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A HISTORY OF INDIA

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PART III—BRITISH INDIA

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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SECOND EDITION—REVISED

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THIS edition contains some additional matter and takes down the treatment to the end of 1939. Owing to the unfortunate demise of my collaborator, Professor M. S. Ramaswami Aiyangar, a few years back, the task of revision has become wholly mine; and consequently I am to be held responsible for the new matter introduced as well as for any defects in proportion between the military, political and cultural aspects of the treatment of India under British rule that may be noticed. Considerable care, however, has been taken to preserve a due tone of continuity in all the processes of development. I am grateful to the Publishers for having the Index prepared and for the promptness with which the revised edition has been brought out. The more elaborate footnotes are intended for the help of the senior students.

Annamalainagar,
25*th June*, 1940

C. S. SRINIVASACHARI

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS Part brings our History to the present day and covers the whole field of European enterprise from the beginning of the seventeenth century down to the gestation of the coming Federal Constitution. Care has been taken to keep a due proportion between the military activities of the British power and their administrative and other work. As in the previous Parts of the book, reference has been given to standard sources of information, wherever it has been found necessary, and attention has been drawn to differing views that are held on debated points and questions. If the treatment had tended to be more elaborate than in the previous parts, it has been mainly the result of the operation of perspective that demands greater attention to details in the modern epoch than in the

more remote ones. The authors however hope that details have not tended to bring down the narrative to an uninteresting and monotonous level. The usual bibliographical and chronological equipment has been provided on a fairly comprehensive, but not, they hope, too ambitious, plan. The authors hope that this book will be received with the same sympathy and indulgence by teachers which they have shown to the previous Parts. They acknowledge with a sense of gratitude, the kindness shown by the Rev. H. Heras, S.J., Director of the Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay, for the Introduction he has so kindly consented to write. They also take this occasion to thank the Publishers for the uniform courtesy and kindness the authors have been receiving at their hands during the years over which the publication has spread out. They are very grateful to Mr. R. Parthasarathy, B.A. (Hons.), for the kindness with which he has compiled the full and comprehensive Index.

C. S. SRINIVASACHARI

30*th August*, 1932. M. S. RAMASWAMI

INTRODUCTION

PROFESSORS C. S. Srinivasachari and M. S. Ramaswami Aiyangar have asked me to write an Introduction to the third volume of their *History of India*, and thus placed me in a very awkward position. I have several times written against text-books for the use of University students, and the present one offered to the public to-day by the learned Professors, does not seem to be a text-book for school boys.

Yet I am glad to say that this is a text-book that has very little of a text-book, and is happily midway between a text-book and a reference book. In point of fact, this is precisely what is desirable for University students. They should commence knowing the most important literature about the main events of our history, and specially the historical sources of those events. In order to obtain this object, Professors Srinivasachari and Ramaswami Aiyangar have wisely referred to both kinds of books here and there. This is a most useful hint to the industrious students, an invitation to read those books themselves, an advice that they should not believe their printed statements blindly without scrutinizing the foundations of history. It is a praiseworthy attempt indeed, which the learned authors have so successfully undertaken as to produce a text-book which may be considered a model of text-books.

Moreover, after perusing this work, one happily realizes that the learned Professors have not copied errors from other text-books, as is usual in the majority of the text-books that are on the market. They have written independently, using the result of their experience as Professors and the fruit of their

knowledge as scholars. Thus their work becomes a practical invitation to University students to enter the Temple of Scholarship and Wisdom.

As regards this third volume which is now offered to the public, one is bound to say that the authors have been most successful in broaching the great difficulties they have come across while preparing the book. This is a particularly difficult period in the History of India. Yet their treatment of the subject has been calm, impartial and disinterested. So must the historian always be. The seeking of truth must be his object. The students who will read the following pages, will practically learn how to seek truth, while truth will enlighten the path of India's History from the darkness of the past to the rosy expectations of the future.

Bombay,
August 23rd, 1932.

H. HERAS, S.J.

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A HISTORY OF INDIA

Part III

MODERN INDIA (FROM THE ADVENT OF THE ENGLISH TO THE PRESENT DAY)

CHAPTER I

EARLY ENGLISH AND DUTCH ENTERPRISE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE FRENCH POWER IN INDIA

SECTION I. EARLY ENGLISH AND DUTCH ENTERPRISE IN THE EAST

As pointed out in the previous Part (Chapter XI), the union of Portugal and Spain under Philip II in 1580 hastened the decline of the Portuguese power in the East. Portugal was involved in the European politics of Spain and in the latter's wars with the Protestant powers of England and Holland. When the English presented a petition to their Queen for permission to send an expedition direct to India and the Dutch demanded from their ruler a like privilege, Elizabeth boldly declared that the ocean was free to all and every nation had the right of using it to its best advantage. The Dutch retaliated on Philip's order that all Dutch ships in Spanish and Portuguese waters should be seized. The Spanish monopoly of the Magellan route had been successfully challenged by Drake who returned by the Cape route in 1580; and two years later the first English voyage direct to the Cape was attempted. The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 further stimulated English daring; and Ralph Fitch, the first Englishman to reach India, returned in 1591 with attractive accounts of the riches earned by the Portuguese. In the same year Captain Lancaster voyaged round the Cape

English and Dutch Defiance of Portugal and Spain

of Good Hope to Cape Comorin and the Malay Peninsula. Equally significant was the first Dutch expedition to Sumatra and the Spice Archipelago, undertaken by Houtman in 1595; and this was assisted by Van Linschoten who had stayed some years in the East and whose account of his discoveries was an invaluable guide-book to Indian and far eastern navigation. The expedition of Houtman was followed by several others fitted out by the Dutch; and before 1601 as many as fifteen voyages had been made by the Dutch to the East either by the Straits of Magellan or by the Cape route.

Their first Expeditions to the East

The English expedition under Lancaster touched the Nicobars and the Island of Penang; and three years after its return, another enterprise was undertaken, but without fruit. In 1599, a fresh voyage was projected but abandoned owing to Queen Elizabeth's fear of prejudicing the issue of the English negotiations for peace then going on with Spain; and it was only in 1601 that Lancaster was able to lead a second expedition to the East. Meanwhile the English East India Company* had been started under a royal charter and with the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies," and with a monopoly of all English commerce in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, except in those territories in the actual occupation of the Spaniards and the Portuguese.

