CHAPTER II
ADVENT OF THE SIKHS

The valley of Kashmir presents a chequered history. From the desiccation of the valley up to 1339, when a Muslim adventurer, Shamsuddin Shahmir laid the foundation of Muslim rule, it was ruled generally by its Hindu kings. For about next one hundred and eighty seven years, it was governed by Muslim rulers, of whom Zainul Abidin (1420-1470) was the greatest and most illustrious. A political upheaval occurred in 1566, when after some repulses

1. The tradition common among the natives about the emergence in the late geological times of the valley of Kashmir - originally a lake, 300 to 400 feet in depth - is substantiated by geological evidence. The remains of water dwellers and fossil oysters - the black shells of water-nuts are extant in the layers embedded in the earth at the elevation of 1500 feet above the level of the valley. These indicate the fluviatile origin. Similarly traces of beaches on the edges of the mountains and the flat surface of the karewas is ample proof of the fact that the whole valley was once occupied by a lake. (Vigne, op.cit., Vol. I, p.266). It is because of the fact that reputed geologist Major Rennel writes "so far am I from doubting the existence of the lake that covered Cashmere that appearances alone would serve to convince me, without either tradition or history." (Major Rennel, Memoir on the Map of Hindustan, p.107).

2. In 1339, a peaceful revolution took place when Shamsuddin Shahmir founded the Muslim Sultanate, without causing any bloodshed. It was in fact a turn over of public opinion.

3. In fact Kinchan Shah was the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir (1320-1323) (Baharistani Shahi, f.15a.). He was a "bhautta" prince and came to Kashmir as a political refugee. He usurped the throne of Raja Sahadeva and proclaimed himself king of Kashmir on 6th October, 1320. He also abandoned his ancestral faith, Buddhism and embraced Islam. But when he passed away in 1323, he was succeeded by, Hindu rulers, Udayanadeva and Kota Rani respectively. But it was Sultan Shamsuddin Shahmir who laid firm foundation of Muslim rule in 1339, which lasted till Sikhs wrested Kashmir from the Afghans in 1819.
and difficulties Kashmir was annexed to the Mughal dominion of India by emperor Akbar. Henceforth Kashmir lost its independence and became a part of the Mughal empire, till 1753.

However, when after the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire was thrown into a welter of chaos and confusion, having a direct bearing on Kashmir, Ahmad Shah Abdali the Afghan invader took advantage of the chaotic conditions of Kashmir and annexed it to his kingdom in 1753.

Kasmiris had pinned high hopes on Afghans, who, they expected would provide them a sigh of relief. But their cherished desires were belied when they witnessed the harsh treatment and acts of barbarity of their new rulers who "rarely issued an order without a blow of the side of their hatchet."

During their rule people groaned and they were pulverized by the heavy taxation policy. The main aim of the Afghans was to

4. Ahmad Khan, as Ahmad Shah Durani was named by his parents, was the second son of Zaman Khan Abdali of the Saddozia clan and was born of Zarghuna Alkozei in 1722 at Multan (Ganda Singh, Ahmad Shah Durani, p.15). Different versions have been put forward for Ahmad Shah being called Abdali. It is said that they were Shi'is and were called Abd-i-Ali (servants of Ali). But the most acceptable definition seems to be that this tribe came from Abdal so was called Abdali. When Afghans revolted against Nadir Shah, he crushed them and took Ahmad Shah Abdali and his brother Zulfiqar as prisoners. Both of them were intelligent and promising. Nadir Shah was very much impressed by these two brothers and provided them jobs. Zulfiqar became the governor of Herat and Ahmad Shah Abdali was attached to the personal staff of Nadir Shah. In June 1747 when Nadir Shah was murdered by his nephew Ali Kuli Khan, the country fell into a state of anarchy and Ahmad Shah seized a major portion of the treasury in the famous Koh-i-noor of the deceased monarch on Kandhar and ultimately occupied Kabul. Soon Ahmad Shah Abdali was able to carve out a mighty kingdom whose limits were the Caspian sea in the west, Punjab and Kashmir in the east and Oxus in the north.

