KASHMIR IN CRUCIBLE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

INSIDE KASHMIR

AZAD KASHMIR

A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN KASHMIR

DAUGHTERS OF THE VITASTA

BOOKLETS

KASHMIR PROBLEM RECONSIDERED

A LAST CHANCE FOR INDIA IN KASHMIR

SHEIKH ABDULLAH, KASHMIR DEMOCRACY AND INDO-PAK RELATIONS

NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS, POLITICAL VICISSITUDES AND PEOPLE IN KASHMIR

THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE OF KASHMIRI PANDITS

OUR TASK IN KASHMIR

THE SHAPE OF THINGS IN KASHMIR

WHITHER INDIA—TOWARDS REVIVALISM OR RENA ISSANCE ?

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF INDIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

IN URDU

GANDHISM, JINNAHISM, SOCIALISM

SHAIR-I-INSANIYAT, ABDUL AHAD AZAD

To My Parents
Who Encouraged Tolerance, Patience and Balance

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KASHMIR IN CRUCIBLE

PREM NATH BAZAZ

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My sole hope and prayer is that Kashmir should become a beaconlight to the benighted subcontinent.

Mahatma Gandhi

The strongest bonds that bind will not be of your armies or even of your Constitution to which so much reference has been made, but bonds which are stronger than constitution and laws and armies—bonds that bind through love and affection and understanding.

Jawaharlal Nehru

Kashmir is in a crucible and its future complexion is in the process of being built up. History has confronted the State people with an unprecedented crisis which also provides them with a rare opportunity. The crisis can end in a disaster or a unique triumph depending upon the attitude that is adopted to meet the situation. Led by demagogues, impatient men or self-seekers who make mountains of mole hills, the State may fall apart and cause the disintegration of the Indian Republic bringing ruin to Asian democracy in its wake.

If, on the other hand, better counsels prevail with those who guide public opinion in the three regions (Jammu, Kashmir Valley & Ladakh) there can be no insurmountable obstacle in the way of building a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-racial democratic state with goodwill and cooperation, making allowances for each other's sentiments and respecting the human dignity of all. It will be an unparalleled achievement of which not only the State people but every Indian will feel proud ; for Kashmir will then have defended the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution and disproved the two-nation theory that continues to sap the vitality of democracy in India and Pakistan.

Prem Nath Bazaz

FOREWORD

Notwithstanding the oft-repeated statement of the Indian leaders that the Jammu and Kashmir State has finally and irrevocably acceded to the Union, Kashmir continues to be a baffling problem and a solution acceptable to all the parties concerned has eluded the understanding of world statesmen.

The problem is the baby born of the partition of the Indian subcontinent.

Although I opposed on various grounds the partition in pre-1947 days, I have no hesitation in confessing that when independence was achieved and the country divided on religious basis, I believed there was no alternative for the State, at any rate for those areas of it which were predominantly populated by the Muslims, but to accede to Pakistan. Influenced by subsequent developments, my views have undergone a change though on basic issue of democracy they remain unaltered. Considering the deep animosity that the tussle has generated between the two countries and the bloodshed, misery and colossal loss of life and property it has caused, the view still held in certain sections of world public that Kashmir's accession to Pakistan would have been the right decision, may not be summarily dismissed as a facet of anti-Indian prejudice. For with the completion of the religious division of the subcontinent perhaps things might have settled down by now and the two countries peacefully engaged in pursuit of economic betterment and happiness of the 600 poverty-stricken millions living in them.

But at the time of independence forces mostly noxious were at work to disallow the history to take that course: hunger for power of National Conference leaders which they thought could be satisfied only by accession to India, the warlike designs of communalist sections among the Muslims, the ardent desire of the Congress leaders to give another fight to the two-nation

theory which had, at least for the time being, emerged triumphant, and, worst of all, the stupidity of Pakistan leaders in despatching unruly tribesmen to invade Kashmir, combined to compel the hesitant Maharaja to hastily take a decision favouring the State's future affiliation with India. The legal requirements under the provisions of the Independence Act of British Parliament having been met, Kashmir became legally and constitutionally a part of the Indian Union like hundreds of other princely states.

Nineteen years have gone by when this fateful decision was made. 1966 is not 1947; many billion tons of water have flown beneath the bridges of the Vitasta during this period of great trials and tribulations, stresses and strains. To talk of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan in the year of grace 1966 as logical in view of the principle underlying partition or to lay undue stress on the demand for right of self-determination is unrealistic. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the future of Kashmir cannot be assumed to have been finally settled by reference to fulfilment of legal or constitutional requirements when the settlement lacks the support of the State people. An enduring solution of the problem, it should be obvious, must be acceptable to a large majority of the Kashmiris.

In all attempts that have been made in the past years in pursuit of a settlement, Pakistan and India were recognised as the parties to the dispute; the Kashmiris were treated no better than pawns in a game of territorial acquisition. However, the long-drawn discussions and acrimonious controversies revealed that no common ground existed between the two contenders and the repeated endeavours for a settlement ended in failure.

Having completely lost hope in a satisfactory outcome of negotiations with Pakistan, thoughtful sections in India have started a search for a fresh approach to the problem. An awareness seems to be growing that in the final analysis what matters is a healthy public opinion in Jammu and Kashmir; therefore increasing attention should be devoted to its cultivation than to what is happening elsewhere. Some

top-ranking Indian leaders, including President Radhakrishnan, have solemnly declared that the difficulties facing Kashmiris have to be removed to end the problem. This book is a modest contribution to the earnest search in which all politically conscious and thinking sections in this country are directly or indirectly engaged.

A solution to be abiding should fulfil certain essential conditions: it should not be imposed on the State people; it should be compatible with the fundamental principles of democracy and should not transgress the accepted canons of social justice; it should be such as to inspire confidence in the different linguistic and religious minorities that they will be secure under the new setup. Above all, the solution should not cause any widespread disturbances in any part of the subcontinent.

The cases of India and Pakistan with regard to the disputed territory may be briefly stated: India is by no means ready to give up the territory on her side of the cease-fire line but is also, on the strength of the instrument of accession, persistently laying claim to the areas of the State which have come to be known as Azad Kashmir. Pakistan leaders hold with one voice that because of its Muslim majority, the entire State should form a part of their homeland. Neither of these demands, if accepted, can fulfil the essential conditions. It is inconceivable that if the rule of India is extended to Azad Kashmir any Government in Pakistan can survive the public fury raised in that country by the change; it will certainly and directly lead to war. And if the State or even the Kashmir Valley falls to Pakistan the forces of disruption in India already by no means insignificant will overwhelm this country. Therefore, safety lies in maintaining the cease-fire line as it is; indeed, it has to be transformed into an international boundary. But in her present mood Pakistan will not agree to the proposal and it cannot be implemented unilaterally by a fiat of the Indian Government. There, however, is a way to achieve this aim provided India can enlist the voluntary support of the Kashmiris.

There can be little doubt that the Dogra Hindus of Jammu and the Lama Buddhists of Ladakh steadfastly support

State's accession to India; only the people in the Valley are wavering in their loyalty. The Valley thus becomes the pivot on which rests the conversion of the cease-fire line into international border. That explains why the discussion in this book is confined to the Valley and does not cover the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir; only in the last chapter while discussing "The Way Out" has a notice been taken of the Jammu and Ladakh issues.

The population of the Valley is composed of six per cent Hindu Brahmins popularly known as Pandits and the ninety-four percent Muslims. That the Valley stays with India should serve as a guarantee that the tiny minority has no reason to feel insecure or have apprehensions about the future. But some means have to be devised to give tangible assurances to the Muslims that their political, economic as well as cultural interests are in safe hands. It is the theme of this book that by providing for autonomy to the State within the framework of the Indian Constitution to the extent acceptable to the majority community the support for the accession will be forthcoming.

Obviously a compromise between the two extreme claims, this solution will be vigorously opposed by the ultra-nationalist Hindus on the one side and communalist Muslims on the other. But I believe it is being progressively realized in the Valley, at any rate by thoughtful men and women, that by insisting on the fulfilment of their respective demands the two communities will make any realistic settlement impossible to attain, allowing the prevailing hardships and sufferings to perpetuate.

The Hindu opposition to autonomy is driving the Kashmir Muslims into the camp of the secessionists and Muslim insistence upon severance of ties with India is inducing non-Muslims (Dogras, Pandits and Buddhists) to fight tooth and nail any plan of democratisation of the State Establishment.

Therefore sensible realism and not misplaced idealism, should inform a solution which of course should be in tune with the cultural heritage and national character of the two communities.

As long as Kashmir Muslims are dissatisfied, sullen and resentful Pakistan has a moral case and cannot be expected to keep silent. The way to shut her mouth is not to discredit, denounce or threaten her by clumsy tricks or subtle propaganda but by removing the genuine grievances and well-founded apprehensions of the Kashmiris. Once this is done, Pakistan will see her way to come to an honourable understanding with India over the dispute.

Kashmir problem is much older than the accession issue which cropped up in 1947. Ever since the British imperialists sold the Valley to Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846, the problem has presented itself in one shape or another. For over eighty years the Dogra Hindu rulers could contrive to conceal the hideous truth that their subjects, predominant majority of whom was Muslim, were unhappy under their harsh rule. But when in 1931 the Kashmiris rose in open rebellion against the despotism the problem was posed in public for the first time. After independence the issue has in essence remained unchanged, namely, the scope of freedom for the State Muslims under majority Hindu rule.

As long ago as 1932 my analysis of State politics led me to the conclusion that Muslim aspiration for freedom from autocratic yoke was no communal issue. A Kashmiri is neither a bigot nor a religious zealot, but he is a man of flesh and blood; he therefore pines for human sympathy; only when he is refused the decencies of life he is forced to be disloyal and to revolt.

In the long period of over thirty-four years I have had exchange of views on the vexing issue with leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru as also a large number of Kashmiri politicians and patriots. From time to time I expressed my views on State affairs in the context of Kashmir's historical background and a rising wave of democracy. I tried to elicit the opinions of the great leaders which they stated, at times with candour, in their letters. Those in disagreement with me in Kashmir have subjected my views to a close scrutiny thereby presenting other aspects of the problem not dealt with by me. Since this correspondence

(comprising selected letters from a big bunch) throws revealing light on the theme of the book, I have included it as appendices at the end.

In the preparation of this volume I have heavily drawn on the writings of several authors, ancient and modern. I owe a debt of gratitude to them all.

My thanks are due to S. C. Malik who read parts of the manuscript before it went to the press. I am thankful to friends for the assistance they have given me in different ways in collecting data used in the book ; particularly I remain beholden to G. N. Khayal and Nand Lal Wattal who provided me the material on which the chapter on contemporary writers and artists of Kashmir is based. I have also to thank Miss Annie Mathews who undertook the typing work of the manuscript.

New Delhi.

Prem Nath Bazaz

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CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Perhaps nowhere else in the world has nature been so kind and benevolent to people as in Kashmir. From the ancient indigenous poets who composed sweet lyrics in praise of their homeland to the casual visitor of today there is none who has failed to appreciate the grandeur of the romantic scenery, the awe-inspiring mountains laden with eternal snows that surround the Valley, bewitching landscapes that meet the eye wherever we go, lovely serpentine rivulets, unruffled lakes with crystal clear waters, deep blue skies, evergreen forests, unending white sheets of snow in winter, fragrant flowers and succulent fruits in summer, besides the superb climate that enlivens the anaemic and invigorates the lethargic. "Neither the natural beauty nor the delicious climate of the valley has been exaggerated in the books which I have read and every year's residence in the valley discloses some new charm and new interest", wrote Sir W.R. Lawrence who lived in Kashmir for a few years as the Settlement Commissioner of the State during the early nineties of the last century[1].

[1] Sir Walter R. Lawrence : *The Valley of Kashmir :* Henry Frowd, Oxford University Press, Warehouse, London. p. 14.

Nestled in the bosom of the mighty Himalayas the beautiful Valley is a cradle where a race of healthy, intellectual and vigorous men can rise and flourish. In a profusely illustrated work, *Kashmir*, Sir Francis Younghusband, a British Resident, wrote in 1912:

> The beautiful Greece with its purple hills and varied contour, its dancing seas and clear blue sky, produced the graceful Greeks. But Kashmir is more beautiful than Greece. It has the same blue sky and brilliant sunshine, but its purple hills are on a far grander scale, and if it has no seas, it has lakes and rivers, and the still more snowy mountains. It has too a greater variety of natural scenery, of field and forest, of rugged mountain and open valley. And to me who have seen both the countries, Kashmir seems much more likely to impress a race by its natural beauty.[2]

We do not have sufficient data about the living conditions of the Kashmiris in the pre-historic or ancient times. Kalhana, the celebrated historian, has carefully recorded the annals of Kashmir for nearly four thousand years down to his own days in 1149 A.D. But his narration of the events before the sixth century is generally brief, vague and unreliable. He tells us very little about the social patterns under which the ancients lived and had their being. To form any accurate idea about the achievements or the failings of the Kashmiris who lived in the hoary past we have mostly to depend on the findings of the present-day archaeologists and the antiquarians. Most of what the ancients produced in their times in the realm of architecture, literature or fine arts has perished either through the wrath of elements or at the hands of vandals. But whatever little remains in ruins speaks volumes to witness the heights that had been scaled by the Kashmiris in those forgotten times. Writing about these achievements Sir Alexander Cunningham, the British antiquarian, said :

> The superiority of the Kashmirian architecture over all other Indian buildings would appear to have been known to the Hindus themselves, for one of their names for the people of Kashmir is Shastra-Shilpina or "architects" a term which could have been applied to them on account of their well-known skill in building. Even now the Kashmiris are the most expert handicraftsmen of the East and it is not difficult to believe that the same people who at present excel all other orientals as weavers, goldsmiths, and as

[2] Sir Francis Younghusband, *Kashmir*, (1909) Adam and Charles Black London, p. 133

> caligraphers, must have been the most eminent of the Indian architects.[3]

Under good government in bygone times the deep blue sky, the green landscapes, the high mountains, the rivers and the lakes did inspire the Kashmiris to perform great deeds and achieve lofty ideals. Surveying these accomplishments Sir Francis Younghusband observed :

> It is at Martand that there is the finest, and as it is not only typical of Kashmir architecture at its best, but is built on the most sublime site occupied by any building in the world —finer than the site of the Partheon or of the Taj, or of St. Peters or of the Escurial,—we may take it as the representative, or rather the culmination of all the rest, and by it we must judge the people of Kashmir at their best.[4]

Political Vicissitudes

Had natural environment been the sole or even the decisive factor in moulding and shaping the character of a race the Kashmiris should have been an ideal people; they should have uninterruptedly continued to produce lovely things in the domain of art and architecture and risen from one height to the other. But, fortunate in having a beautiful homeland, they have been not so fortunate in their rulers who frequently were tyrants and cruel men.

"Kashmir is a land on which God has showered his blessings in the making, where the earth is good and can be made to grow much food, yet many of its people are near starvation," said Pearce Gervis, "a land where the finest silks and the softest wools are spun and woven into cloth, yet most of its people are clad in rags ; a land where precious stones are to be found, yet few of its people possess any; a land in which 'the men are strong and the women as fruitful as the soil,' being those of many basic cultures and creeds. A land which writers have described as 'the happy valley,' yet only those who visit it are happy, not those who dwell therein."[5]

Barring that part of early Kashmir history about which adequate information is not available, the story of the

[3] Major General Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Reports*, 1833 to 1834, Vol. 23, p. 165

[4] Ibid, p. 135.

[5] Pearce Gervis, *This is Kashmir*, p. xv.

Kashmiris is nothing but a melancholy tale of perpetual misgovernment by monarchs and their underlings. We may open any book of chronicles written by the sons of the soil from Kalhana in 1149 A.D. to Hassan in 1893 A.D., we cannot help lamenting that the poor people never enjoyed even a century of continued peace. It is true there have appeared such illustrious and celebrated rulers as Meghvahana, Lalitaditya, Avantivarman, Shahab-ud-din and Zain-ul-abidin who made the people prosperous and happy but such periods were like brief sunshine in the dreary cold winter of maladministration spreading over hundreds of years.

Clothed in exquisite verse and a humane philosophy of Kalhana are the black deeds of scores of kings who ascended the "lion throne" of Kashmir from sixth century to the poet's own days. It is a disgusting account of the bestiality and savagery of mean men and low born adventurers with no principles to guide them and no scruples to restrain them. To what depths the kings of this period could descend may be known by what the Historian wrote about King Unmattavanti (939-944 A.D.) : "Instigated by wicked advisers the king practised the use of arms splitting with throws of daggers the hollows between the breasts of naked women. He also ripped open the abdomen of pregnant women in order to see the foetus."[6]

Hindu Rule in Decline

Of the comparatively good monarchs of these centuries Lalitaditya (697 to 738 A.D.) is adjudged to be the best and the most renowned. The Kashmiris hold him in great esteem and, indeed, for a long time after his death, Alberuni tells us, a day was celebrated in the Valley to commemorate the deeds of the hero ; for he had raised the country through his adventures, exploits and conquests, to a pitch of glory never reached before. But even he soiled his otherwise unblemished career by a savage deed when one night heavily drunk he ordered that Srinagar be consigned to fire because he could not bear to see

Kalhana : *Rajatarangni*, V, 440.

the old capital flourishing after Parihaspur, the new city built by him, was in existence.

King Harsha (1089-1101 A.D.) is considered to be one whose rule was characterised by prudence and munificence towards men of learning. He was a lover of arts. But his spendthrift nature and multifarious extravagances involved him in debt. Consequently he was forced to impose all imaginable taxes on the people ; an impost was levied even on night soil ; but still the treasury was unable to meet his needs. He then confiscated the images of gods in temples made of precious stones. "There was not one temple in a village, town or in the city which was not despoiled of its images," moans Kalhana. "He appointed Udayaraja prefect for seizing the divine images. In order to defile the statues of gods he had excrement and urine poured over their faces by naked mendicants whose noses, feet and hands had rotted away. Divine images were dragged along by ropes round their ankles with spit instead of flowers", adds the Historian.[7]

Kashmir throne fell vacant in the latter part of the twelfth century. For the last time in their history the people were called upon to elect a king. Their choice was one Vopyadeva (1171—1180 A.D.) whom they considered intelligent, efficient and able to administer the country well. But he proved a downright idiot. The chronicler, Jonaraja, records : "The king felt happy at the sight of large blocks of stones and ordered his ministers to increase the size of the smaller ones by making them drink milk of beasts".[8]

In the thirteenth century one Rajadeva (1213—1236 A.D.) became the ruler of the Valley whose hobby was to oppress the scholarly Pandits, vanguard of the progressive intellectuals. By cruel torture and indiscriminate plunder the king reduced the Pandits to such a pitiable plight that every member of the community when seized was heard, according to Jonaraja, to pathetically plead : "I am not a Bhatta, I am not a Bhatta".[9] Bhatta in Kashmiri means a Pandit.