The Formation of the English East India Company (1599-1600)

The first recorded meeting of the Company was held in September 1599. The Charter was signed by the Queen

* The East India Company was an outcome of the type of armed sea-trade on its largest scale and marked the final stage of sea-enterprise in the Elizabethan age Its immediate predecessor was the Levant or Turkey Company; and many of its promoters, like Sir Thomas Smythe, its first Governor, had served the Levant Company. The chief circumstances that led to the formation of the English Company were as follows:— (1) The decline of the trade of Antwerp owing to Spanish policy and wars, which seriously affected English trade; (2) the strangling of the prosperity of the English Levant Company by the Spanish closure of the Straits of

on the last day of 1600; and the management was entrusted to a Governor and Committee-men, twenty-four in number, who were to be annually elected by the share-holders. But the times were bad and capital was scarce; and it was found very difficult to float a stock for the voyage of 1601. Peace was made with Spain in 1604, though it was not accompanied by an acknowledgment of the English claim to share in Indian commerce.

The Period of Separate Voyages

At first the Company conducted its trade by means of the so-called *Separate Voyages*, each separate voyage being undertaken by a minor group among the subscribers who furnished the capital, shared the profits and losses and wound up that concern themselves. This system lasted till 1612; but it proved defective, as "owing to the length of the passage to India and the slow process of winding up, the separate voyages overlapped each other." The agents of several voyages traded in India at the same time and competed against one another, thus producing disputes and mutual hostilities.

Temporary Joint-Stocks

After 1612 the principle of joint-stock came into operation. In this arrangement each subscription was raised for several voyages at a stretch and for carrying on trade for a term of years. But each group closed its affairs and wound up its profits in the same manner as each separate voyage. Here also there was some amount of overlapping which was unavoidable; and each group wanted to make as much money as it could; and there was no proper equipment for any enterprise requiring considerable and sustained effort.*

Gibraltar, thus compelling the Levantine trade to find a new route; (3) the national and religious animosity displayed towards the Catholic powers and the opening of the prospects of rich eastern trade by the publication of the travels of Linschoten and Fitch and by the easy capture of several rich Portuguese galleons—See W. W. Hunter: *A History of British India*, Vol. I, Chap. VI; *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, Chap. IV; *Ralph Fitch*, by J. Horton Ryley; W. R. Scott: *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*, Vol. II, Section V, Division I, pp. 89, *et seq*; and Ballard: *Rulers of the Indian Ocean* (1927).

* See Hunter, Vol. I, pp. 275-76 and 365; and Beckles Willson *Ledger and Sword*, Vol. I, pp. 67 and 101.

The first attempts of the Dutch to find a north-eastern passage to India resulted in failure as in the case of the English efforts. They were followed by the bold expedition of Van Houtman; and the latter's success stimulated the formation of the Dutch East India Company in 1602 out of the union of the several companies that had been already started for the India trade. This United Dutch Company was a very powerful and national organisation with a large capital and a formidable equipment and was vigorously supported by the States-General of Holland.* It was organised by the great Minister of Holland, Oldenbarnevelt, and granted a national monopoly of eastern trade for twenty-one years. The Dutch Government controlled the Directors of the Company, audited its accounts and empowered it to effect conquests and colonisation. The Dutch Company could thus, from the very beginning, make war or peace, seize foreign ships, establish colonies, build forts and coin money. It was the fruit of the exuberant national enthusiasm of the Dutch nation and of the sense of their recently achieved national unity and independence. It had a large working capital, functioned as a semi-state organisation and never pursued a merely commercial and speculating policy.

The Dutch East India Company

Its Strength

On the other hand the English Company continued only as an association of private merchants equipped with small capital and enjoying but slender Crown support; and it was also exposed to the inconveniences and dangers of separate voyages and temporary joint-stocks. It was much too closely regulated by royal charter and frequently interfered with by the Crown and the Privy Council. The

Its Superiority to the English Company

* *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, pp. 28-29; and Moreland: *From Akbar to Aurangzib*, Chap. I, Sec. 2. "From 1608 Dutch fleets went out prepared to fight as well as to trade.....(and from now) we find the Dutch determined to oust the Portuguese from those seas which, at first, they had aspired only to share....."

capital was almost always insufficient for every voyage; and the danger began as early as 1605 from the so-called interlopers who traded on their own account in the East in defiance of the Company's monopoly. The plundering methods resorted to by many of these interlopers seriously diminished English prestige in the eyes of Indians.

The Defects of the English Company

Internally also the Company's organisation was very defective. The promoters of each voyage, whether separate or joint-stock, quarrelled with the Directors of the Company; there was divided interest between the Company and the successive groups of subscribers of the voyages. The methods adopted by the Company, like the export of bullion from the country, were often actively opposed and condemned. Its charter was frequently threatened by the intrigues of royal favourites and by royal grants of patents of trade to the Scotch, who, it was maintained, were not affected by the English Company's Charter.

Section II. Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Archipelago

Dutch Monopoly of the Spice Trade

The Dutch pursued from 1603 a policy of open extirpation of the Portuguese power. They defeated Portuguese fleets, captured their merchant-vessels in large numbers and aimed at getting a monopoly of the spice trade in the Archipelago. The trade with India proper came to be looked upon as purely secondary; and the basis of this policy was that the trade in cloves, mace and nutmegs must be monopolised, since competition would ensure the ruin of all competitors, and consequently the English must at all costs, be kept out of the Spice Islands.* By 1610, the Dutch had become the predominant power in the Archipelago while in India their factories were established on the Coromandel Coast,

* Moreland says :—" To modern readers the most surprising feature of this policy is the importance attached to the trade in spices, a trade which is so little heard of in Asia at the present day. In our period, however, spices were the main commercial link between Asia and Europe.

at Masulipatam and elsewhere. The Portuguese were their open enemies and the English who had got a footing in the markets of Sumatra and Java were regarded as dangerous rivals. The framework of the Portuguese dominion still remained, though their naval strength had decayed. The English suffered not from lack of motive, but from want of capital and lukewarm support from home. King James was lured by the prospect of the marriage of his son with the daughter of the Spanish King and showed himself to be openly inimical to Holland; while the truce made by the Dutch with the Spaniards in 1609 gave the latter plenty of leisure to deal with the English rivalry in the Spice Islands very effectively.

Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Spice Trade

While there prevailed nominal peace between England and Holland in Europe, a never-ending contest went on between them in the East. In 1614, both powers agreed to compose their differences, each keeping such places as it had taken or discovered, and both offered to combine against Portugal and Spain. The compromise did not succeed; and in 1619 the English found themselves so hard pressed by their rivals that they were compelled to enter into a treaty much to their disadvantage According to this agreement the

Futile Agreement of 1619

The insistent demand for pepper and cinnamon, cloves, mace and nutmegs, arose partly from their use in preserving meat for winter consumption, and partly from the taste of the time; while its gradual reduction was due, on the one hand, to changes in western agriculture, which ensured supplies of fresh meat throughout the winter, on the other hand, to changes in the art of cooking, and in particular to the substitution of sweet for spiced dishes. Writers of the eighteenth century usually attributed the declining profits of the Dutch Company to this change in fashion, which steadily depreciated the value of the monopoly in spices; but throughout our period (seventeenth century) and for some time after, the monopoly was one of the most important facts of the world's commerce, and the large expenditure incurred on its acquisition could be regarded as a thoroughly sound investment." P. 21.

"The spice trade of the Moluccas was looked upon as the great prize of the Indian world." P. Geyl in the Chapter on *The Dutch in India*, in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, p. 31.

English could share in the trade with Pulicat on the Coromandel Coast and with Java and were to have a third of the spice trade with the Moluccas. The English were to pay proportionately for the maintenance of the Dutch garrisons in the East, which simply amounted to their contributing to the means for their own destruction. The Dutch, always superior in numbers and fortifications, quickly became insolent towards the English in the Archipelago.

The first important Dutch Governor of the East, Pierre Booth (1610-14), extended and strengthened the Dutch dominion from Java to the Moluccas. His successor strove hard to shut the English completely out of the Moluccas; he also planted factories at Aden and along the Arabian coast and opened up trade with the Red Sea. The third Governor strengthened all the Dutch fortifications and depressed English trade everywhere. Under these circumstances the English could never hope either to get a proper share in the trade of the Moluccas or to build, as they wished, a fortified settlement commanding the Straits of Sunda.* The Dutch claimed priority of occupation of the islands and of trade-treaties with the chiefs of the Archipelago. When the English asserted their counter-claims to trade on equal terms, a bitter commercial rivalry sprang up which ended in the so-called Massacre of Amboyna and in the complete extinction of the trade of the English in the Spice Islands.

The Dutch strengthen their Hold over the Archipelago

Coen, Governor of the Dutch East Indies (from 1618 to 1623 and again from 1627 to 1629), founded the town of Batavia and built up a powerful administration, a lucrative coasting trade and a large volume of regular trade with Europe.

Governor Coen

*The Dutch had got into their hands the Straits of Malacca, the narrow gulf between Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, entered into an alliance with the Raja of Bantam (at the north-wertern corner of Java) who commanded the entrance into the Straits of Sunda and secured the territory of Jacatra (on the northern coast of Java) whereon they built in 1619 the famous city of Batavia which became their head-quarters in the East. The Straits of Malacca and Sunda commanded the only feasible passages into the interior of the Archipelago. They seized Ternate, the chief seat of trade in the Moluccas, and got in 1618 possession of Amboyna, the richest clove-island in the Southern Moluccas.

Like Albuquerque, he clearly saw the necessity of getting control of strategic points and fortifying them and of making alliances with the native chiefs. Hunter compares him, in point of ability and achievements, with Albuquerque, Dupleix and Warren Hastings.

The Culmination of Rivalry—Massacre of Amboyna (1623)

The English claim to a share in the spice trade of the Amboyna group of islands, to the south of the Moluccas, was a serious obstacle to the aims of Coen, as these islands could be approached directly from the open ocean by the south-west; and from these the English might make themselves altogether independent of the Malacca and Sunda Straits, get access to all parts of the Archipelago, and even turn the flank of the Dutch hold on it. The other English claim to a fort near the Straits of Sunda was equally dangerous to the safety of the Dutch factories in Java. Therefore Coen destroyed the town of Bantam and compelled the English to give up Java altogether in despair in 1621. With the aim of stopping all English trade with Amboyna, he gave secret orders to the chief of its Dutch factory to deal with the English "suitably, unhesitatingly and immediately." The English traders at the place were charged with plotting to capture the station, and tortured to confess their guilt; and ten of them were executed After this incident, the so-called Massacre of Amboyna (1623), the English retired completely from the Archipelago, and the Dutch were now without a rival over the whole group of islands.

The English confine themselves to India

Driven from the Spice Islands, the English turned their attention to the mainland of India and developed settlements on its coast. Though they continued for long to have a settlement at Bencoolen in Sumatra and another at Bantam, they never challenged the political or commercial supremacy of the Dutch over the Archipelago, until

they conquered Java in the course of the Napoleonic wars. Thus the Portuguese supremacy over the Indian Ocean which represented in one aspect the triumph of Christendom against Islam, was followed by the triumph of the Protestant sea-powers of Northern Europe over the Catholic powers of the South. It was now succeeded by the fight of the victors over the spoils. These spoils, according to current notions, lay chiefly in the lucrative spice trade and consequently not so much on the Indian coast, as in the Spice Archipelago. The triumph of Holland was the triumph of enthusiastic patriotism and superior resources and equipment over smaller resources, slenderer equipment and lack of national and royal support. Thus the third struggle was over with victory secured by the smaller, but more enthusiastic and better organised, Dutch; and England was forced to be content with the second prize—the less valuable part of the spoils.*

Significance of the Dutch Success

Great indignation prevailed for some time in England against the Dutch; but James I and Charles I did not press for revenge; and political reasons then urged them to be friendly with Holland. It was only under the strong rule of Cromwell that the Dutch were forced to give some compensation for the Amboyna tragedy.