5. Forster, George, A Journey from Bengal to England through Northern Parts of India, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Persia and into Russia (1782-84), Vol. II, p.22. Hatchet was a common weapon of the Afghans and they used it in war as battle axe.
secure as much wealth as possible from the masses. The very first Afghan governor Abdullah Khan Ishaq Aqasi (1753) realized more than one lakh of rupees within six months, from the unfortunate people of the valley under duress. The masses were fleeced to the bone and reduced to beggary. Money became scarce and business came to a standstill. Eighty flourishing business-houses which had been established during the Mughal rule, left the valley for good. It reduced the Kashmiris to abject poverty and plunged them into the deepest misery.

The sectarian antipathies between the Shi'is and Sunnis, which had proved to be one of the principal causes for the downfall of Sultanate in Kashmir and had disturbed the peaceful conditions during the Mughal period also continued to plague the country under the Afghans. Some Afghan governors, for their political ends, aggravated these sectarian riots and contributed towards lawlessness and anarchy.

However, the kingdom of Ahmad Shah Abdali remained in tact as long as he survived. But after his death in 1772 the Central

8. The governor Juma Khan Alkozia (1766) raised to ground those new mosques which were constructed by Shi'is during his absence from Kashmir. This encouraged the Sunnis and they plundered the Shi'is and assassinated some of their leaders. Similarly at the provocation of governor Atta Mohammad Khan Alkozia (1800-05), the Shi'i riff-raff and hooligans looted and tortured the Sunnis of the city of Srinagar (Hasan,op.cit.,II, pp.480,651).
authority in Afghanistan gradually weakened, and the chaos and confusion that followed, had an adverse effect on Kashmir. Likewise the wars of succession among the three brothers, Shah Zaman, Shah Shuja and Shah Mahmmud not only hastened the disintegration of the Afghan empire but also made the Kabul of administration incapable to take any action against the stubborn governors of Kashmir. In addition to this, the uncompromising rivalry, mutual jealousies and political wrangling of the Saddozai and Barakzai tribes, turned Kabul into an orbit of intrigue. Such a state of affairs gave opportunities to governors of distant provinces to secede from Central authority.

The weak Centre and the political unrest that came in its wake in Kabul, prompted some governors of Kashmir to declare independence, which ultimately proved fatal to the Afghan rule in Kashmir. Even during the life time of Ahmad Shah Abdali, governor Raja Sukhjewan Mal (1753–62) had declared Mughal emperor Alamgir II (1754–62) his sovereign and recited *khutba* in his name.\(^9\) From Alamgir he received as a robe of honour, the title of Raja and an elephant with a planquin.\(^10\) Azad Khan also declared independence and called himself the Nadir Shah Sani (second) and he proclaimed caliph of Turkey as his suzerain and minted coins and recited *khutba* in his name.\(^11\) Similarly, governor Atta Mohammad Khan (1806–1813) threw off the Afghan

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11. Ibid., pp. 304–05.
yoke when his father Muktaru'l-Laulah was assassinated by the
Barakzais, the staunch supporters of Shah Mahmmud. It is
interesting to note that like his predecessors he did not declare
any foreign power as his over-lord. But struck the coins in the
name of Sheikh Nuru'd-Din, the founder and the renounced saint
of Rishi order in Kashmir.¹²

But in 1608 there occurred a political change in Kabul,
Shah Shuja was dethroned by Shah Mahmmud and his vazir, Fath Khan.
When Atta Mohammad Khan heard of these developments, he sent
solicitations to Shah Shuja to come to Kashmir, where he would be
declared king till circumstances would take a favourable turn
for him in Afghanistan. Shah Shuja proceeded to Kashmir but was
treacherously seized and imprisoned in the Hariparbat fort in
Srinagar.

