

KASHMIR DIVIDED

BY

BAL RAJ MADHOK

The Author of India at the Cross Roads,

Indian Nationalism Reconsidered Etc. Etc.

FOREWORD

BY

DR. GOKUL CHAND NARANG

RASHTRA DHARMA PRAKASHAN LTD.

LUCKNOW.

Published by
Rashtra Dharma Prakashan Ltd.
Lucknow.

Printed by
N. K. w ag
BHARAT PRESS
4, Nehru Road,
Lucknow.

To
All those brave soldiers and Civilians
who
Have been fighting on field or
Rotting in jails
To maintain
The eternal link of the
Jammu and Kashmir State
with Bharat.

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FOREWORD.

I have read Prof. Madhok's book with much interest and have gathered much useful information. He has written with sufficient internal knowledge of the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir as he has spent many years of his life in that State.

The story of Kashmir, as told by him, is really the story of the glory of the Indian troops and humiliation of the Government of India. As the title of the book conveys, inspite of the heroic deeds of our troops in the most difficult terrain, the fact remains that the Government of India has lost about 34,000 sq. miles of the territory of Jammu and Kashmir and a population of about 11,00,000, consisting of war-like people. As the story unfolds itself, it becomes clear that the invasion by the Pakistan troops was very well planned and very skilfully organized, with the result that a large part of the State was over-run within a few days and Srinagar itself was on the point of falling when in the nick of time our troops arrived to save it and the rest of the valley. Another point which has been brought out in this little book is, that the State was betrayed by some of its own Muslim subjects and Muslim elements in the State Army. Col. Narain Singh, who commanded the Battalion in the most vulnerable

sector of Kohala and Muzaffarabad, was warned against the treachery but he did not take the warning and had implicit faith in the loyalty of the Muslim personnel in his Battalion. He paid, as the author has pointed out, a heavy price for his credulity. He was shot dead in his own tent by his own Muslim soldiers. General Rajendra Singh was also betrayed by his Muslim soldiers who helped the invaders both in front and in the rear, and fighting most gallantly lost his life in his attempt to check the onrush of the invaders. When the invaders reached Baramula the District Officer of that place joined them and was rewarded by the invaders by securing his appointment as Governor of Baramula. Similar things happened in the Poonch and Gilgit area. These incidents have a good deal of importance when one takes into consideration the fact that there are no fewer than about 250 Muslim officers still serving in the Indian Army.

It is also worth noting, that, as pointed out by the author, the Kashmir Militia several thousands strong is dominated by communists, a vast majority of whom must be Muslims. The learned author has voiced the feelings of many Indians in holding that it was a mistake on the part of the Indian Prime Minister to knock at the door of U. N. O. The author's view seems to be that no justice can be expected from this quarter as both England and America are interested in Gilgit as an important base and, they think their interests would be better

served by Pakistan than by the Government of India. Most Indians will again agree with the author in being mystified over the sudden cease-fire order, proclaimed as a New Year's gift to Pakistan on the 1st of January 1949 when all the raiders and their Pakistani comrades and leaders were on the point of being totally expelled from the Jammu and Kashmir territories. This is a mystery which nobody has been able to unravel during all these twelve months.

Some of the Kashmiri Pandits had joined Sheikh Abdulla in the agitation against the Durrani Government and in raising the slogan of "Kashmir for Kashmiris". But they must have been sadly disillusioned at the result of their agitation. The Kashmiri Pandits, according to the author, have been most hard hit by the measures taken by the present Kashmir Government. "The doors of Government services have been closed upon them to make room for the Muslims and they find themselves in great economic distress and have already begun leaving Kashmir in hundreds, in search of livelihood in India."

The author has devoted a good deal of space to the discussion of the present day conditions in Kashmir under Sheikh Abdulla's Government and has referred to the so-called reforms. But he does not seem to be very pleased with the way administration is being carried on by Abdulla Government. Sheikh Abdulla, as pointed out by the author, hails

Kashmiris as a Muslim people and Islam to him is "the Sun while all other religions are stars". Sheikh Abdulla's Government has also been described as a communists' paradise, as many of the key-posts are held by them. The author's opinion is that the plans of the communists are to use Kashmir as a spring-board for making India red. They do not want that Kashmir should either join India or Pakistan. The author's reading of the situation in Kashmir is that Sheikh Abdulla himself has developed a liking for this communist point of view and would like to have Kashmir as an independent State under his heels. This uncertain attitude of Sheikh Abdulla and the reiteration by the Government of India of the provisions regarding plebiscite have, according to the author, made the position of Jammu and Kashmir one of great uncertainty and suspense. The author has enumerated a large number of benefits which the State of Jammu and Kashmir stands to derive from accession to India, but he is not certain as to the final decision of the people of Kashmir when an appeal is made to them in the name of religion and their fanaticism has been aroused.

The book is well written and will be found very useful by those interested in the fate of Kashmir but are not quite well acquainted with its political, religious and economic background.

17-12-49.

G. C. Narang

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

About two years have passed since the first landing of the air-borne Indian troops at the Srinagar aerodrome, which forced the Kashmir problem suddenly on the attention of the whole world. The tribal-cum-Pakistani invasion of Kashmir, the Maharaja's appeal for accession and aid and the India Government's decision to respond to his call for aid and save Kashmir came in such rapid succession and they aroused so much sympathy and enthusiasm in the Indian people for the cause of the people of the Jammu and Kashmir state. that a few bothered to understand what the problem really was.

For the Indian people in general the Kashmir problem then, as now, meant the problem of saving the Jammu and Kashmir state from falling into the hands of Pakistan. They were conscious of Pakistan's ambitions and motives as expressed in the pithy slogan "Hans ke lia Pakistan. lar ke lenge Hindustan" (We have obtained Pakistan just in fun and will take the rest of Hindusthan by fighting for it.) They were, therefore, pleasantly surprised and hum-

oured by the firm stand taken by the Indian Govt. towards Pakistan in regard to Kashmir. Their declaration that every inch of the territory of the Jammu and Kashmir state will be cleared of the raiders and the Pakistanis created enthusiasm in the public mind and the early successes of the Indian army added hope to it.

But for the Indian leaders who count in the Government today the Kashmir problem has been primarily not one of saving Jammu and Kashmir State for India but of disproving the two-nation theory which they had, willy nilly, conceded by accepting Pakistan, and of strengthening their stand for secular state by retaining a Muslim majority unit within India by the willing consent of its inhabitants. Kashmir, as Shri Achyut Patwardhan told the present writer, was considered by them to be the last bid for the so-called Hindustani Nationalism. The territorial gain or loss did not bother them, for, "a few cities or districts this way or that way" did not matter for them if that could help them in winning friendship of Pakistan. It is why they did not accept the accession of the State as final. They voluntarily made the commitment that the future of Kashmir after India had cleared her of the enemy by the blood, sweat and toil of her men, women and armed forces would be finally decided by a plebiscite.

Thus the conception of the problem in the minds of the people and the leaders has remained different.

The people in general neither understand nor bother about the ideological idiosyncracies of the Indian leaders, nor do the Indian leaders understand or care for the susceptibilities of the public in general in regard to their relations with Pakistan. But though the approach of the leaders and the people to the problem has been different the object of the two synchronises in practice. So the Kashmir problem has become the one problem before the country about which the Indian Govt. can be sure of cent per cent support of the Indian public of all shades of opinion if they decide to handle it firmly. The whole country is deeply interested in an honourable solution of the problem which, according to general expectations, can be only one—the complete destruction of the Pakistani designs over the Jammu and Kashmir state.

This popular interest in the Kashmir problem has been daily growing. The heroic deeds of the Indian army and the epoch-making exploits of the Indian air force involving loss of hundreds of valuable young lives containing noblest Indian blood coming from all parts of the country coupled with the daily mounting expenditure of the war has heightened it very much. It has now become a question in which every Indian has a stake. Therefore desire for an early success in Kashmir in keeping with the declarations made by the leaders and the Government from time to time has become intense.

But while interest has increased hope has been

languishing. The prolongation of the hostilities, illogical and anti-Indian stand of the U. N. O., the equivocal and different utterances of some of the Indian leaders coupled with the reports of growing Pakistani and Communist elements, and discontent among the pro-Indian elements and contradictory (and even dangerous) utterances and performances of the men in whom the Indian Government have put their trust in the State have created confusion and suspicion in the minds of all thinking people about the future of the State. This confusion is becoming worse confounded by the attempt to keep the public in dark about the realities of the situation by propaganda and high sounding and idealistic statements and commitments of the Indian leaders. For instance, the repeated declaration about the unity of the Jammu and Kashmir state when its division has been made a fait accompli by ordering a cease-fire leaving about half the State in the hands of Pakistan forces, and reiteration of the stand about plebiscite when Pakistan has frankly chosen the path of war and has already grabbed about half of the State, is taxing hard the patience, intelligence and confidence of the ordinary mortals living in this country. In the case of some people it has created an attitude of indifference and even of complete diffidence about Kashmir. They now want the Kashmir problem to end somehow.

This confusion, indifference and diffidence of the public about Kashmir is dangerous. The Kashmir problem now after two years of fighting is not the

same as when it began. The prestige, honour and reputation of India and her armed forces has now become involved in the Kashmir problem. It is therefore necessary that this attitude of indifference and feeling of diffidence is removed.

This can be best done not by grandiose schemes and high-sounding statements but by informing the public about the real facts about the Kashmir problem and its complications. A clear understanding of the gain and losses so far incurred and the issues at stake, and not harping upon vague theories and fads for which the people in general have no sympathy, is needed to create genuine and patriotic interest in and understanding of the Kashmir problem.

In the chapters that follow an attempt has been made to give a detailed and realistic story of the Kashmir problem, its genesis, origin and growth, by one who has been witnessing the whole Kashmir drama from inside. Some of the things told may be new, and some of the conclusions drawn may not be palatable to some. But they are told solely in the interest of a better and more realistic understanding of the Kashmir affairs so that a genuine and patriotic interest in this vital question could be created. Kashmir has already been divided; we should see that what still remains with us is not lost.



CHAPTER II.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Jammu and Kashmir State popularly known as Kashmir after the name of its most celebrated part is the biggest and the northern-most princely State in India. Extending from the alluvial plains of the Punjab to the Trans-Himalayan and Trans-Indus regions of Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit and bounded by the river Ravi in the East and the river Jehlum in the West, this State of 84471 square miles inhabited by 40 lakhs people touches Tibet, Chinese Turkistan, Russian Turkistan, and Afghanistan besides India and Pakistan. Roughly speaking it is contiguous to the Indian Union for about 250 miles, to Pakistan for about 350 miles, to Afghanistan for about 100 miles, to U. S. S. R. for about a hundred miles across the Pamirs and to Chinese Turkistan and Tibet for about 300 miles each. Thus from the point of view of geographical contiguity it can be called an International State, though historically, culturally and economically it is and has been through the centuries an integral part of India.

Literally the head and crown of India, it is the connecting link between her and her neighbours through its aullying parts of Gilgit and Ladlakh which can be truely called window of India opening into Afghanistan, U. S. S. R., China & Tibet.

Geographically this State presents a delightful panorama of alluvial and tropical plains melting into hills, hills into snowy mountains and mountains into arid Trans-Himalayan plateaus resembling the arctic region, with the delightful vale of Kashmir set in the centre as an emerald inviting the wistful glances of all the Asian neighbours. The whole of it can be divided geographically into three well defined regions.

The first is the sub-mountain (Kandi) and semi mountainous region stretching from the Punjab plains to the Pir-Panjaj range of the Himalayas. It covers the entire South Eastern part of the State. It forms the basin of river Chenab which flows through it, drains its waters and carries its timber wealth to the plains. Except for a narrow strip projecting into the Punjab plains, the whole of this region is hilly in terrain with small dales and valleys here and there. The vale of Bhadarwah, also known as minjature Kashmir, is the most beautiful spot in this region. Its climate varies from extreme hot in the Kandi ilaqa to mild summer and snowy winters of Bhadarwah and Banihal.

The next geographical region is the Kashmir proper surrounded by the high Himalayan ranges

with one natural outlet along the course of the river Jehlum. The river Jehlum starting from the Verinag spring runs a winding and zigzag course through the valley and then enters the mountains near Baramula. It takes the water of the Kishan Ganga at Domel near Muzafferabad and then forms the Western boundry of the State for about 150 miles. It drains the waters of the Kashmir valley as also of the Western districts of Muzafferabad, Poonch and Mirpur and carries the valuable timber wealth of these areas to Jehlum in the Punjab plains now in Pakistan. This region thus forms the basin of the river Jehlum. The climate of this region except the Western districts is temperate.

The third and the most extensive geographical region of the State is the Trans-Himalayan plateau including the frontier ilaqas of Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit. The river Indus flows through this region making deep ravines, narrow gorges and fertile valleys. The only centres of habitation in this region such as Leh, Kargil, Askardu and Gilgit are situated in the valleys of the Indus or of its numerous tributaries. It is the most sparsely populated part of the State. The climate especially in winter approximates to the arctic conditions. But for a few months in the summer it remains temperate.

Thus the basins of the three rivers flowing through the State form the three broad geographical regions of the State divided from one another by

the two Himalayan ranges. The Pir-Panjal range divides the Jehlum basin from the Chenab basin and the Great Himalayan range divides the Indus basin from the Jehlum basin. For administrative convenience this huge territory is divided into four administrative units. The two Jagirs of Poonch and Chenani formed till recently quite separate administrations. But now they have been integrated with the adjoining units. These administrative divisions are:—

1. **JAMMU PROVINCE:** It includes the districts of Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Riasi and Mirpur. It stretches from the river Ravi in the East to the river Jehlum in the west and from the Punjab plains in the South to the Pir-Panjal range of the Himalayas in the North which divides it from the Kashmir Province. Its total area is 10,656 sq. miles and its total population according to 1941 census is 15,47,809. The separate existence of the Jagir of Poonch which adjoins the districts, of Mirpur and Riasi as also of the Jagir of Chenani which is surrounded by the Udhampur district has now been ended. Their total area is 1722 sq. miles and total population is 4,33,624.

2. **KASHMIR PROVINCE:** It includes the districts of Anantnag, including the city of Srinagar, Baramula and Muzafferabad. Its total area is 8539 sq. miles. Its population according to the 1941 census is 17,28,705.

3. **THE FRONTIER ILAQA OF LADAKH:** It includes the whole of Ladakh and Baltistan. It forms one

administrative district sub-divided into the tehsils of Leh, Kargil and Askardu. Its total area is 45,762 sq. miles and total population is 1,95,431.

4. **THE FRONTIER ILAQA OF GILGIT:** It includes the Gilgit district and the tributary states of Hunza Nagar, Chilas, Ishkuman, Yasin, Punial, Kuh and Ghizar together known as Gilgit Agency. Part of Gilgit district had been leased out to the British Indian Government since 1937 for strategic reasons. The Gilgit Agency States used to be under the joint control of the district officer appointed by the State Government and the British political agent at Gilgit. At the time of transfer of power to the Indian hands in 1947 the leased area of Gilgit was returned to the State.

These vast and varied territories were unified and made into one political unit by Maharaja Gulab Singh, the great grand-father of the present ruler of the State by the middle of the 19th century. A scion of the Dogra ruling family of Jammu, he joined the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab in 1812 as a foot soldier. His younger brothers, Dhyan Singh and Suchet Singh followed him. All of them steadily rose in the estimation of the Lion of the Punjab because of their personal charm and great qualities of dash and intrepidity. Dhyan Singh rose to be the prime Minister of Lahore Kingdom while Gulab Singh succeeded in carving out for himself and his descendants a vast and rich kingdom.

The foundation of the present kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir was laid in 1819 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh himself when he installed Raja Gulab Singh on his ancestral Gaddi of Jammu by giving him Raj Tilak with his own hands at Akhnoor on the right bank of the Chenab. Raja Gulab Singh who by that time had become one of the most trusted and important sardars of the Lahore Darbar began to extent his principality within the empire of Ranjit Singh by new conquests. He conquered the small principalities of Bhimber, Rajauri, Kotli and Poonch ruled over by Muslim Rajas as also the principalities of Kistwar and Bhadarwah which were ruled over by Hindu Rajas between 1820 and 1830. Then he turned his attention towards Trans-Himalayan regions of Ladakh and Baltistan which lay beyond Kistwar. His famous general Wazir Zorawar Singh of Riasi led a Dogra army to the snowy heights of Ladakh and defeated the Rajas of Ladakh and Askardu and annexed these regions to the principality of Raja Gulab Singh within the empire of Ranjit Singh between 1834 and 1840. But he himself died fighting on these giddy heights. He was thus the fore-runner of the brave Indian soldiers who have recently saved what he had gained for India from the hands of Pakistani hordes by their amazing deeds of heroism and feats of endurance in and beyond the Yojila pass at a height of 14,000 feet and more above the sea level.

After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839,

his empire fell in weak and inefficient hands. His Sikh sardars who had resented the Dogra ascendancy in the Lahore Darbar now created conditions which made Gulab Singh concentrate on his own principality of Jammu. When the first Anglo-Sikh war broke out in 1846 he was invited to take the command of the Sikh forces. But he advised the Lahore authorities against War and remained in Jammu. After the War was over he played the part of a peace maker. Treaty of Lahore was negotiated by him. By this treaty the Lahore Darbar had to cede the Jullundhur Doaba to the British and pay a War indemnity of Rs. 1 crore. As Lahore Darbar was not in a position to pay this sum, it surrendered all the hilly parts of the Lahore Kingdom between the river Ravi and the Indus to the British in lieu of the indemnity.

The British at that time were not in a position to administer this vast and extensive mountainous territory inhabited by a warlike people because they had not yet consolidated their position in the Punjab. The kingdom of Lahore was still independent and therefore formed a barrier between the British territories and these hilly parts of the Lahore kingdom, now ceded to them. So they decided to hand these territories over to some friendly hands. There could be no more suitable choice than Raja Gulab Singh who was held in high esteem by the British for his military strength and statesmanship and who was already *de facto* master of a large part of these territories.

The treaty of Amritsar of 1846 which gave *de jure* recognition to Gulab Singh as semi independent sovereign of these territories was not a sale deed as has been suggested by some. The British could not retain these territories. They had to hand them over to Gulab Singh because independent kingdom of the Punjab still stood between their other Indian possessions and these territories. Maharaja Gulab Singh would have contested any attempt on the part of the British to dispossess him of these territories which he had been already ruling. The only part of these territories which was not under him till then was the valley of Kashmir. But British recognition did not make him automatically the master of Kashmir even. He had to conquer it by force from the hands of Sheikh Imam-ud-din, the last Governor of Kashmir appointed by the Lahore Darbar.

This explains why this treaty is quite different from the treaties made with other Indian states by the British. There is no stipulation in it for maintaining British troops or any British agent in the State. Nor is there any mention of tribute as such. The Maharaja had only to send annually a few Kashmiri Shawls and goats to the British Government as a token of his recognition of their superior position. No Britisher could enter the State without a pass-port of the State. The State continued in this semi-independent position till the British Government, taking advantage of the internal dissensions of the ruling family, succeeded in leveling it down to the status of other Indian states in 1885.

Maharaja Gulab Singh was succeeded by his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh in 1857. He consolidated the gains of his father and added to them by the conquest of Gilgit and the Frontier States of Hunza, Nagar etc.,. He set up the administrative system in the State which has continued with few changes till now. He gave the State its present laws and gave peace and security to the people by restoring law and order in his far flung kingdom. Above all he resisted successfully the attempts of the British Indian Government to bring his state in line with other Indian States by forcing a British Resident on him. He also refused to give the British Indian Government any foot in Gilgit which they wanted to develop as a military base. He was unquestionably the strongest and the ablest ruler of the dynasty after its founder.

He was succeeded in 1885 by his son Maharaja Pratap Singh. The British Indian Government, taking advantage of the strained relations between him and his brothers, Raja Amar Singh and Ram Singh, imposed a British Resident on him before recognising his accession to the Gaddi. Thus succeeded the British machinations to control this strategic territory, which perforce they had to part with in 1846 because of other difficulties. The British Government wellnigh succeeded in deposing the Maharaja on a fake charge of intrigue with Russia. But the timely revelations by the "Amrit Bazar Patrika" in India and the questions of Charles

Bradlaugh in the British House of Commons saved the state and the Maharaja. But his hands were bound down by a council of Regency dominated over by the British Resident.

Maharaja Pratap Singh was succeeded in 1925 by his nephew, the present Maharaja Hari Singh. He is quite an intelligent and enlightened prince. But he is a bad judge of character and has been very unrealistic in his policies. He is shy of public and has surrounded himself by foolish and selfish advisers who have proved his bane as also of his state in the past and may lend him into difficulties in future. He began very well. He set his heart at making his state a modernised and advanced state. He succeeded to a large extent in achieving this end. But he alienated the British Government in the early years of his reign by his anti-British prejudices and outspoken support to the Indian aspirations in the Round Table Conference. The result was that a British sponsored religio-cum-political movement of the Muslims was started in Kashmir by 1930, which, after passing through different phases and supported by various new forces, has succeeded in making him a non-entity in his own state.



CHAPTER III.

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVISIONS

Being the handiwork of a soldier statesman who extended his native principality of Jammu into a great Kingdom larger than many of the modern European States at a time when the conquering sword and not the people's choice or natural boundaries determined the rise and fall of Kingdoms, this vast and varied State has little intrinsic unity and cohesion. Some of its parts like the trans-Himalayan regions of Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit are not even Indian. Never before, except in the time of Ashoka did these regions formed politically a part of India though culturally they have remained a part of the Indian cultural empire for a long time past. The obedience to a common lord and consequently a uniform and unified administrative system has been the only unifying factor in these diverse territories.

The Jammu & Kashmir State as at present constituted, therefore, is simply a political entity. It is a conglomeration of at least six distinct people inhabiting well defined parts or zones of the State and

each having a distinct language, culture, customs, manner and history. A clear understanding of the historical and cultural background of these different peoples and zones and proper appreciation of their economic needs, social and cultural ties and political aspirations, is essential to understand the Kashmir problem.

1. DUGAR (JAMMU)

The first and the foremost part or zone is Dugar, the homeland of the founder of the State, as also of the Dogra people. It is directly contiguous to East Punjab and Himachal Pradesh in India and includes the entire districts of Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur and the eastern parts of the districts of Riasi and Mirpur of the administrative province of Jammu. It stretches from River Ravi in the east to roughly the cease-fire line running along the Jhangar-Rajauri line in the west and from Suchetgarh in the south to the Banihal Pass in the Pir Panjal range in the north. Its total area is about 9000 sq. miles.

The inhabitants of this region are Dogras. A few thousand Kashmiris have also infiltrated into the Ramban and Kishtwar Tehsils of Udhampur District from Kashmir. Gunjars, who speak a Pahari dialect, inhabit the western part of Piasi District. The total population of this zone is about 11 lacs of which more than $7\frac{1}{2}$ lacs are Hindus. The spoken language of this zone is Dogri which is written in Devnagari script.

The whole of this zone is mountainous except a narrow belt bordering the Punjab. A few beautiful valleys like that of Bhadarwah, which is known as miniature Kashmir, lie in its interior. River Chenab flows right through this region draining its waters and carrying its valuable timber wealth to Akhnur near Jammu. The chief occupation of the people is agriculture and soldiering. Thousands of hardy Dogras from this region serve in the Indian and the State armies. Maize and rice are the main agricultural crops. Lower Himalayan ranges traversing this zone are covered with rich fir and deodar jungles. Lumbering, therefore, is an important industry. Forest produce, lime, resin, honey, anardana and medicinal herbs besides timber form the chief export of this area.

Bhadarwah, which is linked up with Chamba, in the Himachal Pradesh by a bridle track and with Batote on the Jammu-Srinagar road by a motorable road, is perhaps the most beautiful part of this zone. Its fruits are superior even to those of Kashmir and the natural scenery is no less charming. Kishtwar, which lies just to the north of Bhadarwah, is famous like Kashmir for its saffron fields. It forms the direct link between the Dugar and the Buddhist Ladakh, which lies to its north.

Politically this ilaqa had remained divided into small principalities ruled over by Hindu Rajas owing doubtful allegiance, now and then, to the powerful empires rising in the plain still their political unifica-

tion into one compact whole by Raja Gulab Singh. He himself came of the ruling family of Jammu, which principality occupied, according to tradition, the leading place among the twenty two principalities of this hilly ilaqa. Jammu is still the chief town of this zone and is the winter capital of the whole State.

Socially, culturally and economically the people of this zone are indissolubly connected with the Dogras of the East Punjab. In fact the Dogra belt of East Punjab including the districts of Gurdaspur, Kangra, Hoshiarpur and Chamba and Mandi in the Himachal Pradesh, together with the Dugar zone of the Jammu and Kashmir State form the homeland of the Dogras. Naturally, therefore, the people of this zone aspire to remain connected with East Punjab and India, irrespective of what happens to other parts of the state.

From the Indian point of view this is the most important part of the State. It forms the only direct and feasible link between India and the rest of the State. The Pathankot-Jammu road and the Jammu-Banihal road that connect India with Kashmir valley pass entirely through this zone. The choice of its inhabitants about the question of accession is beyond any doubt. The mineral and power resources of the zone are immense. The warlike man-power of this zone is indispensable for the Indian Army, and the hills and dales of this area can form an ideal training ground for the Indian Army.

2. LADAKH.

To the north of Dugar and to the North-East of Kashmir valley lies the extensive Indo-Tibetan tract of Ladakh also known as little Tibet. It is directly contiguous to the Himachal Pradesh of India. Geographically and culturally a part of Tibet, this tract was being ruled over by a local Buddhist Raja under the suzerainty of the Dalai Lama of Tibet, when conquered by Wazir Zorawar Singh between 1834-40 for his master Maharaja Gulab Singh. He entered Ladakh, through Kishtwar in Dugar and not through Kashmir. It includes the Tehsil of Leh and eastern parts of the Kargil tehsil of the administrative district of Ladakh. Its total area is about 32,000 sq. miles and total population is only about 45 thousands of which over 40 thousands are Buddhists.

This is a very backward area. The Buddhist inhabitants eke out their bare existence by rearing yaks and cultivating 'Girm' a kind of barley, in the few high and dry valleys of the Indus. Their chief pre-occupation is their religion. They give their best in men and material to the numerous monasteries, that act as oasis in this arid region. The wealth, art and learning of the people is concentrated in these monasteries. Some of them contain rich collections of ancient Buddhist literature in Sanskrit or in its Tibetan translations. Their population is kept down by the social system like polyandry, dedication of girls and boys to the monasteries and by slow conversion to Islam through inter-marriages with Balti or

Kashmiri Muslims. The offsprings of these mixed marriages are known as 'Arghuns'. They form the trading community.

Leh, the chief town of this zone, is situated at a height of more than 11,000 feet above the sea level and is probably the highest town in the world. It used to be the seat of Raja of Ladakh before the Dogra conquest. Since the conquest and formation of the Ladakh district it has become the summer headquarters of the district officer appointed by the State government. It is connected with Srinagar by a well-kept highway known as the "Leh Treaty Road". It crosses the high mountains dividing Ladakh from Kashmir through the Yaji pass. Leh used to be, till a few years back, a great mart of central Asian trade. Caravans laden with silks, rugs and tea, used to pour into Leh from distant Tashkand, Kashghar and Yarkand. These goods were exchanged there for Indian sugar, cloth and other general goods. But since the absorption of these central Asian states into the Russian empire this trade has virtually ended. But the strategic importance of Leh as a connecting link with central Asia, has in no way been lessened.

