IMPACT OF SHRINES ON EDUCATION:

Islam attaches immense importance to the acquisition and extension of ilm (knowledge). He who acquires knowledge performs an act of piety and who imparts it to its fitting objects performs an act of devotion to God. It is education which enlightens one's mind and enables one to make a proper distinction between right and wrong, true and false. It frees the mind from ignorance and superstition and fills it with reason and truth. It frees the soul from sin and wrong, and quickens its goodness and purity. It frees the self from vanity and greed, from envy and tension, from fear and insecurity. It frees man from subjugation to false duties and low desires, and unfolds before him the beautiful horizons of goodness and excellence. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) himself said, "any person who dies while seeking knowledge will be treated equally with the Prophets." But it is very important to remember:

1. Islam is a religion without any mythology and priesthood. Its teaching is simple, intelligible and practical. It is open to everyone and one can approach the Book of God directly. Islam awakens in man the faculty of reason and exhorts him to use his intellect. It enjoins him to see things in the light of reality. The Quran advised man to pray: 'O my Lord; Advance me in knowledge' (20:114). It asserts that those who have no knowledge are not equal to those who have it; that those who do not observe and understand it are worse than cattle (7:179); that the meaning of revelation became manifest to those who have knowledge (6:97) and knowledge indeed has been given an abundant good (2:269); that basic qualifications for leadership are, among other things, knowledge and physical strength (2:247); and that of all things it is by virtue of knowledge that man is superior to angels and has been made vicegerent of God on earth (2:130).
(That knowledge which is achieved for mere show and worldly benefits proves to be a snake and that knowledge acquired for the sublimation of mind becomes one's friend). This kind of knowledge really becomes our company in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends. Education in fact enables one to realise one's own worth and to recognize God. It enables the servant of God to rise to a noble position, associate with sovereigns in this world and attain the perfection of happiness in the next.

The whole of Arabian peninsula was sunk into barbaric ignorance on the eve of the appearance of Muhammad Mustafa (p.b.u.h.) The period before Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) was known as jahaliya (period of barbaric ignorance) only because of the lack of proper education. In Quran and Hadith a man has been repeatedly enjoined to acquire knowledge so as to gain the title of Ashraf-ul-Makhlucat (crown of creation). Even Sura-i-Iqra, the first revealed version of Holy Quran opens with the injunction addressed to recite Iqra (read) *A. 3. Mohammad Abdul Hai, Yat-fayyaba, pp. 31--32.*
to Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) who, then, through his sayings stressed both reading and teaching. In this connection he said "The search for knowledge is a duty for every Muslim (male or female)" "acquire knowledge though it will be found in China? "Seek knowledge from cradle to the grave" The Prophet further said "The best among you is the one who learns himself as well as imparts knowledge to others".

The holy Prophet in his last sermon addressed in the plains of Arafat (Arabia), stressed the present gathering of Muslim Ummah to convey his message to those who were absent and to continue the process of conveying the message to the succeeding generation so that they may follow the right path. It becomes evident that the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) enjoined the Muslims to spread education from generation to generation.

The origin of establishment of the Muslim educational institutions goes back to the construction of Masjid-i-Nabvi at Madina. A portion of the mosque was reserved for those who chose to devote themselves to learning under the direct supervision of the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) This came to be known

2. The Hadith contains as "Seek knowledge from cradle to the grave".
as Suffah (platform) and the inmates as Ashab-i-Suffah (companions of the Prophet). The members of this group were greatly benefitted by becoming permanent companions of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) The Suffah became the training centre for Muslim religious education. History records that this institution produced dextrous and skilled leaders in all the fields of life. Ever since the mosques, besides being the centres of worship, became the centres of learning as well. After the prayers particularly of morning and evening, the Shaikh (Imam) taught the Qur'an to the Muslims and discussions were held and questions were asked on theology. As the educational activity rapidly grew, first the Caliphs and then the Kings continued building the mosques adjoining schools. Consequently, education grew apace in the Muslim world. Schools and academies sprang up in every part and the public libraries were established in every city where every seeker of knowledge found free access. It resulted in the growth of intellectual activity.

Indians as a people have great reverence and love for learning. Since their first appearance in authentic history, they have enjoyed the reputation of being a learned people. In our ancient tradition education was regarded as the most important tool for self-realization, the title of the ancient

Indian scriptures, the Vedas, signifies knowledge having been derived from the word 'Vid' meaning to know. Thus knowledge or learning was the corner-stone of our ancient system of education which was earnestly sought as a means to the highest end of life i.e., emancipation.

Kashmir has been the centre of learning since ancient times. The praises of Kashmir have been sung by the writers, authors, poets and others since time immemorial. P. N. K. Bamzai observes, "certainly there are ruins of temples and buildings all over the Valley remarkable for their Egyptian solidity, simplicity and durability, as well as for what Cunningham describes as 'there graceful elegance, the massive boldness of their parts, and the happy propriety of their outlines. And Kashmir has a unique distinction of possessing an unbroken historical record from ancient times to the present day in the field of literature and philosophy. It stands second to none in the rest of India, for learning, lofty houses, saffron, grapes, icy-water---things that in heaven are difficult to find are common here."¹

Thus Kashmir has not been famous for its splendour and natural grandeur alone. It has been a famous seat of learning in ancient times. In the words of Grierson, "For upwards of 2000 years Kashmir has been the home of Sanskrit learning and from

this small Valley have issued master-pieces of history, poetry, romance, fable and philosophy. The knowledge of Sanskrit appears to have been of high order. The scholars developed their own alphabet, the Sharda character for the writing of Sanskrit books. P. N. K. Bamzai quoting Ksmendra's remarks states "It was the ambition of every student of Sanskrit and Indian philosophy to go to Kashmir to drink deep at the fountain of knowledge and wisdom that gushed forth from the 'land of Sūrda the goddess of learning'.

The Viharas and monasteries played a great role in spreading education. The monasteries were open to all who wanted to follow the path of morality. The temple-based guru or a vihara based monk played the role of a school teacher in ancient Kashmir. On looking through Kashmir history (under the Muslims) one has to admit the fact that the education and learning were encouraged

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2. P. N. K. Bamzai, op. cit., p. 60.
3. Paper, Buddhism and Education in Ancient Kashmir, J. N. Ganhar. The Buddhist monks always adopted the method of non-formal education, where spoken word was more important. The popularity of Sanskrit language becomes clear by the fact that in India Buddhist literature was written in pali but it was put into Sanskrit writing-- in Kashmir.
and promoted. Khanqahs, shrines and Maktabs were established to educate the people. However, in this endeavour the main role was played by Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani. It was he who founded the Khanqahs. It was at this (Sayyid Ali Hamadani's) instance that Maktabs were established in all the important villages and towns for the teaching of Quran and Hadith. That is why the credit of peaceful revolution (spread of Islam) in Kashmir goes to him.

Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani travelled widely in the Valley. He left his deputies at a number of places to teach in the Khanqahs, Maktabs and madrasas which ultimately became important centres of preaching and proselytisation. The Khanqah system established by Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani continued to work from the period onwards and played very important role in freeing the Muslims of Kashmir from Hindu influence. The Sultans, besides patronising Khanqahs,

1. A Khanqah is a Muslim monastery or religious institution, where dervishes and other seekers after truth congregate for religious instruction and devotional exercises. It is a Muslim institution analogous in many respects to a math, where religious instruction is given according to the Hindu faith. Fyze, Outlines of Muhammadan Law, p. 324.

2. G. M. D. Sufi, Islamic Culture in Kashmir, p. 147.

3. Prior to Mir Sayyid Ali's arrival in Kashmir Muslims were in minority and were not aware of the true spirit of Islam. Since it was the mission of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani to set right the Muslims of the land, he deputed many of his comrades at different places to educate the people. Sayyid Ali, Tarikh-i-Kashmir, ff. 4ab. 2a, 3a.


established colleges, universities and other institutions, where both local and the non-local Muslims used to come for achieving higher knowledge. Sultan Sikandar is said to have built a college near Jamia Masjid which was known as college of Jamia Masjid. He bestowed Wagan pargana as waqf for the maintenance of the college and the hostel. Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin is said to have founded a university at his capital Naushahar. Sultan Hasan Shah also founded a famous college. He succeeded in prevailing upon the pious and the learned to teach the inmates of the college. He gave Zainpur as jagir to the college which was known as Dar-u-Shifa and was constructed in the northern corner of Koh-i-Maran near Khanqah-i-Kubravi. Shaikh Hamza Makhdoom, well-known saint of Kashmir, was a student of this college.

It seems necessary to mention about the Reshi system of education. Reshism built up its own philosophical and educational tradition, which existed quite independent of official control and government encouragement. Attached to the tradition of simple living and high thinking practised by the Reshi saints, their

2. Ibid., II, M. I. Khan, op. cit., p. 143.
system of education became highly popular among Kashmiris.

As a result of consistent effort put in by the Reshi saints in terms of educating the Kashmiri people, a fresh educational programme was launched in the Valley which was characterised by the novelty of its approach. This programme of education aimed at educating its disciples with definite purpose in view. It also trained its followers in the spiritual sense of the term. The scheme was non-formal and natural in its content. They (Reshis) believed that the basic purpose of self-mortification and spiritual concentration was to bring man close to the understanding of the universal reality. Being a purely personal scheme of learning and training, Reshism had no specific centres for imparting their instructions. Therefore, the place, where the Reshi saints resided became the centres of their education. These could be divided into three categories viz., caves, khanqahs and shrines.

1. Their scheme of education was domestic in character, in so far as the disciples and the guide lived together. They ate whatever was available there.

2. The caves are those natural places of dwelling in which Reshis used to practise meditation. During the process of realization of God, young Rishis were ordered by their preceptors to enter the lonely caves and achieve the high level of self-realization. It was in these caves that they used to give spiritual guidance to their followers. Shaikh-ul-Alam spent twelve years in the cave at Koimoh village where he educated and guided three hundred disciples. The people in general used to come individually or in groups to these caves. They brought gifts for their preceptor. The gifts included food, sugar, bread and other things which were used in the kitchen for those who put up in the cave.

2a. Their (Rishis) shrines, as centres of education were sacred places of the pilgrimage. These caves symbolised the austerities and virtues of their founders. From these caves (centres of local orders of holy men) emanated the light which necessarily influenced and benefited the people. The Rishis, through their word and deeds/the principles of
The Reshi scheme made a direct and healthy impact. It became possible through the use of Kashmiri language (native language) as the medium of instruction. Sufis from Central Asia and Persia imparted education in Arabic or Persian which was the language of the elite and beyond the comprehension of the local population. Contrary to this, the message of Rishis was understandable to the illiterate and common people of the Valley. The Muslim rule in Kashmir saw the promotion of the learning both in Sanskrit and Persian. There were Muslim scholars learned in Sanskrit and Hindus with sound scholarship in Persian and Arabic.

The Khanqahs, shrines and mosques played a great part in the dissemination and growth of knowledge both religious and general.

The patronage of Sultans, queens and nobles to the cause of learning resulted in wide-spread education in Kashmir. The process started by eminent Sayyids was continued and it flourished in course of time. The Rishi system of education which was naturally non-formal proved instrumental in promoting the cause of education. The growth in the number of educational institutions and promotion of learning in every nook and corner of the Valley.

1. A Khanqah commenced its functioning first as the centre of an order and then the oratory of its founder. S. M. Jaffar, *Education in Muslim India*, p. 32.

2. It was used both for *Ibadat* and instruction.
were generated by three main agencies, viz., Maktabs (private houses which were generally attached to mosques); Khanqahs (a religious establishment for holy men); and madrassas (formal institutions of higher learning, akin to present day colleges). During the Muslim period, great scholars devoted mainly to propagation of religion. They compiled the biographies of the saints which not only speak of the miracles performed by the saints but throw enough light on social, political, economic, educational and cultural activities of the period. These works are considered reliable sources for the period.

The Muslim children were usually given education with a formal ceremony known as Bismillah-Khwani (initiation) or Maqtab ceremony. This ceremony was performed when a boy was four years, four months and four days old. They were mostly taught Arabic and

1. In the Khanqahs of Sufis, elementary education was imparted mostly to grown up people. It was non-formal in character whereunder preachers delivered sermons on Islamic jurisprudence, Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) sayings to the educated people. Khanqahs were maintained by nobles, rulers and through creation of endowments.

   P. N. Ojha, Glimpses of Social Life in Mughal India, p. 41.

3. P. N. Ojha, Glimpses of Social Life in Mughal India, p. 41.

4. L. F. Smith saw this ceremony (Maqtab ceremony) in North West Province. As Kashmir at that time was part of the Afghan Kingdom, so the Afghan influence must have been very much there, N. N. Law, Promotion of Learning in India, p. 128.

