CHAPTER III
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The advent of the Sikh rule resulted in a change of marked importance in the political life of Kashmir. The social and cultural life of Kashmir did not escape the resultant influence. Although age-old traditions, customs and manners did not undergo any change of great importance, nevertheless, certain ideas, beliefs and dogmas of the Sikh religion and social life were introduced in Kashmir. These new currents got mixed up with the prevailing trends of Kashmiri culture and gave a new focus to the process which resulted in the formation of modern society of Kashmir.

Traditional Joint Family

The family in Kashmir, as elsewhere in India, had been the basic unit of society. In course of time, it

1. Victor Jacquemont who visited Kashmir in the first half of the 19th century had observed that since the introduction of Islam in Kashmir "I do not believe that the manners of the people have ever differed much what they are at present (1832)." Jacquemont Victor, op.cit., II, p.136.
2. Punjabi food preparations such as sweets, and puris were introduced for the first time in Kashmir.
3. Cameras, watches, barometers, binoculars, telescopes, clocks, spectacles and western furniture were introduced in Kashmir during the said regime. Dasturul-Amal-i-Kashmir, ff.114, 118, 122-124.
developed into, what is commonly known as, joint family. The most important feature of the family was its filial bond. The family consisted of the eldest male member as the head of the family, living with his wife, sons, daughters, aged parents, grand children, brothers, uncles, cousins and nephews under the same roof. On marriage, the daughter became a member of his husband's family.

The joint family had a special economic significance. As the major portion of the population resided in the villages, so every member of the joint family directly or indirectly participated in the productive activity of the village to earn a living and improve their financial position. After the death of father, the sons owned the herds and flocks, land and house. But under the Hindu customary law daughters did not claim any share in the estate of their father in the presence of the sons. However, they were given a part of the property in the form of gift or dowry. After the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir, Muslim Law of inheritance was also introduced in Kashmir. Under the Muslim law daughters have equal right to inherit their father's property with their brothers. But it appears that Kashmiris especially villagers followed the Hindu

4. The greatest merit of joint family was that it developed a sense of cooperation and consciousness of mutual understanding. But at the same time, it proved harmful for the development of personality and also curbed the feeling of self-reliance.


6. Ganjo,Gilu Kanth, Customary Law of Kashmir, p.229; Dogra, Sant Ram, p.9; Lawrence, Walter, op.cit., pp.267-68. Whereas according to the provisions of Hindu Succession Act 1956, Sec.(c), un-married daughters or daughters who have been divorced or whose husbands have expired, are entitled to a share in the estate of their fathers.
Law of inheritance. However, Dukhtār-i-Khana Nashin got the share of the property of his father, if her husband lived with her father. With the acceptance of the daughter's claim to a share in her father's property, the position of the women, particularly Muslim women marked some improvement.

Position of Women:

Any study of society without reference to woman would be incomplete. Therefore, while tracing the social history of a people, one has to bring within the focus the condition of woman during his period of study. In an attempt to study the social history of Kashmir during the Sikh rule, we have to take into consideration the position and status of woman, as is depicted in the contemporary sources. However, before we concentrate on this aspect of social history of the period of study, it may not be out of place to mention in passing the position that woman held in Kashmir from earliest times. The fact that woman has ever held a position next only to man has not been generally disputed. Her image was further degraded because of the social evils such as prostitution and practising devadasi.

8. Ganjoo, Nila Kanth, op. cit., pp. 103-195; Dogra Sant Ram, op. cit., p.9., Lawrence, Walter, op. cit.; pp.267-68. The daughter who is married and lives in her father's house with her husband is known as Dukhtār-i-Khana-Nashin. For details see infra, pp.

9. Even in ancient times woman did not always enjoy a position equal to that of man. The birth of a girl was rarely looked upon with favour.

10. Kalhana, Rajatarangani, VII, p.858. The practice of devadasi, according to which young girls were dedicated to temple for singing and dancing purposes, to please their gods, was prevalent among the Hindus during late ancient and early medieval times. But sometimes these girls were lifted by the then Hindu kings for their personal enjoyments.
The practice of early marriages prevalent from early times in Kashmir became universal during the Afghan rule and it continued to be so even under the Sikhs. When the tradition of marrying daughters in their childhood became common, the parents came to exercise greater control over the fate of their young daughters.

But the Sikh rulers for the first time in the history of Kashmir imposed tax both on nikah (wedding) as well as khal (divorce). It was given a shape of law and was realized under the cover of zar-i-qazaya. The amount was fixed both for urban and rural populace according to their social status and economic strength. From every marriage in the city of Srinagar patwari used to get an anna as Rasum-i-Patwari. In addition to this government received two rupees from the affluent people and one rupee eight annas from the poor. In case of repudiation each party had to pay to the state one rupee and eight annas. The villagers were charged one rupee, seven annas and two paisa both in case of marriage and divorce. They were exempted from Rasum-i-Patwari. The tax was an extra

11. The tradition of marrying daughters in their childhood had been there in early times but it had then been restricted to lower strata of society.
12. This practice became more frequent during the Afghan rule, as the governors of the said regime used to molest the virgin girls (Hasan, op.cit., II, p.683,718, Dhar Ramjoo, op.cit., f.4a.) Pandit Anand Koul writes "An Afghan would not molest a married woman, however, pretty, so the only remedy to save the person and honour of a woman was to marry her young." The Kashmiri Pandit, p.33.
13. Wrongly pronounced in Kashmir as 'Khulahl.
14. It was a tax and was imposed on marriages, divorces and the land transactions. (Dasturul-Amal-i-Kashmir, f.135).
15. Ibid. 16. Ibid.
burden on the parents who had already to spend a huge amount of money on marriages. Obviously, it would have created hurdles in performing marriages, especially in case of the poorer sections of the society. But it would have minimised the divorce rate to some extent.

Among the Muslims, pardah system was prevalent and the women of upper classes of society resorted to it. Vigne while discussing the Muslim women, states, "In Kashmir, there is no purdah, or concealment of the features, excepting among the higher classes." The women of this section of society remained within the four walls of their houses and did not move freely in the streets and bazars.

The women of the lower strata of society, having limited resources could not afford it. They gave helping hand to their husbands in their respective professions, so they do not observe purdah. Sometimes the peasant wives worked lonely in the rice fields when their husbands were sent under compulsion to far off places to discharge kar-i-begar.

The shawl industry which was in a flourishing condition provided employment to a large number of women. In 1822-23,

18. For details see infra, p.186.
one lakh females were working on the spinning wheel and thereby they made a part of the income of their respective families.\(^9\) But among them ten thousand spun with the purpose of obtaining shawls for use in their families, while the rest spun to earn their subsistence.\(^20\) It seems that during the later period of the Sikh rule, a large section of the female population of the city of Srinagar and the prominent towns of the valley were engaged in this pursuit. It was that period of the development of the Shawl industry when it reached its climax.

Girls generally took to the art of spinning at the age of ten. The Kashmiris particularly the Hindu parents celebrated a particular fortnight, called pan (yarn) in honour of the Charkha (spinning wheel) and on this auspicious occasion the virgins started their career of spinning. Spinning wheel began to be worshipped as "Indir Raj," and lack of it in a house was considered a bad omen.\(^21\)

Prostitution which was deeprooted in society of Kashmir from the remote past was also in existence during Sikh rule. But no statistical figures are available which would show how many were involved in harlotry, as no census was carried out.

\(^{19}\) Hoocroft, op.cit., II, p.174.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., I, p.174.
\(^{21}\) Ganju, Madsudan, Textile Industries in Kashmir, p. 43n.
during the Sikh rule. However, during the Sikh rule, for the first time, prostitution was legalized and tax was imposed on prostitutes. In 1636-37, government collected in tax as much as fifteen hundred rupees from this profession. It was the economic depression and low standard of morality among certain classes of society that gave rise to this social evil. The women who indulged in this practice were called in Kashmir "Ganee."

Sati, was practised in Kashmir almost from the desiccation of the valley. However, for the first time, it was banned during the reign of Sultan Sikandar (1369-1413). Later on it was abolished by Sultan Zainul Abidin (1420-70) and was also in practice during the period under study.

