Besides the relief afforded by the Punjab Government and the Punjab Famine Relief Fund Committee (which was a semi-Government body), some non-official organizations and individuals also took the opportunity to initiate relief measures. Among these were the various Christian missions, the Arya Samaj, the Brahm Samaj and the Singh Sabha, apart from some socially conscious individuals. In this chapter an attempt has been made to critically examine the role of non-official relief, its motive, nature and the consequences.

The Punjab annexation by the British brought an influx of Christian missionaries in the newly occupied territory for evangelize. There were many missions working in the Punjab during the period of study. These were American Presbyterian Mission, United American Presbyterian Mission, Church Missionary Society, Baptist Mission Society, Society for Propagation of the Gospel, Cambridge University Mission to Delhi, Church of Scotland, Salvation Army, Methodist Episcopal, various Roman Catholics and the Zenana Missions. Out of these the prominent during famines were: (1) The Baptist Mission with its Zenana Mission, (2) The Society for Propagation of the Gospel, (3) The Cambridge Mission of Delhi, and
The Church Missionary Society with its Zenana Mission. Before proceeding to discuss the role played by these Missions during famines, some introduction about these is necessary.

The Baptist Mission Society was founded in 1818 in Delhi by Rev. J.T. Thompson who died in 1856. A new missionary from England, Revd. J. Mackay followed him. Meanwhile, an eminent native Christian preacher, Wilayat Ali, a convert from Islam, became its principal working member. When the revolt of 1857 occurred in Delhi, all these persons with their ladies were massacred. The widow of Wilayat Ali with her daughter escaped while other Christian leaders with their children were being tossed about on the bayonets of the rebellions. After suppressing the revolt at the end of 1858, the work of the Mission was revived by Revd. James Smith. The society then extended itself to Simla (1865), Kalka (1888), Kharar (1890) and Palwal (1894) by the end of the 19th century.

In 1850, Captain Martin sent Rs.10,000 to the Church Missionary Society, anonymously through the Revd. J. Newton, an American Presbyterian missionary working at Lahore. In forwarding the money Mr. Newton and his colleagues cordially invited the Church of England to join them in the new subjection of the land.


2. In Delhi, the Society had 11 sub-stations at Sabzi Mandi, Chandni Chowk, Loni, Shahdara, Baraut, Chhaprauli, Purana Qila, Faridabad, Ich Ghah, Pehar Ganj and Salanagar; 5 sub-stations at Kalka, namely Chandigarh, Ambala, Kasauli, Pinjore, and Nalagarh; 15 sub-stations in Kharar which included Chadiala, Chitamala, Chuni Kalan, Khidera sad, Koreli, Phinjheri, Hallomajra, Manimajra, Loha Kheri, Parowal, Salibah, Panitpur, Radali, Rajpura, Sham doe and Rampur; 2 sub-stations at Palwal, viz., Hodal and Fatehpur and one at Simla; The Indian Report of the B.M.S. in Northern India and Orissa for 1900, (Calcutta, 1901), p. IX.
by the sword of the spirit*. In response, two missionaries the Revd. J. Clark and Revd. T. H. Fitzpatrick were sent out in 1851 and stationed at Amritsar. Prior to this, however, in 1847 work had been begun by the society at Kotgarh, on the initiative of some military and civil officers of Kotgarh, who subscribed a considerable sum for the purpose. The work of the Mission was under the Episcopal supervision of the Bishop of Calcutta till 1877, when the Diocese of Lahore was founded by Mr. T. Valphy French, a C.M.S. Missionary, who was succeeded by Dr. M. J. Mathew in 1887, followed by Dr. G. A. Lefroy in 1899. By the end of the 19th century the Mission established its branches at Lahore (1867), Narowal (1859), Taran Tarn (1885), Multan (1856), Clarkabad (1868), Simla (1883), Kangra (1854), Peshawer (1855), Bannu (1865), Dera Ismail Khan (1862), Dera Ghazi Khan (1879), Quetta (1886), Karachi (1850), Hyderabad (Sindh) in (1856), Sukkur (1887) and Batala (1879).

The society for Propagation of the Gospel began its operations at Delhi in 1854 and had extended to the surrounding areas for a distance of 100 miles in 1901 which included the districts of Gurgaon, Rohtak, Karnal, Rewari, Bhiwani, Hisar, Sirsa, Hansi, Panipat, Kaithal, Balogarh, Mahrauli and Simla 4.

It has long been felt by many resident members of the Cambridge University who were interested in Missions that Cambridge ought to be connected with a characteristic missionary work


and it was resolved that "the special object of the Mission would be, in addition to evangelistic labours, to afford means for the higher education of young native christians and candidates for Holy orders, to offer the advantages of a christian home to students sent from Mission Schools to the Government College; and through literary and other labours to endeavour to reach the more thoughtful heathen" 5. After careful consideration it was determined with liberal support and approval of the 'Society for Propagation of the Gospel', to begin work at Delhi. Accordingly, the first members of the Mission, the Revd. E.Bickersteth, M.A., Fellow of Pembroke College and the Revd. J.D.M.Murray, B.A., scholar of St.John College, left England in the autumn of 1877 and commenced work at Delhi. The Cambridge Mission of Delhi kept its activities confined to the Delhi district. In 1883, the Mission started its functioning with the Society for Propagation of the Gospel and then it was called 'The Cambridge Mission to Delhi in Connection with the Society for Propagation of the Gospel' 6.

The famine of 1860-61 was very severely felt in Delhi. The Revds. Thomas Evans and J.Parsons of the Baptist Mission Society did a lot of work in relieving the native christians. Although, they had, in common with others, been relieved from the Punjab Famine Relief Fund Committee. The Society (B.M.S.) received Rs.750 only from the Punjab Famine Relief Fund Committee and spent it on the distressed people in providing them food, clothes and work. A large enclosure outside the Delhi Gate was

5. The Sixth Report of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, 1884, p.5.  
6. Ibid.
fixed upon the place of distribution of food to those furnished with tickets. An asylum for the homeless and the infirm was also founded near the Delhi Gate. On 1st January, 1861 about 586 persons were relieved, while the number raised quickly when the society found nearly 6,000 persons in daily receipt of food. At the Ede Gah Asylum, where Mr. Broadway, another missionary, superintended the distribution, about 8,000 poor were daily fed. Nearly all received cooked food; while bread was given to some of the higher caste people. The relief was mainly given to the native christians (among whom most were from the chamari community) so that non-christians could be tempted to join christianity. The Annual Report of the Society observed that "it is gratifying to note that the liberality of England at this juncture is producing the most pleasing results in allaying the animosities in the native mind produced by the mutiny, and in rendering the people more willing to listen to the world of life". These views have been corroborated in another letter which stated that "contributions were received from Britain with the expression of the hope that help sent from there will lead to consolidation of British power and thus not only reconcile India to British control, but cause an improvement in the religious aspect of the country, and by extension of christian religion conduce to the eternal happiness of the people". This letter, however, was later withdrawn to prevent publicity of the sentiments expressed in it.