   N. N. Law, op. cit., p. 128.
Persian by the teachers (Maulvis) who were occasionally paid by the parents when the student started new books or got married. The Muslims called their teacher as Maulvi Sahib, Muddarlis, Munshi Sahib or Ustad and the Hindus called them Gurus. On entering the school, the student was provided with a slate and Sura Igra, a chapter of the holy Quran written on it. The student was asked to repeat it a number of times. After completing the primary formalities the student was called Talibilm. The subjects to be taught were karima Nami Hae, Gulistan and Bostan. Besides this Sikandar Nama was taught to the students.

After the Muslim rule, the patronage of Muslim institutions by ruling class ended automatically. The end of Mughal rule witnessed further decline ever thereafter. The khanqahs and shrines which were the main centres of learning were reduced to places of festivity. A practice which ultimately deflected these from their main purpose. After Mughals, Kashmir came under the rule of Afghans. Kashmir which had been a pioneer of progress and beacon of

1. N. N. Law, op. cit., p. 128. In case of rich people the slate was generally made of silver.
4. A complete satire on Afghan aristocracy and high handedness is depicted by poet in the following couplet:-

(Tr. I enquired of the gardener the cause of the destruction of the garden, drawing a deep sigh, he replied, "It is the Afghan who did it")
enlightenment declined under the tyranny and harshness of the Afghan rulers. Sikh rule, which was both short and cruel, did not witness any progress in the field of education.

After Sikhs Kashmir came under the rule of Dogras. The majority of rulers of the Afghan, Sikh and Dogra dynasties were oppressive by their nature. They depended upon loot and plunder. Kashmir became a milking cow for them and they wanted to get as much money from the Valley as they could. They were not willing to give to the people anything in return. The foreign officers were corrupt and unsympathetic. The oppression of the rulers which the ruled bore without a murmur earned them (people) the title of Zulm parast (worshippers of tyranny). It is interesting to note that the Pathans, although Muslims were also against any enlightenment of the Muslims of Kashmir, and were far ahead of Sikhs and Dogras in perpetrating oppression and darkness.

1. The nature of the Sikhs as rulers has been aptly described by Younghusband who says that the Sikhs were "rough and hard masters." Younghusband, Kashmir, p. 160. According to Lawrence "The Sikhs seem to look upon the Kashmiris as little better than cattle". Lawrence, op. cit., p. 199. Accepted uncritically

2. Gulem Singh (Dogra) wrote Colonel Torrens as far back as 1863 A.D., went far beyond his predecessors in the gentle acts of undue taxation and extortion. They had taxed heavily it is true but he sucked the very lifeblood of the people. They had laid violent hands on a large proportion of the fruits of the earth. The profits of the loom and the work of men's hands but he skinned the very flints to fill his coffer. Colonel Torrens Travels in Ladakh Tartar and Kashmir, p. 301.

3. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 5.

4. Ibid., For the rulers of these dynasties Kashmir became a colony like Bengal for East India Company. It had to survive physical and economic lust of its masters.
In this state of oppression, no one could expect development in the field of education which it had during the regime of native rulers. It is now for us here to determine the extent to which the shrines were able to serve the cause of education and bring about an awakening among the people. As a matter of fact shrines and khangaas had played a very important role during the Muslim period. Islam in Kashmir had spread through Khangaas and shrines. But since the time Kashmir lost freedom and non-local rulers came to rule this land, education received very little attention of the rulers. However, there are references to the effect that the Pirs and Gurus were engaged in teaching the Quran and Hindu scriptures. The verses of Lal Ded and Habba-Khatun come to us as evidence of women too having received the benefit of education. Lal Ded a mystic poetess of Kashmir says in one of her shruikas-

(Tr. The mentor taught me the only lesson of the withdrawing into myself. That was the lesson and dictum which established direct communion between my maker and myself)

Kashmir became a part of Afghanistan and fell into wild disorder. "This rule says Lawrence, was a brutal tyranny, unrelieved by good works, chivalry or honour." Lawrence, op. cit., p. 197.

1. The non-local rulers would never think in terms of the betterment of local people.
Habba Khatun said with devotions

Thus we know that Akhoon and Gour continued to be the main source of education. With the ouster of local rulers, the oppressive authorities did not pay any attention to the need for preservation of native culture and institutions. Education became a personal matter monopolised by Pir and Gour who saw to it that the only beneficiaries of their professions were their own families. This profession was almost hereditary one. The credalous masses considered their Pirs and Gours as their friends, philosophers and guides. They (pirs) exploited them a good deal and extracted money from them. Ghulam Hassan Khan has thus rightly remarked that the real knowledge remained confined, as a rule, to a selected few families of pirs, gazis, muftis and waizeen.

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1a. Marasila Kashmiri Panditan, p. 34.
2. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Sofi, p. 42.
The Muslims during the period under survey received education, but not of that healthy kind which would bring awakening to their minds. The Muslim boys were taught to read Arabic so that they may be able to recite the verses of the Quran, but not necessarily to understand it. As there was no system of education in the Valley having for its object, either mental training or social reform. The people had to content themselves what the Maulvis dished out to them. There were Maktabs where Muslims were taught. The boys were imported parrot-like lesson of the Quran and no attempt was made to improve their morals. The Muslim boys used to read Quran in the mosques which worked as maqtaba and were the only place of education. The Maulvis who used to teach in the mosques had not the proper and adequate knowledge of their religion. Consequently the people could at best learn and read just the alphabet of Arabic and Persian and sometimes commit to memory some portions and abstracts from Arabic and Persian. The teaching of Arabic and Persian grammar, Arithmetic

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3. Ibid.
5. These people were also having the mansab (assignment) of imamam.
and accounts were quite neglected. No doubt there were some knowledgeable people who were institutions in themselves and contributed a lot. They alone were able to produce some scholarly people. But the majority of the Maulvis never favoured the idea of spreading true religion. They for their own vested interest always wanted to keep the people in dark. If any reform movement appeared at any time in our period of study it was greatly opposed by the Mullahs. They never thought in terms of seeing the society reformed along healthy lines. Once an, **Anjuman-i-Tahaffuz-i-Namaz wa-Satral Masturat** in 1923 came into being in order to fight the evil practices, the reformers were greatly opposed and criticised by the Mullahs. That is why the Muslims remained in a state of woeful ignorance in the early stage of Dogra period. The Mullahs and Maulvis told the people that the Christian missionaries imparting western education were the enemies of Islam. Since the Mullahs enjoyed respect and confidence of the people, their anti-missionary propaganda carried conviction with the credulous masses.