Shah Mahmmud and Fath Khan were well aware that loss of
kashmir was bound to have serious repercussions on the stability
of Afghan kingdom. They realized that not only the sovereignty
of Shah Mahmmud would change hands but Maharaja Kanjit Singh, who
was expanding his territory at the cost of the Afghans, would get
an opportunity to do so. So Shah Mahmmud directed Fath Khan and his
brother Azim Khan in 1812 "to punish speedily Atta Mohammad Khan,
¹² Mr. Izzau't-ullah, op.cit., p.4.
Sheikh Nuru'd-Din, popularly known as Nand Rishi, is the most
beloved among the indigenous saints. He was born in village
Kaimuh Kulgam. There is no general agreement among the sources
about the date of his birth. However many agree that he was
born on 10 Zu'1-Hijja, 779/9 April, 1376. His shrine is
situated in Chrar Sharif, a small town in the north-west side
of the valley of Kashmir.
For a detailed description about the life and teachings of
Sheikh Nuru'd-Din, please see, A.J. Rafiqui's work Sufism in
Kashmir, pp. 136-156.
the traitor." But the expedition required active support and assistance of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, as the roads leading to Kashmir were either through his dominions or under the control of Jahandad Khan and Atta Mohammad Khan. So he was very much particular to secure Maharaja Ranjit Singh's cooperation. The writings of Col. Sir David Ochterlony also corroborate this fact. He says, "Fath Khan, thinking himself unable to force a passage in Cashmere if opposed by Ranjit Singh, entered into engagement with him only to secure his forbearance and enable him to effect the release of Shah Shuja."

Therefore, Atta Mohammad approached Maharaja Ranjit Singh for help which he offered willingly. G.T. Metcalfe, Resident in Delhi, gives a vivid description of the conditions and terms of this bilateral alliance. He states, "I had lately the honour to report that the Raja of Lahore and the wazir of the king of Cabul were acting cooperation against the ruler of Cashmere." He further writes, "A meeting took place between them on 30th ultimo (30 November 1812) according to the previous agreement in the neighbourhood of nohtas, in the Raja's territories. After an interchange of visits, a treaty was concluded on the 2nd instant.

13. News of Ranjit Singh's Court, 15 September, 1812; Garret and Chopra, The events of the Court of Ranjit Singh, p. 41.
14. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the son of Kahan Singh, was born on November 13, 1780. He succeeded his father, who headed the "Sukkerchakkia" one of the twelve sikh confederacy, better known as Sikh Risls. Shah Zaman, who attempted thrice to wrest the possession of Punjab, failed due to the rebellions in Kabul which necessitated his presence there. So he proclaimed Ranjit Singh the Viceroy of Lahore on the grounds of his imagination, talents and predeuce. Shah Zaman later on conferred upon him the title of Raja.
15. Jahandad Khan was the brother of Atta Mohammad and governor of Attock, had also declared independence on the assassination of his father.
(2nd December 1812) in which it was agreed that the Vmzeer Fateh Khan should undertake the invasion of Cashmere by a road through Raja Runjeet Singh's dominions, accompanied by an auxiliary army of 25,000 men under the command of the Raja's Officer Lewan Mohkam Chand, that after the conquest of Cashmere, if the Vmzeer retained possession of it, he should pay to Runjeet Singh the sum of eleven lakhs of rupees annually, or failing in the fulfilment of this engagement, should resign to the Raja one-half of the country.  

But Ranjit Singh who was diplomatically sound wanted to kill two birds with one stone. Wafa Begum, the chief queen of Shah Shuja who was in Lahore at that time had promised him, the

17. G.T. Metcalfe, Resident in Delhi, to John Adams, dated 24 December, 1812; For. Fol. Sons. 8 January 1813, No. 5.

But in return for the permission and assistance he had to pay Ranjit Singh a sum of eleven lakhs of rupees annually from the revenue of Kashmir. In addition to this, he agreed to handover the fort of Multan to Ranjit Singh and also to place one of his brothers as hostage with him, for the fulfilment of the terms of treaty. (News of Ranjit Singh's Court. 13 November 1813, Garret and Chopra, op.cit.,p.110) But our local chronicler Hasan writes that he had to pay in return for help only an annual tribute of eight lakh rupees from the revenue of Kashmir (Hasan, op.cit., II,p.728).
world famous diamond, the Koh-i-Noor, for his assistance in securing Shah Shuja's liberation from the captivity of Atta Mohammad Khan. Because of this reason he showed further interest in Shah Mahmmud and Fath Khan's designs of invading Kashmir. It is quite evident from the diplomatic communication which he sent to Shah Mahmmud for gaining his good-will. "So long as the king would not punish Nawab Atta Mohammad Khan and reduce the fort of Attock into his own possession, the disturbance would not be suppressed." Maharaja Ranjit Singh personally

18. The history of Koh-i-Noor the mountain of light, for which battles had been fought and cities had been depopulated is as follows: (Travels of Schonber, Vol.II, p.177).