23. Major Leech's commentary on the Revenue of Kashmir dated 1 April 1837, For. Sec. Cons. 18 Nov. 1843, Nos. 13-17.
24. The origin of the custom would have it that "many ancient people buried people or burnt a man's widows, horses and other cherished possessions with his corpse, in order that he might have all that he loved and needed in the other world." (Vedas, X, 16, E, quoted by Basham, A.L., lends support to the same view). Thus we know that kings of ancient Ur (West Asia) and ancient China followed the same practice. The first datable notice of the self-immolation of the Sati occurs in Greek accounts of Alexander's invasion. (Ibid.).
The word Sati denotes true or chaste wife. In that sense it was one of the names of the wife of Shiva, who practised Sati. So the Hindu women followed her and burnt themselves (Vigne, op. cit., I, p.376).
26. To quote Srivara, "Here (in Kashmir) according to the custom of the distant countries, females immolated themselves in the pyre of the beloved and were not forbidden by the king (Zainul Abidin)." (Srivara, Jainrajrajgarini, Eng. tr.by. Lutt, J.C. as Kings of Kashmir, p.743, Also text, I,v., St.61).
We come across a number of cases of the widow burning at the corpse of their husbands, from the contemporary sources. 27 Three cases of Sati occurred during the governorship of Dewan Kirpa Ram, but Khalil Mirjanpuri, the author of *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, the trusted eye-witness account mostly on Sati and natural calamities furnishes full particulars on two cases only. According to his identification, Gopal Tikoo of Habba Kadal, Srinagar, died of cholera and his young beautiful wife of twenty years in the prime of her youth burnt herself with her husband's dead body. Likewise a Hindu of Aali Kadal passed away and his wife performed this cruel rite at Noor Bagh, Srinagar.

Not to speak of Sati, infanticide was also in existence, in some of the hilly areas of Kashmir. The custom was put to an end in 1847, when Maharaja Gulab Singh issued proclamation prohibiting Sati. 28

The Mughal 29 and Afghan 30 rulers sold Kashmiri women-folk like articles of furniture to the people outside Kashmir. They

29. It is from this country(Kashmir), writes Bernier "That nearly every individual, when first admitted to the court of the great Mogal selected wives or concubines, that his children may be whiter than Indian's and pass for genuine Mogals." Bernier, *Travels in Mogal Empire*, p.404.
30. Even the blind Shah Alam's Seraglio in Delhi had in 1794 "Cashmerian beauties who formed the principal ornaments of the palace" Thomas Twining, *Travels in India*, p.227.
converted Kashmir into the market of white slave trade. The Sikh rulers of Kashmir did not remain behind but they rather stimulated the trafficking in women to its extreme. According to Jospeh Wolfe, who visited the valley in 1832, Kashmiri women were brought and sold like pieces of bread.\(^{31}\) Naturally, with the passage of time it resulted in the decadence of the feminine beauty of Kashmir, as the fairest faces were taken to different parts of the Punjab and British India. Jacquement who traversed Kashmir in 1831, says "the men are remarkably handsome race, and the ugliness of the women is explained by the continual exportation of every pretty Cashmerian face to the Punjab and India to stock the harnms of the Mussulmaans, Seikhs (Sikhs) and Hindoos."\(^{32}\)

It seems that the sale of women was prevalent in the lower section of the society. Because, Jacquement got the chance to observe the beauty of those women-folk who either worked in the fields or performed other pursuits of life. He himself admits this fact and writes, "I speak of the women of the common ranks,—those one seen in the streets and fields — since those of a more elevated stations pass all their lives shut up, and are never seen."\(^{33}\) The observations of Vigne which corroborate this fact

\(^{31}\)Wolfe, J. Travels and Adventures, p.196.
\(^{32}\)Jacquement Victor, Letters from India,II, pp.74-75.
\(^{33}\)Ibid.,II, p.65.
are worth-quoting, "Many of the women are handsome enough to induce a man to exclaim, as did the Assyrian soldiers, when they beheld the beauty of Judith, — "who would despise this people, that having among them such women."  

Maharaja Ranjit Singh also used to receive in tribute from Kashmir debutanate beautiful faces adept in dancing and music. In 1839, Rani Kundan, the principal widow and two other Raniis (Queens) and five Kashmiri slave girls burnt themselves with the corpse of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.  

The Sikhs introduced the sale of children especially of little charming girls. To quote Jacquement, "It is true that all little girls who promise to turn out pretty, are sold at eight years of age, and carried off into the Punjab and India. Their parents sell them at from twenty to three hundred francs—most commonly fifty or sixty." The sale of children was mostly prevalent amongst Watul, known for their beauty. Vigne was much struck with the beauty of this tribe. He states, "Many of

38. Vigne holds the view that Watuls of Kashmir trace their origin to the gipsy, having same appearance and manners. Socially they were divided into two classes. Those who abstained from eating carrion were permitted to touch the drink and diet of the rest of the muslims and offer prayers in the mosques. Those who ate flesh of dead animals were hated both by the Muslims and Hindus with greatest contempt. (Vigne,op.cit.,II,p.144). Watul in modern Kashmir means a person who performs menial services such as cleaning of roads or lavatories.
their beautiful children are sold and sent as slaves to the Punjab (Punjab), and, I believe, that many of the pretties of the nach or dancing girls are born of watul parents. These last, of course, are originally chosen for their beauty." The famines coupled with heavy official demands compelled a sizeable number of parents to sell their young and beautiful children.

It would be of academic interest to mention that Maharaja Ranjit Singh's contemporary, Lord William Bentinck, abolished slavery in British India, but in Kashmir it was not only introduced for the first time but also encouraged.

**Institution of Khanadamadi**

The system of corvee, locally known as kar-i-begar was in vogue from ancient times. But during the despotic rule of the Sikhs, it not only assumed a huge proportion but was followed vigorously. Not to speak of hierarchy but ordinary Sikh soldiers forced the natives to perform any of their duty without remuneration.

---

41. For details on begar see Chapter "Agrarian System"
43. Mir Saifullah, Tarikh Nama Kashmir, p.19. However, Colonel Mehan Singh the governor made an attempt to abolish corvee by issuing orders that soldiers must carry their provisions, luggage etc. by themselves. (Mir Saifullah, op.cit., p.19) But it did not carry any weight, as it were the days when "officials enjoyed more powers and privileges than their masters." Khan, M.I. Some Aspects of Corvee (Begar) in Kashmir (A.D.633-1858) (Art.)
The impact of begar on the Kashmiri society was so much that the adoption of Khanadamadi became a common custom. The reason of the popularity of Khanadamadi during the Sikh rule was that whenever men were called for forced labour, by the government, the unfortunate khanadamads were sent to perform this duty. Lawrence writes "If he came back alive he won his bride. If he died no matter as the son of the house, at any rate, escaped." The dukhtaran-i-khananashin were passionately waiting for the arrival of their husbands and some of them had to become widows. Some of those who returned alive, were maimed from frost bite or paralyzed from exposure to cold and thus became a burden for their wives for their whole life.

But after all, these khanadamads who served their in-laws like bonded slaves, were looked down upon. The sad plight of

44. Khanadamadi was a system, according to which the parents having daughters took the boys into their houses, usually from the families of their own tribe, who were blessed with many sons and then married them with their daughters. These boys who now resided with their in-laws, were and are known as khanadamads. This system had three lucrative advantages. First, it enabled the parents to keep their daughters at home. Secondly, the father of the girl received a drudge, who worked like a slave for their in-laws. Thirdly, the parents who adopted khanadamads, saved a good amount of money on account of the expenses on betrothal and marriage. But the system had certain disadvantages. For instance some parents were unscrupulous in the matter of khanadamadi and turned boys out of their houses on small trifles. But as a rule, the boy who had worked out his term of probation could get his bride. But he could not claim the property covered by the deed of gift, executed on the occasion of marriage. (Lawrence, op.cit., p.267)

45. Lawrence, op.cit., p.267.

46. Ibid.
these khanadamads is quite obvious from the following proverb which was coined in Kashmir "Gari Pett Zamatur bara pett hoon"\textsuperscript{47} i.e. khanadamad was not treated better than a dog at the outer door. But those of the khanadamads who served to the satisfaction of their in-laws, obtained the property as well as the kram (caste) of their father-in-laws.\textsuperscript{48}

**Dresses and Clothes**

The dress of both men and women consisted of wrapper,\textsuperscript{49} shirt\textsuperscript{50} and drawers.\textsuperscript{51} The tunic locally known as pheran is the contraction of the Persian word "pirahan". The long loose pheran with large and wider sleeves covered the whole body down to the ankles. Due to seasonal variation it was made of wool and cotton, so was called Loch and Pocch respectively. But the woolen stuff which was usually of white or silver gray was exclusively indigenous and very much durable but not handsome.\textsuperscript{52} However there prevailed distinction as for as the wearing of the wrapper was concerned, the Hindus tied it on the left side and Muslims on the right.\textsuperscript{53} The custom of wearing

\textsuperscript{47} Ganjoo Nilakanth, op.cit., p.111.
\textsuperscript{48} Lawrence, op.cit., p.268.
On the occasion of marriage, a deed of gift was executed, according to which he was given a share of the property of his father-in-law.
\textsuperscript{49} Hasan, op.cit., I, p.453, Forster George, op.cit.,II,p.97.
Vigne, op.cit.,II, p.140.
\textsuperscript{50} Forster George, op.cit.,II, p.23.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., Moorcroft, op.cit.,II, p.131.
\textsuperscript{52} Schonberg, op.cit.,II, p.138.
\textsuperscript{53} Vigne, op.cit.,II, p.140.
pheran with wider sleeves came in vogue during the Afghan regime. The higher class of the people wore under-garment known as shirt and also trousers (aizar) and the lower order went with naked legs and bare feet. But the practice of using spacious trousers was the legacy of Mirza Haidar Daughlat's reign.