9. Ibid.
The immediate effect of relief provided was that the Baptist Mission baptized 58 persons in Delhi of whom 39 were Hindus and 19 Muhammadans. One convert mentioned as being a granddaughter of the King of Delhi, who was reduced to extreme poverty because of the revolt of 1857. Another was the Zamindar or proprietor of the village Rona; while the third one was the son of the Maulvi of the same village. But later on it was reported from the Purana Qila's Native Church that there had been so many defections as to reduce the members to twenty and similar was the case in other churches of Delhi. The Annual Report of the Mission reported that "the Mission in Delhi presents an aspect of a more mingled character, for while 66 persons had been baptized in the year 1860, about 75 had been excluded from the Churches by the end of 1861." It appears that as soon as the dread of famine disappeared, the people abandoned the new faith.

During the famine of 1877-78, the Revd. Mr. Baring, of American Presbyterian Mission, started a relief work at Anarkali in Batala from 1st February, 1879. On the first day only three men were employed, but after three days their number rose to four hundred.

The Society for Propagation of the Gospel also distributed relief in this famine, but on a small scale. Consequently in these years considerable numbers were baptized from nearly all the city.

10. *The Missionary Herald*, Aug., 1861, pp. 583-84. The classification of the baptized persons was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Muhammadans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin-1, Kaysth-1, Chamar-33</td>
<td>Pathans-10, Sheikhs-4, Mughals-4, Sayyids-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khatris-3, Jat-1, Total: 39</td>
<td>Total: 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


12. *Vakil-I-Hindustan* (Amritsar), 8th Feb., 1879; *SNNPP* during the year 1879.
we re(of Delhi) and several neighbouring villages. The people were mostly chamar or from the poorest classes, and again promising that their wives and children would follow soon, but again failed to fulfil their promise. Previously the missionaries did not bother about it, but in 1887 the Native Church Council of the Mission presided over by the Bishop of Lahore laid down that (1) all christians with unbaptized children bring them for baptism, and put their wives under instructions with a view to their baptism as soon as possible; (2) that they form betrothals and marriages for their children only among christians; (3) that they attend no melas or ceremonies in connection with idolatrous practices. The Bishop derived that all who failed to fulfil these conditions should be considered ex-communicate without special reference to himself, and that they should be restored to christian fellowship only after public confession in Church.

The missionaries felt the famine of 1896-97 as a great opportunity of attracting people to christianity as the Report observed, "it may be this famine was sent to prevent our gathering in prematurily the harvest we were anticipating, if so it is proving a good sowing time. Great anxiety was felt among the shoe-makers of Delhi, who were from the chamar community and had already adopted christianity. The baptist mission received £ 64

from 'Baptist's North China Church'. It also received bales of clothes, boxes of toys and food for distribution 16. The Revds. Mr. H.J. Thomas and Mr. Henry E. Crudginton of the Baptist Mission in Delhi, distributed clothes to those whose resources had been exhausted, especially to the native Christians. Revd. H.J. Thomas purchased shoes from the shoe-makers of Dariya Ganj Basti and embroidered uppers from women at a low rate, so that these people could survive themselves by selling their commodities. The Society spent Rs. 1,800 in this way of relief. In Shahdara, relief works on small scale were started for native Christians, in the shape of repairing their chapel and fencing their cemetery 17. In Baraut, there was not very much distress, but the Zamindars refused to allow any Christian to share the harvest work. Therefore, the mission opened relief works here and also in Mahrauli, Dhikana, Loni and Shahdara of making bricks for the new houses and building of cemetery walls, and Rs. 400 were spent on this purpose. In June, 1897 in Delhi non-christians were also admitted on one of the Delhi cemetery work which took Rs. 575 in relieving 100 or more poor people 18. The Government relief works were closed in July, 1897, long before the scarcity of work was lightened from off the non-agricultural poor. This brought hundreds of suppli
cants from outside Delhi. They were employed on digging of a road outside the city walls from the Kashmiri Gate to the river Yamuna. This work took Rs. 200, while Rs. 300 were later on spent in giving

16. Ibid., 1897, p.28.
17. Ibid., p.33.
18. Ibid., p.34.
relief to the aged and infirm. Similarly, Rs.350 were spent in providing work to women and children in the form of repairing of Mission's property, gardening, carrying loads, making hand pankahs, angas, batwas, and 'sewing garments, etc.

In Faridabad where the Missionary School was in progress, some children were provided with grain day by day. To their parents and others some amount of work was given, where possible, and for three or four months a large quantity of grain was distributed to the needy.

In Palwal, the Society opened relief works in the months of February and March, 1897. Hundreds of people came to such works. For sometime in conjunction with the Baptist Zenana Mission the Society provided employment for four hundred people daily. In May, when the harvests were commenced the relief works were closed.

The Punjab Government did not consider the Ropar subdivision (including the Kharar tahsil) to be a famine area, yet there was real and severe distress amongst the poor. The Baptist Society arranged work for the native christians in the shape of making mud-bricks, the erection of out-houses (houses outside the village), and a wall round the Mission compound, together with the mud-plastering of the same, gave work to a considerable number from January till July, 1897, when the rains were set in. Gratuitous relief was given to those unable to work, the aged, the blind, the sick and the destitute widows.

19. The Indian Report of the B.M.S. in Northern India and Orissa, for 1897, p. 34.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., pp. 36-37.
22. Ibid., pp. 41-42.
23. Ibid., p. 48.
The Society for Propagation of the Gospel in alliance with the Cambridge Mission of Delhi (popularly known as the Delhi Mission) provided relief in Delhi, Gurgaon, Rohtak, Karnal, Rewari, Hissar, Bhiwani, Sirsa and Hansi. In Delhi, it opened a Boys Industrial Boarding School in 1896 in which orphans or other poor boys were given a simple education and training of shoe-making. An Industrial School for Christian girls of the poor classes was also started at Delhi in 1896. The girls were trained here in domestic works such as cotton spinning and sheembroidery.

The Delhi Mission also spent Rs.200 per month in affording relief to the shoe-makers of the Dariya Ganj Basti of Delhi. For the poor Muslim women, a little road-making work was started at a very low rate of wages by the S.P.G. Women were also given work of grinding, spinning and road-making in Delhi.

In Hissar, the Society for Propagation of the Gospel afforded relief to Pardanashin (veiled) women who refused to take support from the Municipality. While in Rewari, Mrs. William of the Mission gave food to eight or ten women daily.

The Church Missionary Society also contributed to afford relief to the famished people. The Society spent £11,000 during this famine. However, detail of relief measures is not available.

25. Ibid., p. 628 d.
26. Delhi Mission News, April, 1897, Quarterly Paper No.10, p.3.
28. Miss Heming from Hissar Reports in Ibid., p.15.
29. Miss A. Parsons's Report from Rewari, vide, Ibid., pp.16-17.
The outcome of the relief given by Christian missionaries again led to an increase in number of baptisms during the year 1897. However, the missionaries did not baptize people immediately but they gave some time to make up their mind. In the meanwhile the missionaries used to teach them about Christianity and after that when they were sure about them, were admitted to Christianity. This was being done to avoid their escape immediately after the famine was over as had happened during the earlier famines. Miss Swan from Delhi wrote that “famine made them (the ladies of Dariya Ganj Basti whom relief was provided) realize how thankful they should be that they were Christians, for they were cared for body and soul.” Similarly, Mr. Henry E. Crudgington, a Baptist missionary from Delhi remarked: “due to scarcity of food the Muhammedan women in their dire need often disregarded Pardah (veil), and called me in to see the state there were in. The variety of cases one came across was interesting and touching. Some who had known for better days were on the verge of starvation. Many of them had sold their property. People were relating to their royalty to the British during the revolt of 1857 and till now only to get fund and help. That one touch of 'need' softened many prejudiced hearts, and stories of want and privation often very touching in their desire to make the best show and hide their

31. The number showed an increase by 36 over the number of 1896 in Delhi. The Annual Report of B.M.S. for the year 1897, p. 28.
32. Ibid.
poverty. But gradually people began to learn that we were their real friends, and then they opened up their hearts to us. One cannot say how far a word spoken here or there was productive of good results, but one thing I am convinced, the people have learnt to look upon us with more liberal and unprejudiced minds. One get to be known more, and the recognition was in connection with practical sympathy and help given in a time of sore need, and I hope this may open the way to get at people in the future that I have hitherto not known" 34.