In India the growth of the Dutch power was for some time rapid. In 1603 their fleet blockaded Goa itself; and two years later they established a permanent factory at Masulipatam. Pulicat (to the north of Madras) was the next factory founded; it was fortified and became the centre of a large trade. Negapatam was taken by them from the Portuguese in 1659. Between 1638 and 1658 the Dutch expelled the Portuguese completely from Ceylon. Negapatam, being closer to the Dutch stronghold in Ceylon, was made their head-quarters on the Coromandel coast. Factories were also started on the Gujarat coast; and in Bengal a footing was

The Growth of Dutch Power in India and Ceylon

* *Vide*, Hunter, Vol. I, Introduction, pp. 3-5.

obtained at Chinsurah up the Hugli river in 1653. Cochin was taken a few years later; and both in Ceylon and on the Malabar coast, the Dutch easily stepped into the position of the Portuguese. In Ceylon they kept on good terms with the Raja of Kandy and retained their dominion unimpaired throughout the eighteenth century. But, elsewhere in India, their power never grew to any powerful degree.

Their Decline

In India the Dutch relied on their navy; and in the wars of the seventeenth century, their naval power was the despair of their rivals. But they had to incur a huge expenditure on the upkeep of their navy and garrisons. The evils of private trade among Dutch officials and the fruits of forced monopoly soon began to operate injuriously. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Dutch navy had begun to decay; and the English copied from them their policy of "the strong arm." In that century they occupied a position distinctly inferior to that of the English or the French. The decay and disappearance of their power in India will be treated later.

Their Power in the Archipelago

In the Archipelago the Dutch monopolised the entire spice trade to Europe, and also enjoyed a huge coasting trade. They built up a skilful administrative system and a fruitful array of plantations based on slave labour, cruelly used. Thus they enjoyed a commercial prosperity such as the Portuguese and the English never realised.

Section III. The French in India

Early French Enterprises in the East

The French were tempted by the example of the Portuguese and the English to indulge in eastern enterprise. King Henry IV (1589-1610) encouraged the formation of companies for eastern exploration; and Cardinal Richelieu, the great minister of Louis XIII (1610-43), actually promoted a Company for planting settlements in Madagascar and in the neighbouring islands of Bourbon and

Mauritius which had been taken possession of. The scheme however failed ultimately. The first French Company for trade with India proper was formed in 1664, largely owing to the encouragement of Colbert, the minister of Louis XIV, who gave the Company various privileges. The King granted the Company full power over the island of Madagascar and over other territories that it might conquer or occupy. While in England the merchants wrested their privileges step by step from the Crown, in France the King had to force an unwilling people to embark on trade. The nobility had to subscribe the greater part of the capital, merchants were not forthcoming in any number, and official patronage had to prop up the trading corporation and infuse activity into it almost from the very beginning.

The French India Company formed (1664)

The first object of the French Company was to revive the scheme of colonising Madagascar which was intended to serve as a half-way house to India. The scheme had to be quickly abandoned; and the few colonists who survived had to be removed from the island to the neighbouring settlements of Mauritius and Bourbon. Mauritius soon attained, along with its sister island, to great prosperity and power.*

Colonisation of Madagascar

Caron, who had gained experience in the service of the Dutch Company, was sent out by Colbert in 1667 at the head of an expedition to the Indian coast. He established factories at Surat and at Masulipatam and got from the Sultan of Golconda the privilege of exemption from import and export duties for French goods. Caron soon felt that a maritime stronghold was necessary for the promotion of French trade and even planned a French occupation of Ceylon where the Dutch were opposed by the Raja of Kandy. A French armament tried to oust the Dutch from the island, captured Trincomale (1672), and carried San Thome near Madras by assault.

Caron

* Mauritius was first colonised by the Portuguese and then abandoned by them; it was later occupied by the Dutch who had also to abandon it. Bourbon was occupied by the French in 1649 and the first attempt to colonise it proved a failure.

But the French could not hold these places for long owing to lack of adequate reinforcements; and the Dutch contrived to recapture them soon after.

Francois Martin, a capable lieutenant of Caron, who was recalled by the Company, desired to provide the French refugees from San Thome with a place of shelter. He entered into negotiations with Sher Khan Lodi, the governor of the lower (or coastal) Carnatic on behalf of the Sultan of Bijapur, and got from him a piece of land on the coast about 15 miles to the north of Cuddalore (1674). This was Puducheri (the new town), familiarly known as Pondicherry, which soon developed into a prosperous and expanding settlement. The place was not fully exposed to the violence of the monsoon; and the shallow roadstead in front of it prevented the near approach of warships; it was also in easy communication with the markets of the interior.

Francois Martin and the Acquisition of Pondicherry (1674)

Pondicherry was "nurtured amid the clash of arms and the clamour of falling kingdoms."* When Sivaji raided the Carnatic in 1677, Martin had to take great precautions for its protection. Sivaji captured the neighbouring fortresses of Vellore, Arni and Jinji, defeated Sher Khan Lodi and threatened Pondicherry on the ground that the French were friends with the Bijapurian governor. Martin promised implicit submission to the Maratha invader and a heavy payment for permission to trade and thus saved Pondicherry for the time. He also got a free and absolute grant of the site of the settlement, built magazines and added to its fortifications. But soon its very prosperity became a source of peril to it. The Dutch, always at war with the French in the period 1672-1713, cast covetous eyes upon Pondicherry, captured it in 1693 and retained it in their own hands for six years. They built new walls and soon converted the place into the strongest and best fortified European settlement in India of that age. But they had to

The Growth of the Settlement

Its Capture by the Dutch (1693)

* Malleson : *History of the French in India* (new edition), p. 24.

return the place to the French with the fortifications intact, according to the terms of the Treaty of Ryswick (1697).

When Martin reoccupied Pondicherry in 1699, he recommenced the task of improvement. In 1701 Pondicherry became the head of all French settlements in the East and Martin was appointed Director-General of the French in India. Before his death in 1706, he had earned a reputation for honesty and friendliness in the eyes of the Indian powers and a name for fair dealings in commerce. Thus he laid the foundation for "that intimate connection with the native powers, which the most illustrious of his successors (Dupleix) used with such effect to build up a French empire in India."