But the poverty-stricken section of the society used wooden clogs (kharava) with thongs of rice straw or leather, as a defence for their feet. But their primitive tradition of wearing grass shoes (pulhor), especially during winter months was very much prevalent. The well-off section of the society used shoes and slippers and the Hindus of this stratum of society used wooden clogs because of their religious taboos. On marriages and other festive occasions use of shoes of horse or mule's skin usually adorned with silken work was common. The males used dirty low woollen caps. Both the Hindus and Muslims of distinguished families used large turbans. The Hindus smoothed it over the right temple while as Muslims on the left. The Muslims wore amulets and the Hindus put qashqa (religious mark) on their forehead. However,

55. Ibid.
61. Forster George, op.cit., II, p.32. Vigne, op.cit., II, p.140. According to Hasan, the maximum length of the turban was twenty girahs and height twelve inches.
the followers of Hindu deity, Shiva, placed the sectarian decoration horizontally and those of Vishnu perpendicularly on their foreheads. Saffron, the indigenous production served as the colouring ingredient in the mixture with which the mark was painted. During the Sikhs "Chadari" a locally woven fine woollen blanket replaced the one known as "durma" made from coarse and rough indigenous wool.65

The dress of the women was a gown, shaped like a loong loose shirt having wide sleeves. They wore a skull woollen cap of crimson colour over their hair along with a red fillet on their forehead. The hinder part of the cap was attached with a triangular piece of the white stuff, falling on the back and concealing much of the hair. This type of head-dress was called by the name of kasaba and the taranga by the Muslims and Hindus respectively. The mode of their hair dressing was also a unique one. It was drawn to the back of the head and braided. The braids were then gathered in a single plait and a long tassel of black cotton was suspended from it down to the loins. This peculiar style was locally known as wankapan.

The women of high rank in Kashmir used costly hair oils and

---

63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
70. Vigne,op.cit.,II, p.143.
The Hindu women like their men put a religious mark on their forehead and wore a white rolled cloth (lungi) round their waste. Sometimes the griddle was made from wool, three and a half yard in length and one-and-a-half in breadth. The women also adorned and beautified themselves with elegant earrings, noserings, anklets, bangles and bracelets.

Both men and women, high and low used a portable brazier (kangri) under their loose garment as a protection against intense cold of the chilly winter. It consisted of two parts, the interior contained red vessel of earthen ware (kundal) and the outer enasement and handle of wicker work. When it was bare of wicker-work then it was called manan. The people put live charcoal in it and kept it in close contact with the skin of thighs and abdomen. But its excessive use "invariably discolours and sear the skin, and not infrequently occasions palsy." Sometimes due to the carelessness of the people

71. Very few cosmetics were used and these were almond oil, butter and various Attars (scents) (Vigne, op. cit., I, p. 318; II, p. 122. Census of India, 1961, Kashmir Village, Esh Muqam, p. 15)
75. It is interesting to note that Italians have precisely a similar custom of using kangri. Lient Colonel Torrens had surmised that Jesuit Priests who were first European wanderers in this region would have either introduced this Kashmiri custom into Italy or vice-versa (Lient Colonel Torrens, Travel in Ladakh, Tartary and Kashmir, pp. 309-310)
78. Moorcroft, op. cit., II, p. 31.
who slept with it the kangri became a cause of dreadful burning and wild fires. 79

However, the kangri which was also called "snow queen" was and is sweet-heart of every Kashmiri from child to grown up. The value, which a native attributes to the kangri may be known from the following distich:

"Oh, Kangri! Oh, kangri;
You are the gift of Houris and Fairies;
When I take you under my arm
You drive fear from my heart."

**Food and Drinks**

Rice; the staple food 81 of the people from time immemorial was and is prepared in different manners but the popular one was to boil it till it absorbed the whole water. The total rice production of the province was insufficient to meet the requirements of people. But it is strange irony of the fate that Sikh administrators of Kashmir even exported large

80. Ibid.
quantities of rice to Ladakh, Tibet, Iskardoo and other parts of Central Asia. Because of the fact that a sizeable number of the people used other alternatives of food such as greenish coloured bread made from tromba (buck-wheat). The poorer classes passed their worse days mostly on vegetables and fruits. The vegetables like cabbage, turnips, lettuces, pumpkin, spinach, parsnips and carrots were commonly used. Even the leaves of the dandelion, dock plantain, mallow and the walnut catkins were also taken as food. These vegetables were seasoned with salt, mustard and edible oil. But the vegetable oil especially of til (sesamum) was preferred to walnut oil, both for cooking and burning in the lamps. It was also extracted from kernels of walnuts, apricots and almonds.

In addition to this, produce of lakes and swamps constituted the food of the poor masses especially those who inhabited near them. Moorcroft who visited the valley in 1823 observed that watermelons alone formed "almost only food of at least thirty thousand persons for five months in the year." The Hindu population used to keep fasts for two days in every month and they ate nothing except Singara flour.

82. Dasturul Amal-i-Kashmir, f. 145. Hugel, Kashmir, p. 34.
86. Ibid., p. 46. Every nine people out of ten used oil with their food instead of clarified butter. The walnut oil which does not yield much smoke nor much cold was used in cookery as in Europe.
88. Hugel, op.cit., p. 163.
The stem of the lotus chiefly formed the food of the lower section of the society. The stalks were first boiled and mixed with salt and pepper and then they formed a likeable vegetable. In 1822-23, it sustained five thousand persons in the city of Srinagar alone for eight months. In addition to this, its delicious seeds were eaten and flowers used as religious ceremonies. Similarly the stem of Nilofar-i-Safaid (Nymphaea Stellata) served the purpose of vegetable and its flowers were used for medicinal ends. Likewise its sweet and soft seeds were eaten both raw and roasted. The fish of which lakes and rivers were full, sustained a great portion of the people especially the boat-men. The forest produce such as morels (Kanguch) were also eaten and even dried for long winter months. However, Kashmiris were experts in the preparation of sweet meat not only from fruits but also from the pollen of sweet reed grown abundantly in the lakes.

It seems that dire poverty and discontent were the prevailing characteristics. Victor Jacquemont has revealed the cause of these bad conditions and the low standard of life

91. Dasturul-Amal-i-Kashmir, f.138. As the leaves and flowers of lotus are never covered by water it was regarded by the Hindus as a mystic emblem of the reappearance of the world after having been submerged beneath the ocean. Hence it was viewed with the utmost reverence and its introduction was attributed to Hindu deity Vishnu. (Edward Thornton, op.cit.,I, p.360).
93. Vigne, op.cit.,p.177.
of the general masses in these words. "The Afghans, last century, having deprived the Moguls of that conquest, and the Seikhs (Sikhs) having driven the Afghans from it, a general plunder followed each new conquest; and the intervals of peace, anarchy, and oppression, doing their best against labour and industry, the country is now so completely ruined that the poor Cashmerians seem to be despair, and are become the most indolent of men. If one must starve, it is better to do it at one's ease, than bend under the weight of labour. In Cashmere, there is scarcely more chance of getting a supper for him, who tills, spins or rows all day, than for him who, being rendered desperate, sleeps all day under the shade of a plane-tree." 96

But the upper and middle class of society partly used meat of both goat and sheep. Beef was not procurable, as the Sikh governors punished the killing of cow capitally. 97

The brewing of wine, which was discontinued by Afghans was revived by the Sikhs. 98 Tobacco smoking was not as prevalent as was the use of snuff. It seems that country-made snuff was not qualitatively good, so large quantity of it was

exported from Peshawar. 99

Both in Tibet and Kashmir, tea was an article of daily use and was served at every meal. 100 A tradition had developed among the natives that guest was always served with a cup of tea. 101 Two kinds of tea, Surti and Sabz were brought into Kashmir in many varieties. 102

Kashmiris were and are still very fond of tea and took both the salt and sweet tea. 103 Schonberg states that like Tibetan, Kashmiris never travelled without their tea equippage (Samavar). 104 Every one used to carry his little copper can slung at his saddle-bow, and all the accessories in his pocket. The prevalent ways of tea preparation were as follows.