2. The Mullahs did not favour the new light because they thought that it would reduce the scope of their exploitation which would result in the reduction of their income. Whatever their (Maulvis) mutual differences, they agreed on keeping the Muslims away from the light of modern education. It was their main aim to see that the Muslims remained steadfast in their old beliefs. P. N. Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasta*, p. 242.

English language was suspected to induce idolatory among them. That is why the Muslims did not send their children to government, still less to mission schools, but continued to educate them in their own indigenous institutions, the maktabs, which otherwise had become less useful in the changed circumstances. The Muslims were conservative in their attitude and showed enthusiasm only for religious instructions.

The Muslims after going through the rudiments of Quran and Persian language and sentence-wise reading took up the Karima Nam Hag, an excellent Persian poem, which treated of morality. But as a rule the students neither recognized the letters well nor did they understand what they learnt at the time. After Karima they at once took up the Bostan and Gulistan. After going through about half of it, revised it with explanation in their own tongue. Next to these two books Hurkara and Sikan-darnama were read, and an ordinary student ended his study with these books. Some inquisitive and interested people went beyond and read Sakinama, Sheerin Khusrau, Inshai Tahir Wahid, and a

1. Hari Om, op. cit., p. 66
2. The Hindus gained in knowledge and steadily acquired positions in the government departments. While the Muslims remained behind and were less visible in the government departments.
3. Hari Om, op. cit., p. 74.
few other books. Among the means of correcting boys the severest punishment was 'falak'. It was as follows: A string was hung up in the room and to it the delinquents feet were fast tied and they were allowed to hang there with their heads suspended downward. They were kept in that position for some minutes and sometimes flogged in the bargain. Persian was preferred much by the Kashmiris. Their maqtab syllabus mostly included the Persian texts. The Muslims preferred the mosque schools or the system of private tuition, where Arabic and Persian were taught. Lawrence says that the Muslims "can read and write Persian." Even now we come across some of the age-old people speak Persian very fluently though their knowledge of grammar is scant.

The Maqtabs of the city of Srinagar and of other parts in the Valley where the Muslim Ummah got education, were generally affiliated to the mosques where they were taught Arabic for reading Quran. But so far as shrines of Srinagar were concerned, there is no reference to show that the Maqtabs and Madrassas were connected to them. After taking over Kashmir, the Sikhs tried their utmost

2. Ibid., Hari Om, op. cit., p. 23.
3. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 229.
to persecute the Muslims. To that end the Sikhs made the mosques and shrines their targets as they were the citadels of Muslim faith.

Besides, some mosques like Pather Masjid, Mulla Akhoon Masjid and Khanqah-i-Madin Sahib remained closed during the period of Dogras too. In such a state of affairs, any developmental activity in the field of education was inconceivable. It does not, however, mean that the shrines had no role to play. The shrines which were the citadels of Muslim faith in Kashmir were visited by numerous devotees who got benefited by the preachings of the preachers. The nineteenth century A.D. and the beginning of the twentieth century A.D. was period of darkness because of the cruel attitude of the rulers. Nevertheless, Kashmir possessed preachers, Waizeen, Mubaligeen and scholars as were embodiment of knowledge.

1. Mir Sayyid Mushtaq Hamadani, Kashmir Islam Kay Sayie Main, p. 105.

2. During the time of Sikhs, some new courts and departments came into being. The Muslims of Kashmir had to pay fee for Nikah and other things. Maharaja Ranjit Singh requested Mir Gazi Ghulam-ud-Din Hussaini Jami (an eminent Muslim scholar) to accept the headship of these courts and departments, but Gazi Ghulam-ud-Din refused. Thereupon, the Maharaja, who did not look with favour upon the Khanqahs and mosques, issued orders for the closure of Khanqah-i-Mualla and Jamia Masjid and turned them into stables. Allama Mufti Mohi-ud-Din Pandani, Tarikh-i-Zakhir-ul-Muneer, p. 163.

3. Sofi, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, op. cit., p. 149; These mosques were used as granaries (Shali-stores) and store houses for gun-powder during the period of Sikhs and Dogras.

4. It was also because of the maltreatment and oppression of their rulers and officials that the people generally were gripped in ignorance and backwardness.
many good qualities and it were they who led the Muslims of Kashmir as millat along a lively path in that period of darkness. The preachers and waizeen proved most helpful in the sense that they delivered their goods in the native language—Kashmiri which was easy to understand and easily used by the students in asking questions of the teachers and in receiving answers in the same language. This method made their study more intelligible and rational too. The teaching became more motivative and impressive and naturally attracted large number of people to the mosques and shrines. We have got references that the people eagerly looked forward to the time when a good preacher had to deliver waz at any shrine. Their doubts were publicly set at rest and their questions were answered satisfactorily by the waizeen. No doubt the magtabs gave parrot-like education to the people and their main contribution was to infuse love and affection among the taught and inculcation of humility and respect for elders among the taught. This is what distinguishes the then prevalent system from the modern system of education where such virtues are seen lacking.

1. Mahanama Wasrat-ul-Islam, p. 27.
2. The preachers also discussed other social issues like bad customs and evil practices.
The shrines particularly Sheeshbuga played an important role in imparting education. The system was non-formal as there was no age bar to the admission to the classes of sermons. There stood the eloquent preachers who addressed the kneeling multitude the message of Quran and the sayings of the Prophet. They explained them the articles of their faith. A large number of scholarly preceptors attached to the shrines took regular classes and delivered sermons. Sometimes preachers from outside the Valley came to give discourses on various aspects of religion at the important shrines of Kashmir.

The preachers mostly believed and had complete faith in shrines. They spoke against the people who were indifferent towards the sanctity of the shrines. Ibn-i-Saud and his followers were vehemently criticised and abused in the exciting and passionate lectures by the preachers at mosques and shrines for the alleged destruction of the mausoleum of Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) by them. (Ibn-i-Saud and his followers). They were styled as Wahabbi kuta and Shaitan ke seeq. The shrines became the centres for mobilising the people against the Wahabbis. The preachers generated hatred against the Wahabbis among the people.