Martin's Work

But in marked contrast to the growth of Pondicherry, French influence decayed elsewhere in India. Their factory at Surat had to be abandoned in 1714; that at Masulipatam was not flourishing; and Chandernagar on the Hugli which the French had got by a grant from the Mughal Emperor in 1688 and had earlier occupied, was far behind the English settlement of Calcutta and the Dutch settlement of Chinsurah.

Decay of French Settlements elsewhere

Eight years after Martin's death, the fifty years' monopoly of the French Company granted by Louis XIV in 1664 came to an end. Long before this the Company had ceased to be prosperous; and the Directors were unable to send trading vessels to India, though they got a charter prolonging their rights for ten years more. But as this moment, a Scotchman, by name Law, put forward an attractive scheme for combining all the great French trading companies both in the East and in the West, under the title of 'The Company of the Indies' which was to be given numerous privileges by Government. The shares of the new Company rose in value, but as usual in such artificial booms, a crisis quickly followed; and out of this the old French Company emerged under the name of *The Perpetual Company of the Indies* (1720), functioning as a purely commercial association.

The New Company of the Indies

The new Company began to work actively and tried to revive the drooping prosperity of Pondicherry. Lenoir, a shrewd and clever merchant, who was the Governor of Pondicherry at the time, paid up the French debts and restored their credit. Trade began to revive. Under Lenoir the native population of Pondicherry multiplied and trade prospered. Factories were built at Masulipatam, Calicut, Mahe and Yanam. A fort was built at Mahe in 1724; and everywhere commerce was briskly promoted. Dumas, who succeeded Lenoir as Governor in 1735, was a shrewd, calculating and prudent man and anxious to extend French power by all peaceful means It was during his time that the bonds of friendship between the French and the Nawabs of the Carnatic who claimed to be the representatives of the Mughal power were closely knit together, and Karikal on the Tanjore coast was acquired (1739) for them by Chanda Sahib, the governor of Trichinopoly and a son-in-law of the ruling Nawab.

Governor Lenoir (1720 and 1726-35)

Governor Dumas (1735-41)

After Aurangzib's conquest of Jinji from Maratha hands in 1698, Zulfikar Khan, the Mughal general, appointed one Daud Khan, a Pathan soldier, to the government of the Carnatic. He was succeeded by Sadat-ullah Khan who was confirmed in his office by the great Nizam-ul-Mulk when the latter established his authority in the Deccan in 1723. After Sadat-ullah's death in 1732, Dost Ali, his nephew, came to power. Chanda Sahib, a son-in-law of Dost Ali and a capable man, took advantage of a disputed succession in the Nayak kingdom of Madura and Trichinopoly, got possession of the latter place, seized the whole principality and ruled it in the name of the Nawab (1736). Chanda Sahib had excited some jealousy in the minds of the Nawab and his son, but was careful to cultivate good relations with the French at Pondicherry. He interfered in the affairs of the declining Maratha kingdom of Tanjore, captured Karikal and gave it to the French which they quickly fortified. When a Maratha army under Raghuji

The Situation in the Carnatic

Growth of French Influence with the Nawabs

Bhonsle overran the Carnatic and slew Nawab Dost Ali in battle (1740), the French Governor gave shelter to the families both of the Nawab and of Chanda Sahib; showed a bold front to the Maratha general when he threatened Pondicherry and contrived to mollify him and send him off. Thus he vindicated the honour of the French and got the personal title of Nawab and a high *mansab* from the Mughal Emperor. The Marathas however besieged and took Trichinopoly and carried off Chanda Sahib as a prisoner, mainly at the instigation of the new Nawab, Safdar Ali, who was jealous of him. Such was the situation in the Carnatic when Dupleix assumed the Governorship of Pondicherry in 1741. The new Governor had considerable Indian experience and had promoted the trade and prosperity of Chandernagar of which he was the chief for a number of years.

Accession of Dupleix (1741)

CHAPTER II

THE GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH COMPANY TILL 1746

SECTION I. THE COMPANY'S FORTUNES UNDER THE EARLY STUARTS

The Company had to contend with great difficulties both at home and abroad in its first stages of growth. James I had to be often appealed to before he would, in 1609, issue a fresh charter to the Company with the stipulation that its privileges would be withdrawn on three years' notice, if its India trade should not prove profitable to the realm. But the King did not avenge the insult of Amboyna, as the Company expected him to do; and his successor, Charles I, could not long maintain a bold front against the Dutch. In the country the feeling against the Dutch was quickly swallowed up by the popular indignation against the King. An agitation began for the throwing open of the India trade to all the people The Company had to present a memorial to the Commons in 1628 stressing on the benefits that accrued to the country from its trade monopoly and on its value as a counterpoise to the growing power of Holland and to Spain as well. But while propitiating the Commons, the Company was careful not to lose the goodwill of the King. The latter, however, embarked on the policy of his un-Parliamentary government; he granted a charter to a new company (Courten's Association) in 1635, which was allowed to share in the India trade. The King was to be a secret partner in this new enterprise which, however, did nothing and only depressed the trade of the old Company.

The Company and James I

The Attitude of Charles I towards it

Despairing of all hopes of redress from the King, the Company finally made bold to lay its grievances before the Long Parliament and petitioned it for the vindication of its own

monopoly right (June 1641). During the course of the Civil War the fortunes of the Company came to be so depressed that it decided to abolish seven of its Indian factories. But, under its capable Governor, Cockayne, the Company contrived to get in 1647 from the victorious Parliament an acknowledgment of its monopoly rights and of the importance of its trade to the nation.*

The Civil War and the Company

Under Cromwell Dutch insolence was curbed; and after the Dutch war of 1652-54, the English Company got some belated compensation for the Amboyna massacre. The Portuguese agreed to the right of the English to reside and trade freely in all their eastern possessions. Cromwell looked upon the India trade as a national asset. With a view to define and stabilise the character of England's trade with the east, Cromwell prohibited both the system of open trade as well as the method of regulated trade He decided, in 1657, that the India trade should be carried on by a monopolist company on a united and permanent joint-stock and gave the Company the famous charter which imparted an entirely new form and life to it.†

Cromwell's Policy

His Charter of 1657

*"Charles' high pretensions and low expedients wearied out the Company, as they had wearied out the nation; and the Company's appeal to Parliament (in 1641 and 1646) was the commercial counterpart of the nation's appeal to the sword" (Hunter: *History of British India*, Vol. II, p. 48).