[7] *Rajatarngni* Book VII, 1091-1094
[8] J. C. Dutt : *Kings of Kashmira*, (1879-87) Elm Press, Calcutta, Vol. III, p. 5
[9] Ibid, Vol. III, p. 10

Thus the normal condition of Kashmir for many centuries during the medieval period when the Hindus ruled the country was a state of perpetual unrest and unstability, of constant fear and misrule, and above all, of unmitigated human suffering.

Under Muslim Rule

With the capture, through intrigue and stratagem, of the throne in 1339 A.D. by an upstart courtier, Shah Mirza or Shah Mir as he is usually known, the Muslims came to power. The Kashmiris welcomed the change. For a few years the country became peaceful and hopes of a prosperous future were raised. But not for long; the Valley relapsed into disorder. Sultan Sikander drove the Hindus to desperation by subjecting them to harsh measures. He levied other taxes on them besides the jazia. Even the burning of dead bodies was not allowed without payment of a tax. Sikander got books on philosophy, theology and arts in Sanskrit destroyed by flames "even as fire burns grass." In his fanatical zeal the Sultan took a fancy to demolish all temples in the Valley which symbolized the finest architecture in the country produced by the great Kashmiri masters through ages. "There was no city, no town, no village, no wood," bewails the contemporary historian, Jonaraja, "where the temples of gods were unbroken."[10] The Hindus were neither tolerated in their homeland nor allowed to go abroad. "Struck by fear some Brahmins killed themselves in water, others again by falling from a precipice and others burnt themselves."[11] For his misdeeds Sikander earned the sobriquet of "But Shikan" (idol breaker) or as a Kashmiri calls it "Buthi Shigun."

Undoubtedly Zain-ul-abidin, endearingly called Bud Shah (Great King), was a benevolent monarch who shines resplendently in this dreary period, but his son, Haider Shah, drunkard and profligate, revived the traditions of misgovernment. In his time an ignorant barber, Riktetara, gained official patronage and notoriety. Killing of innocent men by ordinary methods

10 *Kings of Kashmira* Vol iii, p. 59

11 Ibid, p. 60.

did not satiate his hunger for torture. His victims were high and humble, poor and wealthy. "The relentless and sinful barber" says Srivara, "cut off the Thakuras and the courtiers of the king's father by the saw."[12] He impaled his victims on the roadside. For three days and nights the unfortunate men lived like this shrieking till death ended their agony.

Conditions showed no improvement after the death of Haider Shah. There was a long drawn struggle for throne between two kings, Mohammed Shah and Fath Shah, from 1484 to 1516. By turns they captured the throne for short durations, the former three times and the latter as many as five times. On Fath Shah's accession in 1486 the king allowed foreign mercenaries with whose support he gained power, to plunder the city.[13] During this period Kashmir was involved in a civil war which further enfeebled the people and impoverished them. "There appears to be no cause of lamentation over the displacement of the Shahmiri dynasty in Kashmir." wrote Dr. Ghulam Mohiuddin Sufi, "Its rulers had become quite effete. They sadly lacked the essential qualities of initiative and capacity to command."[14]

Chaks succeeded Shah Miris and ruled over Kashmir for thirty-one years from 1555 to 1586 This period is notable for religious fanaticism, wanton barbarity, insecurity and ruthlessness, the victims mostly being the Sunni Muslims. Excepting Hussain Shah Chak, all other kings of this dynasty were boors and heartless men who simply loved to inflict pain and torture.

With the help of certain Kashmir dignitaries, Akbar conquered the Valley in 1586 after encountering stiff resistence and discomfiture in early attempts. The unhappy people accepted the inevitable and befriended the invaders in the forlorn hope that they will at last get some relief.

The Mughal rule lasted for 166 years. Kashmir now became a province of the Indian empire and was administered

12 Ibid, p. 187.

13 Ibid p. 334

14 G. M. D. Sufi : *Kashir*, (1949), Punjab University, Lahore. Vol 1, p. 212.

through governors appointed by the emperors at Delhi. In the last days of the Mughal rule the governors started more an unwholesome practice of deputing their representatives to the Valley while they were themselves engaged in court intrigues at the imperial capital.

Some of the Mughal governors were benevolent, merciful and concientious who took measures to improve the economic and political conditions of the Kashmiris, but there were others particularly those during the declining period of the Mughal rule, who proved merciless despots. They encouraged Hindu-Muslim factions and Shia-Sunni feuds besides levying undue imposts and heavy taxes on the toiling masses which made life hard to live. At the death of Aurangzeb Kashmir was again simmering with unrest. Not only were the people groaning under the unbearable whips of poverty and oppression, acute religious differences were making the matter worse. "Sectarian fights between the Shias and the Sunnis were not uncommon in those days", says Sufi. "Religious feelings were bitter every where."[15]

The more were Mughals involved in dissensions and internal strife at Delhi the less attention could they pay to improve conditions in Kashmir. Ultimately anarchy broke out and there was practically no government in the Valley. At the invitation of some Kashmir nobles, Ahmed Shah Abdali dispatched a small force and easily conquered the land in 1752.

The Afghan rule proved the worst of all the despotisms that the Kashmiris had suffered in their long history. By stealing the last pennies from the pockets of the poverty stricken people and by inventing diabolical methods to torture them, the Pathan subedars made themselves the most despicable of rulers. It was a dismal period unrelieved by any good work, chivalry or honour. Even today the Pathan satraps are remembered in the Valley only for their savagery and inhuman conduct. A Persian couplet quoted about them is : "*Sar buridan pesh in sangin dilan gul chidan ast.*" (These stone hearted people thought no more of cutting heads than of plucking flowers).

The victims of the Pathan ruthlessness were Kashmiris without distinction of religion or caste, but the particular

[15] op. cit, p. 312.

objects of torture were the Pandits, the Shias and Muslim Bombas of the Jhelum Valley. Governor Asad Khan used to tie up the Pandits, two and two, with rope in grass sacks and sink them in the Dal Lake. As an amusement, a pitcher filled with ordure would be placed on the Pandits' heads and then pelted with stones till it broke, the unfortunate victims being blinded with filth. Governor Mir Hazar, another fiend, used leather bags instead of grass sacks for the drowning. He drowned Shias as well as Brahmins.[16]

The Pathans were followed by the Sikhs in 1819 when at the invitation of Kashmir nobles headed by Birbal Dhar, Ranjit Singh succeeded in annexing the Valley to his expanding dominions. "It must have been an intense relief to all classes in Kashmir to see the downfall of the evil rule of the Pathans and to none was the relief greater than to the peasants, who had been cruelly fleeced by the rapacious sirdars of Kabul,"[17] thought Lawrence. The Kashmiris pinned great hopes on the Sikh rule ; but they were mistaken. William Moorcroft who travelled extensively in the Valley and met people of all shades of opinion in the twenties of the last century when the Sikhs had gained firm possession of the land, noted:

> The village where we stopped was half deserted and the few inhabitants that remained wore the semblance of extreme wretchedness ; without some relief or change of system, it seems probable that this part of the country will soon be without inhabitants.

That relief never came nor did any change of system occur under the Sikhs. Moorcroft added :

> The number of Kashmiris who were to accompany us over the mountains proved here to be no exaggeration and their appearance half naked and miserably emaciated presented a ghastly picture of poverty and starvation.

Summing up his views about the Sikh rule Moorcroft concluded :

> The Sikhs seem to look upon Kashmiris as little better than cattle. The murder of a native by a Sikh is punished by a fine to the Government of from sixteen to twenty rupees, of which four rupees

[16] *The Valley of Kashmir* p. 197

[17] Ibid p. 199

are paid to the family of the deceased if a Hindu, two rupees if he was a Mohammedan.[18]

The Sikhs forbade killlng of cows and any Muslim who was known to have knifed the animal even if it be his own, was hanged or stoned to death. Several Muslim mosques in the Valley were seized and used as godowns.

By the end of Sikh rule in 1846 when the Dogra Rajputs got the Valley as a gift from the British in recognition of services rendered by them during the Anglo-Sikh Wars, the Kashmiris were thoroughly demoralised and lying prostrate at the mercy of any individual who was put at the helm of affairs.[19]

Cultural Achievements

Whatever the political complexion of the State, some Kashmiris remained engrossed in cultural activities through the different periods of their dismal history, creating human values and producing things of artistic beauty. The earlier inhabitants of the Valley lived nearer nature and worshipped its various manifestations. Later, Vedic religion gradually spread among them. Alexander's invasion of Northern India introduced Greek influence in their art and architecture. Buddhism became dominant in the days when Ashoka got hold of the country in 260 B. C., but brahminical counter revolution after the Emperor's death gave a setback to the progress. The clash of ideals and ideas resulted in the fusion of the two cultures in the Valley which gave birth to the Trika philosophy commonly known as Shaivism. This system of thought is the outcome of the blending of the Vedic and Buddhistic cultures, a synthesis of the essential elements that are to be found in almost all the Indian philosophies plus the knowledge gained by the Kashmir thinkers with their own speculations and experiences.

Shaivism was founded by Vasugupta in the 8th century A.D. He wrote *Spanda Karika* which contains the essence of the

[18] Willian Moorcoft, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces*, part II chap, ii, pp. 235, 293, 294 (1841), John Murray, London,

[19] Raja Gulab singh had to pay Rs. 75,00,000 to the British to secure the gift according to the terms laid down in the Treaty of Amritsar.

philosophy in aphorisms. Vasugupta's disciple, Kalatta Bhatta, composed *Spanda Vritti* in the ninth century. Soon after came Somananda father of the Pratyabhijna school with his dazzling treatise, *Shiva drishti*. Utpaladeva whose books *Pratyabhijna* and *Stotravali* are accorded a place of authority on Shaiva philosophy, lived in the tenth century. The most prolific, profound and versatile writer on the Trika is Abhinavagupta who was born between 950 and 960 A.D. His monumental production, *Tantraloka*, is recognised as the encyclopaedia of monastic idealism. He wrote no fewer than fifty volumes on different aspects of the Shaiva philosophy and Sanskrit literature out of which forty-four are extant ; the more known among these are ; *Tantra Loka, Tantra Sara, Parmartha Sara and Rasadhvani.* He was the propounder of the "Abasavada" and introduced the Krama and Kula systems in Shaivism.[20]

Works on literature during this period are numberless.[21] But among the important ones mention may be made of Bhima Bhatta's *Ravan Arjuniya* (700 A.D.) Damodara Gupta's *Kuttni Mata* (760 A.D.), Kshiraswamy's *Lexicon* (800 A.D.), Ratnakara's *Haravijiya* (850 A.D.), Vallabh Deva's commentaries on Kalidasa's works, Kshemendra's *Desopadesa* (975 A.D.), Somedeva's *Kathasaritsagara* (1000 A.D.) Bhilhana's *Vikramankdevacharita ;* Mankha's *Srikanthacharita* and Jayadratha's *Haricharita Chintamani.*

Books have also been written on Poetics such are, for instance, Vaman Bhatta's *Kavyalamkara*, Rudratta's *Sringartilaka*, Ruyyaka's *Alankarsarvasva* and Mammata's *Kavya Prakasha.*

A distinguished intellectual of this period was Kshemendra (990-1065) whose thirty-four works are extant. Among them are *Desopadesa*, *Narmamala* and *Darpadalna.* He rendered into Sanskrit the famous work *Brahad Katha* of Gunadhya which was

[20] For further information read the monumenlal work *Abhinavagupta* by Dr. K. C. Pandey : Chowkhamba, Varanasi.

[21] For detailed information on ancient literature of Kashmir consult Prem Nath Bazaz : *A History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, chapter two, entitled "cultural achievements of ancients", pp. 20 to 39.

written in Pishacha dialect. Another stalwart was Bilhana (born in 1078). He travelled widely, achieved fame as poet and scholar, and became the tutor of a princess at Kalyani in Deccan. Among his works that have survived are *Vikramankadevacharita*, *Karna Sundari Mala* and *Chaurapanchashika*.

We have already dwelt on the achievements of the Kashmiris in the domain of architecture during ancient times. Kalhana has recorded in great detail the construction of temples, mathas, viharas, chaityas and other religious and public edifices built by Hindu or Buddhist monarchs and nobles. Most of these constructions were in existence during the life ime of the Poet-Historian in twelfth century The sun-god's temple at Martand so highly spoken of by Sir Francis Younghusband was only one of these.

Women in Ancient Society

In building the social and cultural life, women played an effective and a splendid role. It would be no exaggeration to say that their status in Kashmir was much better than in the rest of India. Broadly speaking, from early times to the thirteenth century they enjoyed remarkable freedom, wielded ample power and exercised responsibility which gave them a high position in the society. Members of both the sexes equally shared joys and sorrows of life. "Kashmir women had emerged from the domestic into the political stage," observed R.S. Pandit "were free, owned landed and other immovable property, managed their own estates and even fought on the battle field as generals and commanders at the head of troops."[22]

At times Kashmiri women have risen to pinnacles of glory and distinguished themselves as rulers (Yashomati, Sugandha, Didda and Kota,) in their own right, as regents of minor princes, as powerful queens-consort (Ishandevi, Vakpushta, Ananglekha, Srilekha, Suryamati and Jayamati,) as diplomats in peace and war (Radda Devi, Kalhanika,) as commanders of armies (Silla, Chudda,) as thrifty landladies, as builders and reformers and as preceptors of the religious lore. As well in

[22] R. S. Pandit, *River of Kings*, (translation of Rajtarangni), The Indian Press, Allahabad, P. XXXIII

singing and dancing, they have earned fame in keeping homes. There were few walks of life in which they did not achieve prominence and there was no social activity in which they did not participate side by side with their menfolk.

There was a tradition as forceful as law that at the time of coronation when the king was crowned the queen had to be present and actively participate in the ceremony. She shared the throne in the royal durbar on the auspicious occasion and was sprinkled with the sacred waters of the *abhisheka* (coronation) in the same manner as the king by the *raj guru* (royal preceptor). The queen had her separate funds, own treasurers and councillors to help and advise her on affairs of state. Like the king she used to hold open levees and receive the homage of the feudatory chiefs, prominent nobles and big officers of the state.[23]

Impact of Islam

In the fourteenth century Islam, like Buddhism in earlier times, revolutionised the social life of the people.

The stiff and strong opposition to Islam by the orthodox Brahmins on the one hand and its critical appreciation by the Shaiva philosophers on the other, finally resulted in the emergence of a new composite culture which may be called religious humanism. The first apostle of this creed was hermitess Lalla or Lal Ded who laid the basic principles of the culture in her sayings, *Lalla Vakyani*. Her illustrious disciple was Sheikh Nooruddin or Nund Reshi who is the national saint of the Kashmiris. Sheikh Nooruddin had a large number of followers, and, after his death, his chief disciples founded the order of "Rishis" in the Valley. The peaceful and rapid conversion of large masses to Islam was facilitated by the spread of the cult of religious humanism.

Islam as practised in the Valley, though it surely stands on the basis of the cardinal principles taught by the Quran, has been deeply influenced by the ancient Kashmir culture.

[23] For a detailed information on past of Kashmiri women see Prem Nath Bazaz, *Daughters of the Vitasta*, (1959), Pamposh Publications, New Delhi

Even after their conversion to the new faith, the Kashmiris did not altogether abandon the ways of life and mental outlook that their fore fathers had cultivated through thousands of years of their history. A Kashmiri Muslim shares in common with his Hindu compatriot many inhibitions, superstitions, idolatrous practices as well as social liberties and intellectual freedoms which are unknown to Islam. "I attribute much of the delightful tolerance which exists between the followers of the two religions chiefly to the fact that the Kashmiri Mussalmans never really gave up the old religion of the country", observed Sir Walter R. Lawrence who knew the Kashmiris more intimately than any other foreigner.[24] The *Imperial Gazetteer* recorded a similar opinion : "Close observers of the country say that the so-called Mussalmans are still Hindus at heart".[25] The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* corroborates this : "The great majority of the inhabitants of Kashmir are professedly Mohammedans but they are still strongly influenced by their ancient superstitions".[26]

This conclusion is borne out by the compositions of Kashmiri poets who flourished during the medieval period and expressed their thoughts in the idiom of pre-Muslim times. The following piece of Shah Gafoor, a sufi poet, may be quoted as a typical example :

Yut ith zanmas kenh chhuna larun
Dharnai darun Soham su
Bashar travith gachhi Isshar garun
Isharus saiti roz sapdak
Ishir sapdith gachhi yi sharir marun
Dharnai darun soham su
Dah chhi avtar zah lagina tharun
Meh zan prazlan naran chum
Ram ram karun gau nam sandarun
Dharnai darun ... Soham su

"Birth avails us nothing. Meditate, therefore, upon Soham the Eternal. Forgetting the age seek Ishvara. Keep close to Ishvara to realise Him.
"Once you attain Ishvara this mortal be got rid of. Meditate upon the Eternal. There are ten incarnations of God. One should never be nervous. Narayana dazzles like the moon. Repetition of the name of Rama leads to one's salvation. Meditate upon the Eternal."

24 *The Valley of Kashmir* p. 286
25 Quoted by Sisir Gupta in *Kashmir*, Asia Publishing House, p. 26
26 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XIII (1947), p. 290.

Shah Gafoor was a devout Muslim of the ninteenth century and by no means a unique personality. Almost all popular Muslim poets of the Valley have sung in the same strain. By being converted to the new faith they did not renounce the old cultural traditions and modes of thought.

Of course Islam in its turn has also not left Hinduism and its followers unaffected in the Valley.

Lawrence wrote that Kashmir Brahmins did things that would horrify the orthodox Hindus. "They will drink water brought by a Mussalman ; they will eat food cooked on a Mussalman boat; the foster-brother often obtains great power in a Hindu household. Maharaja Gulab Singh did his utmost to stop the practice of drinking water brought by a Mussalman, and severely interdicted the eating of cheese (prepared by Mussalmans). But it was all to no effect."[27] This might appear trivial in changed circumstances obtaining today but it is right to remember that eighty years ago Hindus were rigidly orthodox and untouchability at its worst.