A part of Ladakh was overrun by the Pakistanis recently when, after capturing Askardu and Kargil, they began their advance on Leh. Many hundreds of these innocent Buddhists were murdered and many monasteries were looted and despoiled by them. But the epoch making landings of the R. I. A. F. dakotas

carrying the sinews of war on the improvised air field of Leh more than 11,000 ft. above the sea level, and the brilliant winter offensive of the Indian Army resulting in capture of the Yojila, Dras and Kargil have saved Leh and the rest of Ladakh from these Pakistani barbarians.

But the Ladakhis do not yet feel secure. They fear that the Pakistanis and Kashmiris may finish them off if they are thrown into the laps of Pakistan. Therefore they have approached the government of India with the request that they, being a separate people in every sense of the term, should not be bound by the result of the plebiscite in the rest of the State. They have suggested that their ilaqa should either be merged directly in the Indian Union or they should be linked up politically with Dugar with which they claim to have closer cultural ties. They assert that they have nothing in common with Kashmir which came under Dogra rule much later than Ladakh and therefore would not like to be governed from Kashmir even as a part of India.

3. BALTISTAN

The third distinct zone of the state is Baltistan inhabited by the Balti people. It lies to the north of Kashmir and to the west of Ladakh. For administrative purposes it is grouped with Ladakh to form the district of that name. Its total area is about 14,000 sq. miles and total population is about 1,30,000 according to the 1941 census. Almost all of them are Muslims by religion.

Baltistan was conquered by Wazir Zorawar Singh along with Ladakh between 1834-40 for Maharaja Gulab Singh. Before that it was being ruled over by petty Muslim Rajas, a descendant of one of whom still holds the jagir of Khaplu. The chief town of this zone is Askardu which is also the winter headquarters of the Ladakh district.

Baltistan was overrun by Pakistan troops and Gilgit Scouts during the winter of 1947-48. The state garrison in the Askardu held on for some months. But no effective help could be sent to them from Kashmir because the Yaji pass had passed into the control of Pakistan and aid by air was made difficult

The winter offensive of the Indian Army in 1948 resulted in the recapture of the Yaji Pass and the town of Kargil beyond it, which command the road to Leh and Askardu. Thus a part of Baltistan has again come in the Indian hands, but its major portion including the town of Askardu still lies on the Pakistan side of the cease-fire line.

Baltistan is not of much economic or strategic importance. It is sandwiched between Ladakh and Gilgit. But it has provided Pakistan with a convenient route to advance towards Yaji Pass and Leh from their base in Gilgit. Its main produce are barley and fruits, especially apricots. Some of the valleys of Indus in this zone are quite fertile. It depends on India through Kashmir for the supply of most of the necessaries of life.

The people of this part of the State are very backward and were quite indifferent to the political development in Kashmir or Jammu. But now they have been infected by the Pakistani propaganda.

4. GILGIT.

The fourth district zone of the state is Gilgit. It includes the Gilgit district which used to be administered directly by a district officer appointed by the State government and the tributary states of Hunza, Nagar, Chillas, Punial, Ishkuman, Kuh and Ghizar. The total area of this Zone is about 17,000 sq. miles and the total population is about 1,16,000. Almost all of them are Shia Muslims. Most of them are followers of the Agha Khan. They belong to the Dardic race and are closely connected with the Chitralis in race, culture and language. Shina and Chitrali are the two spoken languages.

This ilaqa was conquered by Maharaja Gulab Singh and his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh between 1846 and 1860 with great difficulty. Thousands of Dogra soldiers lost their lives in the campaign that led to the conquest of this inhospitable, but strategically very important region. It is here that the three Empires—British, Chinese and Russian—met. The independent kingdom of Afghanistan also touches its boundaries.

The strategic importance of this region has increased very much since the advent of air force and the expansion of the U. S. S. R. towards the

central Asian regions adjoining Gilgit and Baltistan. Though very mountainous, this zone contains the fine plain of Gilgit, a valley of the Indus. This plain can serve as an excellent military and air base in any war with Russia. That is why the British took it on a long lease from the Maharaja in 1937. Now it is the plan of the Anglo-U. S. A. block to give the possession of Gilgit into safe hands. They naturally consider Pakistan to be safer for them than India.

Gilgit is divided from Kashmir by the same high Himalayan range which divides Kashmir from Ladakh and Baltistan. But the direct and the shortest link between Gilgit and Kashmir is provided by another Pass, the Burzi La. It is more than 13,000 feet above the sea level and therefore remains closed for many months in the year. The access to Gilgit from Pakistan via Risalpur in the N. W. F. P. is comparatively easy.

The whole of Gilgit including the Burzi Pass now lies on the Pakistan side of the cease-fire line. State garrison as also the military governor appointed by the state were over-powered by the Pakistan troops with the aid of the local militia, the Gilgit scouts during the winter of 1947. Gilgit is now the chief supply base of Pakistan in the north of the State.

From the economic point of view Gilgit is not rich though it has vast potentialities. Its climate is bracing and temperate. Temperate fruits like apple,

apricot, and almonds grow in abundance. Zira, a valuable spice, however, is the most valuable produce of this area and is exported in large quantities.

. The people are healthy and fair coloured. Polo is their national game, and it is difficult to beat them in this game.

They had come under the Aryan and Buddhist cultural influence quite early. Gilgit probably formed part of the Khotan Province of Asoka's empire. A recent find of Buddhist and Sanskrit books near Gilgit confirms this view. Their customs and manner still resemble those of the Indians. A class of people among them is held in high esteem. They are expected not to eat beef and to remain clean. They are perhaps the Gilgit Brahmins.

Till recently these people were very much devoted to the Maharaja and his government. They protested against the lease of Gilgit to the British. But after the partition, they, especially the Rajas of Humya and Nagar, were incited by the Pakistanis and the British Political Agent to press upon the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan. They later became collaborators of the Pakistanis and revolted against the Maharaja's government in Gilgit.

5. PUNJABI SPEAKING BELT.

The Punjabi speaking districts of Mirpur, Poonch and Muzaffarabad, lying along the river Jhelum which forms the western boundry of the State, form the fifth distinct zone in the State. Mirpur forms

part of the Jammu province, Muzaffarabad of Kashmir and Poonch is a big Jagir in the State, ruled over by a descendant of Raja Dhyan Singh who rose to be the prime minister of Ranjit Singh. Its total area is about 6,000 sq. miles, and total population is about 11 lacs. Nearly a lac of them were Hindus, but either they have been killed or converted to Islam by the local Muslims with the help of Pakistani raiders. The chief towns of this zone are Mirpur now reduced to ashes by the Pakistanis, Poonch which is still in Indian hands and Muzaffarabad on the confluence of the Jhelum and the Krishna Ganga. This town is now the virtual head-quarters of the so-called Azad Kashmir government. Mirpur and Poonch were conquered by Gulab Singh for Maharaja Ranjit Singh from the local Muslim Rajas. Muzaffarabad was conquered by him after he had occupied Kashmir defeating its Muslim Sultan in a bloody battle.

Parts of this zone are quite fertile. But the real importance of this ilaqa is for its warlike man-power. Poonch area (Abhisara of our ancient literature) alone gave about eighty thousands recruits to the Indian army during the second World War. The Sudhans, the Janals and the Chibs who inhabit this ilaqa are all Rajput converts. This ilaqa has an additional importance for Pakistan because the river Jhelum which carries the rich timber wealth of Kashmir and Karen forests, flows through it. The head-works of the Upper Jhelum canal at Mangla are situated in this zone near Mirpur. This zone also

links the West Punjab and the N.W.F.P. with the valley of Kashmir.

The people of this zone are bound in bonds of a common religion with those of Hazara, Rawalpindi and Jhelum districts in the West Punjab. Sheikh Abdullah could never have any hold over them. They actively sided the Pakistani raiders when the latter invaded the State from that side. Sardar Ibrahim and other leaders of the so-called Azad Kashmir Government hail from this ilaqa. At present most of this ilaqa except the towns of Poonch and Mendhar lies on the Pakistan side of the cease-fire line.

6. KASHMIR.

In the centre of the State, surrounded by the diverse regions and peoples mentioned above and cut off from them by high Himalayan walls, lies the beautiful valley of Kashmir, the 'Nandan Van' of India and the play-ground of Asia. This home of the sage Kashyap, who according to the traditional story made the breach near Baramula which converted this lake into a spacious valley, is a thing of beauty and therefore a constant temptation to her stronger neighbours. It includes the valley of the river Jhelum and many smaller valleys especially those of the Lidar and the Sindh—the two tributaries of the Jhelum. Its total area is about 6,000 sq. miles and the total population is about 15 lacs.

Once the seat of Sanskrit learning and cradle of Aryan culture, it is now a predominantly Muslim

area. The Kashmiris were forcibly converted to Islam by Sultan Sikandar early in the 14th century. They wanted to come to their own faith during the reign of Maharaja Ranvir Singh, but the orthodox Kashmiri Pandits refused to take them back.

The Kashmiris belong to the Aryan race. Their language — Kashmiri— can be best written in Sharada or Devnagari script. But under the influence of religion they have been discarded and Persian script now rules supreme.

Kashmir has a continuous recorded history of more than two thousand years. The great Kashmiri historians-Kalhan and Ratnakar-have written beautiful histories of Kashmir, which apart from their historical value, are recognised as great pieces of Sanskrit literature. Some kings of Kashmir like Lalitaditya and Avantivarman extended their sway far beyond the mountains that surround Kashmir into the plains of the Sindh and the Ganga. They enriched Kashmir with beautiful temples and buildings whose magnificent ruins at Avantipur and Martand still remind the visitor of the Glory that was Kashmir. Every beautiful spot and spring in Kashmir is a holy place of the Hindus. Hindu shrines and temples are to be found even in the remotest corners and on the highest peaks of Kashmir. Shri Amarnath ji, Gangabal, Khir Bhawani and Matan are some of the most important holy places in Kashmir that have an all India fame and importance.

The temples of Shankarcharya in the heart of the valley overlooking the city of Srinagar is a painted reminder of pre-Muslim Kashmir's unity with the rest of India.

Islam entered Kashmir through a Balti adventurer Renchen Shah, and a devout missionary Shah Hamdan. The work they began was soon completed by Sikandar, the iconoclast, who converted the whole of Kashmir to Islam by force and destroyed all the shrines built by Hindu rulers. A few families managed to escape to safety. Their progeny now form the Kashmiri Pandit community of Kashmir, about 70,000 in all.

The Pathans were followed by the Mughals in the 16th century, who enriched Kashmir by building the beautiful Mughal gardens. They were succeeded by Sikhs who in turn were supplanted by the Dogras in 1846.

Much of what can be called modern Kashmir is the creation of the Dogra rule. The Dogra rulers neglected their own homeland and lavished their time, attention and money on Kashmir. But the Kashmir of Sheikh Abdullah wanted to be independent of Dogra rule. Perhaps he has succeeded. Now he is the master of his Kashmir. But it is doubtful whether he will be able to keep it secure for Kashmiris. India is willing to let Kashmir be the complete master of her destiny in the hope that her cultural and historical ties with India, her

economic interests and above all her self-interest as a thing of beauty will keep her as a willing partner of the Indian Union.

But like a beautiful woman, Kashmiris are frail and like to change masters. Whether India who has loved her, saved her from Barbarians and spent huge sums of money and given precious blood for her, will allow her to slip out of Indian arms is a question that can not be answered just now.

These linguistic, cultural and geographical divisions of the state and its inhabitants provide the physical background of the Kashmir problem. It is the attitude of these different peoples towards the developments that have been taking place in the state for the last two years which in the ultimate analysis will decide the future of the estate as a whole or of its various parts separately.



CHAPTER IV.

THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND.

In order to understand the circumstances that led to Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir in October 1947, and the development of the Kashmir problem since then, a clear grasp of the political influence at work in the state prior to and since the invasion is essential. They in conjunction with the social and cultural ties and economic interests of the various peoples inhabiting the state, are bound to determine their attitude towards the recent happenings in the state as also the accession issue. Therefore an insight into the political background of the Kashmir affair is necessary to understand its intricacies and to find its solution.

The political awakening in the state in the modern sense of the term began near about 1930. But due to largeness of the state and diversity of the peoples inhabiting it, this political awakening took different form and direction in different parts of the state. The three outlying and sparsely populated regions of Ladakh, Balistan and Gilgit remained completely unaffected by the political

movement in the other parts of the state till recently, when their easy-going but backward inhabitants were violently shaken out of their blissful indifference to the developments in other parts of the state by shots and shells of the Pakistani invaders. Of the remaining three regions Kashmir was the first to experience political activity. Mirpur and Poonch ilaqas followed the lead of Kashmir. The Dogra area of Jammu remained steeped in its sectional and factional politics till recently when the revolutionary changes in the state's administrative and constitutional set up following the invasion of Kashmir forced them to organize themselves politically and adjust themselves to the new order.

Broadly speaking the political life in the state has been revolving all these years around three organizations, viz., the Muslim Conference, the National Conference and the Praja Parishad. They have provided the state with all the political figures that dominate the stage of Indian Kashmir and Jammu as also of the so called Azad Kashmir. Therefore a study of the origin, activities, affiliations and objects of these organizations can give us the political background of the Kashmir affairs.

The Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference.

The first of these in order of the age and influence, it has been exerting on the State politics is the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. It

began as a religious political movement of the Muslims aimed particularly against the Hindu Maharaja in 1930-31. The inspiration and guidance for it, in the beginning, came directly from the British officers of the Political Department who had become irritated by the anti-British attitude and progressive and patriotic views and sympathies of the Maharaja. His speech at the Round Table Conference wherein he declared that the Indian Princes had full sympathy with the aspirations of their countrymen was like a bomb-shell to the British bureaucrats. They decided to break the independent spirit of the Maharaja and to bring him to his knees. Their imperialist designs to get complete control of Gilgit also pointed to the same course. Thus began the political intrigue which succeeded too well for the British.

Certain grievances of the Muslims who constituted an overwhelming majority of the population in Kashmir and Mirpur-Poonch areas provided the starting ground. Sh. Mohd. Abdullah who had returned from Aligarh after passing his M.Sc. and imbibing the Aligarh spirit became a convenient stooge. He had just been dismissed from the post of a teacher in a Government high school at Srinagar for disobedience. He along with some other disgruntled educated Muslims laid the foundation of the Muslim Conference at Srinagar.

The anti-Maharaja and anti-Hindu propaganda

of the Muslim Conference with the help of maulvis had immediate results. The religious fanaticism of the illiterate Muslim masses thus roused resulted in wide-spread anti-Hindu riots in Kashmir as also in Mirpur and Poonchh Districts. Thousands of Hindus were killed or rendered homeless. The Maharaja had to request the British Indian Government for troops to quell the riots and rebellion. His spirit was thus broken. He had to appoint an inquiry commission under the chairmanship of Mr. Glancy and accept many British Officers.

The report of the Glancy Commission, which the Maharaja accepted in toto brought many privileges to the Muslims. An under-matric Muslim was now to be preferred to a graduate Hindu for recruitment to the State services. The State was to have a Legislative Assembly called the Praja Sabha. It was to have 75 members in all, of which 33 were to be elected. The Muslims were given 21 elected seats.

The agitation and its success raised the prestige of Sheikh Abdullah very high among the Muslims. The Muslim Conference, therefore, soon became the most representative organization of all the Muslims of Kashmir, Jammu and Mirpur-Poonch areas. The State Government now began a policy of appeasement towards the Muslim Conference, which further heightened its prestige and made it aggressive in its demands. Sheikh Abdullah had now become Sher-i-Kashmir.

But a split came in the Muslim Conference in the year 1939 when Sheikh Abdullah decided to convert the Muslim Conference into National Conference. He was able to carry a majority of his Kashmiri followers with him. But the Muslims of Jammu and Mirpur-Poonch regions refused to follow his lead.

Jammu, Mirpur, Poonch, and Muzaffarabad then became the main centres of activity of the Muslim Conference. It continued its work in Kashmir as well under the leadership of Maulvi Mohd. Yusuf, the chief Mullah of Srinagar. His party came to be known as 'BAKRA' (goat) party as against the 'SHER' (tiger) party of Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah. But the central leadership of the Muslim Conference now passed into the hands of Punjabi speaking Muslims like Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, Chaudhary Hamid-Ullah and Sardar Mohd. Ibrahim.

Ch. Ghulam Abbas, the present supreme head of the so-called Azad Kashmir Government is the ablest of the Muslim Conference leaders and has been dominating it since the split. He was a practising lawyer at Jammu before he joined the Muslim Conference. Being a strong man of firm convictions, he has courted arrest several times. He had been arrested before the Pakistani invasion began but was released by Sheikh Abdullah's Government and allowed a safe passage to Pakistan. He is now the guiding figure behind the Muslim

Conference and the so-called Azad Kashmir Government.

Ch. Hamid Ullah was also a practising lawyer at Jammu. He became president of the Muslim Conference after Ch. Ghulam Abbas's arrest. He is an arm chair politician of little intrinsic worth.

Sardar Mohd. Ibrahim the president of the so-called Azad Kashmir Government hails from Poonch. He was educated at the expense of the State. He was sent to England from where he returned as a barrister. He was then appointed public prosecutor at Srinagar, but he found the salary too meagre and the lure of politics too attractive. So he gave up the job and entered the Muslim Conference. He organised the rebellion in Poonch with the collaboration of Pakistani raiders. He was then boosted up by Pakistan as leader of the State Muslims as against Sheikh Abdullah.

Besides these three and Maulvi Yusuf of Kashmir, there are numerous young workers of the Muslim Conference, fired by the Muslim League ideology. Under this new leadership the Muslim Conference became a branch of the All India Muslim League. It, therefore, supported the demand for Pakistan and wanted the whole of Jammu & Kashmir State to accede to it. Finding the chances of early accession of Kashmir State to Pakistan by pressure tactics fading away due to the resolute stand taken by the Prime Minister, Mr. Mehar Chand Mahajan, the

Muslim Conference leaders, in collaboration with the Pakistan Government, hatched the plan of invading the State from outside.

The Muslim Conference has virtually disappeared from the Jammu area as an organization since the successful suppression of their attempted *Coup* in Jammu. Most of its active workers have gone to Pakistan or are living in the so called Azad Kashmir territory. But the Muslims who still remain in the Jammu region owe fullest allegiance to Pakistan and Muslim League ideology. The Azad Kashmir territory is now the centre of the Muslim Conference. But it has revived its activities in Kashmir as well and has already gained considerable strength there. The constant Pakistani propaganda through radio supplemented by whispering campaign of Pakistani agents and supported by the pro-Pakistan inclinations of the educated officials and Mullah class has been helping the revival of Muslim Conference in Kashmir.

2. The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference.

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference or more correctly the Kashmir National Conference for it is almost non-existent out of Kashmir, is literally the creation of Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah. He has made it the National Conference and it has in its turn made him what he is to-day. He dominates this organization as Mr. Jinnah used to dominate the All India Muslim League. Therefore his strength and

weakness are the strength and weakness of the National Conference.

Sheikh Mohd. Abdulillah is a massively built, tall, handsome and intelligent man. Coming from the lowly class of boatmen he proved to be exceptionally brilliant in studies. After passing his M. Sc. from Aligarh he returned to Kashmir to take up the post of a science teacher in a High School. But he was not to remain a school teacher. His Aligarh spirit, which was quickened by his dismissal from the school for indisciplined behaviour towards the Hindu Inspector of schools, whom he considered to be his inferior from the point of view of academic degrees, soon brought him to the political field. Beginning as a tool of the British Political Agent, he soon became conscious of the power that he could wield among the ignorant Muslim masses of Kashmir by dextrous use of his eloquent tongue and bold advocacy of their rights. His knowledge of his rich country and insight into the distressed condition of its inhabitants coupled with his hatred for the government dominated by the Hindus made him bitterly anti-Maharaja and anti-Hindu. The Muslim Conference that he created roused the Muslim fanaticism to a high pitch resulting in wide spread rioting in which thousands of Hindus and Sikhs were killed or rendered homeless. The reforms and concessions for Muslims that followed the disturbances raised his prestige among the Muslim masses especially in Kashmir very high.

But Sheikh Abdullah is an extremely ambitious man. He could not remain contented with administrative reforms or increased share of Muslims in the administration. He wanted real power. This he soon realised, could be possible, only with the help and support of the forces working for similar ends in British India and other States. The support of Muslim League did not appear to him of much value. He must get the support of the powerful Indian National Congress, he thought, if he was to achieve real power in Kashmir. This was possible only if he could change colours, become a nationalist in place of a communalist. He pondered over the pros and cons of the situation. Like a real and practical statesman he soon realised that political power in a country like Kashmir proper, where Muslims formed about 95 p. c. of the population, whenever and however it might come in the popular hands, would mean power in the Muslim hands. He visualised that the real question before the Muslims in Kashmir unlike those of Jammu or other parts of India was not how to get a particular share in the power that the Congress wanted to wrest from the unwilling British hands but how to get the power itself. This interest he realised could be best served by alliance with the Indian National Congress. Therefore, he decided to convert his Muslim Conference into the National Conference. But it was not to be the same thing as the Congress. Its flag was to be quite distinct

from the Congress flag as also its discipline and programme. The National conference flag is red in colour with a white plough in the centre.

He, as seen above, was able to carry a majority of his former followers with him in Kashmir. The National Conference now began to develop as mainly a Kashmiri organization. It had little or no hold in other parts of the State. In Jammu it was almost non-existent till power was transferred to the hands of Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference in October, 1947. But it gained strength and popularity in Kashmir. Mr. Gopal Swamy Ayyangar, the then Prime Minister of Kashmir State followed a friendly policy towards it. Due to the advice of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru some Kashmiri Pandits too joined it. But majority of them still doubted his bonafides and remained aloof.

The Maharajai 1945 decided to have two popular Ministers, one Hindu and one Muslims. The Muslim Minister was taken from the National Conference. This further increased the prestige of the National Conference nominee in the Cabinet. Mirza Afzal Beg could not pull on well with Pt. Ram Chandra Kak, who happened to be the first Kashmiri Prime Minister of Kashmir in the Dogra rule. So he resigned and the National Conference withdrew its support from the Government early in 1946.

Those were the days of the visit of cabinet mission to India. The talks of transfer of power to

Indian hands were going apace. Sheikh Abdullah now thought the opportunity to be ripe for another somersault to gain power in Kashmir. Repudiating his earlier stand for full responsible Government under the aegis of the Maharaja., he raised the cry of quit Kashmir.

The Quit Kashmir movement of 1946 was organised by Sheikh Abdullah on the pattern of Quit India movement of August 1942. He began with a memorandum submitted to the Cabinet Mission. It denounced the Treaty of Amritsar, which gave British recognition to the Dogra rule over Kashmir as a sale deed and wanted that it should be scrapped and Kashmir be given back to the Kashmiris. It was followed by a campaign of very violent and abusive speeches against the Dogras in general and the ruling family in particular. Preparations were also made to overthrow violently the Maharaja's authority in Kashmir.

Before the movement could reach the desired pitch, Sheikh Abdullah left Kashmir to consult Congress leaders, especially Pandit Nehru. But he was arrested on his way to Rawalpindi. The disturbances that followed were put down by the State Government with a strong hand.

The rash attempt of Pt. Nehru to come to Kashmir in the midst of the whole affray and the foolish decision of the State Government to ban his entry into the State gave the Quit Kashmir movement an

all India publicity and importance. The temporary arrest of Pt. Nehru alienated the sympathies of the Indian Public from the Maharaja and his administration and the National Conference obtained an unexpected and unmerited support from the Indian public and press. The net result of the whole drama was that a feeling of bitterness was created in the minds of Pt. Nehru against the Maharaja and his Prime Minister Pt. Kak and vice versa. This personal bitterness, as we shall see later, had very unfortunate effect on the Indo-Kashmir relations and has contributed to a good extent to the unhappy developments in the State since then.

Sheikh Abdullah and his many other lieutenants were charged with sedition and tried in an open court by the State government. Most of them were found guilty and convicted. But Bakhshi Ghulam Mohamed was able to escape. He carried on intensive propaganda in the Indian press in favour of the National Conference and against the Kak regime. An almost illiterate lorry driver by profession, this Bakhshi Ghulam Mohamed is a fine ^organiser and is the most faithful lieutenant of Sheikh Abdulla. Sheikh Abdullah has rewarded him well for his faithfulness. He is the deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister in the interim ministry of Sheikh Abdullah.

The great interest and sympathy shown by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru for the Quit Kashmir Movement and its leaders made him very popular among Kashmiri Muslims in general and National Confer-

ence people in particular. The opposition of the Muslim Conference and the Muslim League to the Quit Kashmir Movement was resented by Kashmiri Muslims. The feeling, therefore began to grow in the minds of the Indian public that Kashmiri Muslims under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah would prefer to remain as a part of India rather than join Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah and his lieutenants strengthened this impression by their speeches, delivered in different parts of India. Pt. Jawahrlal Nehru's personal interest and liking for Kashmir and Sheikh Abdullah also created the same feeling. Thus National Conference began to enjoy the support of the whole of India as against the Maharaja and his Administration. The result is that the National Conference today is the party in power in not only Kashmir but the entire State on the Indian side of the cease fire line. Sheikh Abdullah's calculations have proved correct. He has become master not only of Kashmir but also of the Dogra region. Kashmiri Muslims rule Dogras today just as the Dogras ruled Kashmiris yesterday.

But the National Conference has passed its zenith. Its decline has set in. The Muslim Conference is again gaining ground in Kashmir. The younger members of the National Conference are fast turning communist.

The Communist Element in the National Conference.

This brings us to the communist element in the

National Conference. Some of the active supporters and workers of the National Conference have been communists from the very beginning. For instance Mr. Gulam Mohamed Sadik, the present Development Minister in Sheikh Abdullah's administration, Mr. D. P. Dhar, the Deputy Home Minister, Mr. Girdhari Lal Dogra, the Finance Minister and a large number of newly appointed secretaries and district officers are old and confirmed communists. A large number of communist workers from India like Comrade Dhanwartin, Comrade B. P. L. Bedi and many others are working in the National Conference and the National Militia. They are working to control the National Conference. Kashmir today is one of the strongest communist strongholds in India. A detailed review of the communist activities in Kashmir will be found in another chapter.

3. The Jammu & Kashmir Praja Parishad.

The youngest of the political organisations working in the state is the Jammu & Kashmir Praja Parishad though it would be more correct to call it Jammu Praja Parishad for its activities have remained confined so far to the Jammu area alone. The Dogra region of the Jammu Province, as shown above, had no political organization worth the name till recently. A fallacious feeling that they belong to the ruling race, had created a false sense of self complacency in the Dogras. They remained steeped

in their factional politics. When the great change came, there was no political organization in Jammu to share power with the National Conference. There was a political vacuum in Jammu. The National Conference could not fill this vacuum because of its past anti-Dogra record and lack of sympathy and understanding in its rank and file for the needs and problems of the Jammu people.