During the famine of 1899-1900, the Baptist Mission Society found it necessary, as early as June, 1900, to institute famine relief works for the native chamar christians; the aged, old and sick people. Generally grain was distributed while to few monetary help was also given. This was carried on under the superintendence of Mr. Saul David. People were also given bamboo and matting to build their houses which were destroyed by the floods that followed after the prolonged drought 35.

Kalka itself was not the famine area but famished people were driven here by want and in hope of securing help and work. The Baptist Society provided them with food and also told them of the "Bread of Life". At one time there were 400 people, many of whom had heard the Gospel for the first time. "One who came to us first of all for food now came as an inquirer and was already willing to confess christ in baptism. Many of these people will wander far away to their native villages again, or that they may bear the precious seed with them and that the harvest may be great" 36.

36. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
The Revd. Mr. G. A. Smith, a Baptist Missionary started relief works for about 300 native Christians in Kharar in the shape of digging, making of sun-dried and kiln-burnt bricks, cloth and carpet weaving for men; sewing and cotton-spinning for women; while the aged, inform and sick were relieved gratuitously. Here, a daily scripture of lesson was arranged for all who obtained relief from the Mission 37. After a long drought flood followed which destroyed thousands of mud-houses in the villages of Ambala district, causing great gaps in the public roads; while acres of growing maize and jowar were destroyed. The Mission provided shelter to these flood-affected victims in the verandahs of the Mission House 38.

At Palwal, the Baptist Society sent children for grass and fire-wood wherever a blade or scrap was to be found. Here, relief was afforded to some of the thousands who were continually migrating across the district from Bikaner and Rajputana 39.

In Narowal, district Amritsar, the Church Missionary Society spent Rs. 500 on employing a large number of men and boys levelling the ground round the Church 40.

The Delhi Mission (The S.P.G. and Cambridge Mission of Delhi in combine) opened St. Mary's Home in Delhi in 1899 where the famine orphans (mostly small babies) were to be kept. The famine

37. Ibid., p. 27.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., p. 38.
left a terrible legacy in the shape of orphans. These children were babies from few weeks old infant to the boys or girls of seven or eight years old. These children were placed in one of the Mission Schools, but the babies were sent to St. Mary’s Home 41. At the age of eight or nine these children were to be transferred to whichever school seemed most appropriate, in order that they may be fitted to maintain themselves. Here they were given education and training of different professions 42.

For the relief of native chamar community of Delhi, who were mainly shoe-makers, the Mission (Delhi Mission), adopted a the same method of 1896-97, namely, giving them a small subsidy on each pair of shoe made, as long as the price of corn remained high 43. Relief was also given in Delhi to the higher caste Muhammedans who were called as Safed Posh (white robed) and to the women who were doing Gota work and to the Pardanashin ladies 44.

The Missionary dispensary at Rohtak gave relief to the widows with small children, old women, blind or maimed and Pardanashin, in the shape of food 45.

The S.P.G. in Karnal district spent Rs.6,563 for the relief of destitute masses, in the shape of building of homesteads, re-clothing the naked, repurchasing and giving cattle with farm

42. Ibid., pp.160-61.
43. Delhi Mission News, April, 1900, Quarterly Paper No.10, p.12.
44. Ibid., October, 1900, Quarterly Paper No.12, pp.140-42.
implements and distribution of seed. Over 8,000 were relieved while 1,535 literally starving women in Pardah and children were saved[^46]. While clothes, blankets and a large dish of khichri were being served daily to seven or eight people in the missionary dispensary of Karnal[^47].

The relief which was being afforded by many Christian missions during different famines in the Punjab had varied aspects. As a Missionary report remarked: "the help rendered during the famine of 1860–61 resulted into that many of the people came to confess about their guilt during the revolt of 1857, when they said, 'we have done wrong, we have come to ask you to forgive us, you have helped us; you have saved us from death, and now we promise that we will do wrong no more"[^48].

Another report observed: "when the natives saw how much was being done for them, especially by the clergy during famines, they began to think they should like to know more of the Christian's God, who taught men to be so kind and loving, and they flocked to the missionaries asking to be taught"[^49].

"The famine has wrought miracles. The catechumen are filling, baptismal water flows in streams, and a starvinglike tots fly in masses to heaven. Also among adults the merciful ministry

or priests and sisters in times of famine awakens a strong impulse towards Christianity.  

"The orphanages, perhaps more than any other institution has proved itself a veritable nursery for Christianity. For it is here the children living in a thoroughly catholic atmosphere and protected from the blighting influences of paganism are brought up to be staunch catholic men and women. It is from the ranks of these people that native priests, nuns and catechists are recruited."

When the Christian missionaries were engaged in the work of conversion of the native poor people during famines, they had to face severe opposition from the Arya Samaj and other organisations which has discussed later in this chapter. But few instances may be given here that those natives who adopted Christianity had to undergo severe opposition and disrespect in the hands of the local people. For instance, "in some villages the native Christians suffered greatly during the famine of 1896-97. Some were much tried by Muhammadans for their faith and confession. These were the sweepers who used to labour with the farmers, and they drew no salary, but got some parts of the production of the soil. Now, when they became Christians in 1896, the Muhammadans grew angry and refused to give them work. Not contended with that they prohibited them from cutting grass for cattle or sale, and from heaving wood for sale. So they being perplexed wandered from one village to another in search of food, grass and fuel."

51. Ibid., pp. 251-52.
52. Letter from the Revd. Fath Masih (Native), Fatehgarh (Punjab), undated, Church Missionary Society, Extract from the Annual Letters of the Missions for the year 1896, M.F., Reel No.15, pp.268-6
In another instance, the Missionary related that, "late one night when carrying of a patient to the hospital for a serious operation, our carriage was quite suddenly surrounded by 10 or 15 evil-looking Muhammedans, in one of the lanes of Delhi, who were arguing hotly with the coachman and husband of the patient. They were opposing but finally when the coachman slashed his whip on them, they ran away" 53.

Similarly, during the famine of 1896-97, when a Missionary filled his cart with abandoned children, he asked if there was any guardian for them? The reply was negative. After spending a week or two in his Church when he planned to send these children some where else, then he was confused by the demand of children by their mothers, who were claiming that "the children so far from being orphans, were their own. We saw that the children who were being taken along with you got plenty of food and milk, and grew quite fat. We thought it would be a good thing if our children also had food and milk. So we said they were orphans. But now we don't want to loose them when they are in good health" 54.