† "Cromwell found the Dutch triumphant both in Europe and Asia, our Indian relations with the Portuguese still left to the haphazard of local conventions on the Bombay coast, and Amboyna unavenged. He enforced from Portugal an open trade for the English in the East; from Holland he wrung the long denied redress (for Amboyna). He found the English in the East, struggling, humiliated and in despair. He left them with their future assured. He was the first ruler of England who realised that the India trade was no private preserve of the sovereign and his nominees, but a concern of the nation, to be maintained by national diplomacy and defended by the national arms. His union of conflicting Anglo-Indian interests in 1657 anticipated the great Parliamentary fusion of those interests fifty years later. Under his charter the East India Company transformed itself from a feeble relic of the mediæval trade-guild into the vigorous forerunner of the modern joint-stock company. A large and continuous capital, always capable of automatic increase, took the place of a succession of uncertain subscriptions, each of them intended to be dissolved at the end of a few years." (Hunter: Vol. II, pp. 102 and 141).

Cromwell's charter created a permanent joint-stock for the company and strengthened its monopoly of trade as against interlopers and rebellious members. The powers conferred by the charter formed the sure basis on which the Company could manage all its eastern factories which were under the rule of diverse Indian powers, and protect them and put down European opposition as well as piracy and interloping. The Company began, on the strength of this charter, a vigorous effort to improve its factories and trade.

Section II

The Growth of the Compay's Settlements in India

The earliest settlements of the English Company were planted on the Bombay coast. A factory was built at Surat in 1612; and in the same year an English fleet under Captain Best secured a brilliant victory over the Portuguese in the Surat Roads and thus destroyed the latter's reputation as a naval power. Even before this, Captain William Hawkins, a nephew of the famous buccaneer, John Hawkins, came to India with the third expedition of the Company, reached Agra in 1609, and strove hard, in the face of Portuguese opposition, to get from Emperor Jahangir permission to trade. In 1615, the Portuguese fleet which had roused itself to a supreme effort, was decisively defeated by Captain Downton in a running fight in the Swally Roads, which resulted in the cutting off of their line of communication from Diu to Goa. The immediate fruit of this victory was that the trade of Surat and the Gulf of Cambay came to be diverted in some measure, into English hands. When the stately Sir Thomas Roe was sent out as ambassador from James I, he presented himself before the Great Mughal at Agra in 1616 and remained at the Mughal court for over two years; and after much procrastination and evasion, he got permission for the English to trade duty-

The Surat Factory (1612) and English Naval Victories

free at Surat and travel freely into the interior of the country.

The Fruits of Roe's Mission (1615-18)

Roe's tact and judgment enhanced the reputation that the English enjoyed in the eyes of the Mughals; and they contrived to establish factories at Ahmedabad, Burhanpur (on the Tapti) and Agra, and made a vigorous effort to oust the Portuguese from Cochin and destroy their trade in Malabar.

In 1622 the English at Surat fitted out an expedition and captured Ormuz. Shortly afterwards they drove the Portuguese completely out of the Gulf of Cambay.

Its Development

Soon they came to be looked upon by the Mughals as the constables of the seas and the protectors of the pilgrim ships that went to Mecca. Surat so quickly grew in prosperity that it became the chief of all the English settlements in the East. The Portuguese had to enter into a treaty allowing free trade with the English in 1634; while the Dutch, who had also a factory at Surat, were insignificant in Gujarat.

The prosperity of Surat was, however, short-lived. Troubles in Rajputana and the Deccan, a great famine that raged in the land and other causes produced a great depression in its trade; and it was long before it could recover a measure of its old prosperity. In 1657, it was constituted the sole Presidency of the English in India, when Madras was temporarily reduced to the rank of a subordinate agency. Surat retained its Presidency rank until it was superseded by Bombay. "Surat illustrates the position which the English quickly secured in the economy of the Mughal Empire, as a sure source of revenue, as sea-police for the coast, and the patrol of the ocean-path to Mecca, gradually developing into negotiators on behalf of the native government."*

The acquisition of Bombay by the Company in 1667, from King Charles II, to whose wife it was given as a dowry by her royal father, the Portuguese King, is connected with an interesting chain of events. The situation of the place about the middle

Acquisition of Bombay

* Hunter : Vol. II, p. 68. Surat, though it lost its importance as the Presidency, long retained its supremacy as a factory, even far into the 18th century.

of the western coast enabled its possessors to control the whole coasting trade of that region; it was outside the Mughal limits and could be easily fortified and defended against attacks. It had long been coveted by the English; and its real importance was recognised by the Portuguese King only after its cession to them.

When Surat was first plundered by Sivaji in 1664, the English merchants gallantly defended their factory and received warm compliments from Aurangzib for their courage and resolution. Oxenden, the President of the factory of Surat, gave the first impetus to the growth of Bombay; he garrisoned the Island and organised its administration; and he saw, even when there was no Suez Canal, that Bombay, from its geographical position, would easily become the key to India. His successor, Gerald Aungier (1669-77), was the true founder of Bombay's greatness He defended it bravely against the Dutch, against the pirates of the coast, the Abyssinian Sidis and the Marathas of the Konkan Under him Bombay became a good naval station and served as a harbour of refuge from the Marathas and pirates After his death the prosperity of the settlement declined. It was further affected by a military revolt under Keigwin* by the depredations of pirates and troubles from the interlopers and by a war with the Mughal power, into which the English foolishly plunged during the Governorship of Sir John Child. Though Bombay became, in 1687, the seat of the Western Presidency, superseding Surat, it continued to be in a depressed condition. The adjacent island of Khanderi was held by the Maratha pirate-chief, Kanhoji Angria. Added to these, the rivalry of the new English Company started in 1691, hampered the trade of the old Company's settlements. Bombay remained the weakest of the three Presidencies throughout the earlier half of the 18th century.