It was to meet this situation that the Praja Parishad was formed soon after the provisional accession of the state to India. Within one year it has become a living organisation with a network of branches all over the Jammu area and a membership of over one lac. Its president L. Rup Chand Nanda is a practical man with a realistic approach to the problems facing the State, especially the Jammu people. He has some able and zealous young lieutenants, like Pt. Shyam Lal, Shri Durga Das and Th. Sahdev Singh. Durga Das is the young general secretary of this young organisation. They have taken up the task of educating the people about the changes that have taken place in the State. They have succeeded to a good extent in raising them above their petty clanish and sectional bickerings. They are determined to see the Jammu region making progress as an integral part of the Indian Union. They also want to have Kashmir for India, if they can. But they cannot let their part of the State go to Pakistan, in any case.

But the real leader of the people in Jammu is dignified, grey-haired, short sized Pandit Prem Nath

Dogra. His penetrating eyes, winning smile and affability with a long record of selfless service to the people has made him a natural leader of Jammu. His weakness is that he wants to please every body and is good natured to a fault. He is the main figure in the Praja Parishad and he alone can deliver the goods in Jammu.

Besides these three main political organizations in the State now dominating the Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad, Kashmir and Janmu regions of the State respectively, there are some minor organizations which too have a considerable influence on some section of the people. The most important of these is the Kashmiri Pandit Conference. It is the political organisation of the Kashmiri Pandits who are the most important and influential minority community of Kashmir. Their interests and even their existence depends on Kashmir's permanent accession to India. So they generally support Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conference. But they are very critical of Abdullah's administration and its attitude towards minorities.

Another organisation of note is the Buddhist Association of Leh. It is the only representative organisation of the 40,000 Buddhists of Ladakh. It too stands for accession to India in any case. Its view-point is contained in the memorandum submitted by its representatives to the Indian Government some time back. (See Appendix A.)

CHAPTER V.

THE STATE'S DILEMA

The growing political consciousness in the different linguistic and cultural groups in the population of the state and the resultant separatist tendencies coupled with the extent and diversity of the territories of the State, would have led, sooner or later, to the dissolution of this medieval creation of Maharaja Gulab Singh. But that might have been a slow and peaceful process. The pace of events in the state however, was quickened by the circumstances leading to and following the partition of India. Kashmir problem, as it exists to day in fact is a direct out-come of the partition of India.

The June 3rd plan which accepted the principle of partition and laid down the procedure to give effect to it placed the Jammu and Kashmir state in a very difficult position. Though theoratically it conceded an independent status to all the states after the lapse of British paramountcy, it advised them to join one or the other dominion in their own interest as also that of the new

dominions. The geographical contiguity was laid down as the main factor guiding their choice of the dominion for accession. For the most of the Indian states except those few which were directly or indirectly in league with Pakistan, the choice was obvious. But that was not the case with the Jammu and Kashmir state. Geographically it is contiguous to both the dominions. Historically it has more links with India than Pakistan and economically it is almost entirely dependent upon the former. Some of its parts have close social and cultural ties with India while others have closer ties with Pakistan. But a majority of its population as a whole is Muslim while the ruler is a Dogra Hindu. Its position therefore was very unenviable.

There were three courses open to the state. It could accede to India, or to Pakistan or remain independent. Mr. Jinnah claimed Kashmir for Pakistan on the ground of its being a Muslim majority unit contiguous to Pakistan. In fact he was so confident about it that he told a deputation of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference "Kashmir is in my pocket".

Indian leaders also wanted Kashmir to accede to India. But they did not base their claim on the natural ground of its being an integral part of India which could not be affected by the partition agreement which concerned only British India. They counted on the support of the Kashmiri Muslim

followers of Sheikh Abdullah who held the balance between the Hindus who wanted the state to accede to India and the supporters and followers of the the Muslim Conference preferred Pakistan. Therefore the Indian leaders especially Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to appease Sheikh Abdullah by putting him in power before accepting the accession of Kashmir so that India could be sure of the support of Sheikh Abdullah and his Muslim followers. This stand of the Indian leaders was in keeping with their declared policy that the decision about accession should ultimately rest with the people and not with the rulers of the States.

This put the Maharaja on the horns of dilemma. He did not want to accede to Pakistan and his preference was definitely for India. But the condition of putting Sheikh Abdullah in power before accession of his state to India could be accepted was unpalatable to him. Sheikh Abdullah had made no secret of his hostiality to the person and government of the Maharaja. He and his National Conference wanted him to quit Kashmir bag and baggage before they could give their opinion about the accession authoritatively. Accession to India, therefore, meant to him a sort of voluntary abdication of his authority over Kashmir without any definite gurantee that Sheikh Abdullah and his followers would decide to accede to India even after obtaining full power. On the other hand Pakistan Government began to offer him alluring terms if he

joined Pakistan. The Maharaja, therefore was between the devil and the deep sea. Accession to India meant immediate transfer of power to Sheikh Abdullah without any definite guarantee about the future of the state. His sentiments and patriotism stood in the way of accession to Pakistan. So he deferred decision.

Ultimately the third course of remaining independent began to appeal to him. His Prime Minister Pt. Ram Chandar Kak was an enthusiastic supporter of this idea. His agreements were sound. But the present writer remained unconvinced about the advisability of adopting that course after two long discussions with him. He argued that Jammu and Kashmir being a Muslim majority state, Pakistan has a logical claim on it on the basis on which India had been partitioned. Accession to India, he said, would be resented by Pakistan and there would be trouble in Muslim majority parts of the state. Further accession to India would mean putting Sheikh Abdullah in power. He doubted Sheikh Abdullah's bonafides and sincerity. On his assertion being challenged he warmed up and said "I too am a Kashmiri. I know Sheikh Abdullah too well. His past antecedents and present policies if studied realistically can not warrant any other conclusion."

All this sounded quite plausible. But what he could not explain convincingly was the way independent status of Kashmir was to be maintained in

face of hostile Pakistan and indifferent India. His plan was that Kashmir should remain independent for some years till India become strong and her leaders turned more realistic in their policies. Then he thought, would be the time to accede to India. But the weight of these arguments was taken away by his close association with enemies of India like Nawab of Bhopal whose Home Minister Mr. Shoaib Qureshi, now in Pakistan Foreign Service, had come down to Srinagar to live with him. We pointed out to him that the example of independent Kashmir would strengthen the separatist and Pakistani elements in Bhopal and Hyderabad. But his personal ambition and bitterness against Pt. Nehru, perhaps, stood in the way of his appreciating this point of view. He was however, not able to get much support from the Hindus for this policy of independence. But the Muslim conference, strangely enough, supported this move for independence. May be, it wanted to prevent Kashmir from acceding to India till Pakistan became free from internal problems created by partition to turn her attention to Kashmir.

The net result of this conflict and confusion in the mind of the Maharaja and his Prime Minister was that Kashmir state had not decided about accession till the eve of partition day. The dismissal of Pt. Ram Chandra Kak on the 10th of August did create some hope of immediate accession to India. But it remained unfulfilled. The Maharaja and his

advisers failed to take the right decision even then. At the eleventh hour they decided to send telegraphic requests to Mr. Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten for stand-still agreements. Jinnah at once accepted the request and a stand-still agreement was made. But Indian Government started protracted negotiations which remained incomplete till the date of Pakistani invasion.

The decision of the Maharaja to enter into a standstill agreement with Pakistan was a great blunder. It showed his inability to distinguish between friend and foe and appreciate the true character of Pakistan.

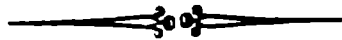
Pakistan could not remain content with stand-still agreement. She wanted to grab the whole state. The stand-still agreement removed her anxiety about immediate accession of the state to India for she was not in a position just then to put her full weight on the state. It gave her time to strangulate Kashmir economically and militarily before delivering the final blow. This failure of Kashmir State to accede to India before the 15th of August is responsible for much of the tragic drama that has been enacted in that state since then. There can be no doubt that accession of the state to India before that fateful date would have simplified the issue. Most of the Pakistani Muslims of the State would have surely gone over to Pakistan and their place might have been taken by the Hindu and Sikh

refugees from the West Punjab. That solution would have surely saved the lives of thousands of men, women and children and lessened the possibility of the armed conflict between the two dominions over Kashmir though it might have engendered great heat on both sides for the moment. The Kashmir affair in that case would have been settled once for all. But that was not to be.

It is difficult to apportion blame for Kashmir state's failure to accede to India in time. Pt. Ram Chandra Kak has been generally blamed for this blunder. But a dispassionate study of the events in the state preceeding and following the 15th of August shows that he alone is not to be blamed. The Maharaja and the Indian Government especially Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru who considered Kashmir affair as his reserved subject are equally to blame. The Maharaja should have dismissed Kak if he did not agree with his policies. Kak was his servant and not his master. The truth is that he was flattered by the plans of Kak and his other advisers about making him His Majesty just as the Nizam was elated by Liak Ali's grandiose schemes about making him the Emperor of India. Further Maharaja failed to approach the problem realistically. He lacked foresight. He should have accepted any terms and conditions laid down by the Indian Government and acceded to India. It might have meant some personal humiliation for him for the time being but it would have saved him from the

humiliation to which he is being subjected by Sheikh Abdullah to-day.

But the Maharaja alone is not to blame. He was after all an Indian prince who had been pampered and misguided by his foolish advisers. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru should have been more broadminded. He should have risen above personal likes and dislikes and tackled the problem realistically. Had the Maharaja been offered half as good terms as the Nizam was offered later on and release of Sheikh Abdullah and transfer of full power to him not been insisted just then as a prerequisite of accession the shape of things in Kashmir might have been quite different. The Maharaja could have then been easily persuaded by Sardar Patel, as he has done in the case of other princes, to hand over power to the popular leaders like Sh. Abdullah. The ambition of Pt. Kak, foolishness of the Maharaja and the narrowminded and unrealistic policies of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru thus conspired together to prepare the ground for the rise of the Kashmir problem.



CHAPTER VI.

PAKISTAN PLANS THE INVASION.

The dismissal of Pt. Ram Chandra Kak on the 10th of August had sent a wave of consternation in the Pakistani circles. But they felt reassured when they found that the dismissal of Pt. Kak was not followed, as expected, by accession to India. The standstill agreement with Pakistan, which followed, gave them great relief. They thought that the worst was over and that the state would slip into the bosom of Pakistan in due course

But their hopes vanished when the Maharaja's Government vigorously protested to the Pakistan Government against the hoisting of Pakistan flag on the state post offices which Pakistan thought had come under her control according to the standstill agreement. The Maharaja's Government even went a step further. They requested the Indian Government to take charge of the Post and Telegraph administration in the state. This showed the bent of mind of the Maharaja.

Pakistan government and the Pakistani elements

in the state now began to devise other methods for bringing the state into Pakistan. The pressing internal problem that came in the wake of the partition and the situation in the N. W. F. P. where the Congress party was still in power did not permit Pakistan Government to put direct pressure on the state just then. So steps were taken to put indirect pressure. It took three forms—economic blockade, Pakistani propaganda among the Muslims population and officials in the state to prepare them for a rising from within and organised raids into the western districts of the state from without. Side by side with these, preparations began to be made in the tribal areas as also in the districts adjoining the Kashmir state for direct assault at the opportune moment which, it was thought, could come in winter alone when the main line of communication between Jammu and Srinagar gets blocked due to heavy snow-fall on the Banihal pass.

Economic blockade was quite easy. Though contiguous to both the dominions all the main lines of communication of the state passed into Pakistan. Jammu was linked by rail and road with Sialkot and Srinagar was linked with Rawalpindi and Abbottabad by motorable roads. Most of the import and export trade of the state passed through these channels. All the necessities of life like salt, soap, sugar, cloth, food-grains petrol and kerosene oil meant for Kashmir state used to be stocked in the markets of Rawalpindi and Sialkot from where

they were sent to Kashmir in motor lorries. The Pakistan Government stopped their movement into the state. The rail link with Jammu was broken. All the engines, bogies and the Muslim staff on the intermediary stations were removed one night to Pakistan leaving the Hindu staff to fend for themselves. This naturally caused great hardship to the public and the state Government. Even the supplies for which payment had been made were stopped. Stoppage of the supply of petrol affected the internal transport and military movements as well. The state Government protested against this breach of the stand-still agreement but to no avail. Even the motor lorries sent from Srinagar to fetch the supplies were confiscated by the Pakistan authorities.

Along with this economic blockade virulent Pakistani propaganda was set on foot in the state. Parties of students of Islamia College Lahore and Aligarh University began to tour the state villages. The Muslim officials of the state and the Muslim personnel of the state police and armed forces were completely won over. Some of the high ranking Muslim military and civil officials like Col. Adalat Khan, Major Sher Ali, Captain Mohd. Hussain, Lieut. Qayum and many others began to work actively for insurrection from within. Others like Mian Abdul Rashid, the senior Superintendent of Police of Jammu, Ch. Faiz Ullah, the District Officer of Baramula and many others began to prepare the

civil population. Arms and ammunition began to be smuggled in large quantities from Pakistan into the state. Regular training in the use of fire arms began to be given in the mosques at Jammu, Srinagar and elsewhere.

To divert the attention of the authorities and disperse the state troops over large areas raids were organised all along the western border especially in the Poonch area. The local Muslims were also incited to rise in rebellion in Poonch and Bagh areas.

These developments after all roused the Maharaja out of his slumber and self-complacency. But it was rather too late. Thakur Janak Singh on whom premiership had been thrust after Pt. R. C. Kak's dismissal was too old and timid to initiate and carry out any policy at all. No Indian statesman wanted to risk his reputation by taking over the charge of the state at such a critical time. Continued absence of the National conference leaders, then in jail, had left the field free for Muslim conference whose followers were becoming rather aggressive.

The change in the policy of the state took two forms. In the first place Sheikh Abdullah and his associates were released from jail so that they might counteract the growing influence of the Muslim Conference and prepare the ground for accession to India. In the second place Mr. Justice Mehar Chand

Mahajan, who happened to be an old subject of the state was persuaded with great difficulty to become the head of the state administration and help it in weathering the storm that had already gathered.

This release of Sheikh Abdullah and appointment of L. Mehar Chand Mahajan to the premiership of the state early in October came as a shock to the Pakistanis, inside and outside the State. The leaders of Pakistan knew L. Mehar Chand Mahajan too well to under-estimate his strength and capacity. He was known to enjoy the support of the Indian government as well. Further, being a subject of the State he knew its people and territories too well to be easily hood-winked by Pakistani officers or foolish advisers of the Maharaja.

The first thing he did was to speed up the negotiations with the Indian government and requested them for a liberal supply of arms and ammunitions for the state troops. The Indian Government too, had been forced to think realistically by the reports of R. S. Shiv Saran Lal, the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ismail Khan in N. W. F. P. about the preparations in the tribal area for an invasion of Kashmir. So they agreed to supply the necessary arms etc. Shri Mahajan himself toured the state to reassure the people and prepare them for self-defence.

The Pakistan government too, now free from other immediate and pressing problems created by the partition, became alert. They did not want to

give Shri Mahajan time to re-organise and strengthen the state's administration and defences. So they changed the programme of invasion. It was decided to begin the invasion in October. The plan as revealed by Subedar Munawar Hussain of the 4th Jammu and Kashmir infantry to a young Hindu friend of the present writer, who had been mixing with him and other Muslim conspirators in the guise of a Muslim, was as follows:—

1. Invasion of the State territories was to begin from Muzaffarabad and Jammu sides simultaneously between the 20th and 22nd of October so as to capture the cities of Jammu and Srinagar by the Id-ul-Zaha which fell on the 25th of October.

2. Attempt was to be made on the life of the Maharaja at Srinagar on the 24th when he was to go in a procession to attend the Dasahara Darbar.

3. The Muslim personnel of the State army on the frontiers was to join the invaders and that of the garrisons at Jammu and Srinagar was to strike after the panic has spread.

4. The local Muslims at Srinagar and Jammu were to keep quiet till the invasion had well advanced to lull the authorities into a sense of security. They were to prepare the ground for the victorious entry of the Mujahids.

5. In order to prevent any help from India from reaching the State the aerodrome at Srinagar was to be captured first. A column of invaders

was to move along the foot of the surrounding hills to secure the Shupian and Banihal passes leaving the other column to enter Srinagar.

Maps and charts were ready and everything was to be done according to the plan.

Brigadier Rajendra Singh, the chief of the State military staff and the Deputy Prime Minister Shri A.L.Batra were informed immediately about the plan of invasion. It was suggested to them that Muslim personnel of the army at Srinagar should be disarmed forthwith. But it seems that they were non-plussed. They had no reserves. All the State forces had been spread over the long Pak-Kashmir frontier. What they actually did was to send words to the commander of the garrison at Domel to be alert. He was also instructed to blow up the bridges of Krishna Ganga and Jhelum at Muzaffarabad and Kohla.

The news about the expected invasion was confirmed by the whispering talk of the Muslim officials among themselves to remember the 22nd October. Some of them even informed their Hindu friends to pack off to India if they wanted to save their lives.

On the 21st morning the author was told by Brigadier Fakir Singh, the Commander of the Srinagar Brigade that Lieut. Qayum of the 4th Jammu and Kashmir infantry stationed at Domel had come to him and assured that everything was O.K. there. He felt that the Lieut. had come to put him off the

guard and wanted the author to help him know the real situation. It was then decided to send an adventurous young man, Harish Mitra. to Domel on a motor-bike to see things for himself and to warn the commander of the Garrison there about the planned invasion. It was a problem to get the petrol. There was only a few gallons of it in Srinagar, which had been flown in a tanker from India. Twenty-second of October was spent in arranging for the petrol. Harish left for Domel on the 23rd morning. But he was back before sun-set.

On being asked the reason of his immediate return by the present writer he informed that the game was up. The invasion had begun and the Hindu troops of the state forces, as was feared, had been taken by surprise by their own Muslim comrades.



CHAPTER VII.

THE INVASION

The tribal horde, armed and supported by the Pakistan Govt. and led by the officers of Pakistan army that entered the State from Hazara district in the N. W. F. P. along the abbotabad Muzaffarabad. Domel-Srinagar road on the 22nd of October, formed the spearhead of the final and the biggest stroke of Pakistan against the State. Its objective was Kashmir valley and its capital city of Srinagar. Almost simultaneously new thrusts were made and old intensified all along the Kashmir Pakistan border including Gilgit. These other thrusts did not get much publicity because they were directed against comparatively little known though strategically equally important parts of the state. They, as we shall see presently, succeeded in gaining their objectives in Gilgit and the Western districts of the state. But their master plan to occupy Srinagar and Jammu simultaneously and present the world with a *fait accompli* before any outside help could come to the state was foiled by the timely arrival of the

air-borne Indian troops in Srinagar and by the popular resistance put up by the people of Jammu.

In order to appreciate the magnitude of the threat and the success it achieved, one must have a clear picture of the circumstances which made it possible. The Jammu and Kashmir state is contiguous to both India and Pakistan. The Kashmir-Pakistan frontier is about 400 miles long, a major portion of which is quite unnatural or ill-defined. Beginning from river Ujha, a Western tributary of the Ravi, it runs along the Ravi, and along the districts of Sialkot, Gujerat and Jehlam of the West Punjab; then turning North it runs along the River Jehlam up to Kohala at which point the Jehlam leaves the state to form its Western boundary. From Kohala onwards this frontier runs along the Hazara district of the N. W. F. P. and then touches the tribal area of Yagistan and the frontier state of Chitral, which has acceded to Pakistan.

During the British regime the state had not to worry much about this long frontier. The prestige of Dogra arms established by Maharaja Gulab Singh coupled with the British protection was enough to keep the turbulent elements within and without the state in check. The defences of the Northern frontier of the State used to be a joint responsibility of the British and the State troops stationed in the Gilgit cantonment. The ruler of Chitral owed allegiance to the Maharaja of Kashmir as well. But with the disappearance of the protecting hand of the British

and establishment of a hostile and aggressive state like Pakistan along this long frontier the problem of its defence was bound to become very difficult.

The problem was made more difficult by the nature and affinities of the people inhabiting both sides of the Western frontier of the state. The people of Mirpur-Poonch area belong to the warlike Rajput and Jat tribes. They have close social, economic and religious ties with the inhabitants of the adjoining districts of Jehlam, Rawalpindi and Hazara in Pakistan. They had been converted to Islam during the Mughal times. Many of them wanted to be reconverted to Hinduism during the twenties of the present century. But the conservatism of the Brahmins and Hindu Rajputs did not allow such efforts to succeed. During the thirties they came under the influence of the Muslim conference. The politics of the adjoining districts of Jehlam and Rawalpindi also began to influence them. The result was that most of them became supporters of Pakistan after its establishment. Many of them being ex-service men possessed fire arms and were adept in their use. It was therefore, easy for the Pakistani agents to instigate them to rebel against the authority of the State.

The armed forces of the state who had to defend this long frontier, as also to meet these internal threats were quite inadequate to meet the situation. The war-time strength of the State Army was nine infantry battalions, two mountain batteries and one

cavalry squadron. The two mountain batteries were retained by the British Indian government after the end of the second World War because they had given a very good account of themselves during the War. Of the infantry battalions three, viz, the 2nd, 4th, and 6th J&K infantries, were mixed—half Hindu Dogras and half Muslims from Mirpur and Poonch areas. These battalions had been spread all along the frontier. At the time of invasion the mixed 4th battalion was incharge of the Muzaffarabad Kohala sector, the 2nd of a part of the Mirpur-Poonch sector and the 6th had been sent to Gilgit under the command of Brigadier Ghansara Singh who was appointed military Governor of that region after the withdrawal of the British. Srinagar cantonment at the time of invasion had only one company of the 4th, besides the Maharaja's personal guards.

The state troops were efficient and brave. But they were ill-fed and ill-equipped. Even the quota of arms and ammunitions allotted to the state had not been obtained in full for the last two years prior to the invasion. The Pakistan Government had withheld all supplies meant for the state forces after the partition. The Indian Government which had been approached for arms and ammunition had agreed to supply them, but none had been sent till the fateful day of invasion. To crown all, the loyalty of the Muslim personnel of the armed forces was doubtful. Information had reached the State authorities about

the plans of sabotage and desertion prepared by the Muslim officers of the state army in collaboration with Pakistan authorities. Their names had been submitted to the Maharaja and he had been requested to disarm and disband them in the interest of the state. But the State Government did not, and perhaps could not, do this because they had no reserves and they feared mutiny. The commanders of the mixed battalions, especially Colonel Narain Singh who commanded the 4th battalion in charge of the Jhelum-Muzaffarabad sector had been warned to remain alert and careful about the Muslim personnel. But Narain Singh who had commanded that battalion in the Burma campaign, expressed his full faith in his Muslim soldiers and officers. He, like his foolish compatriots in India, had to pay a heavy price for this self-complacency.

In view of these circumstances the rapid advance of the Pakistani hordes after they had once broken through the outer defences should be no wonder. Their main column entered the state at the dead of night between the 22nd and 23rd of October 1949. The Muslim personnel of the state pickets joined hands with them. They killed their Hindu comrades in their own tents and began to lead the convoy of the motor lorries supplied by the Pakistan government carrying the invaders. They occupied the Kishanganga bridge without much difficulty and entered the town of Muzaffarabad without firing a shot. The district-officer was taken by surprise

in his own house and shot dead before his wife and children for not shouting "Pakistan Zindabad." A few of them simultaneously crossed the Jehlam over a suspension bridge, connecting Domel, the confluence of Jehlam and Kishenganga, with the Nalauchi Gurdwara situated on the road to Muzaffarabad across the Kishenganga. The Muslim pickets there joined hands with them and Colonel Narain Singh was shot dead in his own tent by his own soldiers in the early hours of the 23rd. morning. The occupation of Domel brought both the roads leading to Srinagar from Rawalpindi and Abottabad under the control of the invaders. Their supply lines thus became secure.

Road to Srinagar now lay open. The garrison guarding the Kohala bridge finding itself sandwiched between the hostile forces from across the bridge and those coming from Domel side made a hasty retreat towards Poonch via Bagh. It succeeded, however, in taking with it about ten thousand Hindus and Sikhs living in the Bagh area, to Poonch town in safety.

The raiders occupied Garhi the same day and started their advance towards Uri on the 24th. The few retreating Dogra troops resisted them at every step. But the odds against them were heavy. Brigadier Rajendra Singh, the Chief of the staff of the State army then came forward to command the troops in person. He had orders from the Maharaja

to fight till the last man to defend a bridge near Uri and stop the advance of the enemy.

Brigadier Rajendra Singh stood the test and maintained the prestige of the the Dogra troops. He stemmed the tide of enemy advance and kept them at bay near Uri for two days. But some of the raiders lead by the Muslim soldiers of the state army managed to circumvent the state troops. They were able to put the Mahura power-house, which supplies electricity to Srinagar, out of order on the night of the 24th. and then attacked the state troops led by Rajendra Singh from behind. Rajendra Singh, like a gallant soldier that he was, fought the enemy to the bitter end. Before his death on the 25th he sent a wireless message to Srinagar saying that he would not be able to hold the enemy for more than 24 hours at the most

This message of the gallant Brigadier sent a wave of panic among the higher circles in Srinager. The Maharaja was prevailed upon by his advisers to leave Srinagar on the same night. Many other high officials followed him leaving the people of Srinagar to fend for themselves. This hasty step of the Maharaja has been bitterly criticised. The criticism is justified though some thing can be said for him also. Had he fallen in the hands of the Pakistan they might have been able to get any thing done from him at the point of pistol. They would have then become de jure as well as de facto masters of Kashmir. But still the flight of the Maharaja was inopportune and

it has done greater harm to his personal cause than anything else. The best thing for him to do was to send away the Yuvraj, and himself to stay on in the Capital to keep up the morale of his subjects. He would then have vindicated the hundred years of Dogra rule over Kashmir whose prestige had already been raised high by Brigadier Rajendra Singh and his Dogra troops, by their brave and heroic resistance to the invaders to defend Kashmir.

By the time the Maharaja left for Jammu the raiders had entered Baramula, the first important town of the valley. The district-officer of Baramula Ch. Fazulullah was already in league with them. He made their work quite easy and was in turn appointed governor of the occupied territory by the raiders. Now, confident of their victory, the raiders spent some time in looting the town and in pleasure. All the spacious buildings including mosques became big brothels for a day. The Hindu quarters of the town were all looted and then burnt down.

Sunday, the 26th of October, 47, was a fateful day for the people of Srinagar, especially for the Hindus and the Sikhs. Administration of the State in Srinagar had almost callapsed with the flight of the Maharaja on the previous night. There were no troops in the cantonment except a few Muslim soldiers who had been wisely disarmed and a few staff officers, who too were getting ready to leave. Had the invaders marched into the city that day, everything would have been lost. But that was not

to be. So, many factors combined to save Srinagar, and therefore Kashmir that day, not the least important of which was the victory celebrations and indulgence in pleasures by the raiders in Baramula for a few hours, which gave time to the real Saviours of Kashmir to, reach Srinagar before it was too late.

Military aid from India, it was realised by one and all on that fateful day, was the only hope left. That aid could only come after Kashmir had acceded to India. The Maharaja had already made a pathetic appeal to the Government of India to accept the accession of the state and save its helpless men and women from Pakistani beasts. Sheikh Abdullah as leader of the National Conference, the most representative organisation of Kashmir valley, had also made a similar appeal to the Government of India. This news had spread in the city and the news of acceptance of accession by the Indian government was expected any moment. So all ears were turned to the radios and all eyes to the sky to see the expected planes with air-borne Indian troops. At the same time there was fear especially in the minds of the Hindus and Sikhs, that accession might not be accepted at that late stage and troops might not come. So feverish preparations for marching out of the city towards Jammu had also begun. 3P. M. was fixed as dead line. Had no news come by that time, people would have begun leaving the city in numbers. But the life-giving news that accession

had been accepted and that troops would be soon be arriving in Srinager, did come before that time. Srinagar was not to fall in the hands of the raiders and Kashmir was to be saved. It was saved.