The legend which supports its origin is that it was traced from the South of India most probably from the mines of Golconda. It was worn by Karna, the King of Anga, one of the heroes of Mahabharata. This traced its origin 5000 years ago or 3000 B.C. (Catalogue of the Great Britain of 1651, Vol. II, p.695).

Nothing is known about it till it became the property of Vikramaditya, the renowned Raja of Central Indian kingdom of Ujjain. Then it passed to the Malwa Raja's who kept it till they were overthrown by the Mohammadan power.

However, it adorned the throne of Mughal sovereigns of India, till 1739, when Nadir Shah seized the entire treasury of Lelhi including the Koh-i-Noor and the Peacock throne. But his assassination brought it into the hands of Ahmad Shah Abdali and remained with his descendents upto 1812, when Shah Shuja passed it to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Sikh monarchs did not hold this gem and handed it to the East India Company. Since then it is well preserved in the London Tower.

19. This is substantiated by Wafa Begum's despatch to Lord Hastings, the Governor General of India, which runs as "As the roads were in his (Ranjit Singh's) possession, it was impossible to proceed to the Company's dominions against his will and he would not permit us to depart." She further states "He succeeded after many prayers, supplications and entreaties in taking me to his territories, and then promised that he would effect the liberation of the king from Kashmir by whatever means were in his power." (Representation of Wafa Begum to Governor General of India, dated 30 December,1814 Sec. Cons.9 of May 1815, No.42).

20. News of Ranjit Singh's Court, 15 September,1812; Garret and Chopra, op.cit., p.41.
advanced to the Rohtas fort (Jehlam) and instructed his chiefs and tributaries to assist wazir Fath Khan in his expedition of Kashmir. But secretly ordered them to secure at all hazards, the liberation of Shah Shuja. In 1812-13 the combined Afghan-Sikh troops marched on Kashmir and took possession of the Shargari and the Hariparbat forts in Srinagar where a considerable amount of wealth was found. 21 But Shah Shuja and Atta Mohammad afraid to trust Fath Khan, lost no time in joining the Sikh camp and sought Mohkam Chand's protection in spite of the seductive offers made by Fath Khan. In reality Mohkam Chand was purposely sent from Lahore to bring Shah Shuja with him.

But Wazir Fath Khan declined to fulfil the condition laid in the treaty concluded with Ranjit Singh. 22 Dewan Mohkam Chand became furious and informed Ranjit Singh accordingly. He was ordered to remain adamant and firmly advised "not to betray the least dissatisfaction or doubt and to conform himself to the wishes of Fath Khan" adding that he (Ranjit) would deal with him suitably "should he violate the engagement ratified by oaths."

Ranjit Singh who was shrewed politician, was aware that he had

22. The wazir refused to pay the stipulated amount on the grounds that he took possession of Kashmir independently (Claf Caroe, The Pathans, p. 269). Actually the troops that reached Kashmir and fought under the command of Mohkam Chand were few in numbers and had no effect on the three actions which took place between Atta Mohammad and Fath Khan.
on the one hand, Koh-i-noor at his disposal, and, on the other, two Afghan chiefs, Shah Shuja and Atta Mohammed in his custody. The amount of eleven lakhs of rupees was trivial and meaningless for him.

Ranjit Singh in order to retaliate, first occupied the fort of Attock in 1813, which was held by Jahandad Khan. When Fath Khan heard about this political development, he was very much annoyed. He appointed his brother Azim Khan governor of Kashmir and returned to Kabul with Afghan troops and war material to challenge Ranjit Singh's possession of the fort of Attock. He warned Ranjit Singh to "release the fort of Attock, otherwise he must expect him there very soon." Ranjit Singh remained

23. However, Mohkam Chand succeeded in getting the person of Shah Shuja and bringing him to Lahore. But the treatment meted out subsequently by Ranjit Singh to Shah Shuja and members of his family in order to exact the terms of the agreement, remained a blot on his character according to modern standards of international code of conduct." (Farmu, R.K., A History of Sikh Rule in Kashmir 1819-1846, p.80) However, Shah Shuja agreed to deliver the diamond on the condition of providing him three lakh rupees in cash and a jagir of the annual value of fifty thousand rupees. After receiving the diamond, Ranjit Singh enquired of Shah Shuja about the value of this stone. His reply was "Djuty" (Travels of Schonberg, op.cit., Vol.II, p.162). The word "Djuty" has many meanings but the most acceptable one seems to be "shoes". This means one who could give his enemy shoe beating (symbol of defeat), would take this diamond. To others its value is equal to one half of the daily income of the whole world. But its real value is "presentation by a weak to a powerful party" which price alone brought it in the possession of Mughals, Afghans, the Sikhs and at last to Britishers.