Oxenden and Aungier

Bombay made a Presidency (1687)

On the east coast, the earliest factory of the English was built at Masulipatam (1613); but their trade was largely injured by Dutch rivalry. The factory was abandoned temporarily in 1628; and only after the

Factories on the Coromandel Coast:

* See R. and O. Strachey: *Keigwin's Rebellion.*

Sultan of Golconda issued his Golden Firman to them in 1632, did the English recover their prosperity.

Masulipatam

Though the factory at Masulipatam suffered from the establishment of Madras in 1639-40, its importance and value continued to be large.

When Masulipatam was temporarily abandoned in 1628, the English took shelter at Armagaon, situated to the north of the Dutch settlement of Pulicat. It was,

Armagaon

however, too poor for any brisk trade and had to be abandoned; and it is only important as having been the first Indian site which was acquired by the English and on which a fort was built.

Francis Day, a member of the Council of the Masulipatam factory, was ordered to select a new and convenient trade-centre; he visited the Indo-Portuguese settlement of San Thomè (three miles to the south of Fort St. George) which carried on a brisk trade with the interior. Day chose a village called Madraspatam lying three miles to the north of it and obtained a grant of it from the local Naik (or governor) who ruled all the coast from Pulicat to San Thomé, on behalf of his master, the Raja of Chandragiri, a descendant of the last ruling family of Vijayanaar. Here, Day began to build a fort which was finished by St. George's Day, 1640, and hence came to be known as Fort St. George. The settlement soon grew in prosperity and population, in spite of wars among the powers of the interior and frequent quarrels with the Portuguese at San Thomé.

The Foundation of Madras (1639-1640)

In 1652, Madraspatam (or Chennapatnam as it came to be called) was raised to the rank of a Presidency, independent of Bantam in Sumatra to which it was hitherto subject. Its new status was made permanent after a short suspension; and in 1658, all the factories in Bengal and on the Coromandel Coast were subordinated to it. Thus Madras became the first

Madras raised to be a Presidency

Presidency of the English, their earliest fort, the chief English settlement in the Bay and the principal market for Indian and European goods. It stood forth as "the type of the system of fortified factories, which the conflicts of the native powers of South-Eastern India rendered indispensable for the safety of European trade."*

Its Rapid Growth

After 1660, Madras entered on a period of vigorous growth Its capable and masterful governors like Winter and Streynsham Master, protected it from the tyrannous exactions of the Sultan of Golconda who now ruled all the neighbourhood, as well as from European rivalry. The settlement was organised into a municipal corporation and quickly grew in size and prosperity. It cleverly avoided rupture both with Sivaji when he raided the Carnatic in 1676, and, subsequently, with the Mughals when they got possession of the Jinji country. In 1690, Devanampatnam (Fort St. David) near Cuddalore was acquired from tne Marathas. Governor Thomas Pitt (1698-1709) greatly raised the prestige of the settlement; and his successors advanced the Company's trade as well as the prosperity of the Indian population.

The First Stage of English Settlements in Bengal (1633-63)

In Bengal, the early stages of English settlement fell into well-marked divisions. Between 1633, when the first English factory was planted at Balasore, and 1663, when Nawab Shayista Khan succeeded to the Mughal viceroyalty of the province, the English factories aimed at nothing more than peaceful trade under the protection of the Mughal power which had been firmly established over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in the reign of Akbar. Besides their factory at Balasore, another factory was planted at Hugli in 1651; and subordinate agencies were started at Kassimbazar and Patna. The English had to encounter

* For the early growth of Madras, see Love : *Vestiges of Old Madras*, Vol. I ; Mrs. F. E. Penny : *Fort St. George ;* and C. S. Srinivasachari : " Historical Sketch of Madras " in *The Official Handbook of the Corporation of Madras.*

Portuguese and Dutch rivalry at Hugli and also suffer from the depredations of the Portuguese pirates who had several strongholds on the sea-boards of Arakan and Chittagong. One Gabriel Boughton, an English surgeon, was sent from Surat to Agra to treat some members of the imperial household and acquired influence at the Mughal court (1645). He became a favourite of Prince Shuja who was then the Viceroy of Bengal and got from him permission for the English to trade throughout Bengal free from customs and other trade-dues. The trade was largely in salt-petre, silk and sugar, which were the chief commodities available.* The succession War of 1657-58 removed Prince Shuja from the scene; and Nawab Mir Jumla, one of Aurangzib's most trusted generals, succeeded to the viceroyalty of Bengal. Under his rule the condition of the English became very bad; their merchandise had to pay heavy imports; and when they retaliated, they were threatened with complete expulsion from the country.

Second Stage (1663-1685): Mughal Oppression

Under Nawab Shayista Khan, Viceroy of Bengal (1663-85), the English were safe from the sea-pirates of Chittagong and Arakan, but continued to be subject to the exactions of the Mughal officials. Meanwhile, in England, there was a growing demand for Bengal goods, especially silk and salt-petre The Bengal settlements were reorganised on more than one occasion; but it was found very difficult to control them from Madras. William Hedges, Agent at Hugli (1681-85), strove hard to put down the interlopers and the exactions of the Mughal officials; he soon became convinced that Mughal promises of fair treatment were useless, and the Viceroy could not or would not protect the English from injury. He resolved to seize some convenient post and

Third Stage (1685-1690): The English resolve to erect a fortified Settlement

* Bengal was called the "Paradise of Nations;" and its trade is praised by travellers like Barbosa, Linschoten, Pyrard and others. For an account of its trade see Balkrishna: *Commercial Relations between India and England* (1601-1750); Moreland: *India from Akbar to Aurangzib* and *The Diaries of Streynsham Master* (Ed. by R. Temple: Indian Records Series).

fortify it* and even proposed to build a fortified settlement on the island of Saugor at the mouth of the Hugli.