The Christian Missionaries had grievances against the Government also. They claimed that "the money was not given to missionaries to use; that native christians were dying of starvation in some places; that native Christians had been refused work or food on the ground that Missionaries can look out for the

christians; that the natives through whom the money was distributed, were making fortunes out of it for themselves, and that even European Officers were using their opportunities in the same way" 55. But the Government reacted harshly to their criticism as Hamilton wrote to Elgin that, "I am getting out of temper with the Missionaries and their misleading reports to their friends at home. They lose no opportunity of decrying the efforts of the Government, and in some cases, appropriated by these supervising them and they invariably add that it is Christians and Christians alone, that the control of charity funds be entrusted. I assume that this exhibition of ill-temper on their part results from their obtaining a less proportion of the money subscribed than in the previous famine" 56. However, under such circumstances the Missionary report judged the situation from the optimistic view when it remarked that the results of famine relief are two-folds; happy and unhappy. Among the unhappy results are that there was widespread suspicion that the distributor might squeeze funds, and secondly, the impression that the Missionaries possess or control untold wealth; while, thirdly the fastening on to the Church of leeches who only wish to feed on the temporal benefits she can bestow. On the contrary the happy results are (1) saving of life and when the Missionary hear", only keep up a penny a day gift till the harvest and we shall live"; "Had you not come, I should have been dead"; "Here come the life-saving gods", etc., are the

55. Letter from Lord Kinnaird, to the Earl of Onslow, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India, dated April 6, 1897, Elgin Papers, M.F. Reel No. 6.

56. Letter from Hamilton to Elgin, dated April 9, 1897, Hamilton Papers, M.F. Reel No. 1, p. 28.
pleasing results to the Missionaries; secondly, an intimate knowledge of the native house life that could scarcely be obtained in any other way. Native homes, as a rule, are closed to foreign visitors, especially to men. But during such occasions we were welcomed there; thirdly, the country was open to Missionary residence and effort; and after the Missionary, sooner or later, will come the rail-road, the telegraph, the post-office, and all other agencies needed for British interest, i.e., the extension of British trade in India, and lastly, the conversion of orphans and spread of the idea of Christianity. The efforts of the Missionaries bore fruit when the native Christians in the Punjab increased from 3,912 in 1881 to 19,728 in 1891 and 38,513 in 1901.

It was noticed by the Arya Samaj that in times of famines the Christian Missionaries were very actively engaged in distributing

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59. The Arya Samaj was founded by Mul Shankar, better known as Swami Dayanand Saraswati, in 1875 in Bombay. But in 1877 the Swami shifted its headquarters to Lahore. The Swami believed in God and in the 'Doctrine of Karma', and the 'Doctrine of Soul'. It disapproved ancestor worship and accepted the Vedas as the infallible books of true knowledge. The founder died on Oct. 30, 1883. The Arya Samaj was basically an organisation of middle class Hindus of the Punjab for whom the question of saving the interests of the Hindus stood paramount. It recognised the need to strengthen Hinduism especially against the rising influence of Christianity. It organised re-conversion programme for those who had embraced non-Hindu religions and purified them in order to include them among the Hindus. Of the works of social reconstruction done by the Samaj in Punjab, the philanthropic services were no less significant. Outside Christian circles it was the first purely Indian association to organise orphanages and widow homes. For detail study, see Lajpat Rai, Arya Samaj; K.M. Jones, Arya Dharma; G.P. Upadhyaya, The Origin, Scope, and Mission of the Arya Samaj; S. Vidyalankar and H.D. Vidyalankar, Arya Samaj Ka Itihas, 4 Vols., and S.K. Sharma, Social Movements and Social Change, etc.
relief and that they made it their business to collect and support the children who had been abandoned by their parents, more generally brought up by the Missionaries and frequently became converts. It was alleged by the Arya Samaj that they were in many cases sent away by the Missionaries to other parts of India before the famine was over in order that they might not be restored to their rightful guardians. It was against what was described as the 'wholesale conversion of Hindu children to Christianity' that the earlier relief scheme was chiefly directed and the same object was kept prominently before the public in the appeals made for subscriptions. This object of the movement no doubt gained for it many supports more on religious than on political grounds and the transition from anti-Christian to anti-Government was Lala Lajpat Rai and his extremist followers, did not allow it to be lost sight of both in its inception and its execution. Therefore, it would appear that Lajpat Rai's scheme of christianising famine relief was mainly a political designed to attract the people from the Government 60.

With this object in view, the Arya Samaj for the first time started a movement in February, 1897, popularly known as 'the Hindu Orphan Relief Movement'. The object of the movement was to save the Hindu children who had been left destitutes during the famine of 1896-97. Lala Lajpat Rai, who was the chief organiser of the movement, addressed a public meeting in Anarkali (Lahore) to raise money for the orphans. He said that "it was incumbent upon the Hindus to assist the father of a lad who had been converted to

Christianity to get back him from the Missionaries. He also warned the people to be conscious about the work of Christianity which was collecting friendless children and converting them into its faith.

Appeals for help, issued under the auspices of the Arya Samaj, were liberally responded to by the Hindu Community generally and by the members and sympathisers of the Samaj in particular. During the spring of 1897 Lajpat Rai continued to publicize his new cause, to gather followers and to collect funds. In May, he called for Punjabi Hindus to accept 50,000 children from the Central Provinces (present Madhya Pradesh) so that they might not fall into the hands of the Missionaries. His campaign was helped immeasurably by stories of suffering, of destitute peasants and homeless children, and bitter tales of missionary exploitation. The famine and Missionaries became interlinked in the minds of many Punjabis...

"It is an open secret that the Christian Missionaries in India have taken advantage of the famine to swell the number of their converts by taking over the children of the famine stricken Hindus and Mohammedans." Although, Missionaries defended their actions on humanitarian grounds, no such argument convinced the educated Punjabis.

In June, 1897, The Tribune could report that all sections of the Hindu community, Aryas, Sanatanists and Sikhs had taken up the work of orphan relief. Individual organisations now applied

61. Ibid., p.35.
64. The Tribunes, June 16, 1897, pp.3-4. The Paper even included the Singh Sabha among the Hindu Organisations active in their movement.
for Government permission to care for groups of orphans. Meanwhile, Pandit Shiv Dutt Ram of Amritsar travelled to the Central Provinces to arrange for the despatch of orphans to the Punjab. He also founded a temporary orphanage at Jabulpur as a collection point, in the famine-affected area. The need for official approval brought Hindu relief workers into direct confrontation with the Government. A three-way struggle developed between the Missionaries, Hindu relief workers and the Government over who should be allowed to take charge of destitute and orphaned children. Stories of official obstinacy soon appeared in the Newspapers and journals as time passed and the Government failed to approve applications by Hindu Organisations. While still awaiting Government permission the first group of orphans arrived from Jabulpur, comprising of 50 children in the care of Lala Bisheshwar Das. They were met with due celebration and the Lahore Arya Samaj opened its orphanage amidst an atmosphere of Hindu solidarity.

In August, 1897, the Government finally permitted the 'Hindu Orphan Relief Association' to accept 200 orphans. Official approval of other applications came only slowly and gradually. In fact, for many applicants it did not come at all. By 1898, the 'Hindu Orphan Relief Movement' had rescued 250 children, and brought to the Punjab where four new orphanages were opened at Lahore, Amritsar, Ludhiana and Jullundur, besides the one already at Ferozepure.