CHAPTER VIII

KASHMIR SAVED

The way Srinagar, and thereby Kashmir was saved is, and will remain a glorious chapter in the history of Free India.

It was a great military feat, boldly planned and exquisitely carried out, of which any army in the world can be proud. It marked the beginning of the first major military operation forced upon the armed forces of Free India by a deceitful enemy. That our armed forces have come to the mark and have established a reputation for themselves can be denied by none.

But while pursuing the daring and thrilling story of our troops in action in Kashmir, it should not be forgotten that the forces and factors which prevented the enemy from reaching Srinagar and capturing its aerodrome till 9 A. M. of the 27th of October, when the first Indian plane landed there, played an equally important part in saving Kashmir. Had the aerodrome come in the enemy control before that time it would have been well-nigh impossible-

for the Indian forces to save Kashmir. Therefore these forces and factors too can well claim the title of 'Saviours of Kashmir' along with the real and ultimate saviours—the Indian Army.

The first and, in a way, the most important factor that contributed towards the safety of Kashmir was the heroic resistance of a handful of Dogra troops of the state forces under the command of their gallant Brigadier Rajendra Singh. As said above, they had been taken by surprise and hit below the belt by their own Muslim comrades. They were ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-equipped, But still they fought wonderfully well.

The part of the Brigadier, who throughout remained in the thick of the battle till unable to retreat due to the many bullets in his thighs, he pressed his men to fall back leaving him to die a soldier's death, needs to be written in letters of gold in the annals of Kashmir war. Unfortunately, little has been told about this brave hero to the Indian public by the press or by the State Government. But lack of publicity, however, cannot detract the noble part he played in saving Kashmir.

His Dogra troops taking inspiration from him fought to the bitter end. They resisted the enemy at every step. They fought him at Domel, then at Garhi, then at Uri and they were still holding him near about Patran, about 17 miles from Srinagar, when Indian troops arrived at Srinagar. But for their dogged resistance, the enemy would have

entered Srinagar long before the arrival of the Indian troops. Therefore first honours for saving Kashmir must go to Brigadier Rajendra Singh and his handful of Dogra troops.

While the Dogra troops maintained the battle-front till the arrival of the Indian army on the scene. Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah and his followers maintained the home front in Srinagar specially on that fateful day—the 26th of October when state administration had almost broken down there. But for his efforts and vigilance the Pakistani elements in the population of the city, with the help of the few raiders and the many Pakistani agents who had already managed to enter the city in disguise, might have started trouble in Srinagar and facilitated the work of the enemy.

The interests of Sheikh Abdullah and his followers in maintaining peace were apparent. His aspirations since the beginning of his political career had been that Kashmiris should get rid of the Dogra rule, and he as their popular leader should wield power to re-build a new Kashmir of his dreams. The Indian Government and people had been sympathetic towards him and had been actively helping him to achieve his ideal. Even the accession of the state had been made conditional upon the transference of power to Sheikh Abdullah's hands.

On the other hand Mr. Jinnah and other Pakistani leaders looked upon Sheikh Abdullah as their bitterest opponent because, he had refused to abandon

his allegiance to the Indian National Congress and the Indian Government which had been giving him sure and effective support against the Maharaja for obtaining the uncertain and ineffective support of the Muslim League and its leader Mr. Jinnah. He, as a realist, had realised that Pakistan Government could not be expected to keep him, and his party, in power and to neglect the Kashmir Muslim Conference and its leaders who had consistently supported the cause of Pakistan.

Furthermore, he realised that Kashmir's accession to Pakistan through the tribal conquest would mean Pathan and Punjabi hegemony over Kashmir. They wanted Kashmir, not for any love for the Kashmiri Muslims but because they wanted to use Kashmir as a pleasure ground for themselves. The past experience of Kashmiris, of the Afghan rule and of the deeds of the raiders in the areas they captured, left no doubt in the mind of Sheikh Abdullah about the fate Kashmiris would meet at the hands of Pakistanis after the forcible accession to Pakistan.

Again, as a son of the soil who had been serving his people to improve their economic and social conditions, he realised that forced accession to Pakistan would mean ruin of the Kashmiri masses economically. Kashmir being a land of beauty and arts and crafts, tourist traffic is its most important source of income. More than 90 per cent. of these tourists come from India. The artistic

products of Kashmir on which the large artisan population of Kashmir lives have their market in India and not in Pakistan. Even fruits of Kashmir are consumed mainly in India because Pakistan has enough supply of such fruits from the Frontier province and from Afghanistan. The necessities of life of the Kashmiris like tea, sugar, cloth and machinery come from India alone. Salt is the only commodity for which Kashmir had to depend upon Pakistan. It could be supplied by India as well.

Thus the economic interests of Kashmir and her people, the bitter memories of Pathan and Punjabi exploitation, the previous record of Muslim League's hostility to Sheikh Abdullah and his 'Quit Kashmir' struggle against the Maharaja with the constant support of the Indian leaders, and above all the realisation that accession to Pakistan will end his position and prospect of political power in Kashmir once for all, made Sheikh Abdullah take the stand he took.

A natural corollary of this stand was that he should see that communal rioting does not break out in Srinagar and that the Pakistani agents and raiders are given no quarters. The Hindu population whose first concern now was safety rallied round his banner and acclaimed him as their Saviour. The communist elements in the National Conference who realised that conquest by Pakistan would mean end of their dreams of making Kashmir a spring-board for communist domination over India, also

became active. Adept in the art of propaganda, they invented fine slogans, inspiring names drawn from the Russian Revolution like the 'Red Square' and organised the volunteer-squads which marched through the city streets raising slogans in order to maintain the morale of the people. The volunteer squads later came to be known as National Militia.

Much publicity has been given to the part of this National Militia in saving Kashmir. It is good propaganda in so far as it helps in raising the morale and self-confidence of the people. But it is not truth, and should not pass as such. National Militia in those critical days meant anybody from a small kid to an old man who pinned a piece of red cloth to his shoulders and went about shouting slogans in the city. They had no arms nor any one knew how to handle fire-arms. Whenever the raiders reached, these Militia men invariably threw away the pieces of red cloth—their distinguishing mark—and became Pakistani in the twinkling of an eye. The one lion in this entire herd was Maqbool Sherwani of Baramula. His loyalty to Sheikh Abdullah was real and genuine. He refused to join the raiders even at the point of sword. He was therefore shot dead by the barbarous raiders in the main bazaar of Baramula. Thus Sherwani became a martyr to the true cause of Kashmir. He has given to the National Militia all the hallow of glory with which it has been surrounded by the publicists.

The real Militia came into existence after the Indian forces and arms had arrived in Kashmir. Then a scheme to raise and train a local militia was drawn. At present this militia is many thousands strong. But it is completely dominated by the communists who took a leading part in raising and training it. Most people who have been in close touch with the Kashmir affairs since its beginning, fear that this National Militia in Kashmir, armed and maintained by Indian money, may not turn out to be a 'red band' communist force in times of stress.

Another factor which helped a good deal in maintaining peace in the city before the arrival of the Indian troops, and thus helped in saving Kashmir was the timely announcement at the beat of drum by Mr. G. C. Bali, the D.I.G. of police, that Indian troops were coming and that any one breaking the peace or harbouring Pakistani agents would be shot dead. Mr. G. C. Bali was the only state officer on that fateful day who maintained his balance of mind. His announcement struck terror in the Pakistani elements who began to fear terrible retaliation at the hands of the Indian troops, if they began roiting.

But all these sacrifices, precautions, slogans and announcements would not have saved Kashmir had the Indian troops not arrived on the 27th morning. Had the raiders entered the city before that date nothing would have availed to save the

city and its Hindu population. Most of the so-called militia men would have turned overnight into Pakistanis as had happened in Baramula, Sopore and Pattan. This is why the Indian army is rightly called the real 'Saviour' of Kashmir.

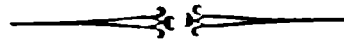
The task of the Indian army was not easy. Their numbers and supplies were meagre and they were ignorant about the theatre of war. The enemy was quite near at hand and had the advantage of considerable local support and could infiltrate into the city and the Indian lines in the guise of Kashmiri Muslims. But their spirits were high. The first detachment of Sikh troops along with their commander Col. Roy refused even to refresh themselves after their arrival. They wanted to refresh themselves in the battle field. They relieved the hard-pressed Dogra troops who had been still fighting. But they were not able to check immediately the advance of the enemy who, leaving the main road had begun to advance along the foot of the surrounding hills to capture the aerodrome and then the Banitial pass so that they might cut the main supply lines of the Indian troops. For the first few days, therefore, the battle continued to be waged on the out-skirts of the city. Indian army suffered heavy loss in the deaths of colonel Roy and Major Sharma in these early days. But with the arrival of armoured cars early in November, the Indian army began its offensive. Baramula was recaptured on the 8th of November, Mahura

power-house on November 12, while Uri about 35 miles from Baramulla and 70 miles from Srinagar on the main Srinagar-Rawalpindi road was reached on the 15th of November. A column sent towards Handward via Sopore checked the advance of the enemy into the valley from the side of Karen. Thus by the middle of November the enemy plan to capture Srinagar and occupy Kashmir had been completely check-mated and the immediate threat had been removed.

The plan of the Indian army was to advance from Uri towards Poonch to link up with the state troops besieged in that town and then to fan out and clear the enemy from the Poonch and Mirpur areas. But the signal of the advancing Indian column was not properly picked by the State garrison at Poonch. Their advanced party mistook the Indian column to be an enemy convoy and destroyed an important and difficult bridge on the road linking Uri with Poonch. The main armoured Indian column had therefore, perforce to return back to Uri though a small party managed to cross the ravine and join up with the troops in Poonch. These troops defended the town of Poonch heroically till it was received by an advancing column from Rajouri after full one year, late in 1948. This mishap which prevented the linking of Uri with Poonch thus proved to be a great blow and upset the Indian plans.

Uri Chakothi area then became the main centre

of activities of the Indian and Pakistan troops in this sector. The main road leading to Kashmir was thus closed to the enemy. But the enemy did not lose heart. He devised other plans and tried other routes to distract the attention and concentration of Indian troops and to approach the valley. But all his plans, as we shall see presently, to surround and penetrate into the valley from other sides have been successfully checkmated by the Indian army. Kashmir has thus been saved for India from the hands of a treacherous and dangerous enemy by the heroic struggle of Indian land and air forces. It is to be hoped that our politicians will not throw away by their unrealistic policies and faulty diplomacy what our Jawans have saved at the cost of many precious Indian lives and so many crores of hard-earned money.



CHAPTER IX

TRAGEDY OF JAMMU

Simultaneously with the invasion of Kashmir from the Abbotabad side, the Pakistanis put the Jammu part of their plan also in operation. The plan, as told above, was to capture the cities of Srinagar and Jammu at about the same time and present the world with a *fait accompli* in regard to the whole state. They considered their task in Jammu to be comparatively easy because of the close proximity of this part of the State to Pakistan and complete allegiance of all local Muslims to the Pakistan ideology.

But there was one difficulty. The Eastern, i.e., the Dogra part of the Jammu province including the Districts of Jammu, Riasi, Udhampur, and Kathua being Hindu majority area was expected to give a stiff fight to those who wanted their land to merge in Pakistan. So two different plans were devised—one for the Eastern part and the other for the predominantly Muslim Western districts of Mirpur and Poonch.

The plan in regard to the Eastern part including the city of Jammu which had a large Muslim population was to foment trouble from within and then rush organised raiders from outside at the opportune moment. Jammu city being only about 20 miles from Sialkot Cantonment the plan was considered to be quite workable. In pursuance of this plan, arms and ammunitions were smuggled into Jammu in large quantities to arm the local Pakistani Muslims. Trouble from within was to be started approximately at the time of invasion of Kashmir. The signal was to be given by Pakistani raids on the border villages.

This signal was given by the middle of October when the border villages of Allah and Charwah were raided, many persons were killed and many Dogra women were kidnapped. The Dogras of Jammu who had come to know of the Pakistani plans became alert by these raids on their border villages. They therefore forestalled the Pakistanis in the city as also outside. Taken aback by this sudden turn of events the Pakistanis evacuated the city and made a hurried retreat to Pakistan. Some of them were killed in the encounters that took place in the city as also in other parts of the province. Huge quantities of arms and ammunitions as also wireless transmitters found from the houses of Muslim evacuees from Jammu, leave little doubt that any slackness on the part of the people of Jammu at that critical moment would have spelled disaster for them.

This failure of Pakistan's plan in regard to Jammu contributed a good deal towards the defence of Kashmir. The Dogra part of Jammu forms the only direct link between India on the one side and Kashmir and other parts of the State on the other. The vital Pathankot-Jammu-Srinagar road passes through this area up to the Banihal Pass. Had the Pakistanis succeeded in capturing Jammu, the only supply line to Kashmir would have been cut off and military aid to Kashmir would have become impossible.

The situation in the Punjabi-speaking Western districts of Mirpur and Poonch including Bhimber and Rajauri was different. This is a predominantly Muslim area. About a lakh of Hindus who formed less than 10 per cent of the population of this region formed the business community though some of them tilled the soil as well. They were spread over the whole of this area. But the main centres of their concentration were the towns of Poonch, Kotli, Mirpur, Bhimber, and Rajauri. The Muslim inhabitants of this ilaga, who are mostly illiterate but warlike, economically depended on the Hindu population very much. Their relations with them therefore were generally good. But being closely connected with the Muslims of the adjoining district of Gujrat, Jehlum and Rawalpindi in the West Punjab, they had come under the influence of Pakistan ideology. It appealed especially to the upper and military classes among them, who had

economic interests in Pakistan or depended for their living on service in the Pakistani part of the armed forces of undivided India.

The State Government was aware of the dangerous potentialities of this ilaqa if the people, of whom about a lakh are demobilised or ex-soldiers, ever took into their heads to rebel against their king. So a large part of the state forces was concentrated in this area as also along its border adjoining Pakistan. The state also depended upon the loyalty of elderly Muslim Rajput chiefs and Jagirdars of this ilaqa who had still close social relations with the Hindu Rajputs of their respective tribes and looked upon the Rajput Maharaja as their natural leader.

Pakistanis therefore knew that it was not easy to instigate rebellion from within in this ilaqa. Therefore the plan adopted by them for this ilaqa was to send a large number of Pakistani Nationals, soldiers and tribals and to rouse the local population in the name of Islam. This plan was put in operation in the Poonch area first. Large numbers of armed Pakistanis began to cross the River Jehlum by barges and entered the state. The State Government protested repeatedly against this violation of the state territory by Pakistan Nationals to Pakistan and West-Punjab Governments, as also to the deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi during September and October, 1947. But the protests were of no avail.

When the invasion of Kashmir began the trouble

in the Poonch area had already become wide-spread with the collaboration of the local Muslims. under the guidance of Sardar Mohd. Ibrahim Khan, the President of the so-called Azad Kashmir Government, Simultaneously with the invasion fresh raids on other parts of this area began. The Muslim personnel of the 2nd Jammu and Kashmir infantry which had been posted in this ilaqa, now deserted to the enemy. The Dogra troops hard-pressed from all sides could not stand the strain. They realised that it was impossible to defend the ilaqa against Pakistani invaders and local rebels unaided. So they concentrated themselves in the few towns to which the Hindu population from the surrounding areas had thronged for safety. Very soon all these towns were cut off from one another as also from Jammu. The history of war in this region after the 22nd of October, therefore, is the history of the defence of these beseiged towns by the civil population with the help of the State troops who had managed to reach them. Their only hope of safety was reinforcements of Indian troops from Jammu or Srinagar. Unfortunately this expected relief failed to reach them in time, except in the case of Kotli and Poonch. They fell to the enemy one by one. Their history is one of tragic destruction at the hands of the barbarous enemy in spite of most heroic defence and sacrifices that remind one of 'Jauhar'. We will take them one by one in choronological order.

1. Bhimber—This town, with a normal population of three thousands which had swelled to about five thousands because of some refugees from Pakistan and Hindus from surrounding villages, lies just two miles within the state border. It was a tehsil headquarters within the Mirpur district. It fell to the armed Pakistani raiders who began shelling the town with armoured cars and heavy guns. Just at this time the Indian dakotas were carrying the first consignment of air-borne troops to Srinagar. The people of the town who had assembled in the courtyard of the fort-like Tehsil-building found all their roads of escape blocked. Still some of them rushed out with the few state troops. But most of them could not. Finding that no hope was left, hundreds of Hindu ladies took poison which they had taken with them as a precaution and thus revived the practice of Jauhar. Many others, including children were kidnapped most of whom are still passing their days of agony and dishonour in Pakistan. The male population was put to sword. Thus Bhimber was the first town of the Jammu province to fall in the hands of Pakistan.

Perhaps the fall of this town, though it was very tragic could not be avoided because there were no troops in Jammu which could have been rushed to save it. But that was not the case with the other towns which fell soon after, one by one.

2. Rajauri. This town with a normal population of

about 6 thousands which had swelled to about 11 thousands at the time of its fall because of the arrival of Hindus from the surrounding villages lies in the interior of Jammu Province along the Mughal road to Kashmir. It is situated in the midst of a very fertile and picturesque country and was a tehsil headquarters within the Riasi district before its fall.

This town was considered to be comparatively safe because of its being out of the direct reach of the Pakistani raiders for some time at least. But the local Muslims, aided by the deserters from the State troops did not wait for the raiders. The urgent calls of the besieged population for help went in vain because the gravity of the situation in these areas was not appreciated by Sheikh Abdullah who continued to divert all available Indian troops to Kashmir. The result was that the town fell on the 10th of November before the local Muslims who proved to be more cruel and barbarous than the tribal raiders. The story of Bhamber was repeated with the difference that the number of person who could escape to Jammu safely from here did not exceed a hundred. Most of the ladies performed Jauhar by taking poison while many of the youth, mostly belonging to the R.S.S. died fighting. Many of these who managed to escape were killed in the way by local Muslims. The number of ladies abducted from this town runs to several hundreds.

3. Kotli. This town with a normal population of 3 to 4 thousands was a tehsil headquarters within the Mirpur district. It lies on the Jehlum—Mirpur—Poonch road. The small detachments of state troops spread between Mirpur and Poonch had concentrated themselves in this town when their position in the interior became untenable. Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania, the Revenue Minister of the State, who had been sent to guide the operations of the state troops in this ilaqa as also Brigadier Chatar Singh, the officer in-charge had also taken shelter in this town. It was surrounded on all sides by the well-armed locals and Pakistani raiders and so no contact could be made with Jammu or Mirpur.

The ammunition with the troops in Kotli ran out early in November. It would have therefore fallen to the enemy and suffered the same fate as Bhimber but for the heroism and gallantry of a few young men of the local branch of the R. S. S. An Indian army plane which had caught the wireless message for aid dropped about 20 chests of ammunition in the town. But unfortunately instead of falling at a safe place they fell in a deep slope outside the town within the reach of the enemy fire from the adjoining hill. To bring the chests into the town was a problem. It appeared to mean sure death. No volunteers were coming forth even from among the troops. Thereupon Ved Prakash the Secretary and Suraj Prakash the Pracharak of

the Local branch of the R.S.S. volunteered themselves with about twenty of their companions to bring about 17 chests of ammunitions. Their heroism and sacrifice enabled the town to defend itself till it was relieved a few days later by an advance party of the Parachute Brigade of the Indian army stationed at Jhanger. Their names deserve to be written in letters of gold in the annals of Free India. It is this spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice which is needed most to preserve our newly-won freedom.

Though saved from the enemy at that time, this town of heroes was abandoned by the Indian army voluntarily. They withdrew from Kotli to Jhanger after evacuating all the civil population and the troops who had been defending it for over a month. This was a great military blunder. It made the position of the besieged population and garrison at Poonch precarious. It also relieved many hundreds of raiders besieging this town who now joined hands with the besiegers of Mirpur. That ill-fated town was next to fall.

4. Mirpur. This strategic town of a normal population of about 10 thousands which had swelled to about 25 thousands at the time of its fall was the headquarters of the Mirpur district. It lies at a distance of about 20 miles from Jehlum. Mangla headworks from where the Upper Jehlum canal is taken out of the Jehlum is only about nine miles

from here. It is connected with Jhelam, Bhimber, Jammu and Poonch by motorable roads.

This town was cut off from Jammu after the fall of Bhimber. It had a garrison of state troops some hundreds strong. But they had little ammunition with them. They had also lost complete touch with Jammu because their wireless sets had developed trouble which they failed to set right. After the fall of Bhimber and Rajauri it was feared that Mirpur might also suffer the same fate. Therefore the people of Jammu who had their relatives in Mirpur waited upon Sheikh Abdullah and Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru when they visited Jammu in the middle of November and impressed upon them the need of sending immediate reinforcement to Mirpur. But unfortunately, Sheikh Abdullah who was expected to guide the military authorities about the disposal of the Indian troops failed to realise the gravity of the situation at Mirpur. He diverted even the 40 lorries, carrying troops which had been sent towards Mirpur to Srinagar where the need was not so urgent after the 8th of November when Baramula was recaptured. The Indian Brigade under the command of Brigadier Pranjpe stationed at Jhanger on the junction of Jammu—Mirpur and Kotli—Poonch roads did not make any effort to relieve Mirpur even though it lay only at a distance of 30 miles from Jhanger because they had no orders to proceed to Mirpur.

The town fell on the 25th of November when the

enemy broke open the back door of the town by heavy gun-fire. The State troops and local officers might have saved the situation if they had shown some guts and foresight. But they lost heart and retreated even before the the town could be evacuated by the civilians. The people therefore began to run in terror. The flight soon become a rout and the rout a massacre. Hardly two thousands out of about 25 thousands living at that time in the ill-fated town managed to reach Jhanger in safety. The rest were ruthlessly butchered. The number of women abducted from here runs into thousands. Most of them were paraded and then sold into the Bazars of Jehlum, Rawalpindi, and Peshawar. In Free India which was to become Ram Raj of Gandhiji's dreams thousenis of Sitas were thus carried away by Pakistani Ravana's without creating even a flutter in the hearts and arms of the followers of Rama.

The loot obtained by the Pakistanis from these towns, espacially from Mirpur, goes into crores. The floor of every house in Mirpur was dug by the raiders in search of hoarded treasures. Then they set fire to the free town Now it stands there as a mound of bricks, earth, and bones a monument of the brutality of Pakistanis and unrealistic, and unimaginative policies of the Indian leaders and the State government.

5. Deva Vatala Next to fall along the Jammu-

Pakistan border in Bhimber Tehsil was the cluster of Hindu villages inhabited by Chib Rajputs and known by the name of Deva Vatala. The warlike people of these villages kept the Pakistanis at bay for many months with their crude weapons. But when Pakistanis began to attack them with modern firearms supplied by the Pakistan Government they approached Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. the chief emergency officer for Jammu Province to supply them with arms and ammunition. But no heed was paid to their requests. The present writer saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears Ziladar Prabhat Singh, the leader of these villages, railing before Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, the popular leader of Jammu that he got no arms in spite of repeated efforts and that there was no hope of their safety. Within a few days towards the end of December 1947, we found him along with thousands of other Chibs entering the city of Jammu with what little they could bring on their heads as refugees. The occupation of Deva Vatala by the enemy brought him within 30 miles of the city of Jammu from the West and therefore caused much panic there.

The fall of Deva Vatala showed the callousness of Sheikh Abdullah's administration towards the people of Jammu. The people of Deva Vatala did not want troops. They could fight themselves. What they wanted was arms. But they were not provided with these although arms were sent to Kashmir

to arm the useless militia there. This naturally created doubts about Sheikh Abdullah and his administration in the hearts of the people of Jammu.

Poonch. The only town of this ilaqa which did not succumb to the enemy pressure is Poonch. The small garrison of the State troops supported by the Indian troops who managed to reach there from Uri, led by their gallant commander Brigadier Pritam Singh, kept the enemy at bay for one long year. Their task would have become impossible but for the daring landings of the R.I.A.F. dakotas on improvised air strip in the town, which lay within firing range of the enemy who commanded the surrounding hills. This town has now been relieved by the Indian force advancing from Rajauri. The defence of Poonch is one of the most outstanding achievements of the Indian army in the Kashmir war.

The story of the war in the Jammu sector in the early months is thus a continuous tragedy occasionally relieved by episodes of glory provided by the heroes of Kotli, or the defenders of Poonch. But the most unfortunate part of it is that little is known to the people in India and outside about this picture of the Kashmir story. The gloom is heightened by the persistent propaganda made by Sheikh Abdullah and his associates about the massacre of Muslims in Jammu without a word of sympathy for the victims of tragedies recounted above and its repetition by simple hearted

Indian leaders. What is worse is that a systematic attempt has been made to make the people of Jammu and especially those who did most for the defence of this vital link between India and the rest of the state appear as criminal so that they could be conveniently used as scapegoats for tragic happenings elsewhere. The bloodshed of innocent Hindus and Muslims in whatever part of the country it has taken place is indefensible and must be condemned by all. But to put the blame of all that has happened on one community or one section of the people is sheer non-sense. Even from the point of view of losses, the loss in life and property suffered by the Hindus in the Jammu Province runs to at least four times of that suffered by the Muslims.

It is, therefore, no use harping upon what has happened as a result of madness or deliberate mischief of some people in the state as in other parts of India and Pakistan. The chief concern of all well-wishers of the state and India should be to work for retaining these places of hallowed memories as a part of India. It will not take long to rebuild them as better and stronger out-posts of our country after that main end has been achieved,



CHAPTER X.

FALL OF GILGIT AND BALTISTAN

Foiled in their attempt to reach Srinagar and occupy the Kashmir Valley through the only natural approach to it, the Pakistanis now turned their attention towards Gilgit and other trans-Himalayan parts of the State adjoining it, which would have automatically fallen in their hands, had they succeeded in occupying the valley. The aim of this diversion was not only to occupy Gilgit—the meeting place of China, U. S. S. R., Afghanistan, Pakistan and India—but also to make new thrusts into the valley from that side.

Gilgit, which is strategically the most important part of the state, lies in the north of Kashmir beyond the outer Himalayan range. The only connecting link between it and Kashmir Valley is the Burzi La Pass, which is about 13,000 feet above sea-level and remains closed during the winter months. It was conquered with great difficulty between 1859 and 1870 by Maharaja Ranbir Singh, who annexed the Gilgit Plain directly to his kingdom and reduced the local principalities of Hunza, Nagar, etc., to his

vassalage. Samadhis of thousands of Dogra soldiers who lost their lives in the Gilgit campaign, still bear testimony to their adventurous spirit and conquering zeal. Maharaja Ranbir Singh also got prepared a brid-le-road connecting Srinagar with Gilgit through the Burzi La Pass.