99. Lala Ganeshi Lal, op.cit., p.35. The snuff from Peshawar has become so popular in the Valley that even to-day, the local snuff producers carry the name "Peshawari Snuff."

100. Schonberg, op.cit.,II,p.127. But Lala Ganeshi Lal is of the opinion that tea was an article luxury.

101. Ibid.

102. Dasturul-Amal-i-Kashmir,f.117.


104. "Samavar" was and is one of the common household utensil. Lt. Col. Torrens writes that when he enquired from Kashmiris about "Samavar" they acknowledged that its shape had been imitated from a Russian model brought by some travellers years ago from the North. This dodge for keeping tea hot had evidently impressed them with a great respect for the Muscovite; and they may be said to imbibe with each cup of comfort a spice of Russian influence. Muscovite intrigue may lurk in the aroma of each domestic tea-pot; and thought the very hiss of the steaming 'Samavar' breathed a covert warning, prophetic of the future."(Lt.Col.Torrens, op.cit.,p.310).

This can or tea-kettle was usually about twelve or fourteen inches high, and two-and-a-half in diameter. It was furnished with a handle and spout, closely resembling the oil-pitcher of the ancient Greeks (Schonberg, op.cit.,II,p.129).
Some cups of water were poured into the tea-pot and then added to it Surati tea leaf and sugar. The mixture was boiled till leaves thoroughly moistened. This preparation was called tea or qahwa. The salt tea was prepared in the same manner but instead of Surti tea and sugar, Sabz (green) tea, little soda, salt and milk were added. 105

Another way of preparing this beverage was entirely different from the above mentioned one. However it was not generally practised in Kashmir and was said to be of Chinese origin. 106 But this drink was far too expensive to be enjoyed by the poor people. 107 It was prepared in the following manner. 108

106. Ibid.
108. Five cups of water, one cup of Sabz tea and full spoon of soda were placed in an iron vessel (Degchi) which was placed on fire. After ten minutes duration two more cups of cold water were added to the mixture and it was brewed for next ten minutes. Then once again five cups of cold water were poured into the teapot which continued to boil for half an hour more. Then vessel was taken off the fire and liquor thoroughly strained through a cloth, into a large kettle, and then required quantity of rock salt was added to it. Afterwards five cups of boiled milk were poured into the said kettle which was placed on fire. When the preparation was at its hottest, to it was added a full cup of fresh butter. Now the tea was ready and it seemed like chocolate. Its taste was like that of a strong soup made of scorched flour. This preparation of tea and choob-chini (Smilax China) was a luxury reserved for the rich. (Hugel, Kashmir, p.30.)
Dwellings

The houses were generally two to four storeys high. In the villages ground-floor was usually reserved for livestock and the rest for family accommodation and household goods. The houses were built of stone, brick and mortar, with a large intermixture of timber as prevention against earthquakes which visited the valley frequently. For instance on 26th June, 1828 twelve hundred dwellings toppled down as a result of a severe shock. Both baked and unbaked bricks were utilized. The windows were rectangular, numerous and disposed in rows as were in Europe. The finished trellis work of window frames was displaying a great variety of Moorish pattern. The thin country-made paper was pasted over them and was serving the purpose of glass.

The roofs of the houses were generally formed of sheets of brick-bark, impervious to moisture. Then it was covered by a coating of fine earth, often planted with flowers. This

110. Lala Ganeshi Lal, op.cit.,p.32.
112. Ibid.,I,p.281. The statement of Vigne was also supported by Kirpa Ram (Gulzar-i-Kashmir,p.253). But Birbal Kachru, the contemporary of Sikh rule, in love of exaggeration states that "all dwellings, massive as well as small toppled down." Najma'i-Tawarikh, f.243b. This incident was also highlighted by Khalil Mirjanpuri but he failed in providing the number of the houses that fell down.
114. Ibid.
fence communicated warmth in the winter and the refreshing cool in the summer months. Similarly the different varieties of flowers sown on the tops of roofs exhibited spacious view of a beautiful chequered parterre in spring season. Some of the houses had chimneys and chimney-pots. A good number of houses had trap-doors (waghmuds). Their principle function was to provide access to the snow and to free the houses from it, otherwise its weight and moisture would damage them.

The houses of well-to-do people were surrounded with walls and attached with orchards of standard fruits and flowers such as, apples, peaches, mulberries and roses. The houses of poorer classes which were thatched with rice-straw were worse than cow-sheds of English people at that time. Their houses afforded no better shelter in rain than a chinar tree. They were "mostly constructed of small trees, coarsely dovetailed together, and coated with rough plaster inside. A planking was laid over the top resting on the walls, and above that a sloping roof was constructed, open at the ends, the space being either filled with dry grass, or serving to give

118. Ibid.
shelter to the poultry. The interior was divided by partitions of wicker-work, plastered, into three of four small dark, and dirty apartments. The Gujars used to live in log-houses called Kothas and watuls in the small thatched huts which could be easily rebuilt.

Houses in the eyes of Moorcroft were "mostly in a neglected and ruinous condition, with broken doors, or no doors at all, with shattered lattices, windows stopped up with boards, paper or rags, walls out of the perpendicular, and pitched roofs threatening to fall." But Vigne, who visited the valley in 1835 gives below the more compassionate description of the houses of Anantnag the second large city of Kashmir. "It (Anantnag) is now but a shadow of its former self; it contains but 600 or 700 houses; many of them are ornamented with most elegant trellis and lattice-work, but their present ruined and neglected appearance is placed in wretched contrast with their once gay and happy condition, and speaks volumes, upon the light and joyous prosperity that has long fled the country, on account of the shameless rapacity of the ruthless Sikhs." Hugel who also visited Kashmir same

121. Ibid., p.237.
122. Vigne, op. cit., I, p.301. Gujars virtually belonged to Gujrat (India) and were emigrants to Kashmir. In 1835 their total population in Srinagar city reached 100. Vigne, op. cit., I, p.30.
year, was of the same opinion and had written that owls
and jackals were now frequent occupants of these houses
and they had completely destroyed their carved worked terraces
and windows. The city of Srinagar was itself an accumulation
of the ruins of what had, once marvellous and grand edifices.
In short the whole valley presented evidence of faded glory.

The streets were also choked with unexampled filthiness
and backed on each side by a border of mire. So the mal-
nutrition, excessive dirtiness, ill-ventilated logings and
immodest habits of the people, contributed largely towards
rearing the diseases especially of loathsome character.
In 1822-23, six thousand people were suffering from such types
of diseases in the city of Srinagar alone. Countless ailing
Kashmiris approached Jacquemont, when he visited the valley
in 1832, but all of them were incurable. To cure the diseases
indigenous medicines were prescribed by the then physicians.
Dasturul-Amal-i-Kashmir furnishes a long list of eighty-two
such drugs, with a full commentary on their properties. Some
of them were Nyoscyamus niger (Bazar bhang), viola Serpens
(Banafsha), Salvia sp (Sholar) Cascuta sp (Kokilipot), Urtica

III, p.38.
dioica (Soi), Fumaria officinalis (Shah teer), Datura stramonium (Datura). According to Vigne, the oriental practitioners of medicine, "distinguish diseases and remedies into hot and cold, moist and dry, etc. In fevers, they recommended, that all around the patient should be of a green, as the most cooling colour. For diseases that require the aid of mercury, they substitute that of Corrosive sublimate, and in some cases I was told that they obtain the benefits of an alternative medicine by the perserving administration of a decoction of Chob-i-Chini - the strength of which is increased at intervals of two or three days, until the cure is effected." 

Fairs and Festivals

From ancient times observance of festivals and holding of fairs was one of the foundation-stones of social edifice of Kashmir. The popular Hindu festivals which were observed passionately were Shiva-Ratri, Biyapuja, Vethaturvah, Dusehra, etc.  

