Kashmir tried to offer job opportunities to them in the hope of converting them. This is illustrated by the fact that a few Kashmiri youngmen in Srinagar embraced Christianity to ensure permanent jobs for

86. The Muslims of Kashmir who formed about 35 percent of the total population of the Valley were almost backward in the field of education. As a result, their number in the government offices was very low. But with the growth of education among them, their demands for government jobs increased which directly fell on the share of the Kashmiri Pandits.
87. Letter from Gulab Ram Gigu to His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur, 1915, Jammu and Kashmir Archives, file Nos. 203/L-197 of 1915, Political Department, for details see Appendix Nos. A, pp. 228-230.
themselves in the Mission schools and hospitals in the Valley. This was the prelude to the opening of educational institutions by the Samaj in the city. The three schools—D.A.V. School Amirakadal, D. A. V. School Maharaj Gumj and D.A.V. School Rainawari were established in the city. In 1910 an Arya Vidyapeeth was started at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar by Smt. Devki Devi. A branch of the D.A.V. College was also started in the city, but was closed after 1947. At present there is a D.A.V. Higher Secondary school at Jawahir Nagar and another one at Rainawari, Srinagar.

The Arya Samaj had denounced in the strongest terms the idol-worship, performance of Shraddhas (Hindu form of ancestor-worship) of the dead outside the Valley. But it could not make much headway in Kashmir owing to the hostility of the orthodox Brahman priests. These Brahman priests have always tried to keep the masses ignorant of the realities of life in order to

88. Interview with K. K. Kak, op. cit.
91. Ibid., pp. 113 and 117.
92. Interview with K. K. Kak, op. cit.
make their living easier. They considered the samajist activities as a threat to their economic life and this explains why they opposed the activities of the Samaj in Kashmir. But their opposition to idol-worship fell flat. The belief of the Arya Samaj that the Vedas and those Shastras which were in strict conformity with the Vedas alone were sacred was responsible for its opposition at the hands of sanatanists. The result was that the Arya Samaj remained confined only to the Pandit elite of the Valley.

The Arya Samajists also started advocating its principle of Shuddhi. In the beginning, its protagonists were successful in bringing a few Muslims and two European ladies into the fold of Arya Samaj. A Hindu name was given to the convert. Miss Nancy Miller, a girl of foreign origin and foreign religion was renamed

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94. Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File Nos. 1-85 of 1923-24, (political Department). Shuddhi is a sanskrit word which means purification in religious terminology; it is now applied to:

1. Conversion to Hinduism of persons belonging to foreign religions;

ii. Reconversion of those Hindus who have recently, or at a remote period, adopted one of the foreign religions; and

iii. To raise the status of the depressed classes.

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ii. Reconversion of those Hindus who have recently, or at a remote period, adopted one of the foreign religions; and

iii. To raise the status of the depressed classes.
sharmishtha Devi after her Shuddi. Another European lady was named as Nile Nagini after her Shuddhi. But soon it had to face a strong opposition from the Muslims of the Valley. They raised their voice against Shudhi Precher of the Arya Samaj and started delivering lectures against Hinduism and Arya Samajists. Some Muslim scholars and Moulvis organized an anti-Samaj campaign. They made counter attacks on Hindu religion at various public meetings, held at Hazuri Bagh, Srinagar. In an incident certain Muslim Moulvis followed by a mob of about three to four hundred Muslims entered the premises of Arya Samaj Maharaj Gunj.

They used quite objectionable and unbearable words against Hindus, their religious books and leaders, particularly about Abdul Rahman alias Sufi Giani who had joined the band of the Arya Samajists. Later on it was proposed in a provoking attitude that a religious discussion between the Samajists and the Muslims

98. Ibid.
99. Mohammed Yasin and A. L. Refi, op. cit., p. 92,
101. Ibid., July 30, 1923.
103. Ibid.
be held. But the government prohibited the holding of such a discussion on the ground that such discussions were beyond the scope of the permission and against peace and tranquillity of the state. The result was that the rivalry between the two continued, and when the anniversary of the Arya Samaj was going to be held from July 8 to July 11, 1924, the Muslim Associations like Anjuman-i-Hamid-Islam and Anjuman-i-Khaneq-I-Musila convened meetings and sent applications to the Superintendent of Police, Kashmir, requesting him to warn the Samajists and preventing them from delivering such speeches as would injure the feelings of other religionists. Their complaint was that the Arya Samajists were using abusive and foul speeches against Islam in their annual meetings and in religious processions.


106. "In view of the present tension between the Aryas and the Muslims all over the country, the Muslims of this place are afraid lest the same unfortunate situation is reported here owing to the abusive and inflammatory speeches that the Arya Samajists are in the habit of making in their Nager Kirtan and annual meetings against the Islam. The Anjuman-i-Hamid-Islam, therefore, respectfully approached you with this humble request that timely measures may kindly be adopted to avert repetition of such unhappy events which are generally incidental to such gatherings." Secretary, Anjuman Hamid-I-Islam to Superintendent of Police, Kashmir, 7th July, 1924, *Jammu and Kashmir Archives*, File No: J-66 of 1924, Political Department.
The Samaj, as a result, practically failed in its mission of conversion among the Muslims and the Sikhs, although some government officers supported the Shuddhi Prachar and also participated in its activities. Maharaja Hari Singh himself had developed close links with the Arya Samaj movement. Arya Samaj was brought on the list of the receivers of family donation of the Maharaja. The influence of Arya Samaj on the Maharaja is reflected in his last will wherein he gave all his personal property to a trust, which is managed by Dayanand College Brahendhak Society and Trust. This trust is running the Maharaja Hari Singh Agricultural School at Nagbani in Jammu.