Summing up his findings on the social and cultural closeness of the Pandits and Muslims in the Valley, Lawrence observed :

> If a comparison be made between the customs of the Hindus and the Musalmans, it will be seen that there are many points of resemblance, and the curious prominence of walnut and salt, and the use of the *'mendhi'* dye, will be noticed. Besides, the *'mehnzrat'*, or use of the *mendhi* dye, in both religions there is the *laganchir* or fixing of the marriage day; 'phirsal', the visit paid by the bridegroom to the bride's house after marriage; *'gulimiut'*, the giving of money and jewels; the dress and the title of the bridegroom as *'Maharaja'* and of the bride as *'Maharani'* : *'chudus'*, the giving of presents, on the fourth day after death, and the *'wehrawod'* and *'wehrawar'* the celebration respectively of the birthday and day of death.

Religious Humanism has been the precious heritage of all classes and communities in the Valley whether formally they adhere to Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or any other religion. Any activities which cut at the root of this philosophy and culture have appeared abhorrent and unendurable to them.

Staunch believer in and the standard bearer of Religious Humanism, King Zain-ul-abdin Bud Shah gave the people the most peaceful and prosperous fifty-two years (1420-1472 A.D.)

27 *The Valley of Kashmiri* P. 300

in the medieval times which are known as the golden age of Kashmir.

Progress Under Muslim Rule

During the Muslim period the cultural progress was more or less maintained by the Kashmiris. Apart from the fusion of the two thought currents, the people made new contributions to arts, architecture and literature. Some valuable books continued to be written in Sanskrit. With the stabilisation of Muslim rule, Perisan became the court language. The Kashmiris learnt it with zest and produced informed treatises on various subjects in it. Indeed, they became so proficient in the language that Kashmir was given the title of "Iran-i-Saghir" (Younger Iran) by the learned.

Among the important Sanskrit works of this period mention may be made of Jagdhar Bhatt's *Stutikusumanjali* (1350), Sri Kantha's *Balbodhini* (1475), Vallabh Deva's *Padyavali* (1550) and Shivopadhyay's *Vignana Bhairavi* (1759).

Sultan Zain-ul-abdin got many books translated from Sanskrit and Arabic into Persian and Kashmiri for the benefit of the people. He built a library consisting of 25 thousand volumes, a surprising achievement in those days. It is said that a copy of *Atharva Veda* was found in this collection when it had become extinct in the rest of India.

Books written in Persian and available even today are over three hundred in number.[28] Among their authors are Yaqub Sarfi, Baba Daud Khaki, Khawaja Habib Ullah Nawshahri, Mirza Akmaluddin Kamil, Mulla Mohammed Mahsin Fani, Khawaja Abdul Karim, Baba Daud Mushkani and Mulla Zihni.

Mirza Kamil produced the prodigious work, *Bahar-ul-Urfan*, which is in four volumes and comprises 80,000 verses ; it was inspired by the philosophical thoughts popularised by Maulana Rumi.

The most distinguished thinker of the Muslim period who personified the spirit of Kashmir culture in Persian literature

[28] For details of litarary, cultural and architectural works of this period read Prem Nath Bazaz: *A History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, Chapter Four entitled "Cultural Resurgence Under the Muslims" Pp. 81-110.

was Mulla Mohammed Mahsin Fani who wrote a fascinating book, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*. He was born in 1615 and belonged to a family which enjoyed reputation for learning and scholarship. He was widely travelled in India and the Mlddle East, and had come in close contact with known philosophers and religious leaders of his age. Returning to homeland and renouncing the world, Fani produced the *Dabistan* in 1655, critically examining in an unbiased manner the mythologies and philosophies of different religions. He did not hesitate to express his preference and liking in certain respects for some religions other than Islam to which he belonged by birth. He was an admirer of Akbar's Din Illahi and Zoroastrianism. The *Dabistan* is the measure of progressive intellectualism during the Muslim times.

Among those who composed exquisite poetry in Persian were; Ashraf, Tayib, Mazhari, Saifi, Salim, Auji, Faroghi, Najimi, Guya, Taufiq, Sati, Yakta, and Bahauddin Mattu.

A volatile, independent artist who composed finest Persian poetry, was Mulla Mohammed Tahir Ghani. He flourished in the reign of Aurangzeb. His verses elicited highest praise of the Iranian scholars. In fact, Persian poetry found another home in the Valley during his time. It is remarkable that Ghani never composed a *qasida* in praise of any human being. When Aurangzeb impressed by the poet's scholarship and fame, ordered his presence at the royal court Ghani refused to attend and, strangely, died next day.

Kashmir Hindus were equally proficient in Persian literature ; they too composed poetry of a high order. Among such poets were Munshi Bhawani Das Kachru "Nikku", Tabaram Turki, and Rajkaul Arzbeg "Dairi" whose *dewans* appeared in 1840, 1861 and 1887 respectively.

Though it is known that books in Kashmiri were written earlier,[29] Hermitess Lalla whose sayings, *Lalla Vakyani*, in archaic Kashmiri is extant, popularised the use of the language for cultural purposes. Following her, many contributions were

[29] Shati Kanth's *Mahanai Prakash* written in the thirteenth century in Kashimiri was published in 1918 by the Research Department of the Kashmir Government.

made by several other seers and poets to the literature. Among those worthy of mention are Habba Khatun, Arnimal, Prakash Bhat, Sahib Kaul, Abdullah Baihaqi, Mohamud Gami, Parmanand, Maqbul Shah Kralawari, Rasul Mir, Wahab Parey, Ramzan Bhat, Laxman Ju and Krishan Das.

Under the Muslim rule architecture took a new shape ; a novel wooden style was invented which soon became quite popular ; it fulfilled a religious need ; the temple was meant for the deity and the individual but the mosque was needed for the communal worship ; it was to be spacious. Buildings of stone are cold but those of wood are warm and comfortable inside and therefore more fit for congregational prayers.

The best specimens of the wooden style of architecture were the royal palaces that Bud Shah built. Zain Dab which he constructed at Nav Shahar (now a part of Srinagar) was twelve storeys high, each of which contained fifty halls (to accommodate 500 people each), besides smaller rooms and corridors. But the wooden structures do not last long. The two grand buildings of this period which have survived are Khanqahi Moulla and Jama Masjid ; both were frequently damaged by fire. They have of course been renovated from time to time and may be considered as the fine samples of the architectural achievements of the Muslim period.

The Mughals introduced their own style of architecture in the Valley but it was neither the creation of the Kashmiris nor the work of the local artisans ; designers, craftsmen and engineers were usually imported from outside to raise the structures and lay out the gardens.

In the days of the Sultans music and dancing made good progress. We read of the hundreds of musicians and dancers who were attached to the court and were accomplished in their respective arts.[30] In the Indian section of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, there are twenty four large canvas paintings which were produced in Kashmir centuries ago.[31]

30 *Kings of Kashmira*, Vol. 111, Pp. 133-136
31 *Kashir*, Vol. II, pp. 555-557

CHAPTER TWO

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Whatever their achievements in other fields, the Kashmiris could not pay much attention to evolve political theories or set up political institutions as did the Greeks by establishing democratic governments in city states of Athens. Among the prodigious literary productions of the Kashmiris, there is no work like Plato's *Republic*. But the Kashmiris did make attempts, though feeble, to have some sort of an organised system of government.

In the time of King Jalauka who ruled the country in third century B.C., the Kashmiris seem to have been successful in laying the foundations of a constitutional government by introducing a system of council of ministers thus restricting the powers of monarchy. It was under the recognised authority of this constitution that many monarchs who proved unfit to rule were deposed, even banished, and replaced by candidates with merit to preside over the destinies of the people. Occasionally, at a time of national emergency, kings have been elected and this practice was followed down to the thirteenth century A.D. Even during peaceful times it was the council of ministers, and, if need be, in collaboration with a bigger assembly of

intellectuals, which decided the succession to kingship in a disputed case. In 939 A.D. commander-in-chief Kamla Vardhan was in a position to seize the throne by armed might. He hesitated to do so and was anxious to win the public opinion to his side. But the verdict of the joint council of ministers and intellectuals went against him and another aspirant to the throne, Yashaskara, a Brahmin, was elected king. "To the historian the interest lies, firstly in the fact that in spite of the corruption and violence of the times, an appeal was made to the traditional law of kingnship instead of to the force of arms", observed E. B. Havell, "and, secondly, in the unexpected result of the Assembly's vote which was that Kamla Vardhan's claim was set aside in favour of the Brahmin candidate, Yashaskara, who was duly consecrated as king by the ancient Vedic rite of Abhisheka and reigned for 47 years afterwards".[1]

But such democratic practices, however rudimentary, were more honoured in breach than in observance after the sixth century, if not earlier. "Usually, except in the intervals when a strong man captured the power, there was a state of perpetual intrigue and assassination, of struggles with brothers, cousins, uncles before a chief even came to the throne; of fight for power with ministers, with the military, with the "nobles" when he was on it, of constant fear of poisoning and assassination, of wearying, petty internecine wars, and of general discomfort, uncertainty and unrest." [2] Consequently people had to wage a long drawn struggle for good government and liberty. "Kashmir is a land that delights in insurrections", concluded Kalhana seeing that anarchy was prevalent in the Valley during his own times. He added : "In this country dancing women of the temples of the gods take a pleasure in upheavals against the king."[3]

But the struggle must have proved unavailing and fruitless, and broken the back of fighters for freedom, indeed of the

[1] E. B. Havell : *History of Aryan Rule in India* (1918), Harrap, London. p. 275.
[2] Sir Francis Younghusband : *Kashmir*, p. 155.
[3] *Rajatarangni*, VII 491.

people in general. For we find that at the fall of Shahmiri dynasty the Kashmiris had lost self-confidence and the sense of national pride ; the main act of patriotism if at all it may be called by that name, was to invite foreign rulers to invade Kashmir and occupy it. Babur, Humayun, Sher Shah Sur, Akbar, Ahmad Shah Abdali and Ranjit Singh, one after the other, received deputations of Kashmiri leaders urging that, because the Valley was in turmoil and people groaning under unbearable administration the foreign ruler could easily occupy it with the assistance of the deputationists and their supporters. The hands of Babur, Humayun and Sher Shah Sur were full in quelling disturbances in India and consolidating the power that they had newly captured. For the first time it was in Akbar's days (1586 A. D.) that the Valley came under foreign domination. The Kashmiris no doubt got some respite under the Emperor ; but not for long and at a very heavy cost.

Disarmed and Dispossessed

In order to break the marshal spirit of the conquered people and to subdue them for ever, the Mughals forbade recruitment of the Kashmiris in the armed forces. This notwithstanding the fact, as stated by Abul Fazal in *Ain Akbari*, that the Valley furnished 6,420 cavalry and 50,530 infantry to the Imperial Mughal Army.[4] The nefarious practice of disarming Kashmiris was followed by the Pathans as well as the Sikhs and the Dogras. It brought about the expected results ; the subjugated people forgot the glorious traditions of living like self-respecting human beings, of heroically defending their homeland and of standing against injustice.

By another ukase the Mughals arbitrarily deprived the Kashmiris of the ownership of their land ; the emperor was declared as sole proprietor of all cultivable land in the Valley and the Kashmiri landlords were entered in the revenue registers as tenants. This practice too was continued by the successive rulers till the days of Maharaja Hari Singh when in 1932 he was compelled through a mass uprising to restore the ownership to the people.

[4] Quoted in *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 188.

Down and Out

By the time the Dogras got the possession of the Valley the Kashmiris were down and out. Creative work in the fields of philosophy, the arts and architecture had come to a stop. The people looked haggard in look and emaciated in body; they had become indolent and lost all zest for life. Almost continuous oppression and suppression for many centuries had affected every part of their existence. The natural environments continued to inspire them but the suffocating atmosphere disallowed them to rise to full stature. Long periods of tyranny produced the inevitable consequences. "They became absolutely hopeless and sullen, and each man played for his own hand," wrote Lawrence. "This sullen temper is one of the worst points in the Kashmiri character and joind to deeprooted apathy, makes it very difficult to improve the condition of the people."[5] Any one who came from outside and had a dealing with a Kashmiri spoke no word of appreciation for him. K. F. Knight called him a "bearded disgrace to human race who would howl, weep and throw himself down merely when a dog ran up to him and barked."[6]

Colonel Torrens in his book on travels describing the character of Kashmiris in terms by no means complimentary referred to a Persian couplet which was often quoted over a hundred years ago, by their detractors:

Agar Kuht-ul-rijal uftad, azeshan uns kam geeri
Eke Afghan, doum Kumboh, seum badzatKashmiri"

Which may be rendered thus:

"Should fate decree a dearth of men
Then, friend of mine, beware ye
Of Afghan, Kumbo, scoundrel too,
But worst of all. do thou eschew
That ill-bred knave Kashmiri :"[7]

5 *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 278
6 E.F. Knight, *Where Three Empires meet*, (1895) Longmans ; London p. 111
7 Op. cit p. 299

Frederic Drew who served as an official under Maharaja Ranbir Singh for a decade, said that "the Kashmiris were false tongued, ready with a lie and given to various forms of deciet,"[8]

William Moorcroft who studied Kashmir affairs in 1819 to 1824 with a considerable degree of sympathy and interest called the Kashmiris "selfish, superstitious, ignorant, supple, intriguing, dishonest and false...whose transactions are always conducted in fraudulent spirit, equalled only by the effrontery with which he faces detection."[9] After making these disparaging remarks, Moorcroft admits that "the vices of the Kashmiri, I cannot help considering, however, as the effects of the political conditions rather than his nature, and conceive that it would not be difficult to transform him into a very different being."[40]

Victor Jacquemont made similar observations in 1833. He said : "The Afghans having during the last century despoiled the Mughals of their conquest, and the Sikhs having expelled the Afghans in this century, a general pillage has ensued upon each conquest and in the intervals of peace, anarchy and oppression have done their utmost against labour and industry, so that the country is now completely ruined, and poor Kashmiris appear to have thrown the handle after the hatchet, and to have become the most indolent of mankind."[11] "In a land on which terror has once lain like a poisonous mist, truth does not grow easily", commented Sir W. H. Beveridge.

Impartial Assesment

An impartial assessment of the Kashmiri character by the close of the last century was, however, made by Sir Walter Lawrence from whose balanced report we have already quoted. He said :

"When one reflects on what they now are one cannot help the thought that many races, had they lived through generations of oppression like the Kashmirs, might have been more cunning and more dishonest. In a country where there was practically no justice the only weapon in the

8 Frederic Drew : *Northern Barrier of India* (1877), Stanford, London. p. 211
9 William Moorcraft : *Travels*, Vol II 299.
10 Ibid p. 299.
11 Victor Jacquemont, *Letters From India*, (1834), Vol II, Edward Churton, London, p. 230

hands of the weak was lying and subterfuge, and I must admit at once that the Kashmirs,in their dealings with officials, do not strictly adhere to the truth,"[12]

Elaborating his Views, Lawrence recorded :

I think many of the hard things said about the Kashmiris are due to the fact that the official interpreters of their character have been foreigners often grasping and corrupt, always unsympathetic. Mughal Subahs, Pathan Sirdars, Sikh and Dogra governors dismissed all difficulties of administration and all humane suggestions emanating from their masters with the remark that Kashmiris were dishonest, treacherous and *zulum parast*. It is the old tale of giving a dog a bad name, and I must confess that during my first year's work in the Valley I shared these views. But I soon grew to understand that the Kashmiris like other orientals, has two sides to his character as distinct as light and darkness.....the dark side of the Kashmiri is revealed when he is in the presence of officials. He has had good reason to hate and distrust them, and his only weapon against them is deceit. His light side is seen when he is in his field or with his family in the house. Take as an instance the relations of a Kashmiri cultivator with the village shopkeepers. The shopkeeper (*wani*) is a musalman and must not take interest. He lends money to the peasants on a system known as *wad*.....No *hund* (*hujat*) is signed by the borrower and the only record of the transaction is an entry in the daily ledger of the *wani*. I have always made a point of talking with the *wanis* whenever I see a village shop, and they are unanimous in saying that they never made a bad debt and that they are never obliged to sue a debtor. This state of things does not argue that the Kashmiri peasants are dsihonest.[13]

Lawrence added :

"Crime is almost non-existent in Kashmir. Crimes of dishonesty may be said to be absolutely non existent among the peasants. Property is entirely safe and during the six years which I have spent in the villages, I have never heard of crimes of theft, or burglary being committed by agriculturists, This surely points to the fact that the Kashmiris are not the dishonest people they are represented to be" [14]

At another place in his book on travels, Moorcroft made similar observations :

The natives of Kashmir have been always considered as among the most lively and ingenious people of Asia, and deservedly so. With a liberal and wise government they might assume an equally high scale as a moral and intelleetual people.[15]

Vigne corroborated the view by cryptically remarking : "Kashmir will become the focus of Asiatic civilization, a miniature England in the heart of Asia·"

In the, then, prevalent social degeneration and political tyranny, women too yielded the high status they had enjoyed for

[12] Op. cit. p. 274
[13] Op. cit. p. 286
[14] Op, cit. 300
[15] Op. cit. Vol. II p. 128.

centuries; all freedoms earned by them were curbed and they were reduced to the position of slaves. At the close of the last century they had sunk to the low level of destitution and ignorance ; they had lost charms of body and refinements of mind; they lacked self confidence, spirit of revolt and even a sense of righteous indignation which made them remarkable in olden times.

Communal Harmony

Whatever the defence, there can be little doubt that at the advent of the present century, the people of the Valley had ceased to possess many virtues and creative faculties which made them great in early times.

In one respect, however, they held their own; they refused to be divided on the basis of religion when the rulers resorted to machiavellian methods and tried to sow the seeds of Hindu-Muslim or Sunni-Shia feuds. In Sultan Sikander's time (1405-1413 A. D.), at the risk of incurring the king's displeasure, the Muslims gave refuge to innumerable Hindus who had come under suspicion. Ghazi Shah Chak persecuted Khwaja Tahir Rafiq, desciple of Saint Hamza Makhdum and a religious leader of the Sunnis. He had to go into hiding and was given shelter by a Brahmin of Vernag, Aider Suh. When Birbal Dhar, a Pandit jagirdar, stealthily left the Valley in 1819 to invite Ranjit Singh for overthrowing the Muslim Pathan rule, his flight in mid-winter across the snow-covered mountains was made possible with the support voluntarily offered by Maliks Kamdar and Namdar, two Muslim landlords, as well as by large numbers of Muslim peasants in Kulgam Tehsil. In Srinagar, Azim Khan, Pathan Governor, issued orders that Kudmal, wife of Birbal, together with her young, handsome daughter-in-law be produced in the court. Even before the Pathan sepoys appeared at Birbal's house, Muslim patriots had planned to thwart the evil designs of the tyrant. Qudus Gojwari, a Muslim grandee, had given the two ladies protection under his roof with obvious risk to his own life. Furious Azim ordered search of all possible hiding places but the Muslims refused to divulge the secret; it was a unique act of chivalry in that dismal period but, nevertheless, a trait

of Kashmiri character the importance of which cannot be minimised or overlooked. Again, enraged by the activities of the Muslim rebels who made Khanqah-i-Moulla as their rendezvous, the Sikhs decided to demolish the sacred shrine in 1834 but the Pandit nobles opposed the move and the Sikh Governor's evil designs were foiled. Examples can be multiplied but these few are sufficient to depict a bright side of otherwise a dark picture.