66. However, Satyaketu Vidyalankar gives the number as 1,000. See Satyaketu Vidyalankar and Hari Dutt Vidyalankar, Arya Samaj Ka Itihas, Vol. II, (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 158-59.
In addition, the Kanya Mahavidyalaya at Jullundur opened its Kanya Anathalya, or orphanage for girls. Their own agent travelled to the Central Provinces and returned with 52 orphans, 19 of whom were received at Kanya Anathalya where they joined as the students of Mahavidyalaya. By mid 1898, this first round of the orphan movement ended with its modest achievement yet it provided a useful lesson in communal co-operation and a practical exercise with problems associated with orphan relief.

Hardly had the first crisis subsided when news of second and more extensive famine began to reach the Arya Samajists in November, 1899. The famine was, in fact, very severe in the Punjab, the Central Provinces, Rajputana (Rajasthan), North-western Provinces (Uttar Pradesh) and Gujarat or Kathiawar. It was, therefore, resolved to revive the 'Orphan Relief Movement' and to put it on vigorously so as to able to render help to as large a number of children as it might be possible to rescue. Lala Lajpat Rai once again called for funds and appealed to the Punjabis on 24th November, 1899 that, "this is the time for Hindus of all shades and opinions to forget their differences and work for the common cause. So long as a child is a Hindu, there is every chance of his being converted some time or the other to one or other set of opinions, which distinguish the different schools of Hinduism, but once he gets into the hands of non-Hindus he is lost for ever... A nation which cannot protect its own orphans and waifs, which cannot feed them from going abegging; which lets them their rescue, which sits listlessly and allows its orphans to be carried away by

outsiders can have no claim to command respect at the hands of the other people. In the name of Hinduism and in the name of good senses, I beg to appeal to my co-religionists for help." 68.

The appeal got immediate response and the Ferozepore orphanage reiterated its willingness to accept orphans from famished lands. Experience gained in 1896-97 enabled Hindus to mobilize quickly, expand their orphanage facilities, and send agents with instructions 69. The Lahore Arya Samaj lost no time and deputed one of its younger members (A senior student of the D.A.V. College and Secretary of the Local Young Men's Arya Samaj) to go to Rajputana and ascertain on the spot the mode of relief. Lala Diwan Chand Chadda also travelled to Jodhpur and stayed at many places (amongst them were Kishengarh, Ajmer, Beawar and Pali) to see the famine relief camps. In several native states the Arya agents waited upon hig officials, and tried to impress upon them their duty towards the orphans and the destitute children of their territory, explaining how necessary it was in the interests of the states to keep the children upon their own soil and to protect them in that trying period, not only from death by starvation but also from being carried to distant places for conversion to alien faiths 70.

In Bombay, the agents of the Arya Samaj travelled as far as Surat and Baroda. They tried to arouse the Hindu public to a sense of their duty towards the little ones of their community,

68. The Tribune, 24th October, 1899, p.5.
69. Jones, op. cit., p.239.
who in dire distress needed help and sympathy. Similarly, the
Samaj carried on a successful campaign in Gujrat (Kathiawar)
and the Central Provinces. In all the Samaj was able to rescue
some 1700 orphan children from Rajputana, Central Provinces and
Gujrat, though it could not get any from Bombay. These orphans
were brought to the Punjab and were placed in different orphanages
where they were given food, clothes and industrial education. In
the meanwhile, the Arya Samaj collected Rs. 70,000 for the relief
of orphans from individuals.

For the destitute children in the Punjab, the Hissar Arya
Samaj had done a lot of work which opened orphanages at Hissar
and Bhiwani under the Presidentship of Lala Chandu Lal and Lala
Churamani as Secretary. At Hissar, Lala Chiranji Lal and Lala
Chandu Lal opened Bhandar (public kitchen) for the destitute
children where more than a hundred people were daily fed. They
also provided food and clothes to the infirm, old, blind, deaf
and decrepit.

In Bhiwani, a temporary asylum was opened on 10th November,
1899. On January 9, 1900 about 70 children were getting relief.
Their number rose to 349 on 7th April. Of these 214 were returned
to their parents or guardians, who had either lost them or deserted
them being unable to give them food, but were afterwards willing
to take over their charge. The inmates of the asylum were given

71. Ibid., pp. 215-16.
72. The Tribune, Nov. 2, 1899, p. 5.
74. The Tribune, January 9, 1900, p. 4.
education of learning of Hindi as well as training of making of 

dari and Nawar. The income of this institution upto 7th April, 1900 

was Rs.1,554 of which Rs.1,000 were realised from local subscript-

ions and Rs.300 from Rai Sheo Nath, Executive Engineer. The 

expenditure for the period amounted to Rs.1,294 75.

The work of this institution was highly approved by the 

Government officials. On 19th January, 1900, the Lt.Governor of 

the Punjab, while inspecting famine works in the Hissar district, 

visited the asylum at Bhiwani and was pleased to see their work. 

Similarly, Mr. Fanshawe, Commissioner and Superintendent of Delhi 

Division, accompanied by many raises (rich men) of the town 

visited the asylum and expressed, "I visited this institution and 

was pleased with all I saw and heard about it. The princely idea 

of the promoter has been carried into effect by aid pecuniary and 

personal of the Bhiwani citizens, and this is the sort of mutual 

help, which those interested in India would be glad to see in all 

branches of Indian life" 76.

The Ferozepure orphanage admitted 352 orphans by 30th 

April, 1900 77. While in Amritsar Lala Sunder Das, an Arya Samajists 

was kind enough to give away his Tawala (where horses were kept) 

for the use of orphans. Lala Hans Rai and Ralia Ram got a well 

dug in the Tawala. The Recreation Club made a donation of Rs.185. 

Lala Sant Ram, Bhai Mehtab Singh and Lala Jai Kishen Das defrayed

75. The Tribune, April 19, 1900, p.4.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., May 8, 1900, p.5.
all expenses for one month each. Lalas Sant Ram, Dholan Das, Sadh Ram, Sain Das and many other gave considerable help in the form of supplying clothes, etc. to the orphans. The clerks of different offices and shopkeepers also promised to help the asylum at Amritsar. Lala Raghu Nath Rai agreed to employ the orphans in his factory of carpet. About 140 orphans were given work here in the Amritsar orphanage. This orphanage was under the presidency of Lala Dholan Das and Pandit Shiv Datt Ram as its Secretary. The income of the asylum was Rs.5,733 of which Rs.4,797 were spent during the famine.

Commenting upon the Amritsar orphanage, Miss Alison Garland, the Congress Lady Lecturer, who visited the orphanage in February, 1900 remarked, "the boys looked in good health and spirits and seemed in every way well cared for... It seems to me that such orphanages should be started wherever the orphans after a famine are many, for the boys are taught a useful trade which will enable them to support themselves in comfort in after life." The net results achieved by the 'Hindu Orphan Relief Movement' during the famine period from October, 1899 to November, 1900 were as follows: (1) Thirteen orphanages were opened and kept prominently working in the province, including one at Sukkar, (2) money in subscriptions, donations and the earnings of children put to work realized to the extent of nearly 40,000 rupees, (3) over

78. The Tribune, May 10, 1900, p.5.
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
1,600 orphans were rescued from probable death by starvation, and majority of them were fed, housed, clothed, educated, and being trained for employment in useful handicrafts, and (4) the planning of industrial projects by which the double purpose was served of finding remunerative work for the children as well as helping in the industrial development of the country 81.