In 1686, the Court of Directors foolishly resolved to make war on the Mughal Emperor and despatched, among other things, a large fleet against Bengal. The English were not safe in Hugli town; neither could they establish a fortified station at Saugor Island or at Chittagong as they had proposed † After a prolonged examination of several sites, Job Charnock, who had escaped from the Mughals, pitched on the site of Calcutta on the eastern bank of the Hugli in 1687. Charnock has the glory of being the Father of Calcutta He opened negotiations with the Mughals, for a license or *firman* to build a factory at the site and got it after a great deal of worry In 1690, Charnock finally settled at Calcutta and in the next year an imperial order was secured which allowed the English to continue their trade in Bengal on a small yearly payment.

Charnock and the Foundation of Calcutta (1690)

For some years after the English finally determined to settle at Calcutta, they had to suffer many hardships In 1693, Charnock died, worn out with his long struggles. In 1696, the English got permission from the Mughal Viceroy to fortify their settlement and in the next year built walls and bastions round their factory. In 1700, Calcutta was constituted a separate

Fourth Stage: The Growth of Calcutta

* "We must protect ourselves; we must break with the Indian government; we must seize some convenient post and fortify it." Hedges convinced the Directors of the necessity for a fort. C. R. Wilson: *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 88-9.

† In such a situation there was no other course for the English between relinquishing trade in Bengal entirely and resorting to force. The creating of Bombay as a Presidency in the place of Surat was the first attempt to escape from Mughal interference.

‡ Sutanati, one of the three villages on which Calcutta was built, being on the eastern bank of the river, could not be approached by the Mughal troops coming from the west; the place was bounded by morasses on its eastern and southern sides; and near it the river had scooped for itself a long deep pool which, at high tide, was accessible to the heavy ships of those days and which now forms the Calcutta harbour

Presidency independent of Madras. The Governors of the new Presidency, called Fort William after the reigning king of England, strengthened its fortifications; and the English got a confirmation of their privileges from the Emperor Bahadur Shah (1707-12) and from his victory Murshid Kuli Khan, and looked forward to an era of steady prosperity and continuous peace.*

SECTION III

THE HISTORY OF THE COMPANY DOWN TO THE UNION OF 1708

The Support of the Company by the Crown (1660 1687)

Turning now to the fortunes of the Company in England, we have to note the beneficial effects produced on it by the Restoration. The Directors became more and more Royalist in their attitude, and both Charles II and James II showered favours and privileges on them. They supported the Company consistently against the interlopers and the rising clamour for free trade with India. Apart from territorial grants like Bombay and St Helena, Charles gave the Company, by means of his charters of 1661 and 1683, the right of coinage, the command of fortresses and troops and power to form alliances and make war and peace and to administer justice in its settlements. Silks and ornaments were greatly demanded by the English society of the Restoration period; and those who belittled the commerce of the Company with India in silks and calico were effectually silenced. The King always championed the Company as against its Dutch rivals and even planned a combination of the English, French and Portuguese fleets in order to put down the power of the Dutch, both in Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Growth of Opposition to it from Several Quarters

As the Company's trade grew more and more prosperous, several enemies began to raise their heads. The original joint-stock capital was not increased; and all the huge profits were monopolised by the small number of share-holders. Other merchants became jealous of them; interlopers reappeared in some number in the Indian Ocean after 1670; and some disorders broke out in their

* For the early growth of Calcutta, see C. R. Wilson: *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*; and Stewart: *History of Bengal*, Sec. VI.

settlements. About 1680 these difficulties came to a head. The interlopers questioned the legal basis of the Company's monopoly. Sir Joshua Child, the masterful Chairman of the Directors, put down the opponents and converted the Company into an exclusively Tory body. He persuaded the King to grant the Company fresh privileges against the interlopers; and when the latter questioned the right of the King to grant any such powers, he secured a judicial decision that the Company's charter was a lawful exercise of the King's Prerogative and its exclusive privileges did not constitute an illegal monopoly.

Interlopers

When Child began a regular crusade on interlopers on the strength of this decision, the latter, being cut off from all legal defence for their actions, turned into regular buccaneers and resorted to open piracy which greatly injured English prestige in the East. Thus arose the class of bold and daring pirates* like Kidd, Hand and Avery, whose exploits are associated with the Indian seas. The interlopers had many sympathisers and helpers even among the Company's servants in India. The most daring of them was Thomas Pitt who subsequently contrived to become the Governor of Madras and even left an honourable record of service behind him.

Other Objections raised against the Company

Also it was complained of in England that no opportunity was given to outsiders to join the Company, that its stock was monopolised by a narrow body of the original share-holders and their successors and the linen and woollen goods manufactured in the country were being displaced by the calicoes and other cotton fabrics imported by the Company. Despite all this opposition, Sir Joshua Child got from James II, in 1686, a fresh charter which gave large powers, both civil and military, together with the rights of coining money, and of employing armed forces against interlopers and Indian princes.

*For an account of these pirates, see Biddulph: *The Pirates of Malabar;* and S. C. Hill: *Notes on Piracy in the Indian Ocean*—in the *Indian Antiquary*, 1923, *et seq.* (Supplement). The English suffered equally badly from these pirates.

The agitation against the Company gained strength with the flight of James II and the accession of William III. In 1690, a Parliamentary Committee resolved, mainly through the efforts of influential interlopers, to charter a new Company, by an act of Parliament, for the India trade. In the next year a new concern was actually started under the name of the Dowgate Association, under Whig auspices. Parliament, finding the Old Company too obstinate to reform and broaden itself, petitioned King William to dissolve it and to grant a charter to the new association In spite of intense opposition and by dint of heavy bribing, Child contrived to procure a new charter for the old Company in 1693. This led to an agitation in the country that the King had no right to grant any monopoly at all and that no monopoly could be created but by Act of Parliament. In 1694, the Commons unanimously resolved that "all subjects of England had an equal right to trade with India and the East unless prohibited by Act of Parliament." This struck at the root of the Company's monopoly and also at the Crown's Prerogative to grant charters of monopoly. But no action was taken on this resolution; and the Company saw to it that its charter was not lost in effect.

The Starting of a Rival Association (1691)

Resolution of the Commons (1694)

A Scottish East India Company was formed in 1695 by the Scotch Parliament with the approval of the King; and after the Peace of Ryswick (1697), Government passed a bill to the effect that all those who subscribed to the Government loan of two million pounds should form the General Society Trading to the East Indies, each member of which was at liberty to trade individually to the value