24. Jahandad Khan was well aware that like his brother Atta Mohammed he will be treated harshly. So to buy Maharaja Ranjit Singh's protection he decided to hand over the fort of Attock to him. Ranjit was informed accordingly by the garrison master of the fort on behalf of Jahandad Khan. Shahzada Ayub Khan, son of Shah Mahmud of Kabul, has written to him to evacuate the fort of Attock and to establish the control and govt of the king (Shah Mahmud) on it; that he did not agree to surrender the fort, but would like to entrust it to the troops of the noble Sarkar. (Maharaja Ranjit Singh) on their arrival." (News of Ranjit Singh Court, 4 March, 1813; Garret and Chopra, op.cit., p.54).

But Murray was of opinion that before the expedition of Kashmir an intrigue of Ranjit Singh with Jahandad was already in progress. Burns makes it further evident when he writes "Ranjit Singh obtained Attock at the small sacrifice of a lakh of rupees and prepared to defend his acquisition" (Burns, Travels into Bokhara, Ill, p. 268). (News of Ranjit Singh's Court, 21 Aug 1819, Garret and Chopra, op.cit., p.92.)
adamant and did not surrender the fort. Ultimately a pitched battle commenced on 13 July 1813. Both sides fought desperately but Fath Khan received a crushing defeat. The military occupation of Attock was the pinnacle of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's political career.

Then in 1814 Maharaja Ranjit Singh launched an attack on Kashmir. His troops were commanded by Ram Dyal. The Afghans were ready to receive them and the two forces clashed at Hirpura. When war was ferociously raging, there occurred a cloudburst. It not only benumbed the Sikh soldiers but also rendered their muskets useless. The Sikh troops lost heart and were defeated. The Sikhs were also defeated in another encounter on the Pir Panjal. Three generals and three thousand Sikh soldiers were slain in this bloody battle. Due to bad weather and stiff resistance of Afghans, Sikh army suffered heavily and retreated.

The news of Maharaja's defeat at the hands of Afghans in Kashmir spread like wild fire throughout the northern India and damaged his political image. But the failure of this campaign taught him some lessons which proved fruitful in the final subjugation of Kashmir. He realised that to wage a war at high altitudes one should possess proper knowledge of the tactics of

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26. A small and scattered village lying about 7 miles South-west of Shupian along the road to Pir Panjal pass.
mountain warfare, accept the need for warm clothes and light
guns. Similarly, the generals under whose command the expedition
was launched, acquired the knowledge of the logistics of the
Pir Panjal route, which was sure to stand them in good stead in
future.

Azim Khan, who was appointed governor of Kashmir after
the over-throw of rebel Atta Mohammad Khan, tried to restore
political stability and economic prosperity, which were lost
due to Maharaja Kanjits Singh's invasion of 1814. He appointed
Birbal Dhar, Mirza Pandit Lhar and Sukha Ram Safaya to responsi-
ble administrative posts. The collection of revenue was
assigned to Pandit Birbal Dhar, but rupees one lakh remained as
arrears against Birbal Dhar, which he could not pay to Azim Khan.
Azim Khan suspected that Birbal Dhar had embezzled the money. He
sent one hundred sepoys to ransack his home. But Birbal Dhar
apprehending stern action left the valley for Jammu. Here
Gulab Singh, the ruler of Jammu provided him not only with
travelling facilities but also gave a letter of introduction for
his brother Lian Singh, the Prime Minister of Maharaja Kanjits Singh.