It attracted the attention of the British Government soon after when Russo-Phobia dominated the British foreign policy. They wanted to make Gilgit a link in their North Western defence system. But Maharaja Ranbir Singh refused to oblige them by transferring it to the British control. The British Indian Government, however, succeeded in establishing a joint control along with the State over Gilgit by the end of the 19th century. A British Political Agent then began to reside in Gilgit to watch the British interests,

Just before the Second World War when U.S.S.R. began to expand fastly towards Central Asia, the British Indian Government prevailed upon the Maharaja to hand over the Gilgit area to them on a long lease. They then connected Gilgit with the N.W.F.P. via Risalpur by a better road and also prepared an air strip there. Since the beginning of the conflict between Anglo-U.S.A. block on the one side and Russian block on the other, the strategic importance of Gilgit has increased all the more because of its suitability for air basis from which central Asian republics and military targets in the U.S.S.R. can be successfully strapped.

Just before the 15th of August 1947, when the British transferred power to the Indian hands, they returned the areas taken by them from the Indian States on lease. So Gilgit was retroceded to Kashmir. The Maharaja then appointed Brigadier Ghansara Singh as the Military Governor of Gilgit. The force stationed at Gilgit under his command included the 6th Jammu & Kashmir infantry which was half Dogra and half Muslim and 600 Gilgit Scouts who were all Muslims.

Though politically the British withdrew from Gilgit yet their interest in it was not lost. In fact it began to grow with the growing east-west tension in Europe. They, therefore, wanted Gilgit to remain in safe and dependable hands. They naturally considered Pakistan to be safer and more dependable for them. Therefore their desire has been that Kashmir, especially the Gilgit part of it, should become a part of Pakistan. Accordingly their erstwhile Political Agent in Gilgit began to cooperate with the Pakistan officials in their propaganda in favour of accession to Pakistan among the local Rajas and population. The accession of the state to India in October 1947 was therefore, equally distasteful to the U. K. and U.S.A as to Pakistan. Their agents in Gilgit now actively collaborated with the Pakistanis in wresting Gilgit from the Indian hands.

The task was not difficult to achieve. There were only about 400 Hindu troops as against their

400 Muslim comrades, who deserted and joined the enemy along with 600 well-armed Gilgit scouts. On an appointed day in the midwinter when all means of communication between Gilgit and Srinagar or Jammu had been cut off, the Military Governor was besieged in his own house. He put up a gallant resistance for some time. But, finding the situation hopeless, he surrendered and was made a prisoner of war along with his 400 Hindu troops. Thus Gilgit passed into the hands of Pakistan. 

After consolidating their position in Gilgit the Pakistan militarists hurried to control the approaches to the valley before the winter had run out. One of their columns advanced towards the Bumyi Pass, occupied it and began to infiltrate into Gurais area of Kashmir from that side. Another column advanced west, by-passed Askardu, the capital town of Baltistan, for it had a Dogra garrison in its fort, and occupied Kargil without much difficulty. Kargil lies on the road connecting Srinagar with Leh in Ladakh and Askardu in Baltistan, via the Yaji Pass, which also is about 13,000 ft. high and remains closed in winter. From Kargil one of their columns began to advance towards Leh in Ladakh and the other advanced south and occupied the Yaji Pass. Some of them even succeeded in infiltrating into the Sindh valley in Kashmir proper.

Thus before the winter was over and before any re-inforcement to Askardu, Kargil or Leh could be sent, the Pakistanis with the help of Gilgit scouts

and the locals, for whom winter weather was no hindrance, had occupied both the passes linking these areas, with Kashmir. Leh too would have fallen before the Pakistanis, who despoiled many monasteries and killed about five hundred Buddhists but for the adventurous and hazardous dash of a Buddhist officer of the Indian Army Captain (now perhaps Colonel) Prithvi Chand, with a few other troops towards Leh in mid-winter. He succeeded in reaching Leh, organised a local militia, prepared an air strip at the height of about 11,500 feet above sea level, where equally adventurous Indian pilots landed their dakotas carrying sinews of war, and thus saved Leh from meeting the fate of Kargil and Gilgit.

The besieged garrison and Hindu population of Askardu was soon reduced to sore straits by the besieging Pakistani forces. The R. I. A. F. dropped some supplies to them, but due to bad weather and giddy heights that had to be crossed, adequate supplies could not be dropped. At last Colonel Thapa of the State forces surrendered to the Pakistanis, after a gallant resistance of many a month. in June 1948.

Thus by the beginning of the summer of 1948 the Pakistanis had occupied most of the trans-Himalayan part of the State including Gilgit, Baltistan and a part of Ladakh. The Burzila and Yoji passes too were in their control. Thus they had well-nigh succeeded in besieging the valley from three sides.

The only hurdle in the way of their approaching the East Punjab towards Kulu and Kistawar in Jammu was the town of Leh. Had that town fallen, not only the task of Indian troops in Kashmir would have become very difficult but also a new and difficult front would have been opened in the North of East Punjab.

The problem before the Indian army now was how to regain control over the Burzi and Yoji passes. The heights in these passes were commanded by Pakistanis who had now a fine base at Gilgit well-supplied through air and land transport by the Pakistan Government. The whole summer of 1948 was passed in their efforts to check the infiltration of the enemy into the valley through these passes.

That alone could not have saved Kashmir or Ladakh. But by the beginning of winter when the passes had been blocked by snow and the Pakistanis felt quite secure in their commanding positions, the Indian army planned an offensive which has made history. Light tanks were carried from India to Srinagar and from there to the Yojil Pass at a height of 13,000 feet, all unnoticed by the Indian public and unknown to the Pakistani spies. As these tanks rumbled along Yojila pass, the enemy began to fly like rabbits from his commanding dens. Before the year had run out the Indian troops were in complete control of the Yojila and had also occupied the strategic towns of Dras and Kargil beyond

the pass on the road to Leh. A column now advanced towards Leh from Kargil and made a short work of the Pakistani pickets in this sector. Leh was thus relieved, Ladakh saved and the threat to East Punjab removed.

But the mouth and the heights commanding the Burzi pass are still controlled by Pakistan. They in fact control some villages in the valley near the mouth of the pass as well. Thus Gilgit and the most of Baltistan is still in the hands of Pakistan.



CHAPTER XI

APPEAL TO THE U. N. O.

On the 30th of December 1947 the Indian Cabinet decided to appeal to the U.N. Security Council under Chapter 35 of the U.N. Charter to ask Pakistan to desist from aiding the raiders entering the Kashmir State from and through the Pakistan territory in the interest of the maintenance of international peace. On the next day the Indian Ambassador at Washington formally conveyed this Indian complaint against Pakistan to the President of the Security Council at Lake Success. The Pakistan Premier was also informed about it the same day.

This decision of the Indian Government to refer this purely domestic and internal issue to U.N. Security Council came as a surprise not only to Indian public, but also to all those countries, which had been looking upon the Kashmir affair as an internal question of India. No self-respecting country would have voluntarily invited the interference of other powers through the U. N. O. in a domestic affair as this was even for the sake of

obliging and making respectable an august body like the U.N.O.

But Pakistan against whom the complaint was made, rejoiced over this decision of the Indian Government. Her leaders took it to be a God-sent opportunity to unburden their hearts of the accumulated venom against India and discredit her in the world by heaping up fantastic accusations against her. Being more practical and less scrupulous than the Indian leaders, they secured the support of the Anglo-U.S.A. power block in the U.N.O. and were not in any way perturbed by this pilgrimage of India to the Lake Success,

To the Indian public this decision of the Government has remained a puzzle. They have not been able to understand the wisdom and advisability of this step of their government. The question that has been persistently asked since then is: why did India appeal to the U. N. O. ? Was it our Prime Minister Pt. Nehru's idealism and faith in the U. N. O. or his lack of faith in the capacity of the country's armed forces to deal with the raiders ?

The answer to these questions is to be found in the events immediately preceding this decision. Their analysis shows that both these reasons and something more combined to persuade the Indian leaders to take this decision.

The faith of Pt. Nehru in the U. N. O. is well known. He is always prepared to make experiments in inter-nationalism with the human material which

he controls. But in this case it was not so much his faith in the U. N. O. as his abhorrence of war and bloodshed which played the decisive role. The immediate factor that seems to have influenced him was the fall of Jhangar, the important road junction to the west of Jammu before a night attack of the raiders in the last week of December 1947. The Indian Brigade stationed there had to fall back to Nowshera. This unnerved the Indian leaders a little. They were unwilling to allow the Indian army to destroy the bases of the raiders in Pākistan for it would have extended the scope of war and might have led to all-out hostilities between India and Pakistan causing more bloodshed.

This fear of bloodshed had been one of the determining factors, at least with Pt. Nehru, in regard to the question of partition of India. The same abhorrence of bloodshed and a weakness for the Pakistanis influenced him, to knock the door of the U. N. rather than knock at the source of the whole mischief in Kashmir.

The result has been as disillusioning in this case as it had been in the case of Partition. The bloodshed and misery that came in the wake of the partition has far exceeded the possible bloodshed that might have resulted from a firm and bold stand against the disruption of India's unity. In the same way the losses in life, property and money incurred by the Indian government and people in Kashmir inspite of their appeal to the U. N. O. have

mounted high and yet the real objective is still distant and the prospects of its full achievement more doubtful.

While making the appeal to the U.N.O. it was hoped by the Indian leaders that India's stand being very logical and sound would be vindicated by the Security Council and that the dispute would be settled quickly putting an early end to the unnecessary bloodshed. The Indian stand was simple. It was that Kashmir having acceded to India has become a part of that country, that Pakistan by aiding the raiders had been guilty of aggression against India and that the Security Council should immediately arrange to bring aggression to an end. India on her part, it was declared, had no territorial ambition and that she was willing to allow the people of Kashmir to decide the question of their accession to India or Pakistan by plebiscite. But before that could be done Pakistan should see that all raiders leave Kashmir. Restoration of peace and normal conditions, it was asserted, were the necessary pre-requisites for holding a plebiscite.

As against this, the stand taken by Pakistan was that she does not recognise the accession of Kashmir to India which can be settled by a plebiscite alone; that she had not been aiding the raiders who were not Pakistani nationals, but had come of their own accord from the tribal areas to fight for their Muslim brethren in Kashmir. But, it was said that Pakistan sympathised with the Muslims of

Kashmir who wanted to accede to Pakistan and therefore could not want to check those who wanted to help Kashmiri Muslim's. Besides putting up this defence, the Pakistani delegate Mr. Zafar Ullah, raised so many other questions pertaining to Junagadh, and riots in the East Punjab and Delhi and employed his art of eloquence and imagery to prejudice the the Security council members against India,

The Security Council on its part, instead of appreciating the logical stand taken by India and asking Pakistan to stop aggression to end unnecessary bloodshed put, as Mr. Gopalawami Ayyangar the Chief Indian delegate remarked, the cart before the horse by taking up the question of plebiscite first. The urgent question of stopping aggression was thrown in the background. Formula after formula and resolution after resolution began to be brought before the Security Council only to be rejected by India. The Indian government became so disgusted with this attitude of the Security Council that the Prime Minister Pt. Nehru, the staunchest supporter of U. N. O. in India, had to express publicly his disappointment about the U.N.O. in a public speech at Jammu on February 15, 1948. He said "Instead of discussing and deciding our refer- ences in a straight-forward manner, the nations of the world sitting on that body got lost in power politics." This was the beginning of the dis-illusionment.

Indian delegation returned home early in February 1948 for consultations with their government. It returned back to Lake Success in March. Again the same old story of resolutions and formulae began to be repeated with one tangible result. By a resolution passed on June 3, a five-man commission consisting of Argentina, U.S.A., Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Columbia was to be sent to India to study the situation on the spot and to suggest a way out of the "disputes" between India and Pakistan. India protested against the word "disputes" which meant inclusion in the terms of reference of the commission, of other questions raised by Pakistan. But as a matter of politeness or as a sign of weakness India did receive the commission and gave it all facilities.

The Commission soon came to know that Pakistan was not only aiding the raiders but was actually fighting in Kashmir. On the basis of these findings of the commission the Security Council passed a resolution on August 13, '48 calling upon both sides to stop fighting and asking Pakistan to withdraw her troops as a first step towards the creation of conditions in which plebiscite might be held. India accepted this cease-fire or truce resolution as it vindicated the stand taken by her that Pakistan being the aggressor must withdraw her troops first, But Pakistan refused to accept it.

After this glaring affront to the U.N.O. by Pakistan whose complicity in the Kashmir war had now

been proved beyond doubt, it was expected that the U. N. O. Security Council would take suitable steps to give justice to India, It was also hoped that the Indian Government would withdraw the offer of plebiscite as Pakistan had deliberately chosen the path of war, and would give her a taste of the Indian metal. But neither the U. N. O. rose above its power—politics nor did India shed her pusillanimity.

The commission then returned to Lake Success and submitted a report to the U. N. O. on November 22. But it did not make any attempt to draw any final conclusion or to make recommendations for any future action to be taken by the Security Council. The stalemate created by Pakistan's refusal to accept the cease fire resolution of August 13 continued till India took the initiative and ordered cease fire. In the meanwhile Pakistan troops continued to strengthen their positions and advance towards Leh. The Indian army authorities at last fearing further surprise by Pakistan army in the winter, stirred a little and started an offensive which very soon put the Pakistani forces on the run, both in the Jammu sector as also in the Yoji Pass sector in Kashmir

Had this offensive continued for some time a decisive military result could have been achieved in the Jammu Sector at least. But before that could be done the Indian Government ordered a cease fire on its own initiative beginning from January 1, '49.

The whole drama of the U. N. Security Council and its Kashmir Commission since the 30th of December has created a sense of disillusionment and frustration even in the most optimistic and idealist supporter of the U. N. in this country. The achievement of the U.N. in regard to the Kashmir issue during this one year and a half has been, if anything at all, negative. It has contributed towards lengthening the war in Kashmir rather than bringing it to a speedy end for which purpose it had been approached. Whatever little has been achieved in the form of the cease fire has been the result of India's self-abnegation and of the zeal of her leaders to be acclaimed as men of peace.

What is the cause, it may be asked, of this failure of the UNO to do justice to India which is now the biggest independent country in Asia? The reasons are not far to seek. Some of them are inherent in the genesis and character of the U.N.O. and others are of India's own making.

The UNO like its predecessor, the League of Nations, is a creation of the big powers who were brought together by the exigencies of war. The economic, territorial and ideological clashes between them rear their head as soon as the question of refashioning and redrawing the map of the world arises because all of them have expansionist ambitions and, therefore, have different axes to grind. In the present case the ideological clash between the Anglo-U. S. A. block of countries—the

Western powers—and the communist Russian block of countries—the Eastern powers—has overshadowed all other clashes of interests. For the economic and political life of the countries of these two power blocks is being governed by their dominating ideologies. Both are trying to expand at the cost of the other. The speed of expansion of Russia being much greater, the Anglo-USA block is trying hard to limit her expansion by building up a chain of military defences and satellite states around the Russian block. Kashmir State especially its Gilgit part is important for them in this respect. So they want it to be in dependable hands. They definitely consider Pakistan to be more dependable for their purpose than India. So their weight has been, so far, put on the side of Pakistan in the U. N. O. They being in a majority in the Security Council carry their point whether right or wrong.

The inconsistent and unrealistic foreign policy of India since the attainment of freedom has been the other reason for this sad plight of India in the U. N. O. An analysis of the voting on the various resolutions about Kashmir in the Security Council shows that seldom a vote was cast in India's favour. As a general rule U.S.S.R. and Ukrain have been abstaining from voting and the other nine have been supporting the resolution which invariably went in favour of Pakistan. This has been mainly due to the equivocal attitude of India towards the two big powers that count in the world to-day. Indian lead-

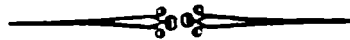
ers have declared so many times that they do not want to join any power block and that they would follow an independent foreign policy aimed at ending the colonial rule and racial discrimination in Asia and elsewhere. This has naturally created distrust for India in the minds of the Western colonial powers. They, therefore, support Pakistan as against India in this and other disputes. At the same time Indian leaders seem to be as much anxious to remain a part of the Commonwealth as U. K. is to retain them. They generally toe the line of Anglo-U.S.A. group in regard to economic and political problems facing our country and the world. This, coupled with their decision to remain in the Commonwealth, has naturally created misgivings about India in the mind of the Russian block.

As regards the smaller Asiatic powers the policy of India has been equally unrealistic. It is governed more by the possible reactions of the Muslims in India and Pakistan towards it than by the interests of India. The historical background and the cultural factors point to the establishment of closer cultural and political ties with the Buddhist countries of the South East Asia. Economic and political interests also demand closer relations with Israel and Afghanistan. But to appease the Indian Muslims, the Government of India toes the line of Pakistan in regard to these countries. Even some of the far off South American countries have been estranged by the unbridled and unrealistic talks and speeches of some of our dele-

gates to the U.N.O. No wonder that India's case like that of a man riding two stools has gone by default in the U.N.O. so far.

In regard to Pakistan our immediate neighbour and rival, the policy of the Indian government has been the same as that of the Congress towards the Muslim League before the freedom and partition of our country. This policy of appeasement towards Pakistan to win her friendship somehow is the greatest hinderance in the way of a speedy and honourable solution of the Kashmir problem as also of many a pressing problems facing the country.

India's going to the U.N.O. might prove a blessing in disguise, if her statesmen take a lesson from the fate that our cause met there, and begin to fashion India's foreign policy with a more realistic frame of mind.



CHAPTER XII.

THE NEW KASHMIR IN ACTION.

Before dealing with the cease-fire and its repercussions on the question of the future of the Jammu and Kashmir state, a brief review of the internal developments in the state during this period of stress and strain is essential, for they are bound to influence to a large extent the future as also the shape of things to come in the State and may be, in India as well.

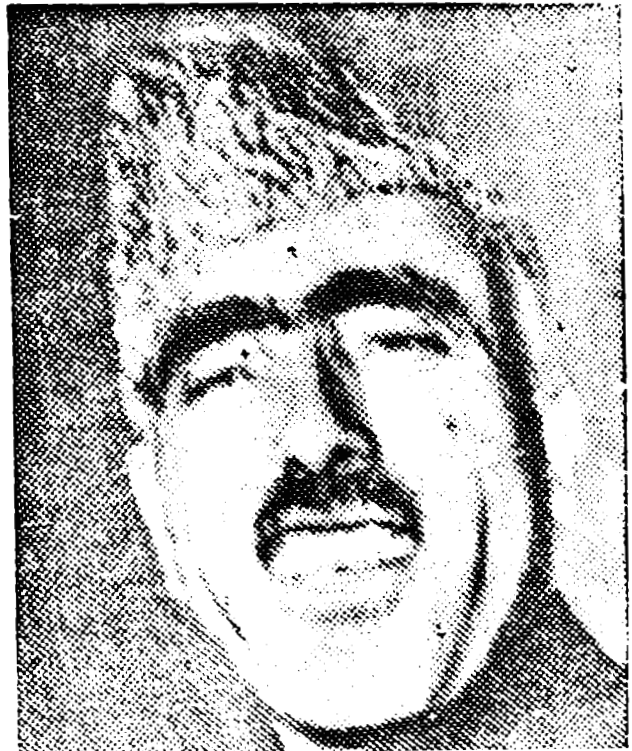
The one all important internal development from which all others have emanated has been the transfer of power to Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conference in the wake of the provisional accession of the state to India. The slogan of 'Quit Kashmir', raised by Sheikh Abdullah in 1936 thus became a reality in 1947 due to circumstances which neither Sheikh Abdullah nor the Maharaja could have even dreamt of in 1946. It made Sheikh Abdullah master of not only Kashmir, but also of Jammu and its Dogra people against whose domination over Kashmir he had been struggling. Thus

KASHMIR DIVIDED



Pt. Prem Nath Dogra
the Leader of Jamm
who has recently
been released after
long detention
without trial.

Sheikh Mohammad
Abdullah
the Leader of
Kashmir, who
heads the interim
Government of
Jammu and Kashmir
State.



after a century of the Dogra control of Kashmir the Kashmiris and the Dogras have changed places.

This attainment of power marked the climax of the chequered career of Sheikh Abdullah. It put him in a supreme test for he was now called upon to rule a people, besides his own, whose rule over Kashmir had been systematically assailed by him as irresponsible, repressive and unsympathetic towards the Kashmiris. It also gave him an opportunity to translate the constitutional and economic plan for Kashmir known as 'New Kashmir' (which the National Conference had drawn in 1945) into action.

The Sheikh faltered in this test of his professions at the very outset. As the exceptional circumstances prevailing at the time of the transfer of power precluded the formation of a regular ministry, Sheikh Abdullah was vested with all executive authority over the state as its Chief Emergency Officer. He was to appoint for his assistance other Emergency officers for the administrative provinces of the state as also for the various departments. It was expected by the people of Jammu that a popular publicman of the province would be appointed as the Emergency Officer for Jammu so that the same enthusiasm for the popular regime and for the defence of the country may be created in Jammu as in Kashmir. But Sheikh Abdullah appointed his own lieutenant Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, who knew little or nothing about Jammu, as the Chief Emergency Officer for that province. Not a single

popular leader of Jammu was attached with him even in an advisory capacity. This was an unwise step, for it kept the distrust born out of the past anti-Dogra activities of Sheikh Abdullah alive. This wrong could have been rectified at the time of the formation of the regular ministry. Again, no popular representative of the Dogras was taken in the cabinet. Pt. Girdhari Lal Dogra, the only Dogra in the Sheikh's cabinet has no representative position in the public life of Jammu. He has been taken for his being the only follower of Sheikh Abdullah in the Jammu area. Thus the transfer of power to Sheikh Abdullah's hands began to be looked upon by the people of Jammu as a change for the worse—from autocracy of the Maharaja to the dictatorship of Sheikh Abdullah and his unsympathetic followers.

The dissatisfaction in the people of Jammu with the new regime was heightened by some of the administrative measures and the discriminatory policies of the Government. The first of them was the formation of the three Tehsils of the Udhampur, district of Jammu, viz, Bhadarwah, Kistwar and Ram Ban, into a separate district placed under the charge of a notorious Pakistani Officer Col. Adalat Khan. These Dogra tehsils link the rest of the Dogra land with Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir. They also constitute the most productive and beautiful part of the Jammu province.

Attempts at settling the Muslim Gujars coming

from Chamba in the Himachal Pradesh and Pakistan in these tehsils further added to the doubts of the people. The appointment or reinstatement of well known Pakistani Officers like Ch. Faiz Ullah and Mian Abdul Rashid who had actively collaborated with the raiders and the discriminatory policy towards the Jammu people in the matter of supply and prices of the controlled goods supplied by the Indian government to the State as also in regard to the formation and arming of Home Guards and border militia, most needed in Jammu, created misgivings and general atmosphere of dissatisfaction in the Jammu area.

To cap all, the civil liberties of the people of Jammu have been suppressed to such an extent that Pt. Prem Nath Dogra M. L. A., the most popular leader of Jammu with two other M. L. As. and some other respectable citizens of Jammu was arrested and put under detention on the alleged charge, according to the Government communique, of misrepresenting the situation in Jammu to the Congress M. C. As. Dr. Raghuvira and Shri M. L. Chattopadhyaya who visited Jammu by the middle of February, 1949.

This led to the bursting of the popular resentment in the form of protest demonstrations, meetings and hartals throughout the Jammu province. But for the timely steps taken by the Jammu Praja Parishad to check the popular frenzy the situation there might have taken an ugly turn.

The National conference and its leaders however, do not attach much importance to civil liberties or political freedom. Their stand is that economic freedom and not the political freedom is the sine-qua-non of all progress, that "Real Freedom takes birth from economic emancipation." The "New Kashmir" according to them guarantees this economic emancipation for the masses of Kashmir as also of Jammu. The creation of this new order, according to Sheikh Abdullah, is his main task. The question of civil liberties or of susceptibilities of the people of Jammu and even the question of accession to India are all secondary.

What is this New Kashmir plan ?—It is a comprehensive plan outlining a political and constitutional set up for the state and an economic and cultural policy calculated to make Kashmir a "Dazzling gem upon the snowy bosom of Asia" through the achievement of freedom and National self-sufficiency. It starts with the assumption that the Jammu and Kashmir state has a separate existence of its own which must grow as an independant Asiatic country with independant policies and not necessarily as a part of India governed by the policies laid down by the Indian centre.

The constitutional plan of the "New Kashmir" originally envisaged a fully democratic system of Government under the aegis of the Maharaja. But since the transfer of power this political objective has been redefined as full freedom without any

trace of the authority of the Maharaja. He is not wanted by Sheikh Abdullah even as a constitutional head. His new slogan is 'Quit Maharaja.' The burden of his speeches in Kashmir now is "We have to get rid of the Maharaja first. Till then the question of accession does not arise. We have made no commitments to India about accession. The people of Kashmir are free to decide the question as they please. I have no separate existence. I will go where you will like me to go."

The stand about the Maharaja's position and the policy of humiliating him whenever and wherever possible is not liked by the people of Jammu. Being a son of the soil the Maharaja is generally held in high respect by the people of Jammu. Their attachment to him has increased in the recent months as a reaction against the oppressive policies of the Abdullah regime.

The economic set up envisaged by the "New Kashmir" plan is ultra-socialistic. It aims at abolition of landlordism and Jagirdari and the big private capitalist. "Land to the tiller" and nationalisation of all "Key industries" to begin with and complete control of production by the state ultimately are the main features of this economic plan.

This plan has already been put in operation. Jagirdari system has been abolished. This has done no good to the peasants. But the land revenue that used to go to the Jagirdars now comes to the state. Moratorium has been given on debts and

in some cases land has been distributed among the tillers. The most important economic measure however, is that concerning landlords. All landlords with more than $12\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land are now to get only 25 p. c. instead of 50 p. c. share of the produce of their land. The land revenue is to be paid by them out of this 25 %. The fodder crops are to be left entirely to the peasants. This measure has made landlordism so uneconomical that it is expected that it would end automatically within a year or two. The peasants encouraged by these measures have begun to refuse even this 25 p. c. share to the land lords.

These agrarian measures have been hailed as marking the beginning of a new order by some. But their immediate effect especially on the minority community has been disastrous for they amount to despoilation of the landlords of their possession without paying any compensation whatsoever. The Kashmiri Pandits who form about 50 % of the total population of Kashmir valley have been most hard hit by these measures. Most of them had agricultural lands on the produce of which they lived. The doors of Government services have also been closed to them to make room for the Muslims. So they find themselves in great economic distress and have already begun leaving Kashmir in hundreds in search of livelihood in India.

These measures are also not in keeping with the

land policies that are being followed by other state and provincial Governments in India. The landlord's right to some compensation has been accepted in India. But the land policies of the Kashmir Government are formulated and planned by those, as we shall see presently, who receive inspiration and guidance not from India but from elsewhere.

In the Industrial sphere the Kashmir Government has not made any such radical experiments so far. Kashmir has only a few big industries such as the Karan Singh woolen mills, the Hadow Carpet Factory and the silk factory. The silk factory is already managed by the Government. Others are expected to be taken over by the Government. In Jammu there are rosin and silk factories. Both are Government concerns. A privately owned flour mill has already been taken over by the Government.

In the commercial sphere the system of Government monopolies has taken the place of private enterprise. The Punjabi Hindu business men from the West Punjab who controlled most of the export and import trade of the State till recently have been generally deprived of their work. The internal trade has been given in the hands of such party-men or kinsmen of the men in power, who had little share in the trade of Kashmir before. This has created great dissatisfaction in Kashmir.