1. Sinha, Kashmir, the Playground of Asia, pp. 188—189.
2. File No: 584/P-7 of 1922, General Department Jammu Archives.
3. Ibid.,
The main role in imparting education in the shrines and mosques was played by the Mirwaiz dynasty. They made the shrines and mosques particularly Jamia Masjid as centre for preaching the Quran and Haidth. It appears that the ancestors of Mirwaiz dynasty were initially residing at Tral. For certain reasons Salam Baba alias Sala Baba left Tral for good and settled at Qalamdanpora in Srinagar. They then shifted from Qalamdanpora to Razia-kadal. Salam Baba had a spiritual bent of mind and as such he spent his whole life in worship and acts of piety. He died at Qalamdanpora. He was survived by five sons. One of them named Lassa Baba received religious education alongwith a co-student named Sayyid Hasan Shah Gilani under the supervision of Syeed Buzerg Shah, from Qazi Mir Muhammad Rasool Hussaini Jam. He also received training from Shaikh Ahmad Tarabali who selected him for the job of preaching. Lassa Baba became famous in the sphere of Ilm-i-Din (theology). He was the first among the Mirwaiz dynasty to start Waizkhwanl (preaching). This job he did with great ability and dedication. Thus Lassa Baba came to be called Mirwaiz.

5. Ibid.
He, throughout his life, gave sermons and explained the real spirit of Islam to the Muslims. He explained to and discussed before the Muslim Ummah the Quran and Hadith, and to that end he delivered sermons. Apart from this he imparted education to the people. He became famous as an eminent preacher in the Valley and earned for himself the title of Namdar Waiz.

The conditions of Muslim Ummah during the period under study was far from satisfactory. No doubt, the Muslims had embraced Islam long before our period of study but the age-old customs and traditions were ingrained in them. The customs and traditions of Hindus and Muslims had intermingled and the true spirit of Islam had been overshadowed. The Muslims had come to have absolute faith in saints and were prepared to make sacrifice in their name and they voluntarily paid Nazr-u-Niyaz in Brahman tradition.

The Muslims performed such practices as were unislamic in character. The Muslim children like non-Muslim children, were permitted to grow Shikha on the crown of their heads and it was shaved off on a particular day with great celebration.

1. Tarikh-i-Kabir, f. 281b.
3. Ibid., p. 431.
There was no such institution as would enlighten the people about the principles of Islam. However, the preachers and waizeen used to give sermons on Islamic theology on particular days viz., Fridays and other holy days at the shrines in order to make the people understand Islam. The sermons, doubtlessly, helped the people to understand the reality. In fact it was due to the sermons of Hafiz Lassa Baba that the custom of having Shikha on the crown of the heads of Muslim children was put an end to.

Subsequently, the Mirwaiz dynasty was split into two branches and their followers also got divided into two groups. It was during the time of Chaudhury Khushi Muhammad Nazr (Governor) that due to certain differences among the members of the Mirwaiz dynasty, that orders were issued wherein Jama Masjid was handed over to Lassa Baba and his followers who subsequently concentrated

1. It is a matter of common knowledge that most of these shrines have been constructed in memory of one or the other pious and holy man. On the auspicious occasion of the birth and death anniversaries of these holy people, the Mubaligeen used to give sermons on the teachings, life history and achievements of the holy men in the light of Islam.


3. It is said that Shia Muslims wanted to construct a mosque outside the tomb of Madin Sahib. But Salam Baba son of Naba Baba objected to it and the Sunnis under the instructions of Salam Baba destroyed the walls of the mosque. This ultimately led to Shia-Sunni conflict. The Shias who were fewer in number than Sunnis were supported by Wazir Panu (during the time of Maharaja Ranbir Singh). This ultimately led Sunnis to counter a number of difficulties. Salam Baba was banished but soon after the restoration of peace, he was permitted to come back. He died in Jamadi-us-Sani, 1300 A.H. and was buried in the compound of Khanqah-i-Mualla. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Pandani, op. cit., p. 169.
their activities of *Waizkhwani* at Jamia Masjid. This group of Maulvis came to be known as Mirwaiz Kalan. The other group led by Sala Baba was given Khanqah-i-Maula which became the centre of their activities which centred mainly around preaching. This line came to be called Hamadani Maulvis. However, it should be mentioned here that the two groups of Waizeen, referred to above, were at daggers drawn. At first when they lived jointly, they used to visit the shrines and mosques in any part of the Valley for giving sermons. But once divided there arose between the two branches of the same dynasty tensions and unrest on the question of Waizkhwani at different religious places. This created law and order problem many a time during our period of study. At last Maharaja Pratap Singh made regular arrangements for Waizkhani in the mosques in order to put a stop to the growth of malice, leading to tension and conflict between the two parties at that time. There seems to have been some divergence in the ideology of two groups of Waizeen of Srinagar, viz., Mir Waiz Jamia Masjid and Mirwaiz Hamadani. For example the reciting of *Shahin Allah* and celebration of *qiyarhwin* were favoured by Hamadani Maulvis, but Mirwaiz Kalan of Jamia Masjid.

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opposed it tooth and nail. It means that they did not hold unanimous views on the issue. In 1317 A.H., a conflict arose between the two religious chiefs over the question of the Sahabiyat of Mamur-i-Habshi, in which Ahl-i-Hadith, though small in number, took the side of Mirwaiz Jamia Masjid. Mirwaiz Hamadani was of the firm belief about the Sahabiyat of Mamur-i-Habshi. While Mirwaiz Jamia Masjid denied the claim which in turn gave rise to a good deal of trouble in the city of Srinagar. Finally a meeting of both the religious heads was held at the residence of Mirza Mohi-ud-Din where it was agreed by both not to give much importance to the issue of the Sahabiyat of Mamur-i-Habshi.

1. Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah was much vehement in his criticism against its recitation and often used derogatory language against mujavirs of shrines under whose guidance such practices had become common among the ignorant masses.

2. It is said that Mamur-i-Habshi was one amongst the companions of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and some Sufis believed that he died seven hundred years after the demise of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).


3. Tarikh-i-Kabir, f. 149.

4. Ibid., f. 150a.

   The Ahl-i-Hadith did not keep silent on the issue of Mamur-i-Habshi. They challenged the very existence of Mamur-i-Habshi and believed that after the demise of Prophet (p.b.u.h.), the only companion who had a very long life was Abu Tufa'il Aamir, who was more than hundred years old at the time of his death. Abdul Hasan Nur-ud-Din, op. cit., p. 3.
The Hamadani Maulvis, belonging to the Barelvi school of thought believed in shrines. Mubarak Baba, son of Naba Baba, got training from Maulana Mir Amir-ud-Din Jami and started preaching sermons at Khanqah-i-Mualla and other mosques and shrines allotted to them. He explained the Quran and Hadith to the people which benefited a large number of them. The first group of Maulvis who occupied Jamia Masjid for purpose of sermons greatly opposed the Mullahs and the Pirs (the worldly ulama) as they were a great threat to Islam. As a matter of fact the number of worldly ulama (those Firs who pursued mainly mundane interests) was indeed very large. This fact becomes clear from the remarks of Shaikh Nur-ud-Din, popularly known in Kashmir as Alamdar-i-Kashmir. This celebrated saint of Rishi movement says, "hardly one amongst the thousand will be saved from the wrath of God". We get a detailed account about the worldly ulama from the sayings of Shaikh Nur-ud-Din which reflect the selfish, hypocritical conceited and ambitious selves of the Ulama. The Shaikh has vehemently criticised and exposed them to the posterity.