Thus the Kashmiri was not a degraded soul beyond redemption. Walter Lawrence summarising his considered views remarked:

> Though the character of Kashmiris leaves much to be desired, I think that it is to their credit that it is not worse, considering the few chances they have had for becoming truthful, manly and self respecting. The Kashmiri is what his rulers have made him, but I believe and hope that two generations of a just and strong rule will transform him into a useful, intelligent and fairly honest man,

Lawrence added :

> The Kashmiris possess an individuality and national character which will cling to them wherever they go....The Kashmiris are fond of their own country, its food, its water and its dress, and though opperession has driven them out of the valley many have come back and all are loth to leave.[17]

A New Era Begins

With the acquisition of the Valley by the Dogras in 1846, the Kashmir people entered a new era of their history. The Dogra Rajputs were no doubt autocrats who vainly treated the Valley as a conquered territory, its people deserving no mercy and no higher status than those of serfs. In his *Travels*, Vigne narrates that an insurrection took place against the authority of Gulab Singh who went in person to suppress it. "Some of the prisoners were flayed alive under his own eyes...He then ordered one or two of the skins to be stuffed with straw...The figures were then planted on the wayside so that passerby might see it; and Gulab Singh called his son's attention to it and told him to take a lesson in the art of governing."[18] "This last state was worse then the first", wrote lieutenant colonel Torrens, "for Gulab Singh went beyond his predecesors in the gentle acts of

[17] Ibid p. 282

[18] G.T. Vigne : *Travels in Kashmir Ladakh, Iskardoo* (1842), Vol. I, p. 241, Colburn, London.

undue taxation and extortion."[19] K.M. Panikar who served as an official under the Dogras concluded that "Gulab Singh did not achieve his ends by methods which were always beyond criticism. He did not hesitate to resort to tricks and strategems which would, in ordinary life, be considered dishonourable."[20] Conditions were no better under his son Ranbir Singh. According to Sir Francis Younghusband : "In the early sixties cultivation was decreasing, the people were wretchedly poor, there were few men of respectable, none of wealthy appearance" and "there were almost prohibitive duties levied on all merchandise imported or exported."[21] When the calamity of the Great Famine fell upon the people in 1877-79 the administration proved incapable to protect them; thousands died of starvation and dead bodies could be seen by heaps lying on the roadside; whole villages lay in ruins and the city of Srinagar was half destroyed.

The Dogras continued the ban on cow slaughter first imposed by the Sikhs; the accused spared from hanging were imprisoned for life. Some special taxes were levied on the Muslims, among them a tax on *shariat* marriages. Many mosques in Srinagar and big towns were forcibly seized and impiously used to store grains offending the religious susceptibility of the Muslims.

But now a new factor was gradually destroyring the old values and changing the political outlook of the people. By the Treaty of Amritsar between the British and Maharaja Gulab Singh, Kashmir had become a part af the Indian sub-continent which had been unified and over which the British ruled as the imperialist power. The Dogras were no sovereign despots but were subject to the supervision of the British overlords. As in the rest of India, the Valley was having an impact of the western education and culture; the Kashmiris were learning the preliminary lessons in democratic practices.

[19] Lt. Col. Torrens : *Travels in Ladakh, Tartary and Kashmir* (1863), Saunders, London. p. 301

[20] K.M. Panikar : *Jamumu and Kashmir Territories* (1830), Hopkins London P. 152.

[21] Op. cit. p. 176.

Early in the eighties of the last century, some Christian missionaries extended their sphere of work in the field of education from the Punjab to Kashmir. A school was started in Srinagar by them where English began to be taught as a subject. The Dogra government could not help opening its own schools soon and before the century ended many primary and high schools were established where Kashmiri students were educated on modern lines. In 1905, Theosophical Society started the Hindu College (now known as S.P. College) where university education was imparted to young scholars.

Pax Britannica had already brought tranquillity and introduced the rule of law in the State. The spread of western ideas and notions of democratic society reawakened the long suppressed desire for liberty and aspirations for self-rule.

In the beginning ; Kashmiris did not make any revolutionary demands ; they did not plan to overthrow the Dogra government. They either submitted their humble desires to the Maharaja or, failing to get any redressal, represented their grievances to the British Viceroy. Partly due to backwardness of the people but mainly because of the distrust of the Kashmiris, the Dogra rulers manned the administrative services with outsiders, mostly the Punjabis. The State army was exclusively reserved for the Dogras and the Kashmiris were not allowed to be recruited in it.

Realising that through education alone they could equip themselves with merit to hold responsible and high posts in the administration, the Kashmiris asked for more schools and colleges. But this reasonable demand was half heartedly conceded, and never fully met.

Inspiration from Congress

By the turn of the century the Indian National Congress was asserting itself on the all-India scene as a reckonable political force. After the First World War, under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership it became a mass party which revolutionised the outlook of the Indians. The gigantic Non-Cooperation Movement of 1919-22 stirred the desire for establishment of Swaraj which gripped the imagination of the Indians. This

could not but influence the thinking of the State people. The claims of the Kashmiris became insistent. To the demand for more schools and colleges were added new ones for proprietorship of land and adequate share in administration. Getting no justice from the Maharaja, a few dignitaries and religious leaders prominent among whom were Nur Shah Naqishbandi, Mirwaiz Jama Masjid and Saaduddin Shawl, submitted a memorial to Lord Reading, British Viceroy, in 1924, adumbrating their grievances. For doing so they were punished, their jagirs confiscated and one of them, Saaduddin Shawl, banished.

In late twenties, Kashmiri Pandits stole a march over the Muslims; they launched a movement which is known as "Kashmir for Kashmiris". Under the leadership of Shankerlal Koul "Kashmiricus" for the first time in modern period, the Kashmiris started a publicity campaign demanding recruitment of educated sons of the soil in government services, ban on the sale of land to outsiders, freedom of the press, freedom of association and assembly, and creation of an elected legislature to voice the views of the people on all affairs of state. It was as a result of this campaign that the Maharaja was induced to enact the State Subject law imposing restrictions on the entry of non-Kashmiris in government services and on sale of agricultural land to them. But this measure of reform failed to adequately meet with the people's demand.

Things were now moving very fast in the Indian subcontinent. In December 1929, the Indian National Congress adopted on the banks of Ravi at Lahore, the resolution of complete independence as its goal; a mass civil disobedience movement followed which electrified the subcontinent from Gilgit to Cape Comorin. Kashmir too felt its repercussions ; people began to be deeply excited with what was taking place in the rest of the country.

It seems astounding today but is nevertheless a fact that the Dogras ostritch-like refused to see the writing on the wall or be moved by these soul-stirring developments. And when a number of Muslim youngmen—among them Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah—educated at different universities in India and deeply moved by the Congress struggle for freedom, returned

home a spark was applied to the explosive matter which had accumulated in the Valley.

Elemental Upsurge

Then in July 1931 the Kashmiris rose in rebellion and turned the corner. It was an unprecedented, elemental upheaval, almost a revolution which shook the State and brought the Dogra Raj to a realisation of the stark reality.

Unfortunately due to certain causes which are too numerous to be discussed here, the movement for freedom remained confined to the Muslim community. It was conducted on religious lines and solely by the Muslims though among the Hindus there were many sympathisers for the cause. However, from the declarations, pronouncements, speeches and resolutions of the leaders of the movement it was clear that the basic principles guiding them were identical with those adopted by democratic movements in all other countries, particularly India. Soon the struggle was conducted under the banner of an organised party called the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. The main demands of the Conference were an adequate share for the Muslims in administration, freedom of the press, freedom of association and establishment of a legislature with an elected majority. The Muslims also demanded that all invidious distinctions against them should be abolished.

The 1931 rebellion was a grand success as most of the demands had to be conceded by the Dogra ruler. The proprietorship of the land, lost in Mughal days, was restored ; the confiscated mosques were handed back to the Muslims ; freedom of expression and association with certain limitations was granted and a legislative assembly established though the majority of its members was nominated by the Maharaja ; more opportunities were afforded to the Muslims to enter State services.

Even greater than these political gains were the improvements in the character of the Kashmiris as an outcome of the successful insurrection. Now they no longer looked down upon themselves as born bondmen ; they began to walk erect

with their heads raised and refused to be easily bullied by an official or an outsider. A new life unknown during past centuries, began to pulsate and gradually the Kashmiri was seen coming into his own.

In the course of the sporadic uprisings throughout the latter half of 1931 the Dogra army was busily employed in quelling the disturbances. The Kashmiris bared their breasts to the bayonets and guns of the army men. It was reported that not a single bullet had been found in the back of scores of dead bodies examined and post-mortemed; none had tried to run away when firing was resorted to by the Dogra military to disperse the patriotic demonstrators.

Cultural Renaissance

In the field of art and culture too a renissance movemens came into existence which made slow but steady advance. Two illustrious poets in Kashmiri language who interpreted the catholicity of Kashmir culture and reflected the urges, desires and aspirations of their fellow countrymen in beautiful verse, were Ghulam Ahmed Mahjur and Abdul Ahad Dar Azad. Mahjur was a votary of Hindu-Muslim unity and an ardent admirer of religious humanism. He discouraged communal distinctions and advocated the cause of nationalism in his sweet poetry. Mahjur repeatedly laid emphasis on human harmony and love. To him this is one of the cardinal principles of Kashmir culture. Azad, a teacher by profession, was a nonconformist intellectual who, though a passionate lover of Kashmir, denounced alike communalism and nationalism. He was a modern secularist, a rebel and a standard bearer of mental and social revolution. He reposed faith in scientific humanism and was critical of religious approach to life. His *Shikwai Iblis* is a challenge to believers and a frank denial of the supernatural. Azad's *History of Kashmiri Literature* in three volumes is a classic. While both, Mahjur and Azad, expressed unbounded faith in the composite culture of Kashmir and laid stress on the importance of secular view of politics, the latter went much further by preaching a materialistic philosophy of life.

Other notable poets who composed in Kashmiri were :

Zind Koul, G.H. Beg Arif, Hairat Pandani, Dilsoz, Shams Faqir, Asi, Samad Mir, Ahad Zargar, Rahman Dar, Pitambar Fani, and Ahmad Batwari.

Under the Dogras, Urdu became the official language and medium of instruction in schools. Some Kashmiris achieved eminence in writing short stories and novels and in composing poetry in this language. Among them mention may be made of poets Nand Lal Talib, Dina Nath Mast, and of the story writer, Prem Nath Pardesi.

Anand Koul Bamzai was among the first batch of Kashmiris to profit by western education and thought. He served as the President of the Srinagar Municipality for many years with distinction. He wrote in English; two of his productions are *A History of Kashmir* (1913) and *The Kashmiri Pandit* (*1924*). Ram Chandra Kak, an archaeologist by training who rose by dint of hard labour to the eminent position of the Prime Minister (1945-47) under Maharaja Hari Singh's rule wrote a notable volume on *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (*1933*). Professer Jaya Lal Koul compiled and translated into English a selection of the Kashmir poetry, *Kashmir Lyrics*. Mention may also be made of Sansar Chand Koul's two works *Birds of Kashmir* (*1939*) and *Beautiful Valley of Kashmir* (*1942*); Arjan Nath Supru's *The Building of Jammu and Kashmir State* (*1931*) and Gwash Lal Koul's *Kashmir through Ages*, which are all informative.

In 1932 freedom of Press was achieved by the people and periodicals began to appear ventilating public opinion and voicing the feelings of different sections and classes. The journals mostly indulged in petty quarrels reflecting the vicious climate generated by the communal disturbances after the 1931 upheaval. But a few struggled to rise above the pettiness and have a broader view of national interests. The most notable of these was *Hamdard* started jointly in 1935 by Sheikh Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz to revive the tolerant spirit characteristic of Kashmir culture and to espouse the cause of secularism and social democracy in the State.

Among the prominent journalists who were at one time or another on the editorial staff of the *Hamdard* and adopted

liberal outlook in State politics were Mohammad Syed Masoodi, Nand Lal Wattal and Jagan Nath Sathu. Wattal is now the chief editor of *Khidmat*, official organ of the State National Congress. Sathu represents London *Telegraph* and New Delhi *Thought*. Another notable journalist who made a mark in the forties by his balanced assessment of events and developments is R. K. Kak working on the staff of the *Statesman*.

The freedom in thinking and the comparative peace which the British suzerainty over Dogra autocracy established in the State brought about the revival of the innate artistic talents of the people ; 1931 upsurge gave an impetus to it. The Kashmiri artisans began to produce things of beauty in embroidery, paper machie, wood carving, silver ware, shawl weaving and several other creative fields; though it must be admitted that in architecture, sculpture and designing they have not yet been able to reach anywhere near the high standards set by their forbears in past ages.[22]

Secularisation of Politics

Whatever the reasons for its adoption—and I hold that some of these were justifiable—the communal approach of the essentially political struggle for freedom waged in 1931, was inconsistent with the cultural traditions of the Valley. Unsurprisingly, this was being realized by the sponsors of the movement even as early as February-March 1931 while the masses held aloof and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had not achieved the pre-eminent position of the top leader which he did in months to follow. An impartial study of the speeches delivered by the then luminaries of Kashmir Muslim politics such as Maulvi Mohammed Abdulah, Ghulam Nabi Gilkar and Saaduddin Shawl will bear ample witness that they were not happy over the happenings misdirecting public affairs into communal channels. Circumstances were impelling the leaders to adopt this stance; nevertheless they felt uncomfortable and out of their element.

[22] For fuller information about the cultural activities of the Kashmiris under the Dogra rule read Prem Nath Bazaz : *History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, Chapter Six entitled "The Cultural Renaissance".

The Muslim Conference was founded in October 1932. One need only patiently go through the records of the deliberations of this organisation to conclude that a number of the leaders and workers of the party disliked communalism and disapproved of the religious basis of State politics. Repeatedly were the non-Muslims invited to participate in the struggle for freedom and assured an honourable place in the political life. In the presidential address of the first session of the Muslim Conference we find a remarkable declaration :

> The Kashmir movement is not communal but has come into existence to get the grievances of all classes of people redressed. We assure our Hindu and Sikh brothers that we are prepared to help them in the same manner as we do the Musalmans. *Our country cannot progress until we learn to live amicably with one another.* (*emphasis mine*)

In March 1933, the working committee of the Muslim Conference constituted a sub-committee to "find out ways and means of bridging the gulf between the communities and uniting Hindus and Muslims."

What made the Muslim politicians uneasy and eager to have non-Muslims among them ? Obviously, the communal politics was coming into conflict with the traditional tolerant temperament of the people. Sheikh Abdullah and some of his farsighted close associates in the Muslim Conference had the intelligence to realize this in time and lend vigorous support to secularisation of politics. Happily, the appeals of the Muslim patriots did not fall on deaf ears; progressive Pandits of the Valley enthusiastically responded to the call and joined the struggle by courting imprisonment in August-September 1938 agitation. Thus the cooperation of enlightened Hindus and Muslims brought the State politics on straight path indicated by the cultural traditions of the people. Secularisation became inevitable and the conversion of Muslim Conference to National Conference easily followed.

In the special session of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in June 1939 where the historic change was registered the cream of the Muslim intelligensia was present. It was attended by such well known figures as Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg, Maulvi Mohammad Syed Masoodi, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, Mian Ahmad Yar, Chaudhri Ghulam

Abbas, Chaudhri Hamidullah and others. G. M. Sadiq presided. Out of 179 delegates present at the session all but three supported the move. It is notable that the dissidents did not belong to the Valley. It would be quite safe to state that every Kashmiri Muslim leader of any importance in the community with the exception of Mirwaiz Mohammed Yusuf Shah (who was not a member of the Muslim Conference) accorded his willing consent to the wholesome change. Indeed, the decision was hailed in the Valley with warmth. Even Chaudhri Abbas of Jammu the unrepentent devotee at the shrine of religious politics, sensing the intensity of the Kashmiri feelings blessed the move, denouncing communalism as a wornout attire. "It suits us no more. We should discard it and have the new garb of nationalism which will lead us to our goal of freedom", he declared. Thus the struggle for freedom became broadbased embracing all sections of the Kashmiris.

When in 1942 the National Congress raised the slogan of "Quit India" asking the British imperialists to leave the shores of the subcontinent, in Kashmir the National Conference too followed suit by asking the Dogra Maharaja in May 1946 to quit the Valley, bag and baggage, enabling the Kashmiris to shape their own future. Again, Pandits took an equal and an honourable part along with the Muslims in the movement.

CHAPTER THREE

ACCESSION TO INDIA

In the last forties when the Indian struggle for freedom reached a decisive stage, Congress leaders failed to convince the Muslims that they will receive even handed justice under a sovereign national government dominated by the Hindus. The Congress leaders believed that so long as the alien rulers were present, holding power to confer favours, it was not possible to inspire confidence in the Muslim countrymen and, with a sense of realism, they agreed, though reluctantly, to the partition of the country on the basis of religion. The entire subcontinent excepting Jammu and Kashmir State, was thus divided into Hindu majority and Muslim majority areas. In Kashmir the National Conference, premier political organisation of the State, under leadership of Sheikh Abdullah, opposed joining the new Muslim dominion of Pakistan and urged upon the Congress leaders to accept the accession of the State to India subject to the subsequent ratification of the act by a referendum.

Having agreed to the principle of partition, the Indian leaders were hesitant to accept the offer of Kashmir nationalists, but at the same time various reasons including the identity of ideals of the Congress and the National Conference as also political kinship of Nehru and Abdullah, prompted them to take the fateful step ; the instrument of accession was signed

by Lord Mountbatten on behalf of the Indian Government, by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah for the State people and by Mehr Chand Mahajan, Kashmir Premier, representing Maharaja Hari Singh, the hereditary ruler of the State.