Commenting upon the work done by the Arya Samaj, The Tribune remarked: "it is gratifying to be told that the whole educated Hindu public of the province were moved as if by one desire for doing as much as they could be further its cause. It was a movement in which every educated Hindu took part, awakened as it were by that touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. Printers and publishers helped by printing the appeals, cloth merchants by supplying clothes, doctors and medical men by giving attendance and medicines free, lawyers by devoting their energies and time; clerks and Government officials by contributing towards its funds, students by curtailing their comforts and sparing money out of their pocket expenses and pre-eminentely by begging from door to door, from town to town, from village to village and from hamlet to hamlet" 82.

The services of Lala Lajpat Rai regarding protection of the orphans were even appreciated by the Punjab Government when in 1901 a Famine Commission was appointed by the Government of India,

81, Ibid., February 21, 1901, Editorial.
82, The Tribune, February 21, 1901, Editorial.
Lajpat Rai appeared as witness. In his evidence, he voiced the objection of the Hindu community regarding the handling over of Hindu orphans and waifs to Christian Missionaries. The Commission agreed with the views of Lala Lajpat Rai and recommended: "that deserted children and orphans should not be made over to persons or institutions of other religions until all efforts to find persons and institutions of their own religion willing to take charge of them have failed". 83.

The famine relief movement by the Arya Samaj had many consequences. It sowed the seed of nationalism in the mind of the Indian people and gave an idea to go against the existing rule. In fact, how Arya Samaj became a political body against the British Government, will be discussed in the next chapter. All classes of Hindu with regard for creed, helped the famine movement and it proved a blessing in more ways than one. It engendered unity in the ranks of the Hindus and brought the literate classes into touch with the illiterate masses as never before, creating new bonds of sympathy between them. It stimulated a healthy spirit of rivalry with powerful missionary organisations at work in the same field. It opened the virgin territory for the training of the Hindu youths in methods of social services and enabled them to make several experiments in reviving indigenous industries through cheap time serving machinery within reach of modest means for providing the orphans with employment. All the girls rescued were suitably wedded to men of castes higher than their own. 84.

Throughout the campaign students and faculty at the DAV College, participated both in the collection of funds and in search for destitute children. With practice mobilisation of college students proved relatively easy, creating a pool of talent and energy that could be used to support a variety of causes.\textsuperscript{85} The fear of Christian missionaries' success during famines drove Hindu leaders to sustain and wherever possible extend their orphanage systems and associated relief work. Stories of missionary cunning, of their vast resources and dedication heightened this fear, as speeches and journals stressed the unequal nature of the contest. "Our ruin is the prosperity of the Christians; our woes are their blessings; when our crops fail, theirs are the richest; the famine makes a hey day for them; they are always on the watch for such opportunities and visitation of heavenly wrath, upon the poor people of India, affords them golden opportunities to add hundreds and thousands of the starving Indians to their fold."\textsuperscript{86}

A vernacular newspaper observed that "the famine code throws great obstacles in the way of the Hindus as well as Mohammedans obtaining charge of the famine stricken orphans of their respective communities. On the other hand, Europeans and Eurasions are afforded every facility in securing not only children but also other starving orphans. The natural result of this is that every famine brings an enormous increase to the

\textsuperscript{85} Jones, \textit{op. cit.}, p.239.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., pp. 239-40.
One feature of the work of the movement which appears to have caused heart-burning to its promoters was the rivalry carried on with Christian Missionary bodies for the adoption of orphans made over by famine relief officers. The applications of the agents of the movement, for being given charge of orphans left friendless and destitute by the famine, generally met with cold response from the authorities concerned, though from time to time a large number of Hindu orphans were made over to Christian Missionaries, who sent them away to distant places in India.

The Arya Samajists publically accused the Christian Missionaries of mesmerising boys, of kidnapping prospective converts and of luring young girls away from their homes. The Arya Gazette averred, "not only did the Missionaries practise unfair and unethical modes of conversions, not only was their theology in error, but the civilization from which they came was decadent, immoral and violent".

Another vernacular newspaper stated that "the Muhammadans are charged with spreading their religion by means of the sword. This mode of conversion is no doubt very cruel in many cases, but it is certainly not worse than the tactics resorted to by Christian Missionaries who compel starving people to abjure their faith for the sake of bread. The convert badmashes by deceiving them into the belief that they will marry them to beautiful memas (European ladies).

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87. The Paisa Akhbar, 16th March, 1901, SNNPP during the year 1901.
88. The Tribune, February 21, 1901, Editorial.
Islam resorted to the swords in times of war, but Christians 
rise to deceptions worse than the sword even in times of peace.\textsuperscript{90}.

The same paper further wrote that "as a matter of fact, 
such acts on the part of the missionaries have already given rise 
to certain sects among the Hindus who consider it their duty to 
give them tit for tat, and who, therefore, receive back into 
Hinduism any Hindu who embraces Christianity. Indeed, the Shuddhi 
Sabha will not rest content with taking back Hindu converts, but 
will also convert the wives of the Missionaries themselves. The 
Missionaries at present are unable to realise the consequences that 
will and are about to follow their high-handed and cruel proceed-
ings" \textsuperscript{91}.

The Oudh Akhbar wrote that "in times of scarcity or famine 
many orphans or children are found wandering in the streets of 
every city. These children are supported by the Government at 
poor-houses as long as the famine lasts; but when the famine 
over and the poor houses are abolished these children are fed and 
brought up by Christian missionaries is naturally not acceptable to 
Hindus and Muslims" \textsuperscript{92}.

"The children of famine-stricken poor found begging at 
Railway Stations are tempted by the Missionaries by offers of 
sweet-meats, etc., and carried away. It is very cruel that the 
Missionaries should add to the suffering of the people by resorting 
to such tactics" \textsuperscript{93}. "It is a pity that the Missionaries should

\textsuperscript{90} The Akhbar-i-Am (Lahore), 8th June, 1896; SNNPP during the year 1896.

\textsuperscript{91} The Akhbar-i-Am (Lahore), 8th June, 1896; SNNPP during the year 1896.

\textsuperscript{92} The Oudh Akhbar (Lucknow), 1st Apr., 1879; SNNPP during the year 1879.

\textsuperscript{93} The Wafadar (Lahore), 15th Dec., 1896; SNNPP during the year 1896.
take advantage of the prevailing distress to convert unclaimed starvalings to Christianity" 94.

The Punjab Samachar remarked that "Christians have hit upon a novel method of spreading their religion. They entice away people by offering them money, and take young children and orphans under their protection without the knowledge of their parents and guardians, and bring them up with a view to converting them to Christianity... The prevalence of famine on the one hand, and poverty of the people on the other are helping the Missionaries in their work and if this state of things continue all indigent people will embrace Christianity before long" 95.