2. When Ahl-i-Hadith filed a case against the Pirs and Mullahs, the Mirwaiz of Jamia Masjid remained neutral. Mirwaiz Ahmad Shah Ullah, Ahl-i-Hadith Kai Nisbat, pp. 1-3.

The Ulama were parasites and drones on the society. They lived a life of luxury without contributing anything to the society. They put on big turbans and went from place to place bargaining their prayers and fasts in return for food. The nature and activities of these Mullahs have undergone no change since the time of Shaikh Nur-ud-Din. Instead of being guardians and interpreters of Muslim law, they became its worst destroyers. They acquired the knowledge of Islam only to obtain their living and other objects of the world. They exploited the ignorant and simple masses in order to have complete hold on them. Once an Anjuman (organization) criticised these people (Mullahs) for their activities. The Mullahs in their typical manner succeeded in arousing the passion among the ignorant masses against the activists of the reform movement who were criticised and nicknamed as yezar pirs and thus the Anjuman fizzled out. The reformers wanted the Muslims to follow the principles of Islam in practical sense of the term. It is very important to note about the pirs that at least some of them were an institution in themselves, and they performed true service to the cause of Islam. They led the

1. Ibid. Similarly many other knowledgeable people criticised the role of Mullahs i.e. worldly Ulama (Ulama Sue) as is evident from the journal Al-Aitqad. To name few illuminaries are Shaikh Abdul Cadir Jilani, Maulana Rumi, Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadanis, Khwaja Hasan Basri, Wali-Ullah Dehlavi, Mujadid-i-Alfisani and others. Al-Aitqad, December, 1985, p. 3.

2. Yezar in Kashmiri means pyjamas (trousers). Since the inception of the movement, reformers stressed the propriety of wearing pyjamas, they came to be called Yezar pirs. G. H. Khan, op. cit., p. 75.

3. Ibid.
people along the path of spiritualism, manliness and piety. Indeed they had a large following. So far as the real pirs were concerned, the Muslim community of Kashmir is and shall be indebted to them for all times. Names of Shaikh Ahmad Tarabali\(^1\), Shaikh Khalil Ahmad Grcabali, Gazi Mir Amir-ud-Din Jami\(^2\), Gazi Ghulam-ud-Din Jami\(^3\), Gazi Nizam-ud-Din Jami\(^4\), Allama Gazi Rasool Jami\(^5\) and Maulvi Mohi-ud-Din Mattoo were the shining stars in the recent past.

But after the death of good and scholarly pirs the way of electing or selecting a suitable successor was not followed. As a result, the institution became hereditary. Son succeeded his father whether or not he was qualified for the post. They degenerated the institution and some of them not having any qualification employed fraud and deceit. They never wanted to get education and

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1. The first two preachers of Mirwaiz dynasty namely Lassa Baba and Yehayah Sahib received training from Shaikh Ahmad Tarabali. Mohi-ud-Din Pandani, op. cit., pp. 163—172.

2. A large number of people namely Shaikh Muhammad Saiyid Parabali Saif-ud-Din Manteki, Waiz Yehaya Khalil Frumboo, Chulam Nabi Shafi and others received education from Gazi Mir Amir-ud-Din Jami, Ibid., pp. 159—60.

3. He taught many people like Mohi-ud-Din Gundroo, Hafiz Yehaya Bayu, Waiz Salam Baya, Maulvi Habib Ullah Mattoo and others. They became great scholars. Ibid., pp. 168, 170, 172, 173.

4. He also taught a number of people. Ibid., pp. 154—157, 167.

5. Ibid.,
enlightenment lest they (pirs) should be exposed. The Mirwaiz Maulvi particularly Maulvi Muhammad Yehaya vehemently criticised these pirs of Srinagar who bargained religion for their interests. Maulvi Muhammad Yehaya criticised the mujavirs of the shrines through his sermons, as their activities were detrimental to the Ummah and ran counter to the message of pristine Islam and the teachings of the pious saints. Maulvi Muhammad Yehaya gave sermons at important shrines and mosques particularly Jamie Masjid for forty eight years. He visited different parts of the city to deliver lessons on Quran and Hadith. Besides preaching at various shrines and mosques he used to teach different type of students within the premises of his house. It may not be out of place to mention here that the preachers were having their vested interests. The rivalry among the two major groups of waizeen testifies to the fact that they exploited the people and generated, sometimes intensified, unreward situations. This was evidently a course quite

1. There were certain causes for this criticism. The pirs were great obstacles in the way of spreading Islam. They did not hesitate to give false futwas (decrees). Secondly the Mirwaiz kalan were having their own interests. As a matter of fact Mirwaiz dynasty did not basically belong to the city of Srinagar and its members did not have their own murids in the beginning. That is why they criticised and exposed the pirs in order to gain the support of simple-minded common masses. Thirdly the Hamadani Maulvis patronised the pirs and had faith in shrines. Naturally the pirs became the great opponents of Mirwaiz dynasty. This became clear in a conflict between Maulvi Yusuf Shah and Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah, the pirs and mujavirs opposed their long standing enemy and supported the Shaikh.

Muhammad-Din-Fauq, op. cit., p. 432.

in conflict with Quran and Hadith. Besides, the Maulvis tried to be in the good books of the Maharajas and always tried to gain their good-will. Maharaja Ranbir Singh used to give khilats like Jora, Shawl, Gown, Fard and other things to the Ulama on the auspicious occasion of Idd. The Maulvis were paid by the people too in lieu of their services. The services rendered by them included giving sermons at shrines on some particular days like Shab-i-Mehraj, Shab-i-Qadr, Idd-i-Milad and on the occasions of birth and death anniversaries of popular saints in Kashmir.