Shiva Ratri (Herat) the birth anniversary of Lord Shiva commences on the 13th day of dark fortnight of Phagan and ends

131. Dasturul-Amal-i-Kashmir, f.139.
134. Ibid.,II, p.93.
with 15th of the same month. During these days Hindus used to send money, fried fish, meat, etc. to their daughters to their father-in-laws houses. On the last day consecrated walnuts at the Puja were distributed among their near and dear ones. On the 15th of Har (13th of June) the festival of Biya Puja was observed. The Hindus believe that on the same day the water of Verinag spring, the source of river Jehlum, ebbed and flowed rapidly for a quarter of an hour thrice a day, morning, noon and evening. So on the very day thousands of Hindus of both the sexes assembled on the banks of river Jehlum and waited for the rising of the water. Those who lived in the neighbourhood of the spring threw peacocks feathers in it as an act of enticement and veneration. Interesting is the fact to note that ebbing and flowing of water was caused by the different degrees of the heat which the snow was melting on the Panjal at different times of the day. Vethaturvah was the day on which the river Jehlum found its course from Islamabad to Baramulla. In honour of this festival local Hindus threw water nuts in different rivers of the valley on that day and carried water to different gods. Dushera was celebrated passionately on the day on

135. Pandit Anand Koul, The Kashmiri Pandit, p. 84.
137. Vigne, guessed that this festival came into being from the great flood which occurred during the reign of Avanti-varman (855-63). It destroyed the banks of the river Jehlum thoroughly. Suyya his chief engineer who was well versed in hydrology, ordered the people to dam up the whole river and allowed the pen-up water to flow in its old and proper channel to Baramulla. Vigne, op. cit., II, p. 94.
which the castle of Sri Lanks was stormed by Hindu deity Rama. The Hindu festival of Navreh (New year Day) took place at the vernal equinox, at which period the valley is said to have been drained. A basket of unhusked rice, with a bread, a rupee, a pen-case, a cup of curds, a few walnuts, a crumb of cooked rice and some flowers were kept over night and were to be seen early in the morning by the inmates of the house as the first thing of the day. Every family member picked one or two walnuts and dropped into the river after bathing. The sont or Basant festival was celebrated twenty days before the equinox, on which day the rice seeds were prepared for sowing.

The popular Muslim festivals were Urs-i-Shahi-Hamadan, Urs-i-Makhdoom Sahib, Urs-i-Sheikh Nur-ud-Din and Urs-i-Pir Dastagir. These semi-religious annual fairs (Urs) which were red letter days in the dull lives of the people, were celebrated with great veneration and reverence in honour of different saints. On such occasions people assembled in large numbers and remained busy in merry-making and purchasing articles such as pretty kangris, item of wood, glass bangles, necklaces and painted clay toys. The natives were of the

139. Ibid., p.93.
140. Pandit Anand Koul, op.cit., p.80.
141. Vigne, op.cit., p.93.
142. Vigne, op.cit., II, p.84.
143. Lawrence, op.cit., p.289.
belief that a visit to the shrine would secure the object of their desires. George Forster observed that "men never undertake a business of moment without consulting (visiting) Muckdom Saheb; and when a Kashmiri woman wants a handsome husband or a chopping boy, she addresses her prayer to the ministers of this saint who are said to seldom fail in gratifying her wish." Sometimes small pieces of cloth were tied to the shrines by the supplicants for offspring and remained there till child was born to them. It was because of the fact that natives were called by the foreigners Pir Farast (saint worshipers).

Five to six fairs were held round the year at Hazratbal shrine where Prophet Mohammad's sacred hair is kept and exhibited to the people on every fete-day. But a great festival was held there on the date of Miraj Sharif when thousands of

145. Lawrence, op.cit., p.286.
146. It is appropriate to quote the remarks of Dr Neve about the participation of the people of Kashmir especially the villagers in these Hazratbal festivals: "These are the great days to which the people, especially women and children, look keenly forward; for not only is there the display at the shrine, but the opportunity of shaving off their best clothes and jewellery, and of seeing the shops of the city and making their frugal purchases. A bundle on the man's back contains a few days' rice and condiments, and the wife carries a fat cock as a present to the moullahs."(Thirty-five Years in Kashmir, pp.301-02).
147. Mui Mubarak(sacred hair) of Prophet Mohammad reached Kashmir in the year 1699. Kh.Nur-ud-Din, an affluent Kashmiri merchant secured it from Bijapur(Deccan) and then preserved it in the Hazratbal mosque (Azam, Wakiat-i-Kashmir: p.156). There was also an Acacia tree in the courtyard of Hazratbal shrine which had been brought as a cutting from Mecca (Vigne, op.cit., II,p.92). Kh. Mohi-ud-Din, an indigenous persian chronicler has written that in the year 1859 an unknown Indian arrived in Kashmir with the Sacred cloths of Prophet Mohammad and exhibited the same to the natives from the balcony of Khanaqah-i-Maulla and then returned. (Tarikh-i-Kabeer,II, f.1049).
Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus of both the sexes rushed there from all quarters of the valley with the purpose of seeing the relic. Idul Fitr, Idul-Zuha and Shab-i-Barat were celebrated with great pomp and show. According to Vigne no "Musalmam" anywhere else observed the fast of Ramazan with greater strictness than the Kashmiri Muslims.

Muharram was also celebrated but the Taziya processions taken out on this occasion often resulted in Shia-Sunni riots, which weakened the social ties and gave a setback to the local economy.

149. Idul Fitr or the festival of breaking the fast of Ramazan (1st of Shauwal), is observed with great rejoicing and solemnity. There is also an exchange of visits to the houses of near and dear ones and the meeting of all and sundry after the id prayer.
150. On Idul Zuha (10th of Zul Hijja) devotees sacrifice goats and sheep.
151. Shab-i-Barat or the night of destiny is observed on the fourteenth night of Sha'ban.
153. The observations of Vigne, about the religious activities of the Hindus of Kashmir are very much perplexing. He states "I have often seen Hindus worshipping at the different holy springs in Kashmir, but never in the temples, and as religious buildings they seem to be entirely neglected, excepting that a Hindu will, perhaps, make a Salaam when he first enters one of them." Vigne, op. cit., I, p. 385.
154. During the governorship of Bahama Singh Ardali (1831), the Shias of Kashmir attempted to celebrate the Muharram festival against prohibition. They were actually acuated by the conservative Punjabi Shias, serving in the Sikh army posted in Kashmir. So they took taziya procession from Zadibal to Hasan abad. It excited the animosity of some conservative enraged sunnis, who attacked the procession. This ghastly episode strained the relations between the Sunnis and the Shias, (Birbal Kachru, op. cit., p. 255; Hasan, op. cit., I, pp. 491-92; Khalil Mirjanpuri, op. cit., p. 178a; Khanyari Gh Nabi, op. cit., p. 59a; Kirpa Ram op. cit., f. 176V, Victor Jacquemont, op. cit., II, p. 120; Vigne, op. cit. II, p. 84).
There were some other festivals of minor importance. A festival of such nature was held at Bijbehara on 18th of June in honour of Baba Nasib, a Muslim saint of Kashmir who flourished during the first half of 17th century.

There were some non-religious festivals also. One such festival which used to be inaugurated at the Nishat Bagh in the first of August was known as Watul mela (fair). It was so called because on that particular day the Watul community performed marriages. The people used to rush to the said garden by boats but the poorer classes went on foot. Then there followed a succession of feasting, singing and dancing for forty eight hours and the entertainments were enlivened by the performances of itinerant bards. In the beat of the day, the boats took refuge in the cool mountain-stream of Tulmul and the evening and night was usually passed in the garden of Nasim Bagh.

The season, when the plum-trees and roses were in full bloom, was celebrated with much festivity by the natives. They resorted, in large numbers, to the adjacent gardens and beauty

This noble grove of twelve hundred chinars was planted by emperor Akbar and is situated on the northern side of the Dal lake. The Afghans punished the defaulters with a fine of five hundred rupees when they cut down a chinar tree even in their own fields. But the tasteless Sikh governors who had no sense of beauty destroyed a good number of them. But when Maharaja Ranjit Singh heard that his governor Mehan Singh had cut down some of the chinars even in Shalimar garden, he ordered him without delay to repair the loss. Vigne,op.cit.,II, pp.94-95.
spots and were full of gaiety and pleasure. The people of Srinagar city went either by boats or on foot to the base of the **Tkt-i-Sulaiman** hillock. They had a feast there especially of waternuts. So the poetical term the feast of roses had now turned into the feast of waternuts.  

**Amusements and Pastimes**

Games like dice, Chess and Polo were popular and beautiful source of recreation to the people. Hawk fighting, pigeon flying, fishing, archery and hunting were no less means of amusement. However natives were forbidden from molesting the herons as their long feathers were utilized for plumes worn by the Sikh aristocracy as a fashion. It is interesting to note that during autumn and winter months lakes especially Dal and Wular were covered with various species of water fowl. Some of them migrated to Kashmir from Yarkand and Mogulistan, in order to avoid severe cold and killing blast of northern regions and departed as soon as spring commenced there.

---

159. Ibid., II, p.102.
But the earnest form of recreation, particularly among the youth of Srinagar was, however, challenge given by one group to the other for free fight with sticks and slings. On a fixed day and place they would clash with each other and this led to breakage of heads, limbs and was even fatal.\textsuperscript{162} A custom which coincides with making an April fool was prevalent among the Kashmirians. When there would be first snow fall of the season a native tried to deceive another by presenting him a little of it, concealed in cloth, paper, etc. If the person inadvertently took what was offered to him, then the presenter was free to rub the snow on his face or pelt him with it. He had also right to demand a forfeit of an entertainment of singing, dancing or any other boon from the deceived and defeated. So every one used extreme caution on the very first snow-fall.\textsuperscript{163} This practice was common among almost all the snowy countries of the region into which Kashmir too fell.\textsuperscript{164}

The people perambulated the Dal lake and arranged feasting and dancing parties both in boats and in its adjacent gardens.\textsuperscript{165}

\textsuperscript{162} Lawrence, op.cit., p.321. Since it resulted in many deaths, so it was banned by Maharaja Gulab Singh (1846-1856).