It is important to mention that the non-proselytising creed of Hinduism does not permit any flow from other religions while it has supplied converts to Islam and Christianity in large numbers. It is another factor which led to the failure of the Samaj in its Shuddhi Prachar.


109. Vidyarthi, p. 70.

110. Ibid., p. 70.

111. Ibid., p. 113.
As mentioned above the Muslims of Kashmir accused Arya Samaj of being anti-Muslim and anti-Christian. This may possibly be true because in the British Indian territory Dayanand and his followers made speeches criticising Islam, Christianity and even Sikhism. But in Kashmir it did not raise controversial communal issues, keeping in view the secular traditions of Kashmir. Its slogan was Hindu-Muslim Ki Jai. However, it cannot be ignored that the Arya Samaj preached the supremacy of Vedic religion over other religions.

Once Leknath, an outsider, made a very objectionable speech and passed foul remarks on Prophet Ibrahim. In one of his speeches he said, "Until the flag of the Arya Samaj could be seen floating over churches, mosques and temples it would not be said that the Arya Samaj tenents were making progress in the world." The government approached with a strong hand, Leknath was


116. Ibid.
forbidden to enter the state territories and further meetings of such a nature were stopped. However, after three years, Loknath was again allowed to enter the territories of the Jammu and Kashmir state.

The Arya Samaj in Kashmir, primarily a socio-religious body, could not keep itself away from the political developments taking place in India. It encouraged the political activities in the Valley. Speeches were made in praise of Mahatma Gandhi and in support of the principles of his programme like Swaraj, non-cooperation and boycott of schools. It supported Swadeshi movement and popularised the use of Khaddar in place of foreign cloth. It also came into contact with the revolutionary party of Bhagat Singh and attempts were made for the attainment of Swaraj. Gandhian principles of simple living were followed.

117. Ibid.
118. Ibid.
119. Windham to John Wood, 7th October, 1921, National Archives of India, Home Department, Political, September, 1921, No. 18, Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of September, 1921.
120. Chulan Hassan Khan, or. cit, p. 52.
121. Interview with Kanchendran Abhijit or. cit.
Samaj, in some cases, assumed entirely an extremist political character. It enlisted membership even from government servants including high officials. Subscriptions were collected for Filek Fund.

The Arya Samajists held the anniversary celebrations of the Samaj at Hazuri Bagh and Habba Kadal from 27th June to 6th July, 1925. Swami Shri Shivanand Ji Saraswati, Pandit Gopi Nath Kals, Pandit Prasad Ram Zadoo and Pandit Shakur Joo took a leading role in the celebrations. Such meetings and processions were marked by singing in praise of Indian Freedom Movement. However, it should be remembered that the Muslims of Kashmir did not support the Fandits in their political aspirations. The reason for this was the Shuddhi movement of the Arya Samaj. Meanwhile the government issued orders to stop the Samaj

123. Ibid.
124. Ibid.
from its political activities. It also issued instructions that the activities of the Arya Samaj should be keenly watched and heavily dealt with.

The Arya Samaj, inspite of its hard labour, could achieve little success in the Kashmir Valley. By 1901 the number of the Arya Samajists in the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir was only 79. The number increased to 1047 in 1911, 23, 116 in 1921 and 93,944 in 1931. It is important to note that the Arya Samaj has been eminently successful in the Jammu province where their strength by 1931 rose to 92,725 leaving a balance of 1,219 souls for the Kashmir province, the frontier districts and the jazirs of Poonch and Chenani. Out of 1,219 people only 468 were in the Kashmir Valley. The above figures clearly show that

127. No 43/C-m/Bemi official (Confidential) Jammu and Kashmir Archives.

128. Government had completely changed its policy towards the Samaj and its members. Its every step and every action was properly brought to the notice of the government. The Arya Samaj Jammu when it decided to erect a memorial at Shatra in memory of Martyr Ramchand, the government, when approached, stopped such activities. See Jammu and Kashmir Archives, File No. 699/I-49 of 1923, General Department.


131. Ibid.


133. Ibid., p. 295.

134. Ibid., Subsidiary Table V-p. 308.
Arya Samaj had little success in the Kashmir Valley. The reason for this was that Kashmir was overwhelmingly populated by the Muslims who constituted 85 percent of the total population of the Kashmir Valley. Secondly, as pointed out earlier the Kashmiri Pandits, who were under the complete grip of their religious leaders, (priests) were opposed to any kind of change particularly in the religious sphere. Thirdly, the Muslims of Kashmir, who had been antagonised by the Samaj through its Shuddhi, organized protest movements against the Shuddhi preacher of the Samaj and made every possible attempt to scuttle the mission of the Samaj. Besides, the membership of the Samaj was in the hands of non-Kashmiri Hindus who had little, almost no dealings with the masses of Kashmir.

However, the movement being based on monotheism and infallibility of the Vodas, and shorn of Brahminical domination and rigid caste system\(^{136}\) was acceptable alike to the enlightened Hindus who desired greater freedom and to some of the uneducated underdog who suffered under the traditional order\(^{137}\).

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The Samaj, the opposition notwithstanding, was successful in awakening the Kashmiri Pandits from the slumber of ignorance and darkness. The Samaj instilled in the Pandits a sense of pride in their ancient culture which indirectly acted as a check on their young men being converted to Christianity or Islam. Consequently, the population of Pandits increased by 6.9 percent. This is one of the greatest contributions of the Arya Samaj in Kashmir. Besides, it ameliorated the condition of women and made great efforts in the spread of education among them. It celebrated widow marriages and this provided a lead to the Pandit community.


139. *ibid.*