However, the Mirwais dynasty produced a dynamic personality namely Rasool Shah who made the Quran and the Hadith popular among the people and explained to the people of Kashmir the religion of Islam at grass root level. He made it clear that salvation from sins and wrath of hell is impossible without impetus implementation and practicality of Quran. Maulvi Rasool Shah not only gave sermons in the mosques and shrines of Srinagar but also visited other places like Islamabad, Sopore, Baramulla, Bijbehara, Shopian, and other towns and villages in order to make the people understand the teachings of Islam. It should suffice to say here

that Mullahs, Piras and other vested interests had preached Islam in a twisted manner. This had misled the people and fostered in them superstitions and encouraged bad customs and evil practices. Maulvi Rasool Shah sharply reacted to all this and he took pains to eradicate the evils. He laid great stress on truth in Islam, while teaching Quran and Hadith. He never concealed anything relevant to Islam. He felt extremely hurt at the ignorance of the people and strongly felt that unless illiteracy was put an end to, the evils would continue. He made it very plain that education was the panacea to all evils. He advocated the spread of ilm (knowledge) as the sure means of fighting illiteracy and ignorance. The most important thing that seems to have motivated Rasool Shah was social, economic and educational backwardness of the people living in different parts of the Valley which he had himself visited and seen.

It is very relevant to note here that it was the time of hatred and anger. The Muslims had lost the rule. Britishers had come to India first as merchants and then grabbed the political power. They had their own way of doing things. They had their own educational system, administrative set up and civilization which were diametrically opposed to that of Indian Muslims and Hindus alike. The Britishers wanted to spread modern education in their own interests. It was opposed by the Hindus. But people like Raja Ram Mohan Roy started a campaign among the Hindus to take to the

modern education which would ultimately be in their interest. He succeeded in this mission. The Muslims were more angry with the British because the latter had deprived them of their power. Consequently, the Muslims lagged behind in the process of modernisation which caused them great loss. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan realized this lapse on the part of Muslims. He started a crusade for the spread of modern education among the Muslims. After many difficulties and hardships he was successful in moulding the attitude of the Muslims of India towards modern education. The Muslim University of Aligarh is still a reminder of his great work.

Kashmir had exactly the same problem. Unqualified and semi-literate Mullahs opposed modern education and catigated all those who took to it as kafirs and infidels. It goes to the credit of Mirwaiz Rasool Shah who foresaw what was coming. His farsightedness led him to contribute not only through non-formal way of education but he formally started imparting education with modern trends. Inspite of being a Mullah himself, he advocated the cause of modern education with a view to

2. Y. B. Mathur, Growth of Muslim Politics in India, p. 36.
pulling the Ummah out of the deep slumber. At the end of
the nineteenth century, the community was at its nadir. Rasool
Shah, endowed with a keen foresight and deep sense of patriotism,
brought home to the people the advantages that would accrue to
them by encouraging the youth of the community to receive modern
education. Sincerity of motive coupled with gift of the gab and
untiring efforts on the part of this reformer evoked a favourable
response among the people and all this enabled Maulvi Rasool Shah
to found the Anjuman-i-Nasratul-Islam in 1899 together with a
school under the direct supervision of the Anjum. The school
was established with the following aims in view:

1. Minute Book First-Preserved in the Library of Anjuman-i-
Nusretul-Islam. However, it should be remembered that on 30th
September, 1906 the formal nomination and selection for the
different posts, executive committee members was made. Mirwaiz
Rasool Shah was unanimously selected as President of the
Anjuman-i-Nusretul Islam. The other officiating body consti­
tuted the following personalities:

1. Khwaja Hassan Shah Naqshbandi — Naib Sadar Awal
2. Khawaja Muhammad Shah Naqashbandi — Naib Sadar Second
3. Maulvi Atiq-Ullah — General Secretary
4. Munshi Kamal Mir — Joint Secretary
5. Maulvi Ahmad-Ullah — Financial Secretary
6. Munshi Serif Ali Khan — Joint Financial Secretary
7. Shaikh Muhammad Hussain — Accountant
8. Khawaja Aziz-ud-Din Kowosa — Examiner
9. Malik Sher Muhammad — Secretary Nasim-i-Paleem.

The executive body was also formed which consisted
of thirty four members, Minutes Book No: 1.

1. To impart Islamic education and equip the new generation with the knowledge relevant to the contemporary times;

2. To impart teaching in Quran and Hadith and propagate their teachings;

3. To guide people in cultural, economic, social and moral affairs;

4. To project the character of the Muslims reflecting the value system of Islam;

5. To strike balance between modern education and religion;

6. To develop the concept of unity and co-operation among the Muslims; and

7. To strengthen human bonds alongside the promotion of spiritual and ethical sentiments.

The institution marked its beginning like all philanthropic organizations. One has not only to realise the foresight of this greatman who visualised the needs of his community almost a century ago. Such people are rare. He not only brought the change in traditional education imparted in Madressas and Maqtabs by pirs but also made it clear that English education was a key, with which the doors to government posts would be opened. It would not be an exaggeration if we say that Maulvi Rasool Shah did the same job as was done by Sir Saiyid Ahmad Khan, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and others. It is because of his contribution that he came to be called as Sir Saiyid of Kashmir. Perseverance of

1. Muhammad-ud-Din-Fauq, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 433. The annual meeting of the Anjumn was held every year. It was in 1908 that Gh. Ahmad Mehjoor while reading his lengthy nazm twenty two verses highlighted in entirety the achievements of Maulvi Rasool Shah. He called him the Sir Saiyid of Kashmir. Shiraza, 1984, p. 61. He is also known as Wayeer-i-Azam in Kashmir.
the founder and willing co-operation of masses resulted in raising the status of the institution to that of High School by 1905 A.D.

Admission to the school from the very beginning was kept open without levying any tuition fee on the poor students irrespective of caste, creed or sex. The first batch of six students appeared from the school in the Matriculation examination of the Punjab University in 1908 A.D. Of these five came out successful. Khwaja Ghulam Ahmad Ashai (a Muslim) stood first and Pandit Sarwanand (Kashmiri Pandit) secured second position. The institution produced scholars, academicians, administrators and intellectuals. Maulvi Rasool Shah inaugurated a new era in the life of Kashmiri Muslims and infused fresh spirit and blood into the Muslims of the Valley. The aim of his mission was to take the Muslims out of darkness and gloom, into light and glory. He spent his whole life in working for the welfare and betterment of the Muslim community.

1. The non-muslims were not discriminated against in matter of admission of students or appointment of teachers. Thus among the students admission was granted to Sarwanand Koul, a Kashmiri Pandit boy while Pandit Kesho Nath Pickoo another Kashmiri Pandit of Bagh Jogi Lanker (Rainawari) was appointed Mathematics teacher in the school.