The frenzy and fanaticism which preceded and followed the partition were factors hardly conducive to this alliance. It was an act of extraordinary courage and of faith in the future of Indian democracy. When sixty million Muslims belonging to the majority Muslim areas had expressly voted to part company and live separately as a new nation, it appeared vain to think that barely three million Kashmiris would like to willingly stay behind with India. The polarisation of Hindu and Muslim politics as also the wild communal excitement accentuated by holocausts and bloodshed mocked at the venture. But undaunted the Indian and Kashmir leaders took the plunge determined to face the odds. Constitutionally and legally, the accession of Kashmir to India was unexceptionable. If Qaide Azam Jinnah could accept Junagarh as a constituent part of Pakistan merely because the Nawab ruler of that Hindu majority State in Gujarat approached him with the offer, India saw no reason why she should feel shy or timid to extend her helping hand to Kashmir. There was no covenant to debar her from doing so. But law, written or unwritten, has little value if the people affected by it oppose it and believe that it has been imposed on them against their will. In the conditions then prevalent in the subcontinent only people blinded by prejudice could believe that the majority of the Kashmir Muslims would voluntarily support the accession deed to which signatures had been affixed by the leaders of India and Kashmir.

The circumstances leading to the partition had proved that the ideals for the attainment of which the Congress leaders had been labouring for decades had not fully captured the imagination of the people. Of course, the Hindus and Muslims cherished some aspirations in common. Both wanted to be free from British imperialism and establish a democratic pattern of society in the country. But in certain other respects they profoundly disagreed; some of their emotions and cultural

traditions were peculiar to them. Besides, the Muslims entertained fears and suspicions that after freedom they would not be treated justly by the majority community.

Kashmir Muslims and Partition

Broadly speaking, the Kashmir Muslims are not very different from the rest of their coreligionists in the subcontinent. At the time of partition the Kashmiris shared the same emotions which were roused by tragic happenings and were equally perturbed by the apprehensions as their fellow Muslims outside the State. But as we saw in the preceding chapters they have a historic and cultural background which made the Congress leaders believe that Kashmir would prefer to stay with secular India than go to Islamic Pakistan if with the disappearance of British imperialism, suitable climate could be generated for strengthening the alliance under the changed circumstances. Apart from the tolerant outlook which had been inherited from the great King Zain-ul-abidin popularly known in the Valley as Bud Shah (Great King) and fostered during the centuries of alien rule by both the Muslim saints and Pandit seers, one of the great events of recent history which induced the Congress leaders in this thinking was the conversion in 1939 of Muslim Conference to National Conference and the closer ties which had been forged between the Congress and the National Conference for nearly a decade.

But there were other compelling reasons to resist the temptation. Like the Kashmiris, the Pathans too had displayed secular tendencies and owned the Congress ideology for many years while valiantly fighting against the British. In fact, the Congress leaders had formed party governments in the North Western Frontier Province in the days of provincial autonomy. But on the eve of independence the Pathans voted for the partition and creation of Pakistan. This was a warning that it was not wholly prudent to depend on the previous opinion of the Kashmiris which might also have undergone a swift change.

When, therefore, the Congress leaders accepted the accession offer of Kashmir they were fully aware of the

tremendous difficulties which they were sure to encounter in integrating the State with India; they realized that constitutional and legal accession would be meaningless if it would not followed by emotional integration of the Kashmiris in the mainstream of Indian social life.

It was recognised that Kashmir had an individuality of her own which, in some respects, differed from the Indian Nation. Though on most of the political, economic and social matters facing the liberated people, the Indians and Kashmiris were in entire agreement, there were a few controversial problems mostly cultural, emotional and sentimental which were viewed differently. It was thought that with the passage of time these differences would disappear and Kashmir would become an integral part of the Indian Republic as any other linguistic and administrative region of the vast country, and the Kashmiris would be happy, contented and prosperous. But till then the Indian leaders no less than the Kashmir leaders had to remain vigilant and devotedly work for the chosen objective exercising the uncommon qualities of statesmanship, patience, forbearance and farsightedness.

It is clear the huge task undertaken was no easy one, particularly when it had been rendered almost impossible by the psychosis generated by the horrible bloodshed and communal hysteria in both the newly created dominions; extremism was rated high, moderation, balance and commonsense were at a discount; yet the hope of accomplishing the noble task lay in reconciling the two nationalisms of India and Kashmir by pruning both of their irrational fringes and overgrowth with the ultimate aim of fostering a common humanist outlook among the Indians and the Kashmiris. If this could be done it would be a splendid achievement.

Joint Adventure

In this adventure, the Indian leaders while guiding their national affairs according to the wishes of the Indians, were expected not to ignore the sentiments and feelings of the Kashmiris, and, in their turn, the Kashmir leaders also were expected to see that in the conduct of State politics nothing was

done to embarass the Indian colleagues. It was an arduous task indeed, which only highly gifted men could undertake in the conditions prevalent in post-partition period; but if the integration of Kashmir with India was the desideratum the leaders had to become such gifted men.

It is fair to recognise that the Indian leaders made a good start; they were quite generous in handling the Kashmir State affairs. The leaders of the National Conference were afforded fullest opportunity to shape the destiny of their homeland according to their own lights. And this liberal policy was soon given a constitutional shape.

Impact of Indian Constitution

Within a surprisingly short period of two years after the achievement of independence, the Indian Constituent Assembly produced a bulky constitution enshrining the lofty ideals which had guided the country for decades in its fight for liberation against British imperialism. It is a document of which any democrat could feel proud. The constitutional structure of Indian society was raised on the firm foundation of secular principles and there was no trace of religious bias in it; caste system was completely ended, untouchability banned, religious and sex distinctions abolished, the rights of man guaranteed and India set on path of democratic freedom.

The preamble of the Constitution says:

> We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into Sovereign Democratic Republic and to secure to all citizens :
> *Justice*, social, economic and political
> *Liberty* of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship ;
> *Equality*, of status and of opportunity, and to promote among them all
> *Fraternity* assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation hereby adopt, enact and give ourselves this constitution.

In recent years controversy has raged round the genuineness and character of Indian Secularism. Pakistani leaders and publicists have derisively referred to it. To incite the faithful but backward sections of the Muslims, the Pakistanis mischievously interpret secularism as creed of the faithless. Sharp differences have been expressed over the definition of secularism by political theoriticians. In his able study, *India as a Secular State*, D.E.Smith explains the ideology in lucid and simple words. According to him a secular state is one "which guarantees individual and corporate religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with it"[1]. In order to make the definition clearer Smith adds : "The secular state views the individual as a citizen and not as a member of a particular religious group. Religion becomes entirely irrelevent in defining the terms of citizenship, its rights and duties are not affected by the individual's religious beliefs"[2].

India is a multilingual, multiracial and multireligious country. In this vast land live people professing different faiths speaking various languages and belonging to a variety of racial stock. The framers of the Constitution were therefore deeply anxious and sincerely desirous of laying down the foundation of the new State on a secular basis. The preamble of the Constitution expresses this concern in the resolve of securing to all citizens equality of status and opportunity. This equality is ensured by guaranteeing all the fundamental rights in the body of the Constitution.

The scope of the present work does not include a critical examination of the different sections of the Indian Constitution. Some of these are no doubt not as satisfactory as one would like them to be. But dealing with the subject of Kashmir's accession to India we are specially concerned with the parts of the Constitution which embody the principle of religious non-discrimination in general and public employment in particular. Article 15(1) of the Constitution provides that "the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them". Article 16(1) states that "there shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to unemployment or appointment to any office under the State". The potentialities of these solemn declarations for non-Hindu minorities are immense and cannot be overemphasised in a land where religious impact on the behaviour of the people continues to be tremendous.

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[1] D. E. Smith, *India As a Secular State*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, (1963) p. 4.

[2] Ibid p. 8,

The adoption of the Constitution gladdened the hearts of the Kashmiris like any other democrats in India and abroad. But what heartened the former most was the special provision which was made regarding their State in it. Like the leaders of the National Congress, the framers of the Constitution fully grasped the reasons that made the relationship between India and Kashmir tenuous and what they could do to make it strong and perennial. Despite the adoption of the full-fledged democratic Constitution by the Indian nation, the Constitution-makers realized that Kashmir had yet to feel one with India in every respect; emotional temperaments had to be adjusted and differences eliminated which could be done only with passage of time.

The Constitution-makers deprecated all attempts made in certain quarters to directly or indirectly foist the decisions of the Indians on the Kashmiris. They knew that in the circumstances then prevailing the Kashmiris would sharply react to the imposition of a constitution that was primarily the handiwork of the Indians because there was no accord on details at that stage. It would therefore be enough for the time being if Kashmiris willingly decided to accept the fundamentals of the Constitution and keep their State within its framework. The Constitution-makers envisaged a transition period during which the Kashmiris would have the opportunity to experience the sort of life that they would have to live as citizens of the Indian Union; only thereafter they would be able to make a voluntary declaration whether or not they would like to get absorbed in the mainstream of India's national life.

The Article 370

Very wisely, Article 370 was inserted in the Constitution as a temporary provision by the Constituent Assembly fully confident that the association with free democratic India would convince the Kashmiris of their bright future by becoming an integral part of the Union. According to this provision the whole of the Article 238 applicable to all other States did not apply to Jammu and Kashmir. The Article 370 further limited the powers of Indian Parliament to make laws about

matters detailed in the Union List and the Concurrent List. Thus Kashmir State remained within the frame work of the Indian Constitution but became virtually autonomous as the centre was empowered to handle only three subjects on its behalf, namely, External Affairs, Defence and Transport.

It may be noted here that even when the Constitution was being framed and completed voices were raised in the country by communalists and reactionaries against the special treatment of Kashmir, but better counsels prevailed with the Indian leaders and the, now controversial, Article 370 was passed almost unanimously by the Constituent Assembly. It was an earnest of Indian statesmanship.

However, the Constitution-makers envisaged the day not in too distant future but quite early, when the need of the temporary provisions would end and the Article 370 abrogated. But this step was to be taken not at the behests of any extraneous authority, not even at the demand of the Indian public opinion, however strong or united on the subject, but at the express wish and request of the people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore the concluding part of the Article 370 laid down in clearest possible terms that the President may by public notification declare that this Article shall cease to be operative or will be operative with such exception as specified but the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the Kashmir State to this effect shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification. After the dissolution of the State Constituent Assembly the right to recommend could naturally be exercised either directly by the Kashmiris or by their genuine representatives chosen in a free election.

This was, so to say, the outline of the blue print of a joint adventure for the establishment of a democratic society in indissoluble partnership with Kashmir, drawn by the secular minded leaders of the ancient country just liberated from imperialist yoke. It is obvious that the success of the plan depended on the good work that the two parties could do in their respective spheres of influence. If either failed, the endeavour was bound to end in smoke. It would be best for each

to be cognizant of its own problems but also to constantly keep in mind the difficulties of the other. The Indian leaders had to prove not only by their words but through their deeds that the Muslims could live like free, respectable and equal citizens of India as envisaged in the Constitution, convinced that their fears at the time of partition were unfounded and imaginary. The Kashmir leaders had to satisfy the State people that through secularism alone they could reach the goal of social democracy for which they had indomitably fought for years and that by remaining with India they could achieve more political and cultural freedom as well as economic prosperity than by acceding to Pakistan. Since the State had become practically autonomous, the National Conference leaders, as the new rulers, had fullest opportunity to create conditions for the fulfilment of such a purpose.

Kashmir Goes Ahead

The Kashmir leaders put their best foot forward. Undeterred by the atmosphere surcharged with communal passion and religious frenzy born of the partition, they assaverated that Kashmir was wedded to secular ideology and would not flinch from it ; the State people would protect their liberty with life-blood and build a society of their dreams.

It is notable that while the Indian subcontinent was enveloped by communal carnage and even Jammu, Muzaffarabad, Poonch and Mirpur were soaked with human blood, true to their traditions of religious tolerance the Kashmiris maintained peace in the Valley. With the slogan "Beware of communal demon ; protect motherland and liberty", the two communities fraternized with each other. When the Pathan tribesmen from Pakistan swooped down with fire and sword to massacre the non-Muslims and create chaos in the land, the Muslim volunteers of the National Conference heroically fought against the fanatical invaders. In the defensive engagements, two Muslim leaders, Abdul Aziz of Muzaffarabad and Mohammed Maqbul Sherwani of Baramulla, nobly laid down their lives reviving the happy memories of such heroic deeds during the hated Afghan rule.

State Constitution

It was decided that though forming part of India, the State would have its own constitution to meet the peculiar needs of the people, its own flag to symbolise Kashmir's individuality, a separate national anthem and a separate head of the State. The elaborate 158-clause Constitution was prepared by the State Constituent Assembly and completed on 17 November 1956 ; it came into force on 16 January 1957. Unlike the head of government of other units in the Indian Republic, the head of the Kashmir Government was called Prime Minister, and not Chief Minister, of the State. The medium of instruction in the schools was to be Urdu. The Dogra Maharaja was virtually banished and after sometime the hereditary rulership was terminated ; an elected head of the State significantly called Sadar-i-Riyast, and not governor as in other States, was to take his place. In this way the sentiments of the Kashmiris were respected and their fears of being absorbed by force in the vast Hindu majority of India allayed ; their identity was preserved ; their individuality left undiminished.

"Perhaps no country furnishes so curious a record of constant change as Kashmir", observed W. R. Lawrence in 1892, "and it is a matter for surprise that under rapid transition of governments, varying in race, religion and language, the people of the Valley should have retained their peculiar nationality unimpaired"[3]. The National Conference leaders acted to show that this was true even in 1952.

National Militia Formed

Appropriately, the National Conference Government recruited able bodied and spirited young men from all communities and classes to form a national militia for the defence of the State against foreign aggression and to maintain peace within the borders of the country. Trained under the direction of Indian commanders the militiamen rendered service in emergencies and during the days of turmoil. The

[3] Op. cit. p. 203

ban on the recruitment of the Kashmiris in the Indian Military which, it will be recalled, was first imposed by the Mughals and continued ever since, was removed ; many youngmen from the Valley were employed in different ranks of the land army as well as navy and air force according to their physical fitness and intellectual capacity. Thus after four centuries of foreign rule when calculated steps were taken to emasculate them, the Kashmiris were again enabled to enter the defence forces as patriotic soldiers.

Spread of Education

But the most gratifying measure above all else was the rapid expansion of literacy in the State. By opening schools at short distance from each other and colleges in big towns, the Government afforded opportunity to the children of the poorer classes to learn upto any standard they desired to do so ; what is remarkable, the education was free from the primary stages to the university level as nowhere else in the Indian Union or Pakistan.

While on the eve of independence the Maharaja's Government spent only Rs. 35 lakhs on education for the entire State, in 1966 the budget allocation for it was Rs. 550 lakhs which is over fifteenfold increase, a creditable achievement by any criterion.

It is the aim of the Government to enable every child of elementary school going age to be at school. Already no fewer than seventy five per cent boys of this age are attending elementary classes.

One aspect of this phenomenal progress deserves special notice. In pre-1947 days the girls education was a problem equally difficult to tackle for Government and the leaders of social reform ; backwardness, prejudice, poverty and a false sense of morality forbade many parents to get their girls educated ; Muslims especially were not eager to send girls to school and were hostile to co-education.

There was marked imbalance in the number of boys and girls at school, the ratio being 12 : 1.

After the termination of the hereditary rulership when

liberal plans were formulated and schools opened in all towns and big villages, girls came forward in larger numbers than boys to receive education. What is more, the parents at many places no longer hesitated to get the girls admitted in middle and high classes in the boys schools ; consequently, revolutionary changs were wrought by this healthy outlook of the people towards education.

In 1947 there were 15,000 boys and 1150 girls in high schools in the State ; in 1966 the number of boys in these classes increased to 25,600 while the number of girls in the same classes shot up to 8,000 ; thus, while the increase in the number of boys is not even 70%, it is over 760% in the case of the girls. The ratio of imbalance between the number of boys and girls decreased from 12 : 1 to 3 : 1.

The same heartening change occurred in education at the university level. While the number of men students in the colleges has gone up from 6300 to 7100 in the third five-year plan period (1961-66) an increase of about 14%, the number of women students has gone up by about 78% from 1680 to 3000 ; remarkably the imbalance in ratio between boys and girls becomes still less at this level and remains only 2 : 1. It is safe to believe that with this hopeful trend and under the enlightened policy of the Government the disparity in the number of boys and girls in educational institutions at all levels will disappear before long.

Rise in Living Standard

In the economic field too the Kashmir leaders acted with promptitude, courage and revolutionary zeal : Jagirs and big landed estates were abolished ; ceiling was put on the possession of agricultural land ; no one was allowed to have more than six acres of cultivable soil. The land seized from absentee landlords was distributed among landless tenants. In the Valley, it may be noted, landlords were mostly Hindu and the tenants exclusively Muslim. Old debts, amounting to millions of rupees were liquidated to improve the condition of indigent, poverty-stricken, indebted masses. Positively, the Government organised and subsidized the cottage in-

dustries and helped entrepreneurs to start new small scale manufacturing units. Long disused canals were repaired and new ones dug to irrigate dry and barren lands making thousands of acres cultivable to produce paddy and other food grains. A number of factories were set up, among them a joinery mill and a plyboard factory at Pampore, and a cement factory at Wuyan. Many roads were constructed connecting towns, villages and cities. A transport system, cheap, efficient and regular, was established carrying every day thousands of passengers from one corner of the State to the other. All towns and many villages were electrified.

These improvements in the social and economic life of the State people were by no means insignificant. After a long period of dismal poverty and semi-starvation the Kashmiris were witnessing the dawn of a new era of prosperity which was being shared more or less by all classes and communities ; there was an all-round rise in the standard of living though some sections in the city and towns profitted by it in far larger proportion than those living in the rural areas.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROGRESS IN CULTURAL FIELDS

After independence cultural activities all over the Indian Republic received an impetus. In Kashmir ; too, creative artists were encouraged by the march of events to express their emotions, record their observations and experiences and reflect the aspirations, urges and feelings of the people in their productions. Many attempts were made to generate an intellectual climate congenial to fresh thinking and unfoldment of individual potentialities.