30. Ibid., p. 734.
31. But the direct flight of Birbal Lhar to Jammu instead of
Rajuri, Poonch and Bimber which were nearer to Jammu and
under the direct control of Lahore Darbar creates suspicion,
that there existed some sort of understanding between the
Gulab Singh and the Pundit community in Kashmir. But there
is also possibility that Birbal Dhar was under the impression
that Gulab Singh was thinking in terms of terminating the
Muslim rule in Kashmir. So he went straight way to Jammu.
On reaching Lahore, he persuaded Maharaja Ranjit Singh to conquer Kashmir and annex it to his dominion. To make his appeal more effective, he agreed to reimburse any financial loss occurring from a failure of Kashmir campaign. He even offered his son, Rajakak Dhar, as a hostage for the surety of the performance of the engagement. These facts are ample proof that he was a wealthy person, because the cost of such an expedition would require lakhs of rupees together. It also testifies that he had taken undue advantage of his position of revenue collector and had grabbed a huge amount of the State revenue during his tenure of office.

Parmu, while putting a veil on the motive which forced Birbal Dhar to invite Maharaja Ranjit Singh to invade Kashmir, calls him "one of the most adventurous and daring patriots," who wanted to liberate Kashmirians from Afghan atrocities. But the fact seems to be that he was neither an adventurer nor a patriot. But in order to save his skin from Afghan wrath, he approached Maharaja Ranjit Singh who had by that time reached the climax of his power. Moreover, after the annexation of Kashmir to the Sikh kingdom, Birbal Dhar was appointed Chief revenue collector. Once again misappropriating the state revenue he was dismissed from the services and imprisoned. This reason

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33. For adequate information please see infra pp.64,155.
alone was not responsible for Ranjit Singh's invasion of Kashmir. Ranjit Singh was keen to extend the boundaries of his kingdom in the north-east and north-west including Kashmir, as the expansion of his territories beyond Sutlej was fraught with dangerous consequences and in view of his treaty with the British, he could not extend his frontiers towards the east.

Moreover, the annexation of Kashmir would fulfil, to some extent, the curiosity of Ranjit Singh to carve out a kingdom which would be circumvalleted by a definite natural boundary. It would also offer to Ranjit Singh both military and economic inducements. Kashmir enjoyed "the singular advantage of being at the same time both a fortress and a magazine." Like-wise Kashmir was very fertile and its fertility can be imagined by the fact that it had maintained a huge army of "sixty thousand horses and foot belonging to Atta Mohammad Khan, giving him also surplus income of two lakhs of rupees in cash and some rolls of pashmina." 

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34. Ranjit Singh consolidated his position by uniting the divided Punjab into a single whole. But his cherished dream to carve out a Punjabi state by integrating Sis-Sutlej state was shattered by the adroit and superior diplomacy of East India Company. He was rather pressurised to sign the Treaty of Lahore on April 25, 1809, which fixed Sutlej as the southern boundary of his territory. But it gave Ranjit Singh a blank cheque to expand his territory towards north and north-west at the expense of Kabul monarchy.


Meanwhile, the political situation deteriorated in Kabul and Azim Khan was recalled and administration of Kashmir was handed over to his brother, Jabar Khan. Besides, a large number of Afghan troops also left the valley and were employed at Kandahar in the expedition against Shah Kamran of Herat. Ranjit Singh was watching political developments in Afghanistan with keen interest. When he received the news that a large portion of the Afghan troops had been recalled from Kashmir to Kabul, he took full advantage of this and at once dispatched a strong army numbering thirty thousand along with a galaxy of his experienced generals like Mishr Dewan Chand, Hari Singh Nalwa, Sardar Jawala Singh, Padania, Raja Gulab Singh and the notorious robber-turned soldier Phulla Singh to conquer and annex Kashmir. The Sikh army marched towards Kashmir by Bhimber-Rajouri-Thanna route and finally entered the valley by the Darhal pass. No sooner Jabar Khan heard of the march of the Sikhs, he sent forward two of his trusted men to ascertain the situation about the march of the Sikhs. They turned traitors and joined the Sikhs. Jabar Khan mobilized his army under the command of Wall Mohd Khan and Abdullah Khan and marched towards Hirapur. But the Sikh army had already reached the heights of Fir Panjal, where an encounter

37. Azim Khan's brother Wazir Fath Khan was first blinded and finally assassinated by Kamran the heir-apparent of Shah Mahmmud for mishandling one of his female cousins (Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdatu't-Tawarikh*, II, p.83). This exasperated the twenty Barakzai brothers of deceased Fath Khan and they dethroned Shah Mahmmud and raised Ayub Khan to the throne as Shah Ayub.