\textsuperscript{163} Vigne, op.cit., II, p.356.

\textsuperscript{164} Vigne, op.cit., II, pp.74-75. Because Vigne gives an interesting anecdote that once a Tibetan tried to deceive his fellow country-man by presenting him a new-gun barrel for his opinion about it. But he detected snow in it and paraded the presenter through the neighbourhood on donkey, with his face turned towards the tail.

\textsuperscript{165} Birbal Kachru, op.cit., f.15a.
Forster George observed that "when a Kashmiri, even of the lowest order, finds himself in the possession of ten shillings, he loses no time in assembling his party and launching into the lake, solace himself till the last farthing is spent. But their Sikh masters arranged such parties with extreme bustle. One day by the orders of governor Kripa Ram boats of every description of the valley were moored around the isle of Charchinar. "Kurpa Ram (Kripa Ram) surrounded by his viceroyal court, sat in the open, marble-pillared Bara Dari, drinking and listening to the singing of the dancing girls. While, the incessant blaze of fire-works threw a brilliant glare over the scene, musketry and matchlocks were discharged, and the thunder of artillery from the fort was reverberated in the grandest echoes." Vigne remarks that the scene recalled the memory of bygone days of emperor Jehangir when valley was:

"All love and light,
Visions by day and feasts by night."

Dance and music was also a source of enjoyment to all classes of people. Every Kashmiri from youth to old age had a taste

for it. Kings like Zainul Abidin and Yusuf Shah Chak were great lovers of it. Their encouragement and patronage to music popularized it among the masses. The Afghan governors of Kashmir also showed inclination towards and interest in music. Governor Amir Khan Jawansher went to the extent that he maintained dancing girls at the state expenses and spent most of his time in enjoying the dance and music. The Sikh administrators off and on pleased and entertained their state guests and themselves by arranging dancing parties. But the courtesans were constant companions of luxurious and self-indulgent governor Kripa Ram. The paddlers of his official barge were exclusively women and completely dressed in red uniforms. They wore Gungroos on their ankles and arms, while paddling the governor's barge, the said ornaments, produced harmonized and musical sound "shroin." So the Kashmiris who were expert in nicknames had given to him the sobriquet of "Kripa Shroin." The lot and

168. Forster George, op.cit., p.125.
172. Hugel humorously writes "The passion of the Sikhs for this amusement is so great, that my chief pleasure was really derived from attending to them, and I believe there is much truth in the proverb, that you may take away the wife and child of a Sikh while he is listening to the adventures of Rustam and Surab, and he would not miss them" Hugel, op.cit., p.146.
174. Ibid.
175. Lawrence, op.cit., pp. 199-200.
life of these poor creatures was miserable and pitiable. They groaned under the weight of heavy taxation. They could not sing or dance without permission and the concerned officer always accompanied them and grasped whatever little they earned. These were the purchased property of certain persons, who had bought them in their infancy. They trained them to this service and ignoble mode of life. Schonberg, recorded the sad plight of a dancing girl in her own words. "I asked one of them would she wish to leave her master but she said no; that she had been sold when a child; that she knew no tie of kindred; she had not known the love of a parent. If she were now set free, whither could she turn? There was no home, no family to claim her, or whom she could claim and that were she to leave her present employers, she should infallibly fall into the powers of others.... she added, that the people whose bread she had eaten were now old; that she owed them a debt of gratitude, and was willing to work for them."  

176. Hugel, op.cit., p.146. These dancing girls also enjoyed the same fate under the Afghans. They were obliged to account for every sum of money they received and had to pay a large share of it to the government. Forster George, op.cit.,II, p.32.  
Robbery and Gambling

Galwan, the highway robber of Kashmir was the counterpart of the thug of upper and Central India. Professionally galwans were counterparts of Kashmiri shepherds and were leading the same kind of life. They reared the horses of the villagers during the grazing season and received certain quantity of unhusked rice in lieu of their services.

But quite earlier the advent of the Sikh rule, some dare devil graziers adopted the profession of horse-lifting. The trade was made by them an easy and sure means of their livelihood. But with the passage of time they turned into frightful highway robbers and it became quite impossible to travel in solitariness, especially during the anarchical phase of the Afghan rule. But during the Sikh rule it assumed a dangerous turn and became a grave administrative problem, as they plundered and robbed the lonely way-farers, horse-keepers and shepherds in the day light. Similarly, they took away not only

178. A full description about the origin and the development of the thugs is available in Sir William Sleemans' Report on the Depredations Committed by the Thug Gangs of Upper and Central India and the Thugs of Phansigars of India, London, 1833. But as far as the origin of Galwans is concerned it is believed that they were off-shoots of old war-like tribe of Chaks, who resisted Akbar's invasion of Kashmir for a quite long time. Later on they were completely suppressed by the Mughal governors of Kashmir so as to wipe out the possibility of revolt. Vigne, op.cit., I, p.301.
179. Shepherds of Kashmir were no less deprived a community than Galwans, as they sold and ate the lambs entrusted to them but the loss was always attributed to the depradation of wild beasts. Vigne, op.cit., I, p.30.
161. Ibid., p.302.
the heaps of unthrashed corn of the agriculturists but also
t heir thrashed one from their barn. Apart from this whenever
they got a chance, the marriage processions were robbed of
their belongings and sometimes brides too were snatched from
them. "A long heavy club, with rings around it, was their
principle weapon."

For the safety they had mostly chosen the safer karewa
regions of Kashmir as their main hide-outs. One such place was
Galandar, located on high altitude between Pampore and Avantipore.
But the more extensive tract of land is situated between Chrar-i-
Sharif and Pakharpore upto Shadimarg on the Shopian road.
Another tract lies on low altitude between Damudar Udar (present
Srinagar aerodrome) and Badgam. But their ramifications were
also located in the far-off hilly and thickly forested areas of Kashmir. Vigne, who traversed every inch of Kashmir valley,
writes, "The defile by which it (the Sind river) joins the
strath from which there is a communication over a pass to that
descending from the Shesha Nag, upon Fahalgam, on the way to
Umar Nath, from Islamabad, was much used, as I have already
mentioned, by the Gulabans or banditt, who thus secured to
themselves a speedy retreat from one part of Kashmir to the

182. Birbal Kachru, op.cit., f. 102b-103b, Mohi-ud-Din Miskeen,op.cit.,
II,ff.102b-103b, Afzala Kishtiwari, Tarikh-i-Farman Rawayan-
Rawayan-i-Kashmir, pp. 71-72, Chulam Rasul Galwan, Servants
of Sahibs, p.1.
183. Miskeen Mohi-ud-Din, op.cit., ff. 102a,103b.
185. Ibid.,I, p.302.
other, without passing through the valley itself."  

Kirpa Ram was the first Sikh governor who took initiative to suppress the open and daring outrages of the gulwans by putting three of them to death. But governor Kanwar Sher took strigent measures to suppress them and accordingly kept a strict and regular watch over their nefarious activities. When he received information that some of them had assembled at Galwanpur, a strong force was sent there. However, eight of them were killed on the spot and seventeen were arrested and later on hanged at the Amira Kadal bridge. But the entire extirpation and termination of the Galwans goes to the credit of iron rule of governor Mehan Singh. He sent his fearless general Ahang Dewan Kan Singh with troops to Kamraj and himself marched with artillery towards Maraz. Their usual haunts were thoroughly ransacked. A good number of them were killed and many were hanged. No doubt, some of them were freed but after cutting their hands so as to make them unable to steal.