The great poets, Abdul Ahad Dar Azad and Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor, passed away in the early days of the new regime, the former in April 1948 and the latter in June 1952. Master Zind Koul also breathed his last in 1965. But many writers, poets, play wrights, painters and musicians appeared who made their small contributions to literature and art. The few cultural associations which were languishing for want of support were activised and more societies for promotion of free thought, literature and fine arts were formed to vigorously pursue the aim of advancement. Among such bodies were Prem Sangeet Niketan Bazam-i-Adab, Himalaya Bhand

Theatre, Kala Kendra Club, Kashmir Art Society, Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, Kashmir Cultural Society and Progressive Artists Association.

The opening of a broadcasting station in Srinagar and the opportunity it afforded to artists for utilization of their talent, provided a further incentive to the cultural movement. The intellectual gifts for which the Kashmiris were known outside the Valley in bygone ages began to have an outlet once again.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 146 of the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution, the Academy of Arts, Culture and Languages was established and its central office located at Srinagar on 24 October 1958. Sadar-i-Riyasat Yuvraj Karan Singh became its patron and Prime Minister Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed its chairman; Mirza Kamal Uddin worked as its first secretary. The Academy was put on a sounder basis and its scope of work widened by Professor Jaya Lal Koul who functioned as its secretary for three years (1963-1966); in fact, the organisation attained maturity through his patient labour and intelligent guidance. In 1963, the Academy was declared an autonomous corporate body and its activities were spread throughout the State. Soon it established contacts with Lalit Kala Akademi, Sangeet Akademi and Sahitya Akademi at New Delhi.

From the inception, the Kashmir Academy formulated an ambitious programme of work to raise the cultural level of the people and encourage and assist the artists and men of letters in their creative activities. Besides giving subsidies for good productions, prizes are granted and awards given to writers, playwrights and poets as well as to painters, musicians and actors for outstanding work. Symposia are held in Urdu, Kashmiri and Dogri from time to time in which local poets in different languages take lively part.

To celebrate the birth anniversary of Poet Tagore, the Cultural Academy held several functions in different parts of the State. The Tagore Memorial Hall was built in Srinagar as a part of the anniversary celebrations and it became the nerve centre of the cultural activities.

The Cultural Academy compiled, edited and published a number of the manuscripts of works by Kashmiri authors long dead which were either lying in the archives or with private individuals,

Among these books is Abdul Ahad Azad's monumental work, *Kashmiri Zaban Aur Shayiri* (Kashmiri Language and Poetry), in three volumes (with able introductions by Prof. Zaidi and Mohammed Yusuf Teng); selected poems in Kashmiri by Nadim, Haba Khatoon, Haqqani, Maqbool Kralwari, Parmanand, Rasul Mir, Wahab Parey and Lakshman Koul's mathnavi, *Samnaama*. The Academy also published selected poems of mystic poets (Swachhkral, Niama Saab, Rahman Dar, Ahmed Batwari, Shah Gafoor, Shah Qalander, Rahim Saab, Wahab Khan and Asad Parey) in two volumes which were edited by Amin Kamil and entitled *Sufi Shaeyir* (Sufi Poets).

A notable production is *Kashur Sargam* in two volumes by Sheikh Abdul Aziz. Owing to lack of adequate facilities for learning the Kashmiri classical music, *Soofiana Kalam*, had been subjected to distortion. Abdul Aziz bent his energy to prepare its scientific notations in the book. After eleven years of hard, intensive research Aziz was successful in publishing two parts and many more are under preparation. Attempts were also made to tape-record the renderings of various *muqams* or ragas by well-known living *ustads* to facilitate further notations.

A *Dewan* containing Abdul Ahad Azad's all poems, published and unpublished, has been compiled and is at present under print.

In 1964 the Cultural Academy started two schools of music and fine arts at Srinagar and Jammu to impart scientific training to desiring students in painting, classical music and dramatics.

The Academy brings out the bi-monthly journal, *Sheeraza*, in urdu under the editorship of Mohammed Yusuf Teng; it is also published in Kashmiri and that version is edited by Ali Mohammed Lone.

Troupes of artistes (musicians, actors and dancers) are sent to tour India and troupes of Indian artistes are invited to

give performances in the State before appreciative audiences.

Compared with the heights attained by the ancient giants in the literary and artistic fields, the achievements of the contemporary generation are poor but it would be fair to record that encouraged by the assistance of the Cultural Academy, many young men and women have been prompted to devote their talents to intellectual work.

Space forbids from giving detailed information about the scores of writers, poets and artists who are living and spread all over the Valley or from making critical comments on their works. That will need a volume by itself. But any report on the cultural development of Kashmir after 1947 will be incomplete without mentioning the more known among them.

Master Zind Koul (1884-1965) earlier referred to earned the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1954 for the collection of his Kashmiri poems, *Sumaran* (Remembrance), which were rendered into English by himself.

Dina Nath Nadim, a gifted poet of leftist leanings, brought out in 1952 the first monthly periodical, now defunct, *Kwang Posh* (Saffron Flower), in Kashmiri. He introduced some new styles in Kashmiri poetry which were unknown before; in a way he modernised it and led the path. Nadim's opera, *Heemal Nagirai*, is popular and has earned him a distinct place in Kashmiri literature. He has composed a large number of fascinating pieces in charming styles though nothing has been published in a book form so far. He is now working as Deputy Director of Social Education.

Another poet to secure a Sahitya Akademi Award in 1960 for his collection of poems, *Naoroz Saba* (New Year Day Breeze), is Rahman Rahi (b.1925). He has also published (1955) *Sana Vani Saz* (Captivating Music) and *Subhuk Soda* (Morning Joy) (1956).

Ghulam Nabi Firaq (b.1922) has, in collaboration with Rahi, produced *Im Sani Alav* (These our Calls).

The editor of *Watan*, first weekly in Kashmiri, is G.N. Khayal (b.1936). By temperament a liberal and a radical nationalist, he suffered imprisonment for his views in 1962. His translation of Omar Khayyam in Kashmiri verse (1961) reflects

the depth of thought in the original. He has also translated Aristotle's *Poetica*. Khayal's collection of own poems has been published (1962) under the title *Pragash* (Dawn) Another collection of his (poems composed in prison) is *Zanjur-i-Hund Saaz* (Music of Chains) (1963). Earlier he compiled and edited *Saam Nama* of Lakshman Joo.

It has already been stated that Amin Kamil (b.1924) has compiled three volumes on Kashmiri mystic poets. His own collection (1955) is contained in *Mas Malar* (Pitcher of Wine). Besides, he has published *Lava ta Prava* (Dew drops & Flashes), *Noor Nama* (Life of Nooruddin) and *Gati Manz Gash* (Light in Darkness) (1960).

A notable work of research in the growth and development of Kashmiri literature is *Kashiri Abdach Tarikh* (History of Kashmiri Literature) by Autar Krishan Rahbar. Produced with devotion and a fair sense of scholarship, the book will be a valuable contribution to Kashmiri literature when its second volume is out. Rahbar has also to his credit two volumes of children's stories entitled *Mukhta Lar* (String of Pearls) and *Tabruk* (Offering).

Akhtar Mohin uddin, a keen observant of human nature, has written short stories on the social life of Kashmiris and published a readable collection, *Sat Sangar* (Seven Peaks), for which he earned Sahitya Akademi Award of 1957. His two novels, *Sonzal* (Rainbow) and *Dod Dag* (Pain and Anguish), are of considerable merit and a worthy contribution to Kashmiri prose.

Prof. Ghulam Mohiuddin Hajini (b. 1917) is a well-known author in Kashmiri and a popular figure among students. Suspected of abetting anti-government activities, he was kept in detention for many months in 1966. He earned Cultural Academy Award for his work (1961) entitled *Kashiri Nasrachi Kitab* (Book of Kashmiri Prose). He has also written *Kashir Shayiri*.

Ghulam Rasool Nazki has written *Namrood Nama* (Life of Namrood).

Ali Mohammed Lone, a promising young man, Assistant Secretary of the Cultural Academy, has written a novel *Asi ti Chhi Insan* (We too are Human). Jointly with Naji Munawra

and Moti Lal Saqi, Lone has produced short poems called *Kashir Tuk Bath* (Kashmiri Poetic Pieces). He writes in Urdu as well as in Kashmiri.

Pushkar Bhan a radio artist is known for his humorous hit, *Machama*.

Sufi Ghulam Mohammed, assistant editor of daily *Kidmat*, got a Cultural Academy Award for writing *Loosmaty Taarak* (Faded Stars), a collection of sketches and stories. Another collection of his short stories is called *Shisha ta Sangistan* (Glass and Stoneland).

The most popular Hindu scripture, Bhagwat Geeta, has been translated in Kashmiri verse by Sarwanand Koul Premi. He has also written a biography of a Kashmiri Pandit Saint, Mirza Kak.

Bansi Nirdosh was awarded the Cultural Academy Award for a collection of his short stories, *Bal Marayo* (I Die Frustrated in Love). To his credit is also another collection, *Adam Chhu Yithai Badnam* (Man Blamed For Nothing). He has translated a biography of poet Tagore in Kashmiri.

An award was granted to Muzaffar Azim for his collection of poems, *Zolana*, by the Kashmir Cultural Academy.

Mohammed Yusuf Teng has written a learned commentary on Gulrez.

Among other writers and poets mention may be made of Moti Lal Saqi (poet), Arjandev Majboor, Chaman Lal Chaman (poet), Makhanlal Bekas (poet), Farooq Nazki (poet) Radhey Nath Masarat (poet), Makhan Lal Mahow (poet), Rasool Pampoori, Noor Mohammed Roshan, Shankar Raina, Fazil, Firaq, Rasa Jawdani and Aisha Mastoor.

Books in English

Three notable books written in English after independence are the monumental work, *Kashir*, in two volumes (1948) by Dr. G.M.D. Sufi, *A History of Kashmiri Pandits* (1953) by Jai Lal Kilam and *A History of Kashmir* (1964) by P. N. K. Bamzai.

Literature in Urdu

As Urdu continued to be the official language of the State, it registered further progress and a number of Kashmiris made contributions to its literature in poetry and prose.

Ali Mohammed Lone already referred to, wrote a novel *Shahid Hai Teri Arzoo* (To Wit Your Desire) which secured an award of Kashmir Cultural Academy in 1964.

Noor Shah a prolific author, has produced some novels and a few collections of short stories. His novels, *Ek Rat Ki Malika* (One Night Queen) and *Payel Ke Zakham* (Wounds of Love), and short stories contained in *Nili Jheel Kale Saye* (Blue Lake, Black Reflections), *Be Ghat Ki Nav* (Boat Without Landing Place) and *Vairane Ke Phool* (Flowers of Desert) have been published.

Prof. Hamidi is another story writer of repute. His *Pighalte Phool* (Disintegrating Flowers) can compare with good novels in Urdu literature. He has also to his credit two collections of stories entitled *Baharoon Men Shole* (Flames of Spring) and *Vadi Ke Phool* (Flowers of the Valley). His poetic pieces have been published under the title *Aroose Tomana* (Bedecked Aspirations).

Tej Bahadur Bhan a writer with leftist views has published two collections, *Aurat* (woman) and *Jhelum Ke Sine Par* (On the Bosom of Jhelum).

Two poets with old fashioned ideas and moderate views are Prof. Qazi Ghulam Ahmed and Mir Ghulam Rasool Nazki. Both have published their collections, the former under the title *Harafi Shirin* (Sweet Word) and the latter under *Deedai Tar* (Wet Eye). Nazki's son Farooq, a visionary, promising young man, contemplates publishing his collection of poems, *Du Atsha* (Twin Fires), soon.

Among others who merit mention as authors in Urdu are: Mir Taus, Shahzor, Hamdam, Pushkar Nath, Mukhmoor Hussain and Kuldeep Raina.

Hindi and its Writers

Before independence, the teaching of Hindi was confined to the educational institutions and only a section of the Hindu students displayed some concern to learn it.

Despite obvious difficulties earnest efforts were made after 1950 to create interest in the common people for the national language of India. For many years these did not bear any fruit, but with untiring zeal lovers of Hindi unflinchingly pursued the aim.

In 1956, Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti of Wardha opened a local branch at Srinagar and the propagation work started in earnest. By holding seminars, debates and competitions, the Samiti attracted attention; three libraries of Hindi books were established; centres were opened throughout the Valley where examinations were held to issue qualifying certificates. Then, gradually, some young men and women belonging to all the communities learnt the language. The Samiti began with barely two centres in 1956 but today it has no fewer than 54 centres in the city and different towns including those in far flung areas of Ladakh and Kishtwar. During the past decade as many as 13,288 students appeared in the examinations in different standards of Hindi held under the supervision of the central office at Wardha. It is remarkable that of the examinees 3,522 were Muslim boys and girls some of whom earned distinction by securing high marks.

Encouraged by the increasing literary activity and the progress registered by Hindi, the Kashmiris began to express ideas and ventilate feelings in this language too.

Prof. Prithvi Nath Pushup compiled and edited selected prose and poetic pieces by Kashmiri authors in *Padya Pushpanjali* and *Gadya Pushpanjali*. Himself a poet of taste, he has translated into verse the compositions of some old Kashmiri poets. His two works *Padyanjali* and *Gadyanjali* have been published by the Kashmir Cultural Academy.

Sheshi Shekhar Toshakhani has published a collection of his poems entitled *Thodasa Akash* (A Little Space). Another poet, Rattan Lal Shant, has produced *Khoti Kirnen* (Spurious Rays) which contains the pieces he composed from time to time.

Prithvi Nath Madhup whose *Vay Mukhar Khen* (Those Exhilirating Moments) and *Kavi Parmanand* have been published, is writer of some promise.

Another Hindi writer who deserves mention is Kashi Nath Dar who has edited anthologies *Shat Dal*, *Nibandh Kumkum* and *Pravahini* (River) in two parts.

Among those who participate in Hindi kavi sammelans or write short stories and deserve mention are Mohan Nirash (poet), Hari Krishen Koul, Chaman Lal Sapru, Chaman Lal Hakhu, Dwarika Nath Giggu (poet), Janki Nath Kamal and Satya Lal Rasik.

Some selected Hindi poems of Dr. Mohammed Ayub Khan of the Hindi Department of Kashmir University, who takes lively interest in the progress of Hindi among students, have been published in a book by the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti.

Two other organizations which are devoted to the spread of Hindi in the Valley are Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Bhartiya Sahitiyakar Sangam.

Play Wrights and Actors

Two budding play-wrights of modern Kashmir are Radha Krishen Braru and Moti Lal Kemu; the former studied at Kala Kendra, New Delhi, and the latter at the College of Music, Dance and Dramatics, Baroda. Before becoming a play-wright and an actor, Kemu had training in dancing at Baroda. Both Braru and Kemu are energetically engaged in reviving the dramatic art of Kashmir. While Braru has organised the *bhands* (the descendants of ancient caricaturists) of Vahthor under Himalayan Bhand Theatre, Kemu is engaged in revitalising the disused faculties of *bhagats* of Akingam under the leadership of Mohammed Sultan. Five theatre groups which took part in a dramatic competition in July 1966 were: 1. Kashmir National Theatre, 2. Jawahar Dramatic Club, 3. TASK (Theatre Arts Seminary of Kashmir), 4. The Masked Ones (of Regional Engineering College) and 5. DARSHAK. Jawahar Club won the first prize for the Hindi play "Kanchan Rang", Braru's *Yahoo* too earned a prize while the *Puz Apuz* (Truth and Untruth) performed by bhagats was widely appreciated.

Za Gabbar a play depicting the composite culture and communal unity in Kashmir written by Prem Nath Dar was staged at Delhi and appreciated by the audience.

Other play-wrights are Som Nath Zutshi (who has translated Ibsen in Kashmiri), Pushkar Nath Bhan, and Som Nath Sadhu whose short plays and humorous features broadcast from Kashmir Radio are liked.

A promising journalist and art critic is Shamim Ahmed Shamim who began his career as editor of *Sheeraza*, but, relinquishing that semi-official job, is now independently running the weekly *Aaina* which is widely read by educated people in all classes for its humour, incisive analysis of political events, sarcastic remarks and bold comments on men and matters.

Painters

A number of Kashmiris have distinguished themselves as painters.

G. R. Santosh (b. 1929) comes first in this line. Starting as a signboard writer, Santosh took to the art seriously and studied under N. S. Bendre at Baroda. Completing the course in 1958, he plunged into a creative life and produced scores of delightful canvases. His work has been exhibited not only in Indian cities but also at several world capitals. He has held many one-man shows of his paintings. He is the holder of National Akademi Award (1957) and the recipient of other prizes.

Santosh is a short story writer. His Urdu novel, *Samander Pyasa hai* (Sea is Thirsty), earned a Cultural Academy Award (1965).

Triloke Kaul (b.1925) is a graduate of the Punjab University. He worked for some time as a decorator and studied the fine art at Baroda where he earned his degree in 1957. At present he is working as the Director School of Designs in Kashmir.

Koul's paintings have been hung at many exhibitions where they were commended. He is recipient of a National Akademi Award (1961). Alongwith Santosh and others he has held several exhibitions of paintings. In October 1966, he held a one-man show in Bombay.

Rattan Parimoo (b. 1935) is a product of Baroda School and is at present working as Reader in History of Art in the

Fine Art Faculty of M. S. University. Parimoo studied at Coutauld Institute of Art at London for three years. He has travelled on the continent and USA visiting art museums and galleries. For his paintings exhibited at different cities he has earned several prizes and awards. His one-man show was held at Delhi (1964) and at Calcutta (1965). He also participated in painting exhibitions in U. K. (1962).

Miss Kishori Koul (b. 1935) is the first woman in the history of Kashmir to be a painter. Playing with the brush to while away time as an invalid in a sanitorium, she acquired zest for the art. This took her to Baroda where she studied under Bendre and earned Master's degree with distinction in 1965.

Miss Kishori has participated in painting exhibitions of local as well as all-India importance and secured a few prizes. Her one man shows were held at Aligarh University (1966), at Bombay (1966) and at Calcutta in November 1966. She is the founder-member of Baroda School of Artists and Kashmir Art Society.

Besides being a painter, Kishori writes short stories and gives talks on art from the Kashmir Radio. Recently she played the role of a heroine in the feature film on the life of Poet Mahjoor which was produced by Prabhat Mookerjee and Balraj Sahney.

Bansi Parimu (b. 1933), painter and sculptor, is another self taught artist whose paintings have been hung in many exhibitions in Srinagar and outside Kashmir. Recipient of several prizes and awards, Parimu held one-man shows at Ambala in 1954, at New Delhi in 1959, at Bombay in 1963 and at Ahmedabad in 1966. His interests are photography and farming. Parimu founded and organised Young Artists Club in 1962 and is also a founder-member of Kashmir Art Society.