2. He became the first Registrar of the University of Kashmir.

3. Minute Book First, Anjuman-i-Musaratul Islam.
Maulvi Rasool Shah contributed a lot through his sermons. In Kashmir the art of waizkhwani was institutionalized by Maulvi Yehaya Sahib. But Maulvi Rasool Shah through his natural ability and farsightedness lent a new hue to the art of waizkhwani. Many more people who were mostly umi (illiterate) got acquainted with the teaching of Quran and Hadith by attending the sermons of Maulvi Rasool Shah.

It is said that one among the listeners of Maulvi Rasool Shah, who was quite illiterate, fell in a discussion with a well qualified student of Deoband. The latter was so much impressed by the vastness of knowledge and other information of the former that the Deoband scholar asked the illiterate person to show him his kutb-khana (Library). But the illiterate yet well informed gentleman had no library. He had acquired all the knowledge (preaching sessions) and information by attending regularly waaz Majalis of Maulvi Rasool Shah. When the Deoband trained scholar came to know about it, he felt humbled and he acknowledged the worth of the illiterate man for his profound knowledge of religion and inevitably he came to have profound respect for Maulvi Rasool Shah, the mentor of the educated illiterate person.

In fact Maulvi Rasool Shah through his preaching and teaching made the Quran-i-Karim so popular among the Muslims that every Muslim believed that without Quranic knowledge nobody deserved salvation. Fifty years earlier a pedestrian on the street any morning would be delighted to listen to the loud recitation of Quran (Tilavat-i-Quran) by boys and girls both. The was ceremony had great impact on the Muslim community of Kashmir. Most of the Umm Muslims committed to memory many important suras (chapters) of Quran together with their meaning, so much so that most of them became preachers. One important feature in the waizkhwani of the Mirwaiz dynasty was the consecutive interpretation and explanation of a Sura for years together. This sequence and order helped the listeners to memorize the teachings. They, while explaining Quran made full use of the sayings of Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and enlightened the Muslim community with the glorious history of Islam and thereby interpreted origin and growth of Islam. The main chapters of waizkhwani were the life history and achievements of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) The Caliphate period was also an important subject of waizkhwani during our period of study. The preachers discussed in detail the happening of Karbala

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1. Ibid., p. 48.
and the crusades of Muslims. The preachers made the life
histories of different saints and Rishis and their achievements
an important subject of their waizkhwani. As we know Kashmir is
the abode of Rishis and sadats and for this reason it gained the
title of Pirwari. The belief and faith of Kashmiris in saints and
their shrines led the speakers and waizeen to highlight the
achievements and karamats (miracles) of different saints. As the
Kashmiris were keen to know more and more about the saints. So
the preachers particularly on the occasions of Urs discussed the
teachings of the saints at length.

The Muslim society blindly followed some bad customs and
superstitions and they considered their observance as part of
worship. The Muslims like Hindus, did not eat meat. No doubt,
the Muslims had embraced Islam earlier, but they were practising
some age-old practices of their predecessors. Maulvi Rasool Shah
preached against these and similar other un-Islamic practices

1. This becomes clear from the fact that age-old Umi
(illiterate) people do know a lot about the Islam though
they have not attended any formal school, yet the preachings
of preachers at shrines and mosques on different occasions
particularly on Fridays have, to a large extent, educated
the Umi Muslims of Kashmir. Sometimes their way of explaining
the things seems more interesting.

2. Most of the Kashmiris know much about the karamats of
different local saints. Though unqualified and illiterate,
they commit to memory many verses (shrueks) of Shaikh
Nur-ud-Din Rishi. The preachers have played a prominent
role in popularising the sayings and teachings of saints.


4. The vaishnavites among Hindus in Kashmir refrained from
taking meat. They were the followers of the principle of
non-injury to living beings.
observed by the Muslims of Kashmir. The influence of the Maulvi was felt by audience when he interpreted to them, the first ayat of Sura Tahrim:

"Prophet; why Holdest them to be forbidden that which God has made law to thee."

It was under the impact of Maulvi Rasool Shah's sermons that Muslims children got acquainted with the basic principles of Islam. Anybody who was ignorant of it, was not shown proper respect by the Muslim Society. However, after the demise of Rasool Shah Sahib, Maulvi Ahmad Ullah continued the practice of giving the sermons. He too wanted to make the teachings of Qur'an and Hadith common among the Muslims of Kashmir.

Maulvi Rasool Shah was President of the Anjum-an-Nusratul Islam from 1909 to 1931 A.D. His brother, Maulvi Atiq-Ullah was the Secretary of this organization. Maulvi Ahmad-Ullah, like his

ancestors considered education as the enemy of ignorance.

The Hamadani Maulvis also continued their work of waizkhwani at (Khanqah-Mualla) in order to bring awareness among the Muslim Ummah of Kashmir. The prominent among them was Maulvi Ahmad Ullah Hamadani, who, besides giving sermons founded a middle school annexed to Khanqah-i-Mualla. In this school Arabic and Persian were taught and this apart, modern education was imparted too. Obviously, the aim was to equip the Muslims with the knowledge as demanded by changing circumstances.

During the period that followed, the Maulvis lost their enthusiasm and in the practice of preaching they deviated from the original course so that preaching became completely a business. The shrines became an important business centres with people as donors and the Maulvis as mobile sellers. The mujavir as became the expert accountants. The Islamia School was founded to cater to the educational requirements of the Muslims in the period of darkness, when it was very difficult to do so. But with the


Though Maulvi Ahmad Ullah continued to keep the torch of education burning, but his successors did nothing to take it (Islamia High School) any further. It is a painful truth that the Anjum and the school became the personal property of Mirwaiz dynasty, and tody it is a one man show. Had the successors of Maulvi Rasool Shah been as farsighted as he was, the institution by now would have become an University.

passage of time even in favourable conditions, the school management simply used it as a source of income for themselves. Had they advanced the aim of its founder (Rasool Shah) it would have become an important source of Muslim learning.

From the above discussion we are led to the conclusion that the contribution of these shrines and mosques is that they kept the lamp of knowledge burning and the interest of people to acquire some sort of knowledge did not all together flag. That contribution has a place in the educational history of Kashmir and cannot be forgotten. Likewise, to the temples of Hindus, were attached pathshalas, which imparted religious education to the Hindus. The need for such institutions was always felt because in modern schools there was no arrangement for imparting religious education to the students. Thus the shrines, mosques and temples were the hubs of educational system and the people of Kashmir neither Hindus nor Muslims could ignore the importance of these.