186. Ibid., II, p.396.
188. Ibid.
189. Birbal Kachru, op.cit., f. Kashmir was divided into two large administrative divisions. The portion which lies southward of the wular lake and river Jehlum in its course upto Baramulla was called Maraz while as the northern part of the same line of boundary was known as Kamraz.
But their notorious leader Khaira Galwan "the black robber" remained at large. He besides committing dacoities on large scale, used to lift the young beautiful girls from the villages.\textsuperscript{192} Mehan Singh now adopted diplomatic methods to catch hold of him. An intriguing and treacherous friend of Khaira Galwan under the pressure of Mehan Singh invited him, as usual to his residence to dinner.\textsuperscript{193} The Sikh sepoys came out of lurking place and arrested and confined him in the fort of Hari Parbat.\textsuperscript{194} Being a man of extraordinary strength, he made an unsuccessful attempt to escape by dropping himself from the fort wall with his hands and feet in chains.\textsuperscript{195} Later he was publicly executed at Zainakadal bridge.\textsuperscript{196} It terrified the rest to the extent that they were afraid of owning the name of Galban. Those who submitted to Mehan Singh either adopted their original profession of rearing horses or earned their livelihood as labourers. Those who went to tending of horses received eight traks of rice as remuneration for each of them during the grazing season.\textsuperscript{197} But the recognized comrades of Khaira Galwan, due to fear of stern action and punishment, left the valley for Baltistan and Ladakh.\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{192} Ghulam Rasul, op.cit., p.2.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{194} Vigne, op.cit., I, p.303.
\textsuperscript{195} Miskeen Mohi-ud-Din, op.cit., ff.102a-103b
\textsuperscript{196} Vigne, op.cit., I, p.303. It is not inopportune to mention here that Kharia Galwan was morally repentant, kind-hearted and sympathetic as he shared the ill-gotten earnings with the helpless and needy persons such as widows, orphans, etc. (Gh. Rasul Galwan, op.cit., p.1.)
\textsuperscript{197} Vigne, op.cit., I, p.304.
\textsuperscript{198} Gh. Rasul Galwan, op.cit., p.2.
Now people moved freely to any part of the valley as the traces of "Galwans, dacoits, gangsters and pick-pockets were absolutely demolished."\(^{199}\) Birbal Kachru, the contemporary of the Sikh rule was of the same opinion about the ruination and destruction of the Galbans.\(^{200}\)

Another social evil which was prevalent in the society of Kashmir during the Sikh period was qumarbazi. It was like an ulcer in the body of the society. The sources do not tell us what type of gambling people used to play. However, it was put to an end by Colonel Mehan Singh.\(^{201}\)

**Architecture**

The sikh governors of Kashmir in comparison to Mughal rulers showed no interest in constructing palaces, tombs, mosques, kiosks and cascades. But in reality they had no money at their disposal because whatever revenue was realized from Kashmir was directly sent to the Lahore Darbar. The loving gaze

\(^{199}\) Khalil Mirjanpur, op.cit., f.181a.
\(^{200}\) Birbal Kachru, op.cit., f.261b

of the rulers of Lahore towards Kashmir was motivated by economic attraction. They considered Kashmir as their colony and mercilessly exhausted it bubbling economic resources without least bothering for the betterment of her people. But quite contrary to this strategy, the Mughal emperors utilized maximum amount of the state revenue within the valley either for the schemes of public welfare or erecting grand buildings and laying out beautiful gardens. In spite of these barriers, some capable Sikh governors managed money and laid certain foundation mainly to commemorate their regimes.

Governor Moti Ram (1819–1820) repaired the Shergarhi fort and added some soldiery barracks, dwelling houses and government offices in the fort area, according to the needs and requirements of the time. The foundation of Ram Bagh, with a summer-house (Baradari) on the banks of Chacha canal in Srinagar is also associated with his name. Similarly during Bhima Singh Ardali's short tenure (1831) of governorship, a small fort was built on the site previously known as Dara Bagh, to serve the double purpose of a palace and a fort. It was rectangular in shape and was four hundred yards long and two hundred wide. It was surrounded by a stone wall, twenty-two feet in height and protected by towers at intervals and a ditch of thirty feet in width and of proportionate depth. The interior of the fort consisted of dwelling-houses, government offices and soldiery barracks (Vigne, op.cit., II, p.70).

When the Sikhs occupied Kashmir, they used the buildings etc. inside the fort for accommodation purposes and also added to it dwelling-houses and barracks etc. according to their needs and requirements. Presently, the entire area with its complex of old and new buildings called the "old Secretariat" is occupied by government offices. But the stone-wall, the ditch, the barracks etc. all disappeared.

202. Amir Khan Jewan Sher (1770–76), the Afghan governor built this fort on the site previously known as Dara Bagh, to serve the double purpose of a palace and a fort. It was rectangular in shape and was four hundred yards long and two hundred wide. It was surrounded by a stone wall, twenty-two feet in height and protected by towers at intervals and a ditch of thirty feet in width and of proportionate depth. The interior of the fort consisted of dwelling-houses, government offices and soldiery barracks (Vigne, op.cit., II, p.70).

but beautiful garden was laid in the close proximity to the Shergarhi fort. Governor Hari Singh (1820-1823) who was a dedicated supporter and enamoured of Sikhism, built gurdwaras at secluded Sikh habitation such as Martand, Baramulla and Chatipadshahi in Srinagar. Between Takht-i-Sulaiman (Shankaracharya hillock) and the Shergarhi fort on the banks of river Jehlum a summer-house with white cupola, was also among his constructions. Two small forts, one at Uri and another at Narochhi near Muzzafarabad, were constructed by him for merely military purposes. In the neighbourhood of the Shergarhi fort two new localities Guru Bazar and Shahl Ganj were founded by governor Colonel Mehan Singh (1843-184 ). The former was used as chief gurdwara especially by the Sikh granthis and in the latter, Nihang soldiers were accommodated, so as to free the city people from their harassment and molestation. He also made an addition of a big hall of audience, a magnificent market and some new barracks to the said fort.

In 1835, governor Colonel Mehan Singh also laid the foundation of Basant Bagh, with a raised terrace inside, in Srinagar on the banks of river Jehlum with residential quarters for Punjabi Nahants. The apple tree canal (Tsunt-Kul) on the east and

---
204. Khalil Mirjanpuri, op.cit., f. 176b.
205. Khasta Hargopal Koul, op.cit., pp. 177-78.
207. Birbal Kachru, op.cit., f. 251 (Srinagar Archives copy).
208. See Appendix D.
the south, the river Jehlum on the west, the Khudabal locality and a branch of the said canal on the north, comprised the land area of the garden. But the polished stones of the garden were taken from Mughal edifice built by Mughal prince Dara Shiko, in the vicinity of Hari Parbat fort, for his spiritual mentor Akhun Mullah Shah better known as Mullah Ahmad Badakshani. Although the garden does not exist now but the locality is still known by the same name. The Amira Kadal (bridge) constructed by Amir Khan Jawan Sher (1770-76) was rebuilt by him when the flood of 1836 swept it away.

Governor Sheikh Ghulam Kohiud Din renovated the Mughal garden, Chasmah Shahi and laid the foundation of Sheikh Bagh in Mysome, Srinagar. His son and successor, Sheikh Imamud Din, the last Sikh governor of Kashmir, built a grand mosque known as "Qila Mosque" in the neighbourhood of the Shergarhi fort.

209. In 1810, Afghan governor Atta Mohammad Khan Barakzai built this massive fort on the top of Hari Parbat hillock (Mir Izzatullah, Travels in Central Asia, p.3).
It is interesting to mention that its fortification was formerly erected by emperor Akbar at the cost of one crore and ten lakh rupees. He also got two hundred skilled workmen from Hindustan (Mir Izzatullah, op.cit., p.3).


211. Vigne, op.cit., II, p.70.

212. Birbal Kachru, op.cit., f. 3ab.

213. See Appendix, E.
Literature

During the autocratic rule of the Sikhs, literature, like every sphere of life was reduced to a declining and languid state. Sir Mohammad Iqbal said that the wrathful reign of the Sikhs and remissness of the Muslim population were mainly responsible for the perdition of literature. The Sikh administrators of Kashmir had neither time nor avidity to promote literature. However, some individual scholars like Hamidullah Shahabadi, Mullah Bahaud Din Mattu, Birbal Kachru, Sonaullah Kharabati, Bahaud Din Khushnavis, Mirza Mehdi Mujrim, Mustafa Khan Bukhtoor, Kamand Ram Hindu, Tabaram Zaki, Narayan Das Zamir, Lakshman Ram Saroor, Shankar Joo and Akhwan Girami contributed to various fields of literature on their own.