42. Vigne, *op.cit.*, I, p.255.

took place between the two armies, but Afghans were defeated and they retreated to Shopian.\(^44\) Next day a severe battle was fought at Shopian, in which Afghans achieved initial success and captured two guns of the Sikh army.\(^45\) Upon this, Sikh made a rally and so desperate was their next onslaught that the Afghans were completely worsted and repulsed. Governor Jabar Khan was wounded\(^46\) and he fled from the battlefield towards Srinagar, where he accumulated a huge treasure of one crore in cash and left for Kabul by Baramulla pass.\(^47\)

The Sikh army, which was disciplined and trained by the European military generals, had preeminence over the Afghan army both on account of their weapon equipment and their numbers.\(^48\) In other words, it can be explained that it was an unequal contest between the Afghan horses on one hand and the Sikh guns on the other. Likewise, the veteran Afghan troops left the valley for Kabul and the raw levies left in the valley were no match to the well-organised Sikh army.

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\(^{44}\) Shopian or Batu was a parganah during the Sikh rule. It is situated to the south-west of the bank of river Rambyara and is 29 miles far from Srinagar on the high road to Pirpanjal mountain.

\(^{45}\) Latif, S.M. History of the Punjab, p.418.

\(^{46}\) Vigne, op.cit., I, p.255.


\(^{48}\) The infantry which had a strength of 29,617 in 1838 was trained and organized by the general Alard and Ventura. Likewise the raising and training of his artillery was entrusted to two European officials namely Claude Auguste Court and Alexander Gardener. In 1838 the artillery had a strength of 4,535 with 188 heavy guns and 280 swivels (Mohammad Yusuf Saraf, op.cit., I, p.76).
The Sikh army entered the valley on 15th July 1819 A.D. (22 Har 1876 Bikrimi) and hoisted their flag on Sherghari fort in Srinagar which remained there till 1846. The date of Sikh victory is also contained in their war cry.

But contrary to Ranjit Singh's special directives, the Sikh generals indulged in looting freely. However, Birbal Dhar succeeded in withdrawing Phulla Singh from such unfair dealing by offering him an amount of fifteen thousand rupees. Another military general Dewan Chand Zafar Jang in a refined and well planned way plundered every well-off Zamindar, and Pandit by demanding from them a horse and cash according to their economic strength and social status. Similarly the Afghan civilians as well as soldiers, who remained within the valley, were searched out and inhuman cruelties were inflicted on them.

Ranjit Singh was so much pleased with the victory that Lahore was illuminated for three days. Robes of honour and cash payments were awarded to Rajkak Dhar and those generals who distinguished themselves in the invasion. Birbal Dhar, in lieu of his services, was made the principal adviser and chief

49. Sohan Lal Suri, Umdatul-Tawarih, II, p.41. But Birbal Kachru writes that the Sikhs entered the valley on 12 Har 1876 Bikrimi. (Majmaul-Tawarih, f.241a). But Hasan states that they entered the valley on 6 Har 1876 Bikrimi. (Hasan, op.cit., II,p.739). The statement of Sohan Lal Suri, the court chronicler of Ranjit Singh, seems to be correct, because he might have participated in the rejoicings held at Lahore in honour of victory.

52. Khalil Mirjanpur, Tawarih-i-Kashmir,f.179a.
54. Fauq Mohammadud-Din, op.cit., p.
revenue collector. Soon after the conquest of Kashmir a son was born to Ranjit Singh from the wife Daya Kaur (widow of Bhangi Chief of Gujrat). He was named Kashmira Singh in celebration of the victory.

The Sikhs, for internal security appointed twenty thousand musketeers. But for precautionary measures against recrudescence of violence and opposition Mohammad Ali, Noor Shah and Namdar Khan Thakur, the chiefs of Khokhas, Bombas and Gujars were sent as hostages to Lahore Darbar.

The Sikh conquest of Kashmir had great political significance for Sikh state. The fertile and paradisiacal valley not only extended the frontiers of Sikh kingdom to the borders of China and Tibet, but also removed the last vestige of the once mighty Afghan power in the Cis-Indus territories.