The Taj-ul-Akhbar wrote that, "it is an open secret that the Christian Missionaries in India have taken advantage of the famine to swell the number of their converts by taking over the children of the famine-stricken Hindus and Muslims. The Missionaries, who are ever undermining both Hinduism and Islam, have been unremitting in their efforts to get hold of native children. That some time back a missionary at Rawalpindi opened an orphanage in that city with the ostensible object of providing food for poor children. It is scarcely necessary to add that his real object was to secure converts. It is rumoured that this Missionary gentleman did succeed in getting hold of several boys, one of whom was the son of a Syed. These children were in a way,

94. The Sada-i-Hind (Lahore), 28th Dec., 1896, Ibid.
95. The Punjab Samachar (Lahore), 9th January, 1897; SNPP during the year 1897.
confined in the orphanage and not allowed to leave it. After few days they grew impatient of this restraint and were, with the exception of a very young boy, turned out of the orphanage. The younger was, however, not willing to stay with the Missionary began to scream in a loud voice. This brought to the spot a large number of men who asked the Revd. gentleman to accompany them to the Kotwali, which he refused to do. This refusal and mob's obstinacy at last took such a form that it enabled some Hindus and Muhammedans being chalaned in Court on a criminal charge. The Editor remarked that the Government should not allow the Missionaries to add to the sufferings of its subjects by taking away their children from them. It is difficult to understand why these gentlemen should be so anxious to destroy the religion of the Natives, or to secure for christianity such converts as are incapable of understanding that religions. They should remember that neither the Hindus nor the Muhammedans have as yet fallen so low that they will remain silent at the attempts, that are being made to convert their children to Christianity.  

The Akhbar-i-Am wrote that "this action of the Missionaries has produced a very bad impression on the people, who now hold Christianity in great abhorence. If Government had checked the Missionaries in adopting such tactics and shown some respect for the religious beliefs of the Hindus and Muhammedans, it would have secured the hearty loyalty of both communities and convert the native army into a irresistible barrier against foreign aggression."

96. The Taj-ul-Akbar (Rawalpindi), 3rd April, 1897; SNNPP during the year 1897.
The Missionaries, however have converted native children and Pardananshin ladies and married the latter to chamars and sweepers" 97.

The Arya Samaj while succeeded in creating anti-christian opinion on the minds of the people with the help of the vernacular Press, it also instigated the Hindus for not showing their sense of responsibility to the appeals made by the Samaj. "It is a matter of shame that no less than 25 lakhs of natives should have embraced Christianity in conservative country like India, where the main portion of the population would be ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their religion. At least one-fourth of this number fell into the hands of the Missionaries as orphans, while the conversion of the remaining three-fourth is due to the refusal of their co-religionists to help them" 98.

Another Newspaper rebuked the community that "appeals of the Arya Samaj to the Hindus to do all in their power to prevent famine stricken Hindu orphans from falling into the hands of Christian Missionaries is likely to fall on deaf ears. The Hindus are fatalists to the core and will never realize their duty towards the helpless children or their community" 99.

Lajpat Rai repeatedly blamed the Hindu community for its apathy, callousness and internal devisiveness which allowed christian missions to prey upon the miseries of the Hindu community. "When one thinks of the cruel indifference and neglect of which

97. The Akbar-i-Am(Lahore), dated 23rd March, 1897; SNNPP during the year 1897.
98. Lala Lajpat Rai's Statement in The Arya Gazettee(Lahore), 17th June, 1877; SNNPP, during the year 1897.
99. Sat Dharam Pracharak (Jullundur), 25th May, 1900; SNNPP, during the year 1900.
the Hindus are guilty towards their own orphans, one has to blush for his community and hang down his head in shame and mortification. Even savages like Zulus and Hottentots want to stand up for their kind at a pinch, and strike a blow in defence of their faith. 100.

On the other hand the British Government began to suspect the activities of the Arya Samaj in regard to famine relief and feared that "Lala Lajpat Rai's efforts of famine were inspired not by philanthropy but hatred of the British lest the hearts of the people should be drawn to the British Officers" 101.

Some of the European Officers sincerely doubted the honesty of the men engaged in this patriotic and charitable work. Some of them believed that these volunteers were so many detectives who under the garb of philanthropic work wanted to pick holes in the Government administration and set up people against them by preaching and spreading discontent. Some of the officials used to wander as to why the Hindus alone should start private relief and not the other communities. They could not ordinarily understand the propriety of its being mostly managed and maintained by the Hindus and see by non-Hindu communities, took an active part in the organization of famine relief. This circumstance roused their suspicion; and because the Hindus had generally to lead other public movements some of which naturally required a criticism of Government measures, they were led to think that this work also

100. Lajpat Rai, quoted in Jones, op.cit., p. 240.
must have been undertaken in a spirit of pure criticism" 102.

Thus, the experience in the orphan relief movement and in the various samajic campaigns enabled Aryas to organize fund and execute relief operations on a growing scale and with increased efficiency. In addition, Aryas furnished leadership for the broader Hindu community of Punjab in areas beyond Arya ideology where all Hindus could stand together, Lajpat Rai, Lala Lal Chand and members of the college faction began to move out of the specific world of the samaj into the wider Hindu community. In this way, they pointed to a future of increasing political consciousness a world transitional between the 19th and 20th centuries 103. In spite of this there is reason to believe that the work was not only philanthropic but was also intended to introduce the seeds of the "National Movement" in the rural tracts and to prejudice against the efforts of the Government 104.

Besides the Christian Missions and the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj 105 also contributed towards relief of famine victims in the Punjab. During the famine of 1860-61 Keshub Chunder Sen of the Brahmo Samaj felt it his duty to save the people in the

105. The Brahmo Samaj or the 'Society of God' was founded in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal, from where it was introduced into the Punjab in 1863. The Brahmo Year Book for 1876, p.35. The doctrines of the Samaj were opposed to the infallibility of the Vedas and, indeed, to all scriptures, which could be interpreted to support polytheism. It sought to replace popular polytheism and idolatory by theism founded on the Upanishads. Besides religious works it has done some social reforms also.
famine affected areas of the Punjab and the North-Western Provinces. It was mainly on his advice that Debangeranath organised a massive demonstration and contributed liberally to the famine fund. Keshub himself organised a band of volunteers, and send them with money, food and clothes. In January, 1876, Babu Nobin Chander Roy (late of Lahore) started a scheme for an asylum for orphans and widows which had been left destitute during the earlier famines in the Punjab.

Among the Sikh institutions only the Singh Sabha remained active during famines in collaboration with the Arya Samaj. Because the severity of famine in the Punjab was confined to the south-east Punjab where the Arya Samajists were dominating. Moreover, the differences between the Aryas and the Singh Sabha before 1901 were not so strained. That is why no references are available to the relief made by the Sabha separately. That is why The Tribune has included the Singh Sabha among the Hindu organisations. However, in 1904, the Chief Khalsa Diwan opened the Central Khalsa Orphanage at Amritsar for the fatherless and motherless children of the Panth who, being uncared for and unattended to, had to seek refuge in the Arya Yatim Khana (Orphanages) where, bereft of Sikh atmosphere, they were sure to bid adieu to their beloved faith. Besides, preparing the children for earning

106. V.A. Narain, Social History of Modern India, 19th Century, (Delhi, 1972), p.94.
108. The Singh Sabha was founded in 1873 in Lahore. Its main functions were to represent the interests of the Sikhs to encourage the Punjabi language and to maintain the original purity of Sikh doctrines and customs.
109. The Tribune (Lahore), June 16, 1897.
their livelihood by imparting training in tailoring, handling the weaving loom and printing work, religious instruction and music formed an important part of the curriculum at this institution 110.

Some socially conscious individuals also played an important role in affording relief to the famine victims during different famines in the Punjab.

In Amritsar city, during the famine of 1877-78, some raises (rich men of higher status) and members of the Municipal committee rendered relief to the poor 111.