Firdousi-Kashmir,  Mullah Hamidullah Shahabadi was an

(Quoted by Sabeer Afaqi in his Jalwa-i-Kashmir, p.12)

215. Ibid.
216. Ibid. Hamidullah was son of Maulvi Himayatullah an illustrious learned man of his times. Farganah Shahabad, which was famous for producing great personalities was not only the birth-place of our poet-cum-scholar but also of the dignified and renowned persian and Kashmiri poets such as Saidullah Shahabadi, Rasul Mir and Mohmud Gami (Hussamud Din Rashdi, op.cit., p.215). The ill-treatment of the residents of Shahabad forced him to migrate to Naubugai, a village in the Farganah of Brang. To express his grievances against the residents of Shahabad he composed the following couplet:

In the later days of his life he preferred to settle in Islamabad. Throughout his life teaching remained his means of livelihood (Dr. Sabeer Afaqi, op.cit., p.53). His date of birth is yet to be traced but he breathed his last in the year 1848. The chronogram of his death, which he himself composed is as follows: The alphabetical numeration of the persian words comes to 1264/1848 (Dr. Sabeer Afaqi, op.cit., p.53; Hussamud Din Rashdi, op.cit., p.215; Hasan, op.cit., IV, p.56; Nisskin, I, op.cit., 1, p.350).
exalted and eminent scholar of his age. He earned popularity mainly as a satirist and sardonic writer. His work Akbarnama, Shakistan and Rad-ai-Shia in poetry and Bibuj Nama and Dasturul Amal in prose are steeped in eloquence and rhetoric. Being very much fond of tea he composed humorous Chai Nama in response to Zuhiri's Saq-i-Nama. His compositions both in prose and poetry being a precious asset to persian literature, reflect vividly political, social, cultural and economic aspects of life of that gloomy period of Kashmir history. Bibuj Nama also called Napursan Nama, writes, Dr Parmu, "It is steeped in symbolism depicting the glaring traits of the bureaucracy under the Sikh rulers from the Fatwari upto Nizam or governor."217 All the three works Shakaristan, Bibuj Nama and Dasturul Amal present a vivid picture of the corrupt practices of the Sikh officials and their cruel oppression over helpless and innocent masses of Kashmir.

Masnavi Akbarnama, the master-piece of Hamidullah, is versified history of the vigorous battle fought between Afghans of Kabul and British East India Company in 1838. Compiled in 1844, after the model and rhythm of Firdausi's Shahnama, it became so popular that its fame reached Kabul only four years after its compilation. But the major difference seems to be

that Rustam was the main character of Firdausi, while Sirdar Akbar Khan son of Dost Mohammad Khan of Kabul was national and celebrated hero of Hamidullah Shahabadi.

Mullah Bahaud Din Mattu\textsuperscript{218} flourished in the early phase of the Sikh rule. He composed a praise-worthy \textit{Khamsa}, consisting of \textit{Rishi Nama}, \textit{Sultania}, \textit{Ghawsia}, \textit{Nagashbandiya} and \textit{Chistia}. Birbal Kachru,\textsuperscript{219} the Persian poet had assumed Warista as his pen name. He composed two \textit{masnavis} namely \textit{Soz-O'Gudaz} and \textit{Bahar-i-Kashmir}\textsuperscript{220} but his historical document \textit{Majmaul-Tawarikh}, which is an outstanding example of classical style and erudite scholarship, provides ample information about the general administration of the Sikh rule in Kashmir and through it the author built his own image as a versatile scholar. The social and moral aspects of life were presented by him in amatory poems in imitation of the model of Sheikh Saadi Shirazi. But his gazals composed in flowery Persian language have much similarity with those of Mohammad Jan Qudsai and in sweetness approach the compositions of Abdul Rahman Jami.\textsuperscript{221} He also proved a successful translator as he translated a Hindu religious book \textit{Mahashivpuran} into Persian.\textsuperscript{222}

\textsuperscript{218} He opened his eyes in a respectable ulma family of Kashmir in 1766. He passed away in 1832 and was buried in the Patwani Masjid of Srinagar.
\textsuperscript{219} Birbal Kachru, the resident of Rainawari Srinagar was the son of Daya Ram Kachru, one of the learned men of his times. He was one of the Dagh Shawl officials of the Sikhs and died after completing seventy four years of his life.
\textsuperscript{220} Sabeer Afaq, \textit{op.cit.}, p.55.
\textsuperscript{221} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{222} Ibid.
Khwaja Sonaullah Kharabati was one of the great personalities ever produced by Kashmir in the field of art, literature, philosophy, religion and mysticism. He earned name and fame not only as a top-most scholar but also as a great poet and sufi of his times.223

He lived by darring up to 1822. Then he showed overwhelming interest in the shawl trade and in this connection traversed Iran, Afghanistan, Hindustan and Russia.224 But the famine of 1832 compelled him to leave Kashmir and take up service of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu. However, he was dismissed from the service in 1854 and confined in the Hariparbat fort on the allegation of misappropriating the funds.225 After a few months' imprisonment, a close friend of his got him free through his influence. Then he left Jammu and settled permanently in Gujrat in the town of Jalalpur Jalaw. He breathed his last in 1879 at the age of seventy five.226

He had started writing at the age of twenty years and continued it up to his last. He composed as many as one hundred and two works but only fifty two have been traced so far. Some important and noteworthy compositions are Khulasat-ul-Asrar.

223. Ibid., p.231. He was born in 1809 in the present Jogilangar Mohalla of Srinagar and was known by fifty seven different names at the different stages of his life but the above-mentioned one was most popular. (Ibid., pp.231,236).
224. Ibid., p.232.
225. Ibid., p.234.
226. Ibid.
Tuhfatul Zaman, Jannatul-Asrar, Haqiqat-ul-Islam, Sirat-ul-Mustaqim, Dalilu'l-Sadiqan, Tuhfatul Qadiri, Khirad Nama Kharabati and others; only two of his compositions are in Kashmiri language and the rest in Persian, Arabic, Punjabi and Turki. Out of his fifty two compositions, forty four are in prose and four in poetry. He had acquired proficiency in the art of calligraphy and used to write in Naskh, Sullat, Raqa, Nasta'liq and Shikasta at ease. He was also well-versed in twenty seven arts and sciences. For instance, some of these were embroidery, engraving, astrology, oration, magic, astronomy, etc.

Khwaja Hasan Koul who was the product of the age compiled Mar'at-ul-Khayal, Zabdatu'l-Akhbar and Qissai Chahardarwesh. But his masnavi, La'ila-wa-Gowhar was lost during his own lifetime. He showed dexterity in the field of ode and eulogium. Being a shawl merchant, he visited the whole of India and had also developed friendship with the famous urdu poet Mirza Assadullah Khan Ghalib. The Sultan of Turkey to whom he addressed a Qasida conferred upon him the title of Fakhr-Ush-Shura Aftab-in-Hind.

---

227. Ibid., p.236.
228. Ibid.
229. Ibid., p.235.
230. He belonged genealogically to the family of Inayatullah Khan, who was governor of Kashmir under the Mughal emperor Mohammad Shah.
Mirza Mohammad Mehdi, whose poetic name was Mujeim was well-known for his forceful expression. His _Lewan_ and _maanavis_ _Shahr-l-ashob_ and _Soz-o-gudaz_ in addition to being a great contribution to literature, throw ample light on the depressed social and economic conditions of his time.\(^{233}\) Similarly _Labul Tawarikh_ in simple Persian script was composed by Bahau'd-Din Khushnawis.

But whatever we have stated above were individual contributions and the Sikh governors did not offer any patronage to the literary figures. However, Sheikh Ghulam Mohiu'd-Din presents a contrast in this respect as he gave due encouragement and showed proper respect to the scholars and poets of his time.

The Sikh governors did not even make any positive efforts to introduce the Gurmukhi script in Kashmir. However, some progressive Kashmiris with the purpose to know the real value of _Granth Sahib_ learnt Gurmukhi script. Pandit Rama Lekhari of Sathu Srinagar made the first attempt in this respect by writing _Granth Sahib_ and _Ramayan_ in the Gurmukhi script.\(^{234}\) The composition of _Ekadeshi_ in Gurmukhi is also attributed to him.

During the period under review a lot of literature was transcribed by skilled penmen (katibs) who earned their subsistence by copying, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts,

\(^{233}\) Sabeer Afaq, op.cit., p.55.
\(^{234}\) The manuscripts of the said works are in the possession of Giyani Makhan Singh of _Lewar Tral_ (Kashmir).
as they were a lucrative item of trade. According to Jacquemont there were some seven to eight hundred copyists in Kashmir in 1831. "They work only on orders ... they transcribe the Quran or the Shahnamah, and a very small number of other books which are the objects of a small but regular trade. The best are paid one rupee for every thousand couplets of the Shahnamah of Hafiz. Their maximum speed is 200 verses, and they consequently earn three annas a day. The trade in manuscripts was more extensive under Afghan rule." 235 But in 1835 there remained only a hundred scribes and they charged five to ten rupees for a small quire or juzu. The reduction in their numbers was mainly due to the severe famine of 1832, when a large number of people died and many migrated to other parts of India. Some European travellers who came with the sole aim of visiting Kashmir, also purchased manuscripts of their interest. In this connection it is interesting to quote the actual words of Vigne "Persian manuscripts are common enough; but having usually taken the best advice on the subject, I do not think that I have missed any in either language that had any pretensions to be considered as a rarity." 237

237. Ibid.