S.N. Bhat and P.N. Kachru two other notable artists both self taught have taken part in several exhibitions in Srinagar and elsewhere. Kachru gave a one-man show of his paintings at Calcutta in 1965. Both are now employed in the School of Designs at Srinagar.

Two artists who have persistently followed the realistic style, are D.N. Wali and Mohan Raina; the former has exhibited

numerous beautiful and pleasing landscapes in Delhi and Calcutta, the latter went to U.S.A. for higher studies and is now employed in an American University in giving lessons on ancient Indian paintings.

Some other painters who deserve mention are Nissar Aziz, Suraj Tikku, Bhusan Koul, Maharaj Kishan Bhat, Shiban Kav, Bhavanesh Raina and Gayoor Hassan, all of whom have exhibited their paintings at one place or another and received appreciation of discerning critics.

Master Craftsmen

The revival and expansion of cottage industries afforded opportunities to many people to demonstrate their talent in different indigenous arts like shawl weaving, carpet designing, paper machie and wood carving. Ghulam Qadir Rangrez and Ghulam Qadir Lala, two master craftsmen, were awarded national awards by President of India, the former in 1964 for exquisite workmanship in *kani shawl* and the latter in 1965 for carpet designing.

Musicians

In the dark period of history music, once in a flourishing state, had become almost extinct. Now musicians too began to rise. *Sufiana Kalam* and *Chhakri*, the two forms of music peculiar to Kashmir which had just survived through efforts of individual lovers of art, were revived. Side by side the classical Indian music as well as the light music were introduced and made fashionable. A number of young men and women acquired the knowledge and the practice of playing on different musical instruments.

Even before 1947, Jagan Nath Shivpuri a young ambitious, hard working boy with sweet voice studied vocal and classical music. He had the gift and natural aptitude for acquiring it. Facing innumerable difficulties and social odium, he introduced the music among the youth of the Valley. He founded Prem Sangeet Niketan which did much pioneering work in the field. Now the principal of the Niketan, Shivpuri has distinguished himself as an artiste of repute.

Mohanlal Aima, a law graduate of the Punjab University, is a self taught musician whose potentialities as a vocalist developed while working on the staff of the Radio Kashmir. He soon joined the All India Radio, earned a distinction and was deputed to Kabul on a musical mission. He is at present in charge of the Music Section of the Indian Television Centre at New Delhi where he plans and directs its various programmes.

Shamboo Nath Sopori a graduate of Prayag Sangeet Samiti in instrumental music (Sitar), is lecturer of music at Womens College, Srinagar. Belonging to a family of musicians he has earned a reputation for being an expert sitarist as well as vocalist. His son Bhajanlal is a good player on Santoor.

There are several parties and individual artistes broadcasting instrumental and vocal music from the Radio Kashmir some of whom deserve to be mentioned.

Mohammed Abdullah Tibet Bakal is considered to be the best and sweetest in the *Sofiana Kalam*. Habib Ullah and Ghulam Ahmed Soofi have specialised in *Chhakri*. Two parties of known musicians are G.N. Dolwal and his companions, and Balpuri and his associates.

A specialist in the ragas and raginis of *Soofiana Kalam* is Ustad Ramzanjoo. Two other masters of this instrumental music are Ghulam Mohammed Qalinbaft and Asad Ganai.

The only expert player of the peculiar musical instrument of the Valley, *Saz*, is Ghulam Nabi Bhat. A musician who can handle with equal ease sitar, sarangi and tabla is Abdul Ghani Namtahal. Sana Ullah is known for his dexterity in playing on Rabab.

Vidhlal Dhar (soofiana and classical) is a well-known devotee of the Muse and an expert player on Santoor. His two daughters, Rageshwari Mattoo and Jaijaivanti, are vocalists. His third daughter, Raj Kumari, had given evidence of growing into a virtuoso but unfortunately she met with a fatal accident in Delhi in 1964.

A budding instrumentalist (violin) is Vijaya Bazaz who obtained her M.Mus. degree from the Baroda College of Music,

Dance and Dramatics in 1966. She was awarded a gold medal for being the best girl in her class.

Among the singers of Kashmiri songs and gazals from Radio Kashmir who have fascinated the listeners and captivated many hearts are Raj Begum and Nasim Akhtar (vocalists). Mention may also be made of Swaroop Chand (Principal, Sangeet Mahavidyalaya), Raj Karni Koul (lecturer in sitar), Dulari Koul, Nirmala Chhatoo Mohan Wali, Asha Koul, Motilal Khazanchi, Qadir Bhat of Vahthor, Mohammed Sultan of Makhdoom Munder, Abdul Khaliq of Bijbihara and Ghulam Mohammed Bhat of Manz Gund, all good singers.

Kamal Bhat of Vahthor is another expert player on Kashmiri sitar; so are Dwarka Nath Koul (light music) and Kanwal Kishan Jala (of Paluskar Sangeet Sadan). Sarwanand Koul is a tabla player and Virendra Mohan a flutist.

CHAPTER FIVE

RULE BY ROD AND TERROR

The rapid progress in social, economic and cultural fields after Kashmir's accession to India would have been inconceivable in pre-1947 days under the monarchical rule of the Dogras; it was surely conducive to the fructification of the plan for integration of the State with the Union.

But, unfortunately, the National Conference leaders were intolerant of opposition. It was in no way surprising or unexpected that as a result of the harrowing events which followed partition, secularism was at a discount, particularly with a large section of the State Muslims who opposed the new regime. The situation demanded the best qualities of head and heart: Objective assessment, tolerance towards dissent, power of persuasion, sweet reasonableness, sense of history and calm attitude. But armed with absolute power the new rulers in their impatience to convert public opinion to secularism, if need be by force and coercion, did not hesitate to use extremely repressive methods and to violate many canons of social justice and principles of democracy.

Harsh Measures Adopted

The first Prime Minister of the National Conference Government was Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the veteran

leader of the freedom struggle, who assumed power immediately after the instrument of accession to India was signed and ratified. During his seven years rule thousands of political workers were consigned to prison, mostly without trial for varying periods extending to three years merely because they held views unpalatable to the Government. Among the prisoners were not only pro-Pakistan politicians but also those who cherished faith in secularism but were critical of the working of the administration and doings of the National Conference workers. Sheikh Abdullah invited brigades of the Indian Army which were deployed all over the State on its border to defend it against invasion from Pakistan. These forces were frequently though indirectly employed to intimidate and silence opposition irrespective of the consideration whether it was responsible and democratic or wild and communal. Each and every opponent of the Government was tarred with the same brush; liquidation and not conversion of critics became the aim of the rulers.

An ordinance entitled "Enemy Agents Ordinance" was promulgated to arrest and summarily try those who were suspected of pro-Pakistan leanings with harsh punishment of rigorous imprisonment for the guilty. The Preventive Detention Act and Defence of India Rules vehemently denounced as lawless laws by the National Conference leaders in the days of the Maharaja were pressed into service and freely used to indiscriminately imprison opponents on the charge of opposing the Government and not falling in line with the views of the National Conference.

Hooliganism Encouraged

Concerned that the incarceration of a large number of people will bring the regime into disrepute outside the State, a more reprehensible method of dealing with the opponents was ingeniously devised: A band of ragtag and bobtail was organised to humiliate and demoralise the critics. The police force was doubled and a persecution wing known as Special Police Centre established under a notorious bully, Ghulam Qadir Ganderbali, head constable promoted superintendent, to maltreat and torture suspects and release them only when their spirit had been sufficiently broken disabling them to oppose the regime.

Today when Sheikh Abdullah has become champion of liberty and Kashmir people's right of self-determination and a staunch supporter of Indo-Pak friendship, it seems unbelievable that during his stewardship unheard of barbarities were perpetrated by him or with his knowledge and approval to subjugate patriots for demanding the same right. However, it is manifest that such methods of running the administration and governing the country were hardly helpful in strengthening the forces of secularism or in securing free will of the Kashmiris for integration of the State with India; it only embittered the Kashmiris and assisted the Pakistan authorities in making their propaganda effective and in sowing seeds of hostility towards India in the Valley and other parts of the State mostly inhabited by the Muslims.

People Alienated

If the National Conference leaders had thought that the repressive measures would be abandoned after a short period and the State restored to normalcy as a result of liberal, political and economic reforms, they were soon disillusioned. Suppression made people resentful and the more they opposed the regime the more drastic were the measures the Government applied to put them down. A vicious circle had set in which seemed nowwhere to break.

Because the objective of integrating Kashmir with India by the voluntary assent of the people was a joint venture involving the interests of both, the Indian leaders should have remonstrated with the Kashmir Government and impressed upon the National Conference leaders that it was only through a climate of consent that the purpose could be achieved, and that by alienating the goodwill of the Kashmiris they were jeopardising any chance of success. But, depending on the false reports of the Kashmir leaders that the suppressed people were one and all pro-Pakistan conspirators, the Indian Government connived at the misdeeds. This was a grave error of judgement which proved harmful in the long run. Had the Indian leaders displayed the required courage to firmly stand by Kashmir democracy and upheld the civil liberties and human

rights of the Kashmiris, the accession problem would have found a solution by now to the satisfaction of democratic India.

That despite the termination of Dogra rule, the implementation of the revolutionary economic reforms and the rising standard of life in the State, the National Conference leaders became unpopular there could be no doubt; it could be read in the angry looks of the people and smelt in the air by any keen observer.

Hindu Communalism Challenges

In India too, secularism did not have a smooth sailing. It is one thing, though praiseworthy in itself, to produce a splendid democratic constitution enshrining human values and high ideals, but it is different to practise the noble professions in conducting public affairs and directing every day life. In spite of the herculean efforts of the top Congress leaders, Hindu revivalism became increasingly violent in temper and minatory in behaviour. It received sufficient nourishment from the poisonous anti-Hindu propaganda incessantly carried on across the border in Pakistan. Worse still, Hindu narrow-mindedness began to invade the Congress citedal. The Muslims in India found themselves in an unenviable position; they were suspected of harbouring disloyal tendencies; they were denied fair share in civil services and in recruitment to armed forces notwithstanding the declared equality of all communities and individuals before the basic law laid down in the egalitarian Constitution. Even in Kashmir the ratio of Muslim entrants in Central Government departments was insignificant and far from their ratio in State population though suitable candidates were becoming increasingly available for the jobs. This gave a big jolt to the thinking of the Kashmir Muslims and augmented their communal propensities.

Encouraged by the rejuvenation of Hindu communalism in India, the Dogras of Jammu founded Praja Parishad (now local branch of Jan Sangh) to advocate the lost cause of Hindu supremacy in State politics and administration which held sway before. It was destined to come into conflict with the Government seeking social justice for the Muslims. Every

reform was a thorn in the side of the Dogras who fiercely opposed it. The Parishad launched anti-government movements, the agitators were arrested and imprisoned first in 1949, then in 1950, and for a third time in 1952. There was an uproar in the Indian Press over it and the Indian Government could not help feeling concerned. Then an astounding event took place which had far reaching consequences in State politics. One Central Minister, Gopalaswamy Ayyengar, a former State Premier, was hurriedly despatched by the Union Government to Jammu in 1952 to put pressure on the Kashmir Government to release the Dogra agitators. At the time hundreds of Kashmiri Muslims were also behind the bars; but neither the Indian Press raised any voice demanding their liberty nor did the Indian Government think it fit to advise the Kashmir Government to release them. This difference in the treatment of Dogra Hindus and Kashmir Muslims could not nourish the roots of secularism in the State nor did it strengthen the unity of Kashmiris with the Indians.

Abdullah Vacillates

Sheikh Abdullah guessed the implications of this discriminatory attitude on the part of Indian leaders and he felt disconcerted. Was it only to suppress the Kashmiris that he was in power? It now dawned on him that he was becoming an unwanted figure because he had trodden over the aspirations and emotions of the people he had pledged to serve. Rather thoughtlessly and indifferent to consequences, he made an unexpected volte face and played foul with India. He started giving expression to ideas which were in crass contradiction to the views he had loudly voiced for over twelve years, Overlooking his own faults of omission and commission, he unsparingly denounced Indian leadership and Congress nationalism. He virtually and unilaterally tore to pieces the agreement that had been solemnly made by the Indian and the Kashmir leaders for promoting secular idealism. India felt aghast, the Congress leaders were flabbergasted and for the Indian Government it was a trying time indeed.

Sheikh Abdullah's forthright but imprudent utterances led to his deposition, arrest and imprisonment on 8 August 1953

at the hands of his unscrupulous lieutenant, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, who became the second National Conference Prime Minister. Along with Sheikh Abdullah hundreds of his supporters including cabinet minister, Mohammed Afzal Beg, and some other prominent leaders and legislators were consigned to prison. There were widespread disturbances in the Valley when police resorted to firing at several places to bring the excited people under control.

The defection of Sheikh Abdullah and his group should have occasioned heart searching and a reassessment of the Kashmir policy in the light of the principles which had guided the Constitution-makers. This was not done at all; the minds at New Delhi did not travel that way. A flattering unction was laid to the ailing soul that Sheikh Abdullah was solely responsible for the mess and a strong hand was needed to deal firmly with unfriendly sections in the Valley. The Indian Government failed to diagnose the malady which afflicted State politics and therefore the ill conceived policy continued to operate.

Nationalist Muslims Fall Out

A little while before this sad episode, Ghulam Mohiuddin Kara, a pillar of the National Conference, fell out with the ruling party and started in early June 1953 a new body, Political Conference, which rallied a number of workers under its banner. Depressed by the increasing sullen attitude of the people, Kara thought that the chances of Kashmir remaining with India had disappeared as a result of the misdeeds of his erstwhile colleagues no less than the narrow minded policy of the Indian leaders. A staunch supporter of Kashmir Nationalism, though known for his pro-Pakistan slogans with which pamphlets and statements issued by him are adorned, Kara would prefer to see the Valley attaining an independent status.

Having been held in detention for over a year, M.A. Beg, after release convened a meeting of Sheikh Abdullah's supporters and formed the Plebiscite Front which, as the name indicates, demands the holding of a free and fair plebiscite to finally solve the accession dispute. The Front is also pledged

to fight for the right of self determination of the State people in general.

Bakshi Intensifies Repression

With the exit of Sheikh Abdullah from the Government, the chapter opened by the inclusion of Article 370 in the Indian Constitution to gradually reconcile the two nationalisms of India and Kashmir through patient labour and tolerance of dissent, came to a close. By this time Hindu revivalists and reactionaries had been able to exert sufficient baneful influence on the policies of the Central Government. Nehru who is on record to have frequently stated in public gatherings and Press statements that the Union Government would bow before the will of the Kashmiris, harped on a different tune. He declared that the accession was complete and the question of a plebiscite did not arise. Blame for the basic change in policy was irrelevently laid at the door of Pakistan for entering into military pacts with the Western powers, particularly the United States of America.

It was now assumed that Kashmir Muslims were essentially communal in outlook and only firm determination to hold the State at any cost would make them forget the possibility of any chance of accession to Pakistan. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed assured India that by providing large sums to be spent for the welfare of the Kashmiris the Indian Government would be able to achieve the new aim. The old adage that man does not live by bread alone was conveniently forgotten.

There is no gainsaying the fact that India helped the Kashmir Government with more liberal grants during the Bakshi regime and a further progress was registered in educational and economic spheres. But these laudable achievements were offset by the savage repression let loose in the period. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed added some more laws to the armoury of repression: Any citizen could be detained in prison for five years at a stretch and the Government was under no obligation to inform the detenu about the grounds of detention; the helpless victim could be rearrested after release and detained for another term of five years. Bakshi, besides having a large

number of goondas in his pay, recruited a force euphimistically called the Peace Brigade which was frequently employed to beat the opponents and silence them. He imposed heavy restrictions on the State Press and peremptorily banned publication of newspapers which were critical of his misconceived policy and atrocious deeds. He seldom permitted a new journal to come out unless he was convinced that the editor would play his tune. During his days public meetings could never be held in the Valley for political purposes unless they were meant to support the views and the activities of the ruling clique.

Moral Relapse

The loss of political rights under the National Conference Government was but small in comparison with the moral degeneration which set in as a result of the terrible suppression. Hypocricy, dissimulation, lying and cowardice reappeared in the character of the Kashmiris. They no longer spoke out their minds fearlessly. The network of espionage and the fear of being reported as an individual harbouring anti-Government views made a Kashmiri suspect every one he met. It was a deplorable state of affairs surely in no way conducive to the reconstruction of the moral and cultural life of the people so essential for the establishment of a democratic society.

Side by side with the practice of strong arm methods, Bakshi launched upon a campaign of corruption of both supporters and opponents by any means at his disposal. By giving tempting bribes in the shape of huge sums, government jobs or P.W.D. and Forest contracts he corrupted political workers, journalists, religious leaders and others inside and outside the State. His route permit system under which a permit holder could earn thousands while sitting at home gained notoriety. There was no branch of administration and no sphere of public life where bribery was not openly practised. To be corrupt carried no stigma, no discredit for an official or a public worker.

Inroads into Autonomy

Sheikh Abdullah was jealous of Kashmir's autonomy and resisted its infringement, at any rate in the early years of his

premiership, but Bakshi, to curry favour with the Indian public opinion, allowed frequent inroads into it. Within a few years after the adoption of the Indian Constitution, a number of Presidential notifications were issued to curtail the autonomy of the State without the express desire of the Kashmiris. Among the measures adopted were: Application of fundamental rights Article, extension of the Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and authority of the Auditor-Generel of India, transfer of Services to the Union list, approval by the Union Planning Commission of State development programmes, financial allocation from the centre, abolition of the customs barrier, integration of Services, and the association of the State with the Northern Zonal Council.

In almost every public utterance, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in season and out of season declared that Kashmir had finally and irrevocably decided to remain with India; the only problem facing the State was, in his opinion, to liberate that part of the country which was in the occupation of Pakistan. To pacify the ruffled consience of Indian Democracy, he would dogmatically add that every Kashmiri supported him in these assertions.

Under Bakshi's regime general elections to the State legislature were held twice in 1957 and 1962. As has been universally recognised now even in India, on both occasions the elections were rigged and by hook or by crook Bakshi got his hand-picked men declared elected to the legislature. Only three seats were allowed to be captured in 1962 by the Praja Parished in Jammu so that Indian public opinion is not antagonised.