These economic plans of Sh. Abdullah's government which aim at making Kashmir a happy and prosperous country are good as ideals. But

the real utility of a plan depends on the way it is executed. The haste and high-handedness with which the economic plan of the "New Kashmir" is being enforced has, for the present at least, created more economic dissatisfaction and new economic problems without solving any. The landlords in Kashmir had to part with a fixed part of their produce which used to be stored in Srinagar to meet the food scarcity. The peasants who have now been given the right to keep most of the produce with them are reluctant to part with their surplus grain. Procurement is more difficult in their case than in the case of a few known landlords. The result is that Kashmir has begun to suffer from severe food-scarcity.

The relations between the landlords and the peasants have become so strained as a result of these measures and Communist propaganda that the peasants refuse to give to the landlords even the meagre share allowed by the new land laws. Fights between landlords and tillers, especially in the Jammu area have become frequent. The doctrine of class-hatred as preached by the communists is taking root among the peasants and the old social ties are fast breaking. It is therefore, not possible to gauge the real good that these economic policies have done to the people of Kashmir. But the good they have done to the communists whose activities in the State are daily on the increase can not be gain said.

In the cultural and educational sphere the aim of the votaries of "New Kashmir" is to take Kashmir out of the sphere of influence of Indian culture and learning. One of the first things done by Sheikh Abdullah after his assumption of office has been the creation of the Kashmir University at Srinagar and cutting off of the relationship with East Punjab University. The court language and the medium of instruction in this University is to be Urdu. A centre for Islamic students has also been opened at Hazart Bal. Though claiming to be the inheriter of both the Sanskrit culture of ancient Kashmir as also of the Persian culture that came to Kashmir with the Muslim conquest. Sheikh Abdullah has been concentrating upon the development and revival of Persian and Islamic culture alone. Perhaps it is wrong to expect anything else. Sheikh Abdullah knows that 95 p. c. of the Kashmiris are Muslims and that they are as much under the influence of religion and religious slogans, if not more, as their compatriots of the N.W.F.P. Therefore, he wants to make them feel that Abdullah's Kashmir is in no way different from Jinnah's Pakistan. He hails Kashmiris as a Muslim people and Islam to him is "the sun while all the other religions are Stars." His speeches to his people are punctuated by the recital of "Kalma" and verses from the "Holy Quran" at every step. Therefore, he like a realistic popular leader has been trying to cater to the likes and dislikes

of his Muslim followers to continue to be their leader. Perhaps for this reason he has closed down the oldest and world famed cultural institution of Kashmir—the State department of research and translations of Sanskrit Manuscripts, the expenditure on which was never more than Rs. 20,000 a year.

In spite of all this Sheikh Abdullah has not been able to render ineffective the Pakistani pro-poganda, which is being carried on vehemently by the Muslim students as also by the educated and Mullah classes, in Kashmir.

The "New Kashmir" in action has thus created new problems. A deep rift between the Dogras who place accession to India above every thing else and claim equal share in the administration of their home land and Sheikh Abdullah's party has arisen and is daily widening. Many acts of ommission and commission of the Government and the wide-spread corruption and nepotism have affected the popularity of Sheikh Abdullah with his own people in Kashmir as well. Power, they say, corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Sheikh Abdullah today enjoys absolute power in Kashmir. He is not a saint, nor he wants to be one. He loves power and enjoys its intoxication. No wonder, therefore, if the absolute power coupled with the doting support of some Indian statesmen has made him arrogant, dictatorial and intolerant of any criticism, however well-meaning it might be.

The one organised group, which has been exploiting the unsettled conditions, the growing economic discontent and the growing dissatisfaction with Sh. Abdullah's regime in the state, is the Communist party. Sh. Abdullah has a soft corner for them. They have their men in the Key positions and want to make "New Kashmir" a communist Kashmir. They have their plan ready for that. A survey of their activities and plans in the Jammu and Kashmir state is given next.



CHAPTER XIII.

A COMMUNIST'S PARADISE.

Communists have a knack of exploiting difficult situations for their party ends. In fact they thrive on disorders and human distress especially of the economic nature. Taking advantage of the difficult situation created by the Pakistani invasion and of the events that followed it, they have so penetrated into the ranks of the party in power and have become so well-entrenched in the state that Kashmir may well be called a Communist's Paradise.

The Communist party has no well-defined separate existence as such in Kashmir. But the Communists form the most influential and effective group within the National conference and dominate its deliberations and policies. They can come out as the Communist party of Kashmir at any time because their first allegiance remains to the Communist party of India from which they get guidance.

The name of the Communist party was not much heard of in Kashmir till recently. There were

only a few persons in Jammu and Srinagar who went about as communists. But they had little or no status in public life of these places. During the last World War they drew some attention by forming themselves into the Society of the 'Friends of the Soviet Union' at Srinagar. The prominent members of this society were Mr. Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq and Mr. D. P. Dhar. In Jammu, Pt. Girdhari Lal Dogra and Mr. Trilochan Datt were the only known communists till then. They were at the same time members of the National Conference as well. Mr. Sadiq, in fact, had a lot to do with the drafting of the economic plan as envisaged in the "New" Kashmir. |

During the Quit Kashmir movement started by Sheikh Abdullah early in 1946, the communists came into prominence for the first time as the brain behind the movement. Mr. Mohi-u-ddin Karah, a young pleader and a close relative of Mr. Sadiq who went underground and controlled the movement in Kashmir after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest, is also a communist. The prestige he gained as a successful under-ground worker has added to the strength and popularity of the communists in Kashmir. In Jammu Pt. Girdhari Lal Dogra and Mr. Trilochan Datt were the only persons who supported that movement and courted arrest. They therefore became still more unpopular in Jammu.

At the time of Pakistani invasions these Kashmiri communists again came into prominence.

Mr. Sadiq organised the militia. The few young communist workers took charge of the propaganda work. The attractive slogans which resounded in the streets of Srinagar those days and the renaming of the city's main "Chowk" as the 'Red Square' to create a sort of revolutionary fervour in the people, was their work. Well known communist workers of India like Mr. and Mrs. B. P. L. Bedi, Rajbans Krishan, Chaudhary Sher Jung and Dhanwantari with a horde of other male and female workers now rushed to Kashmir. They were all given important assignments. Mr. B. P. L. Bedi became incharge of internal propaganda and publicity. Chaudhary Sher Jung and Rajbans Krishna were deputed to raise and organise the regular militia. To Mr. Dhanwantri was assigned the work of organising the National conference in Jammu.

With the formation of the Interim Ministry some of these communists come to occupy key positions in the Government. Mr. Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq became the Development Minister and Mr. D. P. Dhar became incharge of Law and Order as Deputy Home Minister. Pt. Girdhari Lal Dogra was appointed Finance Minister and Mr. Trilochan Datt was given the key post of Deputy Commissioner of Jammu district. Many other communists came to occupy important Secretarial Positions.

The stage was thus set for systematic and intensive communist propaganda and work in the State. This takes three forms, viz, the hold over

militia and the collection of arms, propagation of Communist ideology through Cultural Front and exhibition of films depicting life in the adjoining Soviet republics, and intensive propaganda among the peasants to rise against the propertied and land-owning classes. The Kashmir National Militia which is now many thousands strong and has been well equipped with the modern weapons of precision by the Indian Government, has been dominated by the communists since its inception. Through study circles, lectures and stories most of the young recruits to the Militia have been indoctrinated. The wide-spread military movement in the state have made the work of collections of arms and ammunition through purchases from the army personnel quite easy for them.

A campaign has recently been started by them in the Jammu area to take away the arms given to the upper castes for border defence, and their redistribution among the menial classes who are being roused against the upper classes. The control of Militia and the accumulation of arms has thus made Kashmir one of the strongest Communist bases in India.

The propaganda of the communist ideology is being done through the Cultural Front. It is an organization consisting of communist writers and actors who go about the country-side with mobile cinemas and dramatic parties. The Russian pictures like 'Life in Tajikstan' are shown to the student

and the working classes free of charge. Mr. P. L. Bedi, who is officially incharge of the counter propoganda department, guides the activities of this Front. The educated Kashmiri Pandits are fast coming under the communist influence because of their economic distress and sense of frustration.

In the villages the communist officials and non-officials have been openly telling the tillers to realise their strength as against their landlords and fight for their rights. This poison of class hatred has already gone so deep that some landlords in the Jammu area have recently been murdered by their tenants.

THE COMMUNIST PLAN FOR KASHMIR.

The communist leaders in and outside the state are fully conscious of their growing strength in the State. Some of them do not make any secret in private talks, of their plans of using Kashmir as a spring board for making India Red. They, therefore, do not want the State to accede to India or Pakistan, because that might mean suppression of their activities in Kashmir with a strong hand by the Dominion Government concerned. Accession to India, they feel, will make their task difficult because of the increased and direct control of the Indian authorities over the Kashmir administration. Accession to Pakistan also does not suit their ends for obvious reasons.

Division of the State is also not approved by them, for that would automatically lead to the

integration of the of two parts with the two Dominions. So they have a new plan for Kashmir for which they have already won the support of some leading mass figures in the National Conference.

The communist plan is that Kashmir should remain an independent country whose freedom should be guaranteed by U. S. S. R. besides other neighbours of Kashmir. They have been preaching this view for some months past. Their arguments in favour of this plan for the Kashmir masses are that India is the country of not only Nehru but also of Patel, Dalmias, and Birlas. Accession to India, they say, will mean end of the 'new' Kashmir. Further, it will be resented by Pakistan and may mean continuation of hostilities. Accession to Pakistan, they argue, will make it difficult for Hindus to continue to live in the State. Their argument for the men in power is that independence will mean a guarantee for their continuity in the seat of power.

The success they have achieved can be gauged from the speeches of the National conference leaders and from the trend of events in Kashmir during the recent months. Maulana Mohammed Sayid, the General secretary of the National conference while speaking in a meeting of the National conference workers towards the end of March 1949 at Srinagar said "For us India is a Jin (Devil) and Pakistan is Ag (Fire). We can join neither. But there is a third course also open to us. That is the course advocated

by our Sadiq Sahib (Mr. G. M. Sadiq, Development Minister) Dogra Sahib (Pt. Girdhari Lal Dogra, Finance Minister) and Begh Sahib (Mian Afzal Beg, Revenue Minister.)” Similar has been the wording used by many other National Conference workers and leaders in their recent speeches.

Above all, and that is most important, they have won over Sheikh Mohamed Abdullah, to their point of view. He has begun talking in this strain for some time past. His two exclusive interviews given to Mr. Michael Davidson of the London “Observer” and to Mr. Ward Price of the “Daily Mail” have dispelled all doubts about the way his inclination lies. In this interview with Mr. Michael Davidson he is reported to have said, “Accession to either side cannot bring peace. We want to live in friendship with both the Dominions. Perhaps a middle path between them with economic cooperation with each will be the only way of doing it. However, an independent Kashmir must be guaranteed not only by India and Pakistan but also by Britain, U. S. S. R. and other members of the U. N.”

When asked about the Pakistan-held areas of Poonch etc, he said that he believed Poonchis would welcome inclusion in an independent Kashmir. But if after its establishment they chose to secede and join Pakistan, he would raise no objection.

The interview of Sheikh Abdullah confirmed by a similar suggestion from “Blitz” of Bombay, which

has gained the reputation of being Sheikh Abdullah's own, was naturally-considered by the Indian public opinion as a volteface on the part of Sheikh Abdullah, tantamount to a gross betrayal of the Indian people and Government by him. Therefore he issued a statement from Delhi on the 17th of May, 1949 as a matter of strategic retreat. But cleverly enough he avoided the word accession in it and used the word 'alliance' for the relation that he would like Kashmir to have with India. This so called contradiction in which he deftly avoided any reference to the interview in question could not allay the doubts of the public created by his previous speeches and interviews.

Along with this propoganda a systematic effort has been going on in the state to weed out or suppress under various pretexts those elements which want accession to India at any cost. The arrest and continued detention of the popular Dogra leaders of Jammu who cannot be considered pro-Pakistani by any stretch of imagination is a part of this policy.

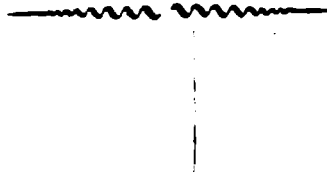
The justification given by Sheikh Abdullah and the "Blitz" is that independent Kashmir is an alternative to any plan of division of Kashmir. The unity of 40 lakhs people of the State, according to Sheikh Abdullah, cannot be allowed to be broken. But is there any basic unity in the hotch potch population of the State? By admitting the right of the Poonch to secede and join Pakistan,

Sheikh Abdullah himself has given a lie direct to his own assertion about unity of the state and its people. Further he himself can speak for Kashmir Valley alone. Outside the valley he was no body till he got the reins of administration of the whole state. He has, therefore no right to dictate or decide the future of other parts of the state on the lines of the Communist, or for that matter, any other plan.

The Government of India seem to have been awakened to the Communist menace in Kashmir by the two interviews of Sheikh Abdullah and by the conspiracy of the Communist dominated militia to blow up the bridges connecting India and Jammu with Kashmir-towards the end of May, 1949. The decision of the Government of India to disarm the militia, to invite four representatives of the State to sit in the Indian Constituent Assembly to give a look of finality to the accession of the State to India, coupled with the call of the Indian Prime Minister to the Indian troops at Srinagar to "tighten their belts", and his declaration about India's resolve not to be brow-beaten by Pakistan or any other extraneous forces in the matter of Kashmir's relationship with India have checkmated the Communist plan about Kashmir to some extent. But they are still a force to reckon with in Kashmir.

So far as the unity of the state is concerned it has already been destroyed by the Pakistani conquest

of a large portion of the state. The Indian Govt. as we shall see presently, accepted the division of Kashmir State as a fait accompli when they ordered cease fire without first recapturing the parts of the state that have been lost to Pakistan.



CHAPTER XIV.

KASHMIR DIVIDED.

The Kashmir problem entered a new and decisive phase with the 'cease fire' order given by the Indian Government on its own initiative on the 31st of December, 1948. Pakistan Government had been consulted and they too agreed to do so simultaneously. Thus fighting on all fronts in Kashmir stopped on the 1st of January 1949.

The Cease Fire came as a pleasant surprise to the World, especially to the U. N. circles. What U. N. commission on Kashmir had failed to achieve inspite of its best efforts was made a reality by an "act of faith" of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru. In India it was received with a mixed feeling of relief and dismay because it came all of a sudden at a time when the Indian army had well nigh put the enemy to flight on all fronts and was fast recapturing the areas occupied by the enemy. The Pakistani and the so-called Azad Kashmir circles, however, felt relieved at this move of the Indian Govt. Their fast waning prestige with the people of the occupied areas was

restored and they got much needed breathing space to put their house in order.

The reasons for this sudden move on the part of the Indian government are best known to them. But apparently it was the desire of our conscientious and idealistic Prime Minister to call a conference of the Eastern Nations at Delhi to discuss the situation arising out of the Dutch aggression against the Indonesian Republic which actuated him to take this step. How could he talk of peace elsewhere, when his own country was a party to the hostilities in Kashmir? That this war in Kashmir was not of India's own seeking, but had been forced on her by a perfidious neighbour did not seem to bother him. Was not the applause that he won for this act of self-abnegation on behalf of his country a compensation enough for the harm it might have done to the interests of India in Kashmir?

Whatever may be said about the advisability of the Cease Fire at the time it came, there is no denying the fact that it has in a way, simplified the problem of Kashmir. The Cease Fire line has divided the Jammu and Kashmir State roughly into two equal parts from the view point of area. Beginning from the barren plateau linking Ladakh with Baltistan to the North of the Yoji pass, this line crosses the Srinagar-Leh road beyond Kargil and then runs along the great Himalayan range dividing Kashmir

from Baltistan; then turning South a little it passes near the mouth of the Burzi pass on the Kashmir side. From there it runs along the Western mountains, dividing Kashmir from Chilas and Karen up to Uri from where it goes South-West parallel to the river Jehlam and touches the Southern boundary of the state near Bhimber. A major portion of Baltistan excepting the towns of Kargil and Dras, the whole of Gilgit and a major portion of the Punjabi speaking area of Muzaffarabad Poonch and Mirpur thus now lie on the Pakistan side of the Cease Fire line. The strategic Burzi pass, the only direct link between Kashmir and Gilgit as also a few Kashmiri villages in the Gurais area, also fall on the Pakistan side.

Thus out of the six distinct linguistic and cultural parts or Zones of the State, three are already in the hands of Pakistan. All of them are predominantly Muslim. The Hindus and Sikhs in these parts who never exceeded one lac in number have either been all killed or driven out. Pakistani propoganda has made almost every Muslim inhabitant of these areas a Pakistani.

The remaining three, Viz, Dugar (Jammu) Ladakh and Kashmir except a few villages in the Gurais area and a corner of Baltistan beyond the Yojila lie on the Indian side of the Cease Fire line. Of these Kashmir alone has a Muslim majority. The remaining two are Hindu and Buddhist majority parts of the state.

Thus by proposing the Cease Fire and allowing the Pakistani forces to remain in the occupation of the Pakistan held area of the State, the Indian Government has virtually accepted the division of the State. The Cease Fire agreement does not mention the right of the state Government to administer the areas now held by Pakistan or the so called Azad Kashmir Government. Those areas have been left to be administered by the "Local Authorities" which practically means the Azad Kashmir or any other authority sponsored and supported by the Pakistan Government.

The question of the armed forces of Pakistan and the so-called Azad Kashmir forces has been left vague and undecided. No doubt. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru has made it clear to the U. N. commission by his two 'aides memoirs', that the so-called Azad Kashmir force whose strength is officially stated to be 30 battalions must not only be disbanded, but also disarmed and conditions created for the return of Hindu refugees to their homes, before plebiscite is held, to decide the future of the State.

But these aids memoirs were not shown to the Pakistan Government. They have therefore refused to accept the conditions laid down in them.

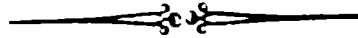
The difference of opinion between the two Governments about the disposal of the so-called Azad Kashmir forces as also about the control of the Gurais area on the mouth of the Burzippass on

the Kashmir side has created a stalemate in the negotiations for truce agreement. The question of holding plebiscite to decide the future of the State does not arise. The truce agreement has not been signed. Admiral Chester Nimitz who has been nominated as the plebiscite administrator by the U. N., can come in the picture only after a truce agreement has been signed.

The new and final proposals presented by the U. N. Commission to both the Governments on the 20th of April 1949, have met with little response from India, because they do not meet the fundamental objections raised by India about the original truce proposals. The temper of the Pakistani press and the speeches of the Pakistani leaders show little evidence of any desire on their part to meet the Indian point of view and decide the question peacefully. The numerous violations of the Cease Fire, increasing raids on Jammu border and increased military activity show that Pakistan has consolidated the gains already made and is busy preparing for obtaining more.

Thus the Jammu and Kashmir state stands divided. Pakistan has grabbed a substantial part of the State by force. The rest, especially the Kashmir valley, she wants to have by diplomacy, if possible, or even by war. There is no sense in these circumstances, of any talk about unity of the State or opposition to any plan of its division. What is more important for us today is a realistic

appreciation of this situation in Kashmir and proper efforts to retain what still remains in our hands. A study of the gains and losses will show that quite a valuable part of the State still lies on our side though the gains of Pakistan too are quite considerable.



CHAPTER XV.

PAKISTAN'S SPOILS

The gains made by Pakistan by the fifteen months of the perfidiously undeclared war against India in Kashmir are not only considerable but also important. Her only claim to the state territories, now occupied by the Pakistan or the so called Azad Kashmir troops, is force. Legally and constitutionally the whole state belongs to India because of the regular accession made by the Maharaja, with the support and consent of the popular leaders. Therefore Pakistan's gains can be better called spoils obtained from a strong neighbour who is oblivious of her strength because of her incapacity to distinguish between friends and foes.

The area of the State territories now held by Pakistan comes to about 34,000 square miles out of the total area of 84,471 square miles for the whole state. It includes about 17,000 sq. miles of Gilgit, about 12 out of the 14 thousand sq. miles of Baltistan and about five thousand square miles of Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad zone. The total population of this Pakistan-occupied part of the state comes to about

whole state. Population of Gilgit is about 1,16,000.

The population of the Pakistani part of Baltistan is about one lac and that of Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad, excluding the towns of Poonch and Mandhar and the Hindu population of about one lac which has been exterminated, is about nine lacs.

Though these population figures are not very imposing yet they are important to Pakistan. The Poonchis, Mirpuris and Gilgitis are fine fighting material. They make good soldiers and seamen. In fact military service is the main occupation of these people. There are about a lac demobilised or ex-soldiers in Mirpur and Poonch areas. They in fact have been doing much of the fighting for Pakistan in Kashmir. Thousands of them are employed in the Indian navy and mercantile marine as naval ratings or stokers. Being comparatively backward educationally and politically, they were considered to be more amenable to the army discipline. This warlike manpower is bound to prove an asset to Pakistan.

Apart from this manpower, Pakistan has been able to achieve a major part of his objectives in the State by the occupation of these territories. Pakistan's main contention about the State was that it being a Muslim majority State it should accede to Pakistan. But the more realistic Pakistani leaders

realised the difficulty in obtaining for Pakistan the Hindu or Buddhist majority parts of the State which are directly contiguous to the Indian Union. They therefore favoured division of the State on the same basis on which India had been partitioned. Such offers in fact were made by Muslim Conference leaders to the Dogra leaders of Jammu long before the troubles started there. But the division of the State on the basis of religion was disapproved by the Dogra people of Jammu for that would have meant loss of Kashmir to them. The Kashmiri leaders like Sheikh Abdullah also opposed partition of the State on the basis of religion because that would have meant ascendancy of the Muslim Conference and the Punjabi Muslims in Kashmir valley.

Pakistan has now virtually brought about a division of the State. Three Muslim majority parts or zones of the State are now held by her. The only Muslim majority part of the State that still remains out of the Pakistani control is Kashmir valley. Pakistan is striving hard to get Kashmir as well. She has realised that Kashmir can not go the way of Mirpur or Gilgit because Indian army is there to defend it. So she is trying to obtain Kashmir by paths of propaganda and diplomacy. But she has not ruled out the path of war which has already given her the other Muslim majority parts of the State. She is therefore giving her utmost attention to the needs of defence and war and may spring a military surprise in Kashmir any

day to achieve her final territorial objective in the State.

From the strategic point of view she has obtained all that she could reasonably hope to get. The first objective of Pakistan in this regard was to cut off the State (which she feared might accede to India any day) from the N.W.F.P. and the tribal area so that no link up of Pathan land with India might be possible. The anxiety of Pakistan to prevent this link up was great in view of the growing demand for Pathanistan and the keen interest that is being evinced by Afghanistan in it. The Indian Government has no doubt adopted quite a neutral attitude towards the Pathanistan movement. But the sympathies of the Indian Public are for the Pathans who have worked shoulder to shoulder with the Indians in their fight against the foreign rule. A direct link between India and the Pathan land, therefore, would have become a headache for Pakistan. That possibility is now removed by the occupation of the Kishan Ganga basin by the Pakistan forces.

The next objective of Pakistan in Kashmir from the strategic point of view was the control over Gilgit. With Gilgit in unfriendly hands, Pakistan's Western defences become quite vulnerable. The bombers and fighters from the air bases in Gilgit can effectively strafe the military targets on the Western frontiers of Pakistan. Further, the creators

and benefactors of Pakistan, like Britain and U. S. A., needed Gilgit as a necessary link in the chain of defence bases against the U. S. S. R. Thus both the strategic objectives of Pakistan as also of the Anglo-U. S. A. block have been achieved.

From the economic point of view these territories are vital to Pakistan. The headworks of the Upper Jehlam canal which irrigates a large part of the West Punjab lie near Mirpur at Mangla. It flows for about 20 miles within the State territory before entering the West Punjab. The economic life of a good portion of the West Punjab could be strangled by the destruction of these headworks. Even a breach in the right bank of the canal which flows parallel to the river Jehlam could render the canal useless to Pakistan. Now the headworks and the area through which the canal flows have come under the control of Pakistan. Therefore the real or imaginary fear of Pakistan about economic strangulation by India is removed.

Further these spoils have brought Pakistan in possession of a rich source of timber and the means of bringing it to the plains. All the rich timber wealth of the forests of Kashmir and Karen areas is carried to the plains by the river Jehlam. The control of some of these forests as also of river Jehlam at the stage at which it enters the plains has made Pakistan self-sufficient in timber. This gain is important because Pakistan has only a few

timber forests on the Murree hills which form the only part of the main Himalayan range falling in Western Pakistan. The Suleman range in Pakistan is barren and yields little forest produce. Further, the Control of these forest areas has assured Pakistan of a regular supply of rosin for her Rosin factory at Jallo near Lahore, and of other kinds of forest produce. Pakistan, in fact, has obtained almost a monopoly of "Kuth", a fragrant medicinal herb, which is produced in the forests of Karen and Chilas.

As far as minerals are concerned, little is known so far about this area. But a geological survey is bound to reveal rich mineral potentialities of these thirty four thousands square miles of mountainous territory. The surveys so far made have revealed the existence of mineral oils in the Poonch area. Lime stone, suitable for cement and different types of valuable clays, is also known to exist in these parts in abundance.

Sources of Hydro power in these areas are immense. The waters of the rivers Jehlum, Krishnaganga, and Poonch can be profitably harnessed to produce electric-power, so badly needed in Western Pakistan.

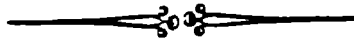
The Kashmir affair has thus proved to be a very profitable game for Pakistan. She has obtained sure and valuable gains at a little cost. The losses of tribal hordes which she threw in the Kashmir

battle could not effect her. Rather that meant some relief to Pakistan for it gave an outlet to the energies of the turbulent tribesmen. Her own military expenditure in Kashmir has not been more than a fraction of that incurred by India.

Her gains are sure because the population of the occupied territories has now been converted, completely to the Pakistani point of view. The systematic Pakistani propoganda and their Mullah's appeals in the name of religion have influenced their minds as much, if not more, as those of the Muslims of the West Punjab. Their linguistic cultural and social ties with the inhabitants of the adjoining districts of Western Pakistan must also have their effect on their minds. They are therefore, sure to vote for Pakistan in the case of a plebiscite, and to fight for her in the case of War. Further the reconquest of strategic areas is very difficult, if not impossible, because the Burzi pass, which is the only approach to Gilgit from the Indian side. is still in the control of Pakistan and the supply-lines of Pakistan army in Gilgit are much shorter and easier than those of the Indian army in Kashmir.

The assertion of Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah in his recent interview to Michael Davidson of London "Observer" that the Poonchis would like their inclusion in an Independent Kashmir is misleading. The Poonchis and Mirpuris have nothing in common

with Kashmiris. They have been resenting the Kashmiri domination in the administration of the State. Kashmiri Muslims being larger in number than Mirpuris and Poonchis combined are not likely to be trusted by them. They certainly prefer direct merger into Pakistan to inclusion in an independent Kashmir which is bound to be dominated either by Communists or by Sheikh Abdullah and his associates, or by both.



CHAPTER XVI.

SURELY OURS.