During the scarcity of 1883-84 in Sample (Rohtak district) the Mahajane raised a fund by subscriptions for supplying food to the blind and decrepit. In Rohtak the Lamberdars and Ala Lamberdars raised subscriptions from those who were in a position to contribute for helping the poor and needy. During the month of May, 1884, 87 persons were maintained by private subscriptions 112.

In Hafizabad district, Lala Mal Raj Chora had shown great generosity in providing one meal for poor people daily during the famine of 1890-91 113.

The contemporary records reveal that the well to do people of Amritsar had gone ahead of the Lahoris in the matter of affording relief to the poor. Rai Dholan Das and Mian Chulam Qadir,


111. *The Safir-i-Hind* (Amritsar),1st March,1879; SNNPP during the year 1879.


113. *The Saraj-ul-Akhbar* (Jhelum), 13th April,1891; SNNPP during the year 1891.
raises of Amritsar, had spent Rs.2,000 and Rs.1,000 respectively for distribution of food among the poor during the famine of 1896-97.

During the prevalence of famine in 1896-97, Captain Christe, Cantonament Magistrate of Sialkot was unremitting in his efforts to afford relief to the famine-stricken in his Ilaga (area). The rich traders and Shahukars of Lahore city had increased their expenses under the head of charity, and of 'free dinners', or doles of grain being given in the Hindu Quarters of the town to scores of starving people almost every day.

In September, 1896 in Karnal district, two of the Mandal Chiefs, Khan Shamsher Ali Khan and Rustam Ali Khan, Purchased 5,000 rupees worth of wheat and grain, and a cheap shop was opened at which it was sold at cheaper rates to the poorer classes generally. The Bhai of Arnauli fed the poor of his village daily, and many banias in villages did the same. The well to do Ranghars in the Canal tracts received in their homes large number of their fellow-tribesmen from the distressed area and shared their grain with them.

In Jullundur, the banias consisted of moneylender and traders arranged for the large and liberal gifts of money and grain.

The gentlemen who were most generous in the distribution of charity in the Hissar district during 1896-97 famine were

114. The Akhbar-i-Am (Lahore), 8th Oct. 1896; SNNPP during the year 1896.
115. The Victoria Paper (Sialkot), 2nd Dec. 1897; SNNPP during the year 1897.
116. The Tribune (Lahore), September, 30, 1896.
118. Ibid.
Zaildars Abda Khan of Jhopra and Sultan Singh of Bhiwani, Lalas Ram Das, Ram Gopal, Naurang Rai, Harna Ram, Jaju Ram, all of Bhiwani town, Salig Ram, Lieutenant Stanley Skinner and Mr. R.H. Skinner both by contributions and personal assistance did much good in the Hansi tahsil. Sheikh Ghulam Ahmad and Lala Sher Singh rendered great help to the authorities in distributing relief. The following set an example of generosity - Lalas Ramji Dass, Shankar Das, Sheonath Mal, Bins Raj, Ragonath Sahai, Bishan Lal and Ganga Sahai of Hansi town and Radha Kishan of Dhanona.

Mr. James Skinner took a warm interest in the welfare of his tenants in the Hissar tahsil and came to their help. When the rains broke, with large grants for the purchase of stock, Mr. Hasan Ali of Daulatpur and Lala Sohan Lal, Treasurer, were equally generous in this direction. The Zaildars of Hissar, namely Akbar Khan, Pat Ram, Nanak Chand and Ismaıl Dogar rendered good service in looking after the minor works undertaken for the relief of townspeople. Others were Lalas Sohan Lal, Chandu Lal, Chiranji Lal, Gauri Shankar, Chabil Das, Mutsaddi Lal, Shugan Chand, and Ram Saran of Hissar; Har Sarup of Satraund, Sher Dial of Rawalwas, and Mr. Hasan Ali of Daulatpur, Lala Churamani, Lala Lakhpati Rai, Munshi Mahbub Chand and Kesar Singh of Bhiwani. In Fatehabad the gentlemen who helped were Zaildars Abdul Rahim of Ahrawan, Punjab Singh of Budulada and Hussain of Bhiwani, Lala Ram Sukh Das of Sirsa contributed to the relief funds. His son Ram Gopal managed relief works carried out by the Municipal authorities. The following gentlemen of Sirsa gave alms in kind: Lalas Seth Ram, Mul Chand, 119.

119. Ibid., Para 130, pp. 85-86.
Duni Chand, Suraj and Mangal Rai and Bhai Isher Singh, Mahant Bishwa Nand, Sadh of Rori, made his shrine the centre of a large charitable scheme and Jalla, a Zaildar of Rania, rendered good services.

During the famine of 1899-1900 S. Ajit Singh, a revolutionary of the Punjab, helped the poor and the destitute evincing special interest in the care of orphans, who, he felt, could be moulded into fine fighters for the country's freedom.


120. Ibid.

Thus, it is apparent that the various socio-religious organisations that took active part in affording relief to the famished people had some objects in view. In fact, the famines provided them an opportunity to exploit the situation for their vested interests. The Christian missions had the ideas of spreading Christianity, extension of British trade in India, consolidation of the British empire in the newly occupied territory of the Punjab and winning over the minds of the people after the revolt of 1857. The chief characteristics of the Missionary relief were: (1) That they provided relief only to the native Christians (who had already embraced Christianity) so that non-christians could be tempted to join the new faith in dire need and poverty, (2) The Missionary generally operated among the poor strata of society, especially the Chamars, (3) When the Missionaries found that the people were abandoning their religion as soon as the calamity was over, they made stricter the rules of providing relief. They evolved a new strategy to impress upon the minds of the victims, the idea and benefits of Christianity in their relief centres. When they became sure of them, only they admitted them into their religion. The results of such relief were two-fold. The positive aspects were: (1) The number of native

converts increased in the Punjab despite the opposition of the Arya Samaj and other bodies, (2) It helped the Missionaries to procure the knowledge of the native house life, and (3) to consolidate the British rule as well as the extension of British trade in India. Since after the Missionary will come, sooner or later, the rail-road, the telegraph, the post office and all other agencies needed for British interest, i.e., extension of British rule in India. On the other hand, it led to direct clash with the Arya Samaj. In fact, the wholesale conversion of Hindu orphans during famines by the Christian Missionaries alarmed the Samaj that launched a vigorous campaign against their activities. The Aryas imitated the Missionaries in starting relief works, opening of orphanages, widow homes and industrial and training schools for the orphans. The Samaj alleged the Missionaries of their unjust means of converting Hindu orphans and took a strong notice of their activities by arousing a public opinion among the masses with the help of the vernacular Press. If the Samaj succeeded in creating anti-Christian movement among the common people, it also brought unity among the various ranks of the Hindu religion. Also, it brought the literate classes into touch with the illiterate by creating a new bond of sympathy and thus widening the sphere of activities of the Samaj. It provided the ground for political activities by the Samaj against the British Government when it started criticising the Government that famines were the consequence of poverty which was the result of British rule in India. On the other hand, the British Government also became suspicious about its activities which it considered were 'not
only philanthropic but were politically designed to uproot the British in India'. Similarly, the Brahmo Samaj and the Singh Sabha had their missions to fulfil and they came forward to help the famine victims. While the Christians, the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Singh Sabha had their objectives, the socially conscious people had nothing to do except to give help to the poor and especially the people like S. Ajit Singh helped the poor people and the orphans for a noble cause, i.e. to prepare them as a force for the liberation of the country from the alien rule.