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WOH/H:

Vancouver, B.C. 25th., September, 12.

Sir,

In connection with the visit of His Royal Highness, The Duke of Connaught, Governor-General of Canada, to this City, as affecting the Hindu Community in Vancouver, B.C., and its vicinity, I beg to report as follows:-

On the 27th. August last, His Worship the Mayor, through his Secretary, sent a formal invitation to the Sikhs or Hindu residents in Vancouver, to participate in the Military Review to take place on the 19th. instant, at the Brockton Point Grounds, in this City. A copy of this invitation, marked "A", is appended to this report.

No reply was received to this invitation up to the 9th. inst., when a prominent socialist (white man) handed to His Worship the Mayor a reply from Bagh Singh, President of the Khalsa Diwan Society in Vancouver. No explanation was made by this man at the time he handed over this reply, a copy of which I also attach hereto, marked "B".

During the period from the 26th. August to the 8th. instant, as far as I am aware, no General Meeting was called by the Khalsa Diwan Society to discuss the invitation extended by His Worship the Mayor.

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A day before the arrival of His Royal Highness, and by which time the decorations, etc., had been completed, a large number of Hindus made inquiries as to why they were not permitted to participate in the Festivities, whereas the Chinese and Japanese - not British subjects - had each been allowed to erect an arch in the City to show their appreciation of the event. I, naturally, explained that an invitation had been extended by the Civic Authorities to the Khalsa Diwan in Vancouver, and that that Body, through their President, Bhag Singh, refused to take part. It was then that I was able to gather that the question of participating in the Reception had not been discussed in a General Meeting of the Hindus, but that the leaders themselves had taken it on their shoulders to refuse the invitation.

His Royal Highness, the Governor-General reached Vancouver at 3 p.m., on the 18th. instant, Wednesday. I was present at the time of his arrival, and immediately put myself in touch with Inspector Parkinson of the Dominion Police, at present on duty with His Royal Highness' Party. As there was no special work for me to do, I mingled with the crowd during the procession and kept my eye especially on the Hindu community, and in particular on the leaders. Nothing of any moment occurred, although I noticed that the Hindus

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had turned out in their gala dress, many of them wearing Indian Army decorations and uniforms. This was more noticeable on the 19th. inst., Thursday, which was a Civic Holiday, when all the citizens turned out to see the Military Review at Brockton Point Grounds.

What transpired between the leaders of this Community and the rest of the Hindus is very difficult to say; but, I have been able to ascertain that resentment was expressed by a large number of the Hindus at the action of the Khalsa Diwan in rejecting the offer of the Civic Authorities to participate in the celebrations.

This displeasure apparently had some effect, the outcome of which was that a man named Harri Singh, ex-priest of the Temple, was sent down to New Westminster to try and arrange for the ex-soldiers among the Sikhs to turn out in review before His Royal Highness on his visit to that City on the 21st. idem, Saturday. I followed this matter up with a visit to New Westminster on the afternoon of the 20th., and there learnt that such was the case, and that a prominent Hindu, named Kapoor Singh, had made preparations for presenting an address of welcome and loyalty to His Royal Highness at New Westminster on the following day.

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The draft of this address was prepared by Mr. W. F. Hansford, a Barrister at New Westminster; and, made over to Kapoor Singh.

This draft, without any alteration or addition, was signed by Kapoor Singh and two other Hindus, and read out by Kapoor and presented to His Royal Highness at New Westminster, on the 21st. instant, Saturday.

On my return from New Westminster on Friday, I called on Inspector Parkinson, at the Hotel Vancouver, and informed him that an address would be presented to His Royal Highness, the contents of which I was not aware. Inspector Parkinson promised to inform Lieutenant-Colonel H. C. Lowther, Secretary to His Royal Highness the Governor-General, of this fact; and, asked me to come to the Hotel on the following morning and meet this gentleman. I went to the Hotel at that time and was there introduced to him by Inspector Parkinson. Lieutenant-Colonel Lowther appeared to be familiar with the reports that I had submitted from time to time regarding Hindu matters; and was pleased to see me. He discussed the Hindu situation with me for about fifteen minutes, and I acquainted him of the fact that an address would be presented by the Hindu community on the visit of His Royal Highness to New Westminster.

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In company with the Royal Party I left for New Westminster and was present at the time the address was read out by Kapoor Singh to His Royal Highness the Governor-General. I attach hereto a copy of the same, marked "C". It will be noticed that this address contained a reference to the restriction - if such it may be called - regarding the entry into Canada of the wives and children of the Hindu Community.

With Kapoor Singh at the presentation of this address was Harri Singh, the ex-priest of the Sikh Temple at Vancouver, and in the Review were about thirty-seven ex-Indian Army Sikhs.

In his reply, His Royal Highness expressed his appreciation of the address presented by the Hindu community, and touched upon his connection with the Indian Army during his seven years' sojourn in India. He also expressed his conviction as to the loyalty and bravery of the Sikh community during his tenure of Office both in India and in Egypt. His Royal Highness inspected the Hindu Contingent, the majority of whom were ex-Indian Army men; and, spoke to quite a few in their own language, enquiring into their length of service, engagements and the Branch of the Indian Army to which they were attached.

After the Review, His Royal Highness and Party visited

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the Provincial Asylum Farm at Coquitlam, and then the Fraser River Sawmills. At this place there are about three hundred Hindus employed, and these people were quite eager in their efforts to get a look at His Royal Highness.

On the return of the Royal Party to Vancouver at about 6 p.m., I explained to Lieutenant-Colonel Lowther the difference between the reception at Vancouver and that at New Westminster, as far as the Hindus were concerned. In this connection, I would like to mention the fact that the address presented by the Sikhs at New Westminster, and their turn-out at the Review, were, more or less, the result of the hurried action of the leaders in this City in order to quell the ill-feeling expressed by a large number of the Hindus at the action of the Khalsa Diwan in refusing the invitation to participate in the celebrations.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lowther desired me to let him have a copy of the report at Victoria on His Royal Highness' return from Prince Rupert. I intend leaving for Victoria on Thursday afternoon a day prior to the arrival of His Royal Highness, with a view to ascertaining if any address will be presented by the Hindu community there, and also, if necessary, be with Inspector Parkinson during the stay of their Royal Highnesses at Victoria.

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On Sunday, the 22nd. instant, a Meeting was held at Mill-side, where the question of the reception was again discussed at the Temple. Resentment was expressed by several of the Hindus present at the action of the Khalsa Diwan at Vancouver, who had been the cause of placing the Hindu community in a very peculiar position, from which the action of the Sikhs at New Westminster had probably saved them.

I expect to be in Victoria for about four or five days, during which time I shall be in touch with Hindu matters; and, will report on my return to Vancouver.

A copy of this report is being furnished to Lieutenant-Colonel Lowther, at his request.

Your obedient servant,

Sgd. W. C. Hopkinson

W. W. Cory, Esq., C.M.G.,
Deputy Minister of the Interior,
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