Though a considerable and strategically important part of the State has been lost for the time being, India still retains the cream of the State territories. The Dogri speaking Eastern part of the Jammu Province stretching from Pathankot to Banihal, the whole of Ladakh as also the Kargil area of Baltistan and the Kashmir Valley excepting a few villages in the Gurais area are still held by India. They lie on the Indian side of the Cease-Fire line. There is no reason why any of these areas should be now lost to India if the Indian government take a firm stand. But in view of the past unrealistic policies of the Indian Government and the compromising attitude of Indian leaders nothing can be said with certainty about the Kashmir Valley with which we shall deal separately. But there can be no question of the Dogra and Ladakhi part of the State being lost to India. They are surely ours unless our leaders in their yearning for goodwill of Pakistan decide to throw them forcibly on her mercy.

The Dugar and Ladakh parts or zones of the State have an area of about 42,000 sq. miles including about 9,000 sq. miles of the four Eastern districts of the Jammu Province comprising the Dugar land and 33,000 square miles of Ladakh. Both these parts are directly contiguous to the East Punjab and Himachal Pradesh in India as also to each other.

The total population of this part is about 11 lakhs of which about 40 thousands live in Ladakh and the rest in Dugar. The Ladakhis are 95 per cent. Buddhists. Out of the Dogras, about 8 lacs are Hindus and the rest are Muslims. But most of the Muslim Dogras migrated to Pakistan after the failure of the Pakistani plan about Jammu and are not expected to return because they have found a place in the economy of Pakistan. Further they do not think that Jammu area can be obtained by Pakistan in any case.

The Rajputs and Brahmins among the Hindu Dogras make fine soldiers. They conquered Kashmir and other far-flung parts of the State for their Dogra Chief Gulab Singh. They occupy an honourable place in the State and the Indian armed forces. They know that their existence depends on their land remaining a part of India. Therefore they are determined not to allow their land to fall in the hands of Pakistan. The same is the case with the docile Ladakhis who have had a bitter taste of the Pakistani methods recently.

This area of 42 thousand square miles, apart from its valuable and war-like man-power, is strategically very important to the defence of India and has vast economic potentialities. The Dogra area forms the only direct link between India and the rest of the State and therefore is indispensable to India if Kashmir valley is to be retained. It covers the North-Western frontier of East Punjab and intervenes between it and the Western parts of the West Pakistan. Being all hilly and mountainous it can form a natural barrier between India and Pakistan in this direction. Its warlike people living in the hills and dales of this typically Himalyan country can become effective guardians of our Northern frontier. Further, its hilly terrain resembling that of the Tribal area can serve as a fine training ground for the Indian army. It is separated from Kashmir in the North by the natural barrier of Pir-Panchal range and from the Punjabi speaking Western districts of the State now held by Pakistan, by the low lying hills extending from Bhimber to Rajauri and the Pir-Panchal range beyond it as also by a perennial stream known as Tawi which passes into Pakistan near Bhimber.

Strategic importance of The Ladakh is no less. In fact it has increased manifold since the loss of Gilgit. It covers the North of the Himachal Pradesh and links India with the central Asian States of Yarkand, Tashkand and Kashghar. Its capital town, Leh, is the nerve-centre Asian trade routes.

It is linked up with Srinager by the Leh Treaty Road which passes through the Yoji pass. But it can also be linked up with Jammu directly via Kishtwar as also with Kulu in the East Punjab. In fact it was conquered by the Dogras through Kishtwar much before them they obtained possession of Kashmir. This vast but barren stretch of land with the town of Leh in its centre can well be regarded as an Indian balcony opening out into central Asia.

Economic potentialities of these parts of the State are immense. If properly developed, the Dugar Area along with the Himachal Pradesh which adjoins it, can become the Switzerland of India. The economic resources of this extensive territory include forest produce, Hydro-Electric Power, Minerals, silk, wool and fruits.

FORESTS PRODUCE:—Forests are perhaps the most valuable assets of the Dogra area at present. The Himalayan ranges running parallel to one another and divided by the river Chenab and its various tributaries, are covered with magnificent Fir and Deodar forests which yield an income of about one crore a year to the State. The timber from these forests is carried down to the plains by the Chenab. Wazirabad, used to be main depot for this timber coming down the Chenab. But since Wazirabad has fallen to Pakistan, Akhnur near Jammu has taken its place. From there it is sent down the Ranbir Canal to Jammu.

Besides timber other forest produce such as medicinal herbs, which supply the raw material for the Drug Research Laboratory at Jammu, and Rosin, which is refined for industrial purposes in the Rosin factory at Miran Sahib near Jammu, is yielded in abundance by these forests. The Rosin factory at Miran Sahib can make up for the loss of the Rosin factory at Jallo which has fallen to Pakistan. The grass and wood pulp from inferior types of trees can be used for the manufacture of paper. In fact the State government had planned to open a paper factory near Jammu. The wood pulp is also utilised for manufacturing Indianite, a light building material for which a factory has been set up near Jammu.

HYDRO ELECTRIC POWER :—The scope for harnessing the vast hydro electric power for generating electricity which can be utilised for both industrial and irrigational purposes is very great in this area. The rivers Chenab., Tawi and Ujha with their numerous tributaries make many natural falls as they flow through this part of the state. At one point near Riasi, enough electricity can be produced to meet the needs not only of the State but also of the whole Punjab at a comparatively lower cost. The Government of the United Punjab, in fact had been negotiating with the State authorities for undertaking a Hydro-electric project at that spot. The waters of the Chenab and the Ujha can also be conveniently and economically used for irrigation of Kandi part of

this area. Already the Ranbir Canal taken out from the Chenab and the Ujha Canal taken out of the Ujha irrigate a part of this area. But the waters drawn by them, so far, was limited by the agreements made between the State and the Government of the United Punjab in the past. Now these agreements have become null and void. Therefore enough water can be thrown in to these canals to irrigate the entire Kandi Ilaqa and make it a surplus area as regards food stuffs.

MINERALS:—From the point of view of minerals the Dogra part of the Jammu Province has four distinct highly mineralised Zones as under:—

1. Riasi Zone:—In this zone rich bauxite deposits coal deposits, kavlin, zinc, lead, copper, nickel, steatite, iron ore, magnesuim, clays, lime-stone for cement and lime, breccias quartzite for glass, pyrites, arsenic, polymetallic sulphates, calcite and codmium are found. Out of these, bauxite is available in very pure form. Forming a surface layer averaging 4 feet in thickness passing downwards into bauxite clay and kavlin or china clay, it exists in workable quantities. The quantity of the first grade ore containing 70 to 80 percent of the metal is 1,810,000 tons and that of the second grade are containing under 70 per cent alumuna is 10,000,000 tons, easily available at the surface. The quantities of Bauxite clay available are very very great.

Coal of excellent quality forming a number of

seams 2 feet to 20 feet in thickness occur over a vast stretch of country from Jungle-Gali to Kala Koti. Samples from various deposits have yielded 60 to 80 per cent of fine carbon. The quantity available is over 100,000,000 tons.

The rest of the mineral deposits of this zone need further detailed investigation to prove their extension, quality and quantity.

II. Padar Kishtwar and Bhadarwah Zone:—This zone is also rich in minerals and contains sapphire deposits, ruby, beryl, mica, graphite of various colours, nickle, copper ore, pyrites etc. Only Sapphire mines at Padar have been worked so far.

III. Ramsu, Khaleni, Doda and Basantgarh Zone:—This is another area abundant in minerals in the Jammu ilaqa containing nickel ore, copper, mica, galena, gypsum, graphite, iron ore, silver ore and polymetallic sulphides which may contain gold. Rocks containing Platinum are also found in this area.

IV. Lower hills and Kandi ilaqa:—In this area possibilities of petroleum have been found. Briers are also found over vast country and can be exploited for the supply of salt, iodine and bromine.

LADAKH:—This region has gold alluvial as well as in sulphides besides salt, sulphur, soda, chromite, quartz, china clay, copper ore and polymetallic sulphides. This area has not been fully investigated as yet. But it is supposed to be very highly mineralised and

holdes out great possibilities. Platinum and other precious metals may also be located in this area.

Thus the mineral resources of Jammu and Ladakh are rich and considerable. But they have not been exploited on large scale so far. Absence of proper means of communication and lack of capital had been the main hurdles in the way of their economic exploitation. The means of communication have improved since the accession of the State to India and are bound to improve still further in the near future. Capital too would be coming forth, once the question of the accession or merger of these areas with India is permanently settled. The firm of Tatas had been negotiating with the State Government before the troubles started for a long term lease and concessions of some of these mineralised areas.

SILK AND WOOL:—Silk industry is one of the promising industries of Jammu. The silk factory at Jammu is doing good work. The Banihal, Batote and Bhadarwah areas are very much suited to sericulture. The hills provide excellent breeding ground for sheep as well. A sheep-breeding centre has already been opened at Banihal by the State Government with the object of rearing Australian breeds of sheep so that finer varieties of wool might be obtained. In view of the rich prospects of Wool Industry in Jammu, the Karan Singh Woolen Mills Co. Ltd. of Srinagar had decided to open a big Woolen Factory at Jammu. The con-

struction work had begun before the troubles in the State started. With the restoration of normal conditions this area can surely be expected to become a big wool-producing and manufacturing centre in the country.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE:—The main agricultural produce of the Jammu area is rice, wheat and jawar. The only corn that grows in Ladakh is a kind of black barley known as "Girm". Saffron is also produced in Kistwar. This is the only place other than Kashmir proper, where saffron of fine quality grows,

Some parts of the Jammu region such as Bhadarwah and Batota are situated at a height of about 5000 feet above the sea level and therefore have a temperate climate similar to that of Kashmir. All varieties of Kashmiri fruits grow here in abundance and are known to be even superior to Kashmir fruits. These placed along with Kud and Sanasar can be developed into fine hill-stations rivaling Gulmarg and Pehalgam in the matter of climate and beauty of landscape.

The people of these areas have close, cultural and social affinities with the people of the adjoining Indian Provinces of East Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Jammu, the chief town of this area is known to be a city of temples and a seat of Sanskrit learning. Vaishno Devi near Riasi is a famous place of Hindu pilgrimage and is visited by lacs of people from all over the North-Western parts of India every year.

Thus the Jammu or Dogar and Ladakh areas of the State, which must come to India under any circumstances unless they are deliberately thrown away, are of great strategic and economic significance. These parts of the State have remained comparatively unknown and neglected so far because of the all-absorbing prominence of the Kashmir valley. The rulers of the State too, though they happened to be Dogras, lavished all their attention and resources on Kashmir. No wonder, therefore that the Indian public thinks Jammu and Kashmir State to be nothing but Kashmir valley.

But this misconception must be removed. Kashmir valley, no doubt is the most celebrated part of the State. But it is only about 1/14 of the whole State. The remaining parts of the State especially Jammu and Ladakh are as good, if not better, parts of India as Kashmir is, and are more surely ours. Therefore they should not be lost sight of in any analysis of the Kashmir problem.

Sheikh Abdullah's plea for independent Kashmir can not affect these parts of the State. They have made it clear to the Indian Government through their representative organisations, the Jammu Praja Parishad and the Ladakh Buddhist Association, that they want the whole of the State to accede to India. But if any part or parts of the state wanted to remain independent or follow some other course, their decision should not be binding on them. Sheikh

Abdullah is a Kashmiri and his National Conference is a Kashmiri organisation. Its decision therefore, can not affect the position of Jammu or Ladakh. The people of Jammu and Ladkh are known to prefer merger with Himachal Pradesh rather than remain tied with Kashmir in case the Kashmiris chose to remain out of India.



CHAPTER XVII.

FUTURE OF THE KASHMIR VALLEY.

Kashmir proper, the biggest river valley in the world situated at a height of more than five thousand feet above the sea level and home-land of 15 lakh Kashmiris is the most celebrated part of the Jammu and Kashmir State. It is the pivot around which the Kashmir problem has been revolving. Now that other Muslim majority parts of the State have already been occupied by Pakistan forces, it has become the only bone of contention between India and Pakistan as regards the Jammu and Kashmir State.

Though strategically not very important either to Pakistan or to India, as it lies just in the centre of the State cut off from Pakistan and India by big stretches of Punjabi speaking and Dogri speaking parts of the State respectively, yet it is the most coveted part of the State. It is a rich country of about five thousand square miles where nature is bountiful, land is fertile, water is abundant, climate is bracing and scenic beauty is magnificent. Surrounded by many Himalayan ranges on all sides and traversed by the Jehlam and its beauti-

ful tributaries like the Sindh and the Lidar, this ancient home of sage Kashyap has been lavishly praised by poets and lovers of beauty of past and present. It has been described as Nandan van, the paradise on earth and a vale of happiness for its grassy meadows, gushing springs and streams, juicy fruites, fragrant flowers, shady "Chinars" and magnificent lakes and landscapes. A cradle of the Aryan race whose culture and civilisation reached great heights here, its every beautiful spot and spring has been hollowed by memories of Aryan sages and shrines of Aryan gods. Kashmiri language is a daughter of Sanskrit and the Sarda script in which it is written, is a sister of the Devnagri script.

Its economic resources and potentialities are also considerable. Its lovely stretches of paddy and maize fields, worlds famous Saffron producing land and rich orchards have made it known as one of the richest agricultural tracts in the world. Forests covering the Himalayan ranges surrounding it yeild valuable timber and other varieties of forest produce. Its soil contains rich deposits of copper, lignite, graphite, gypsum and marble. Its shawls, silks and wools as also artistic handiworks of its skilled artisans are famous all over the world. The tourist traffic pours crores of Rupees into it every year from all parts of India and the world. It is thus a rich country which has a great scope to grow richer and more prosperous.

At present the whole of Kashmir Valley except a few villages in the Gurais area, lies on the Indian side of the cease-fire line. But Pakistanis claim it for Pakistan. They wanted to have it by force. But having failed in that, they are trying hard to have it by diplomacy or by any other means, fair or foul. The claim of Pakistan on Kashmir is based on the contention that being a Muslim majority part of the Jammu and Kashmir State it must go to Pakistan. They in fact, want to have all that still remains in the Indian hands in the State. But it is known that they would not press for the Hindu or Buddhist majority parts if the Kashmir valley is given to them,

The Pakistanis are not actuated, in making this demand, by any sympathy for its people. In fact they know that economic and other vital interests of Kashmiri masses would be hit hard if their land is separated from India. But still they want to have Kashmir because it would cater to their pride and provide them with a pleasure ground and rich loot. The thousands of modern bungalows built by Hindus in Kashmir are coveted by Pakistani barons whose appetite for Hindu's wealth and properties has been whetted by their ill-gotten gains in Lahore and elsewhere in Western Pakistan. The rich orchards and pleasure-gardens, the beautiful women and docile but skilled workmen of Kashmir attract the attention of Pakistani barons. It appeals to them as an ideal pleasure ground and

valuable spoil They know that Kashmir can provide every Pakistani nawab with a bungalow well-furnished and equipped with modern amenities of life. This prospect of loot coupled with the desire to have this celebrated beauty spot for Pakistan has made her rulers keen about Kashmir. They persist in their demand because their past experience has convinced them that any demand can be made acceptable to the Congress leaders of India if it is persistently made and is backed by threats of force and bloodshed

The claim of India on Kashmir is much stronger and logical as it is based on solid grounds. In the first place, Kashmir valley is geographically and culturally a part of India and has remained so politically too throughout the course of her long history, except for short periods when she became part of Afghan empire controlled from Kabul. Kashmiris know fully well, and history bears it out, that whenever Kashmir was cut adrift from India she suffered physically and economically. A thing of beauty as Kashmir is, she can be happy and prosperous only in the life-giving and sympathetic shelter of her Mother India.

The partition of India which followed the assent given by the Congress to the claim of Muslim majority areas in British India to secede, could have no bearing on the Indian states which could not be a party to that unfortunate settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League

leaders of British India. The Jammu and Kashmir State or for that matter any other part of India could not automatically get the right to secede from India and join Pakistan as a result of partition of British India. Therefore the claim of Pakistan on Kashmir for its being a Muslim Majority area is untenable, unless the Indian people and leaders are willing to allow Kashmir to secede from India like the West Punjab and Sind.

This natural claim of the Indian Government to keep Kashmir within India was strengthened by the regular accession of the State to India through its Maharaja, supported by the popular leaders of the State. The Jammu and Kashmir State being geographically contiguous to both India and Pakistan, could with equal justification accede to India or Pakistan according to the suggestions of the partition plan of June 3rd, 1947. She chose to accede to India.

The claims of India over Kashmir became fully established when she decided to defend Kashmir from the Pakistani hands. Her success in saving Kashmir from falling in the hands of Pakistan by a military victory against the Pakistani invading force has added to the other claims of India on Kashmir, the one based on the right of conquest and actual possession. The precious blood of thousands of Indian youth who have died fighting on the hills and dales of Kashmir for its defence and expenditure of crores of money coming from the

impoverished Indian tax-payer has made the retention of Kashmir a question of honour and prestige for the Indian army and people. Its loss through bad tactics and diplomacy, after it has been saved militarily, is unthinkable.

But the uncertainty about Kashmir is created by the persistent stand of the Indian leaders that the ultimate fate of Kashmir shall be decided by a plebiscite. There is nothing wrong in this democratic stand. But to stick to this recognised peaceful method of settlement of territorial disputes, after the complicity of Pakistan in the Kashmir war has been proved beyond doubt and has been accepted by Pakistan Government herself, smacks of appeasement and amounts to pandering to that type of intransigence which resulted in partition of India and all that came in its wake. Pakistan in fact has forfeited all claims to plebiscite by taking resort to arms against India, and therefore talk of plebiscite in Kashmir should end once for all.

But since Indian leaders persist in this stand about plebiscite, it is important to know what an average Kashmiri himself thinks about the accession question. The economic dependence of Kashmir, both for its necessities of life as also for the export of its fruits and artistic products, on India is so pronounced that average Kashmiri considers accession to India advantageous for him. His historical and cultural ties also point in the same direction. Though most of them have been converted to Islam,

their life, customs and manners are still governed mainly by the Bhartiya ideals. The tourist-traffic on which the economy of the valley depends to a good extent, also determines their choice in favour of India because 90 per cent of the visitors coming to Kashmir during the past few years, happened to be Indians. Their experience of the Hindu visitors who are invariably better paymasters and more upright in their dealings and behavior towards them in contrast with the bullying attitude of the Pakistanis points them clearly where their best interests lie. Their recent experience of the Pakistani raiders, who like the Afghan invaders in the past, let loose hell on Kashmir in the name of Islamic brotherhood, contrasts poignantly with the sympathetic and honourable treatment meted out to the Kashmiris by the Indian soldiers who have cleared the valley of the raiders. All these factors point out to an average Kashmiri that his best interests demand that his homeland should remain a part of India. Thus his reason and logic of events point to the advantages of accession to India.

But there is one hurdle upon which Pakistan counts. It is the religion of an overwhelming majority of the Kashmiris. They are Muslims and are as much swayed by sentiments and propoganda in the name of religion as their coreligionists in other parts of India and Pakistan. Pakistanis know it and they bank on it in the case of a plebiscite. Their appeal to them is in the name of Islam. They

interpret the question of accession before them as a choice between a temple and mosque, between Gita and Quran. This kind of propoganda has its effect on them as it touches their heart and rouses their sentiments.

This has naturally created a conflict between the head and mind of an average Kashmiri. Cold reason and economic interests point out to him the advisability of accession to India, while his sentiments point out to him his religious duty to vote for Pakistan. The ideal of Secular State or the talk of Gandhian ideals is as little understood by him as by his Indian compatriots and can have little influence on his choice. So this conflict, in which his heart and religious sentiments are bound to overcome the cold logic based on the consideration of economic gain, if not satisfactorily resolved, is bound to influence his choice, in the case of a plebiscite in favour of Pakistan.

This conflict in the minds of Kashmiri Muslims could have been resolved by one man if he had wanted to do so, though it is doubtful whether he can even if he wishes, do the same now. This man is Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah. He was really respected and loved by a majority of Kashmiries before he became Prime Minister of Kashmir. They looked up to him for guidance. He claims to speak for the 15 lakh Kashmiris and therefore he might have been able to carry them with him in the matter of accession. That is why the Indian

leaders like Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru gave him all-out support during the 'Quit Kashmir' movement and expected him, in return, to go all out in support of India.

But unfortunately Sheikh Abdullah himself perhaps suffers from the same conflict. At least he has done nothing so far to resolve this conflict in the minds of the people whom he claims to represent in favour of India. An analysis of his speeches delivered in Kashmir since his release from jail in September 1947, bears this out. In none of his speeches in Kashmir he has pleaded unequivocally for accession to India. He has always been laying conditions and provisos to be fulfilled before Kashmiris could vote for accession to India. If read together they lead to the conclusion that he himself does not want unqualified accession to India.

His attitude towards India and Pakistan was cleanly laid down in a statement, issued by him as head of the administration of the Jammu and Kashmir State, which was published in the form of a pamphlet entitled "To America" in 1947. In the course of it he writes "I sent one of my colleague, to Lahore to convince the Muslim League leaders of the justice of our demand. We asked them to give us time to judge for ourselves the advantages and disadvantages of any of the three courses, accession to Pakistan or to India or Independence that we may wish to adopt. The stand, which I and my people took at that time, was that we must achieve

our own freedom as a State before deciding the issue of accession.

“In a speech which I delivered at a public meeting in Srinagar on the 5th of October, I said that if the people living in the Jammu and Kashmir State were by-passed and the State declares its accession to India, I shall raise the banner of revolt and we will launch a “do or die” struggle.

“The first round of exploratory talks having proved futile, we attempted a second time to approach the leaders of Pakistan with the request to support our freedom demand. My representative went once again to Lahore, but while the talks with the leaders of Pakistan were proceeding, preparations for the invasion of Kashmir were being made from behind the scenes”.

Sheikh Abdullah was reported in the ‘Hindustan Times’ of New Delhi to have said during the course of his speech at Srinagar on the 5th of October 1947, that his choice about accession between India and Pakistan would depend upon the welfare of the people of Kashmir. “But even if we join Pakistan, we will never believe in the two nation theory”.

In his speech before the Bombay Union of Journalists early in 1949, he demanded guarantees from Indian Government. He said, “If India gave Kashmir an honourable place with a guarantee of peace and security and protection for the interests that Kashmir stood for, the State would never be lost to the Indian Union”.

Speaking at Hazarat Bal in Srinagar early in March, at a reception given to the Egyptian Press Delegation, he said, "The foremost question before us is not accession to India or Pakistan. First we have to become completely free."

The latest and the most damaging has been his interview to Michael Davidson of the London "Observer" in which he said, that he would like Kashmir to join neither India nor Pakistan, but remain as an independent buffer state between the two dominions.

These statements and speeches coming from a man, who approached the Indian Government to accept accession on the eve of Pakistani invasion and on whose initiative the National Conference in its convention at Srinagar in 1948 registered its final decision in favour of accession to India, look strange. But they are facts and have deepened the conflict in the mind of the Kashmiri masses about the question of accession. He is thus becoming a hurdle rather than a support in the way of final accession of Kashmir to India.

People ask the reason for this dubious attitude of Sheikh Abdullah. Is he insincere? No, he is not. The truth however, is that he is a realist and a popular leader. He is very ambitious and his dominating passion is power. He knows that his value depends upon the support and confidence of the people of Kashmir in him. Indian Government has to woo him for that reason alone. He therefore

does not want to take any decision which might be exploited by his possible opponents in Kashmir to wean the Kashmiri masses away from his influence. He knows the influence of religious sentiments on his Kashmiri followers. He therefore, punctuates every speech delivered before them with quotations from Quran and Hadish. In the matter of choice between India and Pakistan he does not want to tell them explicitly to join India. He wants to leave this delicate choice to his followers and avoid responsibility. His own past antecedents and Aligarh-spirit are also partly responsible for this dubious attitude. Probably there is a similar conflict raging in his own mind too. Naturally, therefore, he cannot resolve the conflict in the minds of his followers in respect of this question of accession.

The Indian government too is responsible for this conflict in the minds of Kashmiri people and Sheikh Abdullah. By treating Kashmir as a foreign country and by declaring again and again that the future of Kashmir shall be decided by a plebescite, it has stood in the way of settling down of the popular mind in Kashmir. It has kept alive the thought in the average Kashmiri's mind that he has still to decide his future. Therefore his mind has remained open to the Pakistani influences that are being brought to bear upon his mind in many subtle ways.

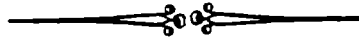
The decision to invite representatives of Kashmir

to sit in the Constituent Assembly of India and the authoritative declaration of Shri N. Gopaldaswamy Ayyanger on the floor of the Assembly that the accession of Kashmir to India is "Complete and unconditional", and the resolute and firm speeches of Pt. Nehru at Srinagar on the 29th and 30th of May, 1949. have removed this uncertainty about Kashmir to some extent. The acceptance of Abdullah's humiliating demand about the removal of the Maharaja in spite of the fact that he had been fully cooperating with the Government of India since the day of accession of his State to India, and assurances of full and unstinted support to whatever he does in the State should have dispelled the doubts and resolved the conflict, if any, in the mind of Sheikh Abdullah.

But still, it is too early yet to say anything definite about the future of the Kashmir valley. The Indian Government and leaders still harp upon their commitments about plebiscite in Kashmir. It was an unnecessary and unwise commitment when it was entered upon. Pakistan by her persistent attitude of hostility has made such a commitment on the part of India look most ridiculous and foolish. But the Indian leaders, in their idealism or too much regard for their name, still persist in humouring Pakistan by the talk of plebiscite. They still pin their faith in Sheikh Abdullah alone, to the utter neglect of other and more dependable forces in the State. Their other assurances cannot

be much relied upon in view of the fate of their assurances about partition of India in the past.

Kashmir valley, however, is still in our possession, our armies are there. We have already paid a heavy price in blood and money to save it. Therefore the Indian leaders, however idealistic and Utopian they might be, can ill afford to lose it. The loss of Kashmir now many mean a death blow to their prestige. That wholesome fear in their minds justifies the hope that they would not yield to the threats of Pakistan and shall save the Kashmir valley from going the way of Gilgit, Baltistan and Mirpur-Poonch.



CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSIONS.

The foregoing study of the Kashmir problem, its genesis, growth and present position, points to the need of a bold and realistic approach to it. A policy of helpless dependence on the shape circumstances may take in Kashmir or elsewhere, or on one person or party which has been much boosted up by propaganda during the last two years, is neither in keeping with the dignity and interests of India, nor suited to the actual conditions prevailing in the Jammu and Kashmir State. The prestige and self-respect of India and her armed forces are involved in the Kashmir issue. Therefore no personal or extraneous considerations should be allowed to stand in the way of a firm handling of the problem. It is a test for India's strength and statesmanship. She should not be found wanting in either. The strength of India has been well demonstrated by her armed forces. They have done their part of the job well, and might have completed it if politicians had not intervened. It is now for the politicians and statesmen to not only preserve what has been

saved by the armed forces, but also to improve upon it.

The first requisite for this is, that the Indian public and statesmen should be clear in their mind about what they wanted in Kashmir, what they have actually achieved or lost so far, and what are the prospects for the future. This is essential for a realistic approach to the problem, for, it is no use deluding one's own self or befooling the public by talking of things and situations which do not exist.

India, as is well known, wanted the whole of Jammu and Kashmir state to remain a part of India. The whole had acceded to it. But India has already lost about 2/5 ths. of it to Pakistan. Of the four Muslim majority zones of the State three, namely Gilgit, Baltistan, and Mirpur-Poonch-Muzaffarabad are under the control of Pakistan. Pakistan armies are well-entrenched in the areas under their occupation. Their military bases in Pakistan are close by, their supply lines are short and secure, and the local populations of these areas have been won over by them.