Deceptive Normalcy

Seven years of steam rolling had at last brought about a stability in Kashmir and Bakshi was accepted as a successful administrator and a hero. The chaotic conditions of Pakistan politics which culminated in the establishment of military dictatorship in that country in 1958, were extremely helpful to Bakshi in bringing about the "normalcy". He was admired and his methods recommended for emulation to inexperienced and "less gifted" politicians holding office; he was lionised

wherever he travelled in India. The Indian leaders believed or pretended to believe that the Kashmir problem had ended and any one who had the courage to point out that the seeming calm was deceptive was considered an incorrigible sceptic, if not worse. A structure had been laboriously raised which appeared strong, massive and well built. Kashmir had become safe, impregnable and inseparable part of India ; at any rate, so thought the Indian politicians as well as the National Conference leaders.

Then in the beginning of 1963 cracks began to appear and at the end of the year a chasm yawned which swallowed Bakshi. He was blown off with his own petard. The house of cards built by him with fabulous wealth of India and the blood and tears of the Kashmiris came down with one gust of public resentment.

CHAPTER SIX

A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

There is sufficient reason to believe that in 1962 Prime Minister Nehru was feeling concerned about Kashmir and pondering over the unpleasant developments.[1] He was biding time to put the sinking boat of the State politics on an even keel. When in 1963 the Congress adopted the Kamraj Plan the Kashmiris were overjoyed to learn that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had, in a spirit of bravado, declared to relinquish office and Nehru encouraged him to do so.

It was fervently expected that the fresh development will lead to a revision of India's Kashmir policy and afford a chance to the progressive group in the National Conference headed by G. M. Sadiq to come to power. The progressives had for some time made it known that they were unhappy and anxious to create a peaceful climate by restoring civil liberties, giving clean administration and introducing democratic practices, thus retrieving the good name of the Indian Union.

[1]After an extensive tour of the Kashmir Valley in June 1962, the author had some correspondence with Premier Nehru in which the deteriorating political conditions in the State were discussed. This correspondence giving an indication of Nehru's mind is published as Appendix B at the end of the book.

Acceptance of his resignation by Nehru was shocking to Bakshi. He regretted the mistake in stepping down from Premiership when it was too late to retrace the step. But through underhand manoeuvrings and objectionable tactics he managed to foil the progressive group in the ruling party from coming to power and despite the advice of Nehru to read the writing on the wall, he succeeded in getting a government of his own proteges reconstituted in the State with Shamsuddin as Prime Minister.

Then, suddenly, the pent-up feelings of the Kashmiris got a way of expression. Prophet Mohammed's holy hair lodged at Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar was stolen by unknown hands. How this sacrilege took place is still shrouded in mystery but it shook the Valley to its depths; the Kashmiris rose like an unbound giant to express anger. Soon the avowedly religious movement assumed an unmistakable political complexion. The huge antigovernment demonstrations which were held all over the Valley paralysed the administration. For days members of the State Cabinet had to remain confined within the four walls of their homes. Bakshi was conspicuous by his absence. When his brother, Abdul Rashid, general secretary of the National Conference, attempted to address a gathering of infuriated people at Lal Chowk,in Srinagar, he was manhandled and his car smashed. Some property of the Bakshi brothers acquired since 1947 by dubious means was consigned to fire by angry mobs.

All the opposition parties, political and semi political, in the Valley including Sheikh Abdullah's Plebiscite Front and Ghulam Mohi-uddin Kara's Political Conference, joined hands and a powerful working body known as the Action Committee was formed to guide the gigantic movement. A new figure Mohammed Farooq, a lad of nineteen years, ebullient, courageous and dashing, donning the hereditary mantle of Mirwaiz Jama Masjid, appeared on the scene to lead the orthodox and conservative Muslim opinion. He too offered his growing strength to the Action Committee and with this reinforcement the movement assumed formidable proportions. Never since 1932 had the Kashmiris presented a united front for a cause as in winter 1963-64.

It is remarkable that complete communal harmony prevailed during the period of the upheaval and not a single Hindu—man, woman or child—was molested. While demanding the restoration of the sacred relic the people left nobody in doubt that Bakshi and his brothers were the most hated men in the State and until they were removed from positions of power and influence the Kashmiris would not feel conciliated. This served as an eye-opener to all who had maintained a complacent attitude over Kashmir.

Under the compelling circumstances Union Government consulted safety of the State in bidding Bakshi to behave properly. Shamsuddin Ministry was asked to step down and hand gres the reins of the Government to Sadiq and his band of prodifferentsives. This opened a new chapter in Kashmir history since from the one through which the people had passed over October 1947.

In the contemporary history of Kashmir the people have on two occasions, in July 1931 and December 1963, shown that exasperated by the misdeeds of the rulers they can assert their will and make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Gevernment to function. In winter 1963-64 despite inclement weather the Kashmiris proved that the bestiality of Bakshi's hordes had not succeeded in killing their spirit. Such massive and unprecedented were the demonstrations that New Delhi was induced to take notice and adopt measures to mollify the agitated people.

Dim Realization of Real Problem

Dimly it began to be realized at this juncture that there was something basically wrong with the Kashmir policy pursued by the Central Government. For the first time in sixteen years the Indian Press published long, more or less accurate and revealing, accounts of the highhandedness and shameful methods with which the Kashmiris had been ruled by the National Conference governments. Some light was thrown on the rampant corruption fostered by Bakshi and his brothers and the seething unrest which had brought about the uprising. Almost overnight Bakshi, the ideal administrator and beloved leader, became the villain of the piece; he was presented,

now quite justifiably, in dark colours as one responsible for bringing discredit to India in Kashmir.

Whether the Indian leaders realized that the Kashmir problem was the product of violation of the spirit which guided the Constitution-makers and that the Central Gevernment had for past years followed a wrong method in bringing about the integration of the State with India, is doubtful. Probably they never thought on those lines. But it is clear that profiting by long and bitter experience and re-enthused by the idealism which inspired patriots in the early period of Kashmir's freedom struggle, a batch of National Conference workers under leadership of G. M. Sadiq, felt convinced that for promotion of secularism and democracy and with the object of emotionally integrating Kashmir with India it was imperative that there should be complete reorientation of State policies: civil liberties and human rights of the people should be restored, detenus and political prisoners released, complete freedom of expression granted, and the Muslims particularly convinced by deeds and not merely by words that their religious, political and cultural rights would be safe if they continued to remain with India.

Though no doubt in consonance with the liberal spirit of the Constitution-makers, it was a daring enterprise upon which Sadiq and his colleagues decided to embark. There was wide scepticism in the country about the efficacy of this belated move to untie the tangled skien of the vexing imbroglio. But the disturbing events of the 1963-64 winter left no choice for the Indian Government but to give the alternative a trial. Being the antithesis of his political philosophy and practice, Bakshi offered stout opposition to the liberalisation but the furious wind blowing against him in the country forced him to yield. Sometime later he plotted to overthrow the Government but was promptly arrested and imprisoned on grave charges of corruption and abuse of official position.[1]

[1] The Kashmir Government framed a charge sheet against Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed accusing him of corruption, abuse of his official position as Jammu & Kashmir Premier etc. A one-man enquiry commission consisting of Justice Rajagopala Ayyangar was appointed to go into the charges and submit its findings to the Government. The report of the Commission is awaited at the time of writing.

Brave Statesmanship

Coming to power, Sadiq took one bold step after another. He astounded the people everywhere by showing that tolerance and patience paid, and that the policy of liberalisation and democratisation alone was conducive to restoration of peace and tranquillity in the State. He emptied the jails of all the detenus and political prisoners. Even Shiekh Abdullah and his colleagues charged by Bakshi with conspiracy to overthrow the State and join Kashmir with Pakistan by force, were released. The infamous Peace Brigade was disbanded. Freedom of expression and association as well as freedom of Press heavily curtailed for seventeen years were restored. There were no doubt some trying times for the State administration and weeks of anxiety for the Indian Government, but ultimately liberalisation proved to be the right and wise statesmanship. For people became relaxed and less hostile to the administration; the tension in the atmosphere disappeared to a considerable extent; a bit of real normalcy returned.

The liberalisation policy set new forces working in the State. On the one hand it encouraged the moribund secularism and democracy to revive and get organised, on the other, it weakened the pro-Pakistan elements because the main plank of their antigovernment agitation —suppression of free voice— had been removed. In the new climate extremism gradually began to lose appeal and a process of conversion of Muslims through persuasion and reasoning was put into operation ; the Muslims who preferred social democracy to rule in the name of Islam were heartened because they were given a hearing by their co-religionists.

The Relic Restoration Movement had all but destroyed the National Conference. As a result of the anti-people measures of the Government for seventeen long years this organisation had lost following and existed only in name. The upheaval reduced it to shambles; it was thoroughly discredited and its leaders became an unwanted lot. Liberalisation gave National Conference a new lease of life. With the fall of Bakshi, undesireable groups and goondas hastened to quit it or were made to go while going was good; there was purging on a wide

scale; fresh hopes were raised in the minds of the people that the organisation might after all be able to attain the goal of a welfare state.

Eight Months of Healthy Developments

The enemies of liberalism among the Muslims and the Hindus did not stay put while the Sadiq Government was winning one post after another in its onward march towards social democracy. Neither the Muslim communalists nor the Hindu reactionaries let the grass grow under their feet while the ruling party was consolidating its stand and reviving the political organisation. Taking advantage of the liberal policy the anti-India and pro-Pakistan sections came into the open and started new platforms to propagate their ideology and popularise their views. In the beginning especially immediately after the release of Sheikh Abdullah and other political leaders in April 1964, the whole country seemed to be flocking to hear them. But gradually their exhortations lost force and they were cut down to their proper size. It would have been unrealistic to believe that merely with the declaration of a new liberal policy the influence of pro-Pakistan politicians would disappear or become negligible, and that it did not pose a problem. However, it was wisely decided that the adversary's challenge was to be met on a political plane through spread of healthy ideas, modern concepts of freedom and rational beliefs.

Judging from the results shown during eight months of liberalisation, it was no overoptimism to think that Sadiq Government might have been successful given time and patient hearing. But the Hindu reactionaries would give it neither. There are in Kashmir and outside powerful sections among the Hindus who believe that Muslims can never be loyal to India. If that is so, it would follow that India can have no claim on Kashmir State which is overwhelmingly Muslim. But prejudiced minds are nowhere interested in logic; these people do not understand that by holding such views they are rendering the emotional integration of the Kashmiris and Indians impossible of achievement.

Reactionaries up in Arms

Be that as it may, the anti-Muslim ultra nationalists have not only well organised parties to propagate their ideology, they are also found in strength within the Congress fold; they have vociferous members in the Indian Parliament. Unabashed, they incessantly stress that Kashmir can be held by force and should be held by force in utter disregard of consequences in the national and international sphere. As mentioned earlier, they opposed tooth and nail grant of autonomy to Kashmir in the Indian Constitution. Unsuccessful in this endeavour, they have been anxious all along during the past years to smother the spirit with which the Constitution-makers inserted the provision while subsequently the Kashmir issue was being handled by the Indian Government from time to time. If the Government openly or tacitly approved the repressive policy in Kashmir, the ultra nationalists had much say in it. And when the repression produced the restlessness in the State they only justified their anti Muslim outlook and blamed the Indian Government for not administering a stronger dose of their nostrum.

It is remarkable that in the eight months when the policy of liberalisation and democratisation was in operation no political or communal disturbance took place in the Valley as to give rise to any fears about the future. Of course the voices and opinions ruthlessly suppressed for seventeen years began to be raised indicating certain good and bad tendencies. Among the latter was the religious approach to State politics and the desire of a section to secede from India and get the State acceded to Pakistan. But airing such views, however vehement or persistent, did not in any way endanger public peace; moreover, there were clear signs that the anti-secularist views were gradually losing force.

Significantly, the freedom to rethink had given rise to dissensions among the Muslims and within the Action Committee Sheikh Abdullah and Mirwaiz Farooq were involved in a fierce quarrel whether the Muslims should first aim at Indo-Pak reconciliation or lay stress on peoples right of self determination irrespective of the relations of the two countries. If there was any tension in the Valley it was caused

solely by the recriminative speeches of the two leaders accusing each other of playing false to the community. True, Abdullah and Farooq had unhappily misdirected the process of rethinking but closer observers could not fail to see that all thoughtful sections among the Kashmiris were in one way or another involved in the rethinking process. Only if the policy of liberalisation had continued for a longer period Kashmir politics could have been reoriented on healthier lines.

The restoration of civil liberties in the Valley and the free expression of views by the Muslims was extremely disliked by the reactionaries and the ultra nationalists. Merely because Kashmir leaders gave vent to feelings critical of India, the Sadiq Government was declared incompetent and unable to deal with the situation; the demand for the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution was stridently revived and the Indian Government advised to dismiss the liberal Government and impose President's rule on the State. Repeatedly Sadiq was asked to curb and gag those who did not agree with the Indian policy on Kashmir or raised the slightest objection to the State's accession to India. Sadiq rightly refused to take any such action though he did warn his adversaries that no disturbance of peace would be tolerated. His approach to the problem was sensible and guided by the universally accepted democratic principles. He would fight ideas with ideas and do his best to defeat the opponents of his policy on political plane; employment of force, he asserted, would defeat its own purpose and so long as he remained in office he would follow this course and none else, the opposition of ultra nationalists notwithstanding.

Sadiq Faces Imponderables

This was indeed heroic and said with a keen appreciation of the historic task ahead. But Sadiq Government had to deal with imponderables. The implications of the liberal policy were not understood even by the rank and file of the Kashmir ruling party. The recurrent discomfiture of the National Conference in State politics since it was formed in 1939

has been caused by this lack of understanding and long perspective.

Sadiq and his colleagues courageously held the fort of liberalisation and declared that if they had to abandon it, they would prefer to bid good-bye to office. But to be successful this stand needed support of a substantial section of the people; this was not forthcoming. Though enough of goodwill had been gained in all classes, the party men did not rise in stature because the cadres were ill-informed and inadequately equipped with ideas. The Pakistan propaganda to which colour was lent by the anti-Muslim attitude of the Hindu nationalists confused and confounded the Muslim members of the National Conference; they talked parrot-like about the accession, advancing hackneyed arguments which carried little weight. There was no strength of conviction in the assertions of the members and therefore Muslim masses turned a deaf ear to them. In utter disregard of the Muslim reactions, the Hindu members of the National Conference hustled the leaders to take steps which were calculated to annihilate the individuality of Kashmir and wound the susceptibilities of the Kashmiri Muslims. The Hindu colleagues of Sadiq were thus playing in the hands of the Hindu reactionaries.

Proposal to End National Conference

Even during the closing days of Bakshi's rule the Dogra Hindu members of the National Conference had started arguing that since the ideals of the Congress and the Conference were indentical there was no need to maintain a separate organisation in the State. But it was feared that any proposal to dissolve the National Conference might injure the feelings of the Kashmiris who had reared it with their hard labour and life-blood. It was also argued that so long as the State people had certain peculiar cultural and political problems to encounter it may not be advisable to merge the National Conference with the Congress. The demand was not entertained or encouraged. But now the Dogras insisted on it. The Muslim members of the National Conference should have set their face against the move and represented the feelings of the Muslims which were manifestly against it. But

confused as ever, they meekly connived at it and the top leaders of National Conference for reasons best known to them, accepted the unreasonable Dogra demand. This proved to be a disastrous step for liberalisation policy. For the Hindu reactionaries in Kashmir and outside emboldened by the obvious weakness of the progressive leaders started their fresh onslaughts and challengingly demanded the abrogation of the Article 370.

Now the campaign against the liberalisation policy was intensified and carried into the camp of the Congress outside the State. It has been the old practice and tradition of the Congress to half-heartedly oppose a Hindu communal demand in the beginning, but mostly concede it when the passions are roused. Fiercely opposed to Muslim communalism, on Hindu communal matters a Congressman usually has never had a mind of his own. What Mahasabha or Jan Sangh demands today the Congressmen do so tomorrow. That is what happened about Kashmir. For 17 years the Congress leaders and the Government of India had been consistently opposing the demand for abrogation of Kashmir's autonomy as guaranteed in the Indian Constitution to maintain the spirit of the pact between the Indians and the Kashmiris. It is true small inroads had been made every now and then into it but on the whole the basic autonomy had been allowed to remain unimpaired. The fresh attack of the reactionaries and the ultra nationalists was so concerted and furious that the Government of India consulted wisdom in appeasement.

Unfortunate Decision

On 20 November 1964 the Lok Sabha discussed a Bill introduced by an independent member urging that Article 370 of the Constitution be done away with in the interest of complete integration of the State with the rest of the country. The support of the House was full and enthusiastic. There was no opposition to the demand and every member who spoke on the occasion supported it. The Congress members vied with the Jan Sanghis to prove that they did not lag behind in destroying the individuality of the Kashmiris. The only member to qualify his backing was R. K. Khadilkar who, in

the spirit of Constitution-makers, pointed out that the initiative should come from the Kashmir people and not from the Union Government. This evoked bitter references; nobody was prepared to hear the sane advice for the spirit of the Constitution-makers was nearly dead. However, the voting on the Bill had to be postponed till the next day of the non-official business.

Meanwhile, the campaign against Kashmir's autonomy was stepped up by the opponents. Struck with crippling fear and wanting in moral courage, the leaders of the Indian Government started clearing the decks for the virtual acceptance of the demand.

But legally any change in the Article 370 could not be effected without the recommendation of the Kashmir Constituent Assembly. Since that body had been long dissolved the right reverted to the Kashmiris who had elected it. Taking Sadiq Government to be the representative of the State people, pressure was brought to bear on it to agree to the changes which would satisfy the Indian public opinion. An unpleasant position was created for the Kashmir progressives. They were not oblivious of the current feelings of Kashmir Muslims regarding the merger of the State with India but the discussion in the Lok Sabha had left no uncertainty about the Indian demand. Sadiq saw that ultra nationalism was bent upon having its way ; it was perhaps expedient to give in but the cost was very heavy ; liberalism would receive a severe blow. In moments of weakness Sadiq yielded. After a careful review, including a discussion by the Cabinet, the Union Government decided that it would be imprudent to repeal the article 370 which gives a special status to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, but the reactionary protagonists of the abrogation proposal had to be appeased. With consultations between the Union Government and the State Government it was decided that this aim could be achieved by extending to Kashmir State in successive stages all those articles of the Constitution which did not apply to the State. The Article 370 would be eroded, declared Sadiq.

As a first step in this direction, on 4 December 1964, the Union Home Minister, G. L. Nanda, announced the Govern-