Thus the declarations and pledges of the Indian leaders, that not an inch of the State territory would be left in the hands of Pakistan, have been belied and broken. By accepting cease-fire without first recapturing all the territory lost to Pakistan and driving all the Pakistani troops and raiders out of the State, the Indian Government have shaken the

confidence and betrayed the trust of the people in their leadership. The people have been amazed and annoyed at the audacity of Pakistan and timidity of the Indian attitude towards her. The Indian leadership seems to be caught in the cobweb of deceitful diplomacy of Pakistan and enticing methods of the U. N. C. I. P.

The political unity of the State has thus been broken. It has been virtually partitioned. This fact should be admitted frankly without beating about the bush. Some Indian leaders abhor the word partition, for the two-nation theory has come to be associated with it. But they themselves accepted it by implication when they agreed to the partition of India. It cannot be destroyed now so long as Pakistan exists as a separate State within the natural boundaries of our country.

Nor is there any justification for dragging in the fair name and ideals of Gandhiji or the new-fangled slogans like secularism into the Kashmir problem. The Gandhian ideals had been belied and negatived by the congress leaders in his very presence by accepting partition of India. Their slogan of secularism is little understood and appreciated by the masses in India or Kashmir. Therefore it is not proper to keep eyes shut to the realities or to deliberately ignore them in the name of such whims of a few persons at the top. Gandhiji's ideals are going to be better served by the incorpo-

ration of not only the whole of Kashmir State but also of Pakistan into India and by building up a united India, politically well-knit, economically prosperous and culturally renescent on the pattern of Ram Rajya as envisaged by him.

The problem of Kashmir is the result of Pakistan's aggression against India. It is a question of territorial integrity and honour of India. Communalism and secularism which are India's domestic problems or fads should therefore not be allowed to stand in the way of proper handling of this vital problem.

The gains obtained by Pakistan in Kashmir so far are important. Gilgit, the most important part of the State from the strategic point of view, is under her complete control. She is feverishly busy in converting it into a strong military base so that she may be able to use it against India if and when the hostilities are renewed.

But much still remains in Indian hands. Kashmir valley, Jammu and Ladakh are potentially rich and strategically equally important for the defence of India. Pakistan wants to have them too by diplomacy, conspiracy or coercion. She has been employing all these methods since the cease-fire. The main concern of India in Kashmir now therefore, should be to see that what still remains with her is not lost, in part or whole in any circumstances.

This demands that the minds of Indian leaders and public should be clear about certain things.

In the first place it should be realised that the talk of plebiscite has no meaning or justification now. Pakistan had no right to demand plebiscite in a territory which legally and constitutionally belongs to India. India had made this offer to prove her bonafides and her anxiety to avoid bloodshed and settle the matter peacefully. But Pakistan spurned it. She forfeited, whatever right she had for demanding it long ago by taking resort to arms. She cannot claim it now after having occupied a big part of the State by force and dectet. Plebiscite is essentially a peaceful and civilised method of deciding territorial disputes. But those who deliberately choose the path of war can have no moral or legal right to demand a plebiscite after their failure to achieve their objective by war. War and peace cannot go together. Pakistan cannot be allowed to eat the cake and also have it. In fact India has nothing to do with Pakistan in the matter of plebiscite. India made the offer of plebiscite to the people of the Jammu and Kashmir State and not to Pakistan which has no locus standi in Kashmir. The Indian Government, therefore, should refuse to enter into talks or negotiations with the Government of Pakistan about plebiscite in Kashmir.

But if the Indian leaders are determined to oblige Pakistan in this matter, they must first make her compensate to the people and Government of India for all the losses and expenditure in men, money and material—incurred by them in the war.

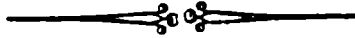
in Kashmir, which was forced on India by her. It should be made clear to Pakistan that plebiscite can be held only after Pakistan has vacated the State territories occupied by her, paid compensation and created conditions for the return and resettlement of all the refugees from those areas now living in camps in India and Jammu. The suspense and conflict in the minds of the people of the State, created by the talk of plebiscite, should thus be ended.

Secondly India must adopt a realistic attitude towards the internal developments in the State. To try to wink over the acts of omission and commission of the men whom India has put in power in the State under the mistaken idea that India depends on them for retaining Kashmir, is dangerous. The people of the State are getting restive. Their oppressive policies and equivocal speeches and statements, coupled with the economic distress and growing activities of the communists and Pakistani elements in the State, have shaken the faith of even the staunchest pro-Indian elements in the population of the State, in the present regime, set up by the Government of India in the State. A state of suspense has been created in their minds. Many have been seeking relief from this suspense either by saying good-bye to the State or by turning communists. It is therefore necessary that steps should be taken to remove the internal discontent.

That can best be done just now by placing the State under the State's Ministry and appointing a military administrator who should run the Government with the cooperation of the National Conference in Kashmir and Praja Parishad in Jammu. This will restore confidence in the civil population and will also prove more helpful to the military authorities. In the mean while, new elections to the State Praja Sabha should be held on the basis of adult franchise, so that the true representatives of the people may be able to come to the forefront.

But, in case the Indian Statesmen fail to adopt a realistic approach to the Kashmir problem and persist in the policy of drift, with minds torn between the idealistic thoughts about U.N.O., plebiscite and desire to disprove the two-nation theory in Kashmir on the one hand and actual realities of the situation in the State on the other, they must concede the right of self-determination to all the different and distinct peoples inhabiting the State. Plebiscite draws its sanction from the democratic principle of right of self-determination. This right belongs to Dogras Ladakhis and Kashmiris inhabiting the State as much as to the Gilgiti's or Poonchis. To allow the Pakistani elements inhabiting the Pakistan-held parts of the state to influence the fate of Dogras and Ladakhis or Kashmiris would be most undemocratic and unjust.

This last suggestion is not a counsel of despair. It is the last realistic alternative for the solution of Kashmir tangle to be adopted only if the Indian statesmen fail to adopt a firm attitude towards Pakistan and leave the matters to drift. The need of making this suggestion arises because of the scepticism, born out of the past experience and the trend of our present policies towards Pakistan and Sheikh Abdullah, about the shape things may take in Kashmir in future. It is better to be fore-warned than to repent afterwards.



POST SCRIPT

The Kashmir Problem on the whole has remained as it was—both internally, as well as externally during the four months which have passed since the last Chapter was written and the manuscript sent to the press. The conclusions given in the last chapter, therefore, remain as true today as they were four months ago.

But nothing can remain absolutely static in this changing world, and least of all a problem which has fallen into the vortex of power-politics of the nations that dominate and control the movements of thought and action in the modern world. The cease-fire in Kashmir has no doubt created a stalemate so far as actual fighting by the soldiers is concerned though the Pakistani and Indian armies still stand face to face along the 800 miles of the cease-fire line. But this has not ended the fight for Kashmir. It is continued by Pakistan on other fronts with even greater vigour. The propaganda campaign against India has been intensified by her both in Pakistan as also in foreign countries. Warlike preparations are being pushed forward by her with redoubled vigour.

She has been making huge purchases of arms and armaments from Italy, Czechoslovakia and other European countries. Training centres for mountain warfare have been opened by Pakistan in the N. W. F. P. and Azad Kashmir territories. Her plan is to smuggle such trained personnel into the India-held territory in Kashmir—to whip up an internal rebellion at the opportune moment.

At the same time the Pakistani diplomats have forced America and Britain to pay more attention to Pakistan by obtaining an invitation from Moscow for Liaqat Ali to visit Russia through subtle diplomatic manipulations. Truman and Attlee did put the pressure on India as desired by Pakistan, by urging upon the Indian Prime Minister Pt. Nehru to accept arbitration over the Kashmir issue. Indirect pressure is also being put by her on India by picking up new quarrels about such question as river water in the Punjab and by adopting aggressively unreasonable attitude toward the question of the Evacuee Property and of the Hindus still remaining in Pakistan.

The attitude of the Government of India has also undergone a little change as signified by their firm rejection of the Truman-Attlee suggestions about arbitration. Pt. Nehru seems to have realized the folly of harping upon the offer of plebiscite in face of the aggressive propaganda and behaviour of Pakistan and has begun to take a more realistic view of the problem. He has come to the conclusion that

war, stalemate or mediation could be the only three ways of solving the Kashmir problem. He is opposed to war and would try to avoid it at any cost so far as it lies in his power. He favours mediation and would even prefer long period of stalemate, with all the economic burden on the Indian exchequer and suspense and worry for the people of the State which it is bound to entail, if that could avoid war. But it is doubtful if his desire for peaceful solution would be gratified by Pakistan whose top-ranking leaders have openly been preaching Jehad against Hindus of India and declaring that not only every inch of Kashmir would be reconquered but also every inch of the rest of India as well. First Kashmir, then Patiala and then Delhi and beyond is the popular slogan in Pakistan today.

The U. N. C. I. P. has been enjoying the bracing climate of Kashmir and Switzerland all these months. It has presented its new report on Kashmir to the Security Council of the U. N. O. shortly. It provides the two power-blocks another opportunity to sit on judgement on the country of Mahatma Gandhi for having violated the principles of non-violence by resisting the Pakistani aggression by force of arms. Both Abraham and Sheikh Abdullah have reached Lake Success to press their claims on the land which really belongs to neither of them. Neither the Maharaja who is still the ruler and head of the State, in fiction at

least, nor the people in whose name both of them will speak, would come in the picture, because the people as such remain as good chattels as before, with the only difference that their new lords keep their swords covered with high-sounding ideologies and deep cutting slogans.

The interests of the British and the Americans who are the real arbiters, demand that they should keep both the parties well humoured. America has humoured Pt. Nehru by giving a great welcome to him but has also kept the Muslim world well in hand by giving a greater welcome to Shah of Iran and is preparing for giving a similar reception to Liaquat Ali as well. The British listened to Pt. Nehru on Kashmir with patience when he last visited London only to give greater publicity to Abraham, the President of the Azad Kashmir Government, by inviting him to speak on the same topic on the B. B. C.

The situation inside the State has also not remained static. The popular discontent especially in the Jammu region against the oppressive and discriminatory policies of the present regime continued to grow till it burst out in the form of a province-wide peaceful and non-violent Satyagraha against the Government. Hundreds of young and old men and women, coming from every strata of society courted imprisonment and underwent terrible suffering to draw the attention of the public and of the Government of India to their genuine grievances.

Sheikh Abdullah's Government in its treatment of the Satyagrahis proved that the intoxication of power in the case of upstarts, with narrow minds, can be more dangerous than the tyrannical use of power by autocrats. The cruelties perpetrated by the popular Government of Kashmir on men and women satyagrahis in Jammu put to shame, as an old police officer of the State told the present writer, the worst oppression of the old regime. Even the Home Minister of the State, Bakshi Gulam Mohammed, did not lag behind the police in beating the Satyagrahis with his own hands. This naturally strengthened the movement which began to spread in the interior and might have taken a dangerous turn if it had not been withdrawn by the Praja Parishad leaders on the advice of some Indian leaders, in the wider interests of the country. The State Government too has become a bit wiser and has released the popular leaders, like Pt. Prem Nath Dogra. But some others like Thakur Dhanwantar Singh M L. A., Pt. Makhan Lal and Pt. Niranjana Nath have undergone a longer period of detention without trial.

Though peace prevails in the State today, yet the dissatisfaction of the people of Jammu with the present regime continues. The result is that the demand for separation from the State and for merger with the Dogra parts of the East Punjab has begun to gain ground in the Jammu region.

The Ladakhis are equally distressed and

dissatisfied. Their experiences of the Pakistanis and of the Kashmir Administration has scared them so much that during the last few months they have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Indian Government to their request to be taken under direct Indian control.

The new Indian constitution has treated Jammu and Kashmir State as a class apart from other Provinces and States constituting the Indian Union. Its accession to India has been recognized only in respect of defence, foreign affairs and communications. In respect of all other matters Kashmir is treated as an Independent State and it has been expressly laid down that Indian jurisdiction over the State except in regard to the above-mentioned three subjects can be extended only with the consent of the Constituent Assembly of the State which is still to be born. It is a concession to Sheikh Abdullah's ambition to mould the social, economic and political life of the State on independent lines. He wants to enjoy all the advantages of accession without its responsibilities. This is not to the liking of the people of Jammu and Ladakh who want closer relations and even merger with Bharat.

But all these internal and external developments in the State are ultimately bound up with the final decision about the future of the State. The U. N. C. I. P. has submitted its report and has suggested the appointment of a mediator with wide powers to bring India and Pakistan together on all unresolved issues.

Nothing can be said about the way the mediator would take up the question. But it seems that history of the U.N.C.I.P. will repeat itself in the activities of the mediator. The Government of India are likely to accept the mediation as Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru already put forth such a proposal. Mediation or arbitration but it seems almost certain that the present defacto division of the State between India and Pakistan would be recognized with a few changes in favour of Pakistan. It may recommend some sort of international control for Kashmir Valley and suggest some territorial concessions to Pakistan in the Rajori Sector to add to her spoils in Kashmir. Whether the Government of India would accept such a solution or reject it even at the risk of renewal of war with Pakistan is a question which time alone can answer. For the time being, the partition of the Jammu and Kashmir State seems to have been accepted as an accomplished fact. Kashmir divided has come as a cruel but rather natural consequence of India divided.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.

Text of the letter addressed to Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General of India containing the decision of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir State, regarding accession of the State to India with the concurrence of the popular leader of the State

26th Oct. 1947.

My dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have to inform Your Excellency that a grave emergency has arisen in my State and request immediate assistance of your Government.

As Your Excellency is aware the State of Jammu and Kashmir has not acceded to either the Dominion of India or to Pakistan. Geographically my State is contiguous to both the Dominions. It has vital economical and cultural links with both of them. Besides my State has a common boundary with the Soviet Republics and China. In their external relations the Dominions of India and Pakistan cannot ignore this fact.

I wanted to take time to decide to which

Dominion I should accede, whether it is not in the best interest of both the Dominions and my State to stand independent, of course with friendly and cordial relations with both.

I accordingly approached the Dominions of India and Pakistan to enter into a standstill agreement with my State. The Pakistan Government accepted this arrangement. The Dominion of India desired further discussion with representatives of my Government. I could not arrange this in view of the developments indicated below. In fact the Pakistan Government under the standstill agreement are operating Post and Telegraph system inside the State.

Though we have got a stand-still agreement with the Pakistan Government, that Government permitted steady and increasing strangulation of supplies like food, salt and petrol to my State.

Afridis, soldiers in plain clothes, and desperadoes, with modern weapons, have been allowed to infiltrate into the State at first in Poonch area, then in Sialkot and finally in mass in the area adjoining Hazara district on the Ramkot side. The result has been that the limited number of troops at the disposal of the State had to be dispersed and thus had to face the enemy at several points simultaneously that it has become difficult to stop the wanton destruction of life and property and looting. The Mahoora Power House which supplies the electric current to the whole of Srinagar has been burnt. The number

of women who have been kidnapped and raped makes my heart bleed. The wild forces thus let loose on the State are marching on with the aim of capturing Srinagar, the summer capital of my Government, as a first step to overrunning the whole State.

The mass infiltration of tribesmen drawn from the distant areas of the N. W. F. Province coming regularly in motor trucks using Mansehr-Muzaffarabad road and fully armed with up-to-date weapons cannot possibly be done without the knowledge of the Provincial Government of the N. W. F. Province and the Government of Pakistan. In spite of repeated appeals made by my Government no attempt has been made to check these raiders or stop them from coming to my State. In fact both the Pakistan Radio and press have reported these occurrences. The Pakistan Radio even put out a story that a provisional Government has been set up in Kashmir. The people of my State both the Muslims and non-Muslims generally have taken no part at all.

With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and the great emergency of the situation as it exists I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion. Naturally they cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government. The other alternative is to leave my State and my people to freebooters. On this basis no civilised Government


can exist or be maintained. This alternative I will never allow to happen so long as I am the Ruler of the State and I have life to defend my country.

I may also inform Your Excellency's Government that it is my intention at once to set up an Interim Government and ask Sheikh Abdullah to carry the responsibilities in this emergency with my Prime Minister.

If my State has to be saved immediate assistance must be available at Srinagar. Mr. Menon is fully aware of the situation and he will explain to you if further explanation is needed.

In haste and with kindest regards.

Sd. Hari Singh.



APPENDIX II.

Extracts from the Resolution passed and speeches made at the Convention of the National Conference held at Srinagar on the 12th of October, 1948.

Resolution

“.....In these circumstances this convention therefore confirms the provisional accession of the State with India. It further pledges its fullest support to the final accession to India on the basis of New Kashmir, the realisation of which will be our first and foremost task”.

Speech of Maulana Mohamr ud Saeed, General Secretary of the Kashmir National Conference:—

“The time has come now when Kashmir should boldly and unequivocally declare for final accession to India. The State of hesitation and uncertainty was unfair to their friends and a boon to their enemies”.



APPENDIX III.

**Resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Jammu
Praja Parishad in its meeting held at Jammu
on 20th of May, 1949.**

The Jammu Praja Parishad reiterates its considered opinion that the full and unconditional accession of the Jammu and Kashmir State to India alone can ensure social progress, material prosperity and political security to the people of Jammu, Kashmir and other parts of this heterogeneous State. To the people of Jammu who are a distinct people inhabiting a distinct and well defined homeland from Pathankot to the Banihal Pass the idea of an independent States for the Jammu and Kashmir State outside India is as repugnant as that of joining Pakistan because their best interests demand closer ties with India and particularly with its Dogri-speaking belt consisting of the Himachal Pradesh, and the districts of Kangra, Hoshiarpur and Gurdaspur in the East Punjab. The Parishad therefore wants to make it clear to the Government of

India that the future of the Jammu and Kashmir State and particularly of its Jammu region should not be decided over the head of and against the declared wishes of its people. Any such decision would be resisted by the Praja Parishad by all possible means.



APPENDIX IV.

Memorandum Submitted by Shri Chhewang Rigzin, President Buddhist Association Ladakh to the Prime Minister of India on behalf of the People of Ladakh.

Sir,

On the eve of the grant of responsible Government to the people of Kashmir by the Maharaja, we the Buddhists of Ladakh and adjoining areas presented to him through our representatives in the Praja Sabha a memorial, a copy of which was submitted to you for your information and consideration. This memorial, which was prompted by our apprehensions for our future, based on our bitter experience of nearly a century and a quarter, embodied the following proposals:—

1. That he should govern us directly through legislative and administrative machinery, proposals for which would be submitted by us at his command.

2. That our homeland amalgamated with the Hindu-majority parts of Jammu should form a separate province in which adequate safe-guards should be provided for our distinctive rights and interests.

3. That we should be permitted to join East Punjab.

4. That we should be permitted to re-unite politically with Tibet of which land we form part and parcel for all purposes but political.

Proposal (1) originated in our respect for the obligation we owed to the ruler in view of the relation which bound us to him from the day of the conquest of our land by his great-grand-father.

Proposal (2) emanated from the fact that we desired to see nothing more of the administrators

Kashmir, who had mostly governed us during the past to our utter ruin, that our cultural kinship with the Hindus encouraged us to expect a sympathetic regard for our interests and an assured future in a Hindu-majority province, and finally that historical causes bound us to the people of Jammu and not to those of Kashmir, for it was the Jammu Dogras who conquered Ladakh for Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1834, while Kashmir came into his possession in 1846, twelve years latter.

All things considered, however, proposals No. 1 and 2 were concessions to treaty obligations imposed on us by the Dogra conquest while proposal No. 3 which would come into force on the failure of (1) and (2) was put forward because it is the only panacea for all our ills, the only guarantee for our future progress and development

No. 4 was a proposal of despair, for though we are in and of Tibet, the political and economic system

of that land—our racial and spiritual home—are too archaic, antiquated and unprogressive to suit us. We rather wish that India should exert her wholesome influence in the political and economic fields on her (Tibet) at the present day even as she shaped and moulded her spiritual and cultural life in ancient times.

The Maharajadhiraj has so far vouchsafed to us no reply and we have taken this silence of His Highness to imply the relinquishment by him of his position as a party in respect of proposals (1) and (2), a tacit recognition of our right to choose our path independent of him. We have given most anxious thought to this grave problem and after mature deliberation arrived at the decision that we should straightway merge with India.

That we have the right to determine our own future apart from other communities and people inhabiting the state and that we cannot be affected by the result of the forthcoming plebiscite in the event of its being favourable to Pakistan is evident from the following facts:—

(1) We are a separate nation by all the tests—race, language, religion, culture—determining nationality. The only link connecting us with the other people of the State being the bond of common ruler. If the Indian National Congress could persuade itself to recognise the Muslims of India as a separate nation although they had so much in common with the other elements of the Indian population the

Government of India should have no hesitation in recognising what is patent and incontrovertible fact in our case.

(2) Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla built up his case on the validity of the Treaty of Amritsar. This treaty bears upon the territory of Kashmir only so while the ruler has consented to the transfer of his sovereign power in favour of all his people. S. Mohammad Abdulla and the people of Kashmir can, through this transference, manage the affairs of their country as they will. But they have not the power to appropriate against their will a people, a separate nation, whom a separate treaty—the result of the war of 1834 twelve years anterior to the treaty of Amritsar—bound to the ruler in a special relationship, in which, the people of Kashmir, who came into the picture later, naturally, did not figure at all.

(3) The right of self-determination claimed by us cannot be claimed with equal force by the people of Baltistan including Skardu and parts of Kargil tehsils predominantly peopled by Muslims, as they are connected by ties of religion with the majority community in Jammu & Kashmir, nor by the people of Gilgit who came under Dogra rule through conquest after the annexation of Kashmir and whom not only identity of religion but of race as well binds to the majority community of Jammu & Kashmir. It may be added that at the time of the conquest of Ladakh by Zorawar Singh, the entire area comprised under the Tehsils of Leh and Kargil acknowledged

the suzerainty of our Raja, while Baltistan had several rajas of its own.

In case the result of the plebiscite is favourable to India, we simply go a step further than other people of the State in seeking a closer union with that great country and in case it is otherwise, our verdict stands clear and unchallengable. When we have decided to cut ourselves asunder from the State itself, the question of our forming part of Pakistan cannot arise at all.

We have indeed made up our minds to join India; but what is our decision worth until India is prepared to accept it? We certainly make the offer for our own advantage; we see in our merger with India the only hope of our salvation. But India, too, will not be loser by this arrangement. The Tehsil of Leh alone covers 23,000 Sq. miles and, if we add to it the other areas predominantly inhabited by Boudhs, viz. Zanskar, Bodhkarbo, Mulbek, Fukar, Darcik Garcon, in Kargil Tehsil and Padar in Kishtwar, the total acquisition of territory to India will not probably measure less than 33,000 Sq. miles. It is true that the whole of this area is undeveloped and most of it at present barren. But it must also be remembered that its economic potentialities are tremendous and in the hands of a great country like India it is bound to be transformed into a smiling garden and a source of immense wealth and power. Its strategic and commercial importance too cannot be underrated. The Tehsil of Leh has Tibet and China among

its neighbours and the town of Leh is the nerve centre of Central Asian trade.

The British Indian Government took Gilgit on lease from the Maharaja for military reasons for no consideration in return. The Indian Government has already incurred an expense of crores of rupees for the protection of Kashmir, not to speak of the great sacrifice of military personnel which the process has involved. It is clearly impossible for Kashmir to liquidate this colossal debt which is daily growing in magnitude. Would this not be an additional reason for India to take over the Buddhist homelands hereby offered by the Buddhists themselves for its acceptance? Though our right of self-determination stands intrinsically unassailable, we are willing to be considered as the instrument of redemption of the people of Kashmir, heretofore our fellow citizens, if that purpose can be automatically served by India's acceptance of our offer.

There is nothing in our offer which is in any way incompatible with the high idealism which characterises India's international policy. We might even say in positive terms that it is perfectly consistent with it, for has not India repeatedly declared that it stands for the right of self-determination for all nations, and are we not a nation whose right of self-determination it should uphold and to whom it should extend the protection it seeks?

Tibet is a cultural daughter of India and we of lesser Tibet seek the bosom of that gracious mother

to receive more nutriment for growth to our full stature in every way. She has given us what we prize above all other things—our religion and culture and it is the experience of having been the recipients of such precious gifts which encourages us to ask for more. The Asoka wheel on her flag—symbol of goodwill for all humanity and her concern for her cultural children—calls us irresistably. Will the great mother refuse to take to her arms one of her weakest and most forlorn and distressed children—child whom filial love impels to respond to the call ?

Sir, the absence of a reply to our previous references on the subject of our future has depressed us greatly. We beseech you with all earnestness to be so kind as to vouchsafe a line in reply to this our last prayer on the subject.

Before we close, we wish to make it clear that our desire to be absorbed into the body politic of India does not imply any reflection on the present National Government of Kashmir. Far from it, we have no hesitation to say that we have full confidence in the present Prime Minister, S. Mohamad Abdullah. The step we have taken has been dictated solely by the instinct of self-preservation which governs all men and nations alike, as also by the desire to find swiftly deliverance from the misery, spalor and stagnation in which we have been sunk for generations past.

APPENDIX V.

3rd Interim Report of the U. N. C. I. P.

The U. N. Kashmir Commission submitted its third interim report to the U. N. Security Council in the second week of December 1949. The report contains the following suggestions and recommendations :—

1. The Security Council should replace the 5 man commission by one person with “broad authority to bring India and Pakistan together “on all unresolved issues”.

2. The Council should consult with representatives of India and Pakistan to arrive at terms of reference for its representative—including consultation regarding the scope of his authority to settle eventually *by arbitration* those issues involved in the demilitarisation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir as may remain outstanding, which impede the creation of conditions for the plebiscite”.

3. Security Council should ask both India and Pakistan “to take all necessary precautions to secure that their agreements regarding the cease-fire be faithfully observed”.

4. Both governments should be requested to abstain from any measure liable to augment tension in the State of Jammu and Kashmir pending the final settlement of the future of the State."

Arbitration Suggested.

Further on the report says "Since the Government of Pakistan accepted the suggestion that the issues relating to the truce be settled by arbitration and the Government of India has stated that it does not object to the principle of arbitration as provided for in the charter, further consideration be given to the use of this procedure."

The three main problems in the dispute have been enumerated by the report as:—

1. Disposal of the "Azad" Kashmir forces.
2. Withdrawal of Indian and Pakistan regular forces from the state.
3. The question of northern areas of Baltistan and Buni-Pass.

The Azad Forces.

The report admits that "the Azad Forces now have a strength which changes the military situation and to that extent makes the withdrawal of forces particularly those of India a far more difficult matter to arrange within a structure which considered only the regular forces of the two armies."

Limited arbitration and not mediation on the whole issue.

The gist of the report is that the issues, need to be settled before plebiscite can be held, be through single representative or a one-man commission of the U. N. The designation of that representative has not been defined. He might be called arbitrator as well as mediator.

The ultimate decision has been left to the plebiscite. The stand of India that Pakistan has no *locus standi* in Pakistan is not accepted. Rather Pakistan has been put on equal footing with India. One of the members of the Commission—the nominee Belgium—has even protested against the representation given to Kashmir in the Indian Constituent Assembly.

On the whole the report has maintained a balance between India and Pakistan both of whom must look to the U. N. which in effect means the Anglo-U. S. Block for the fulfilment of their objectives in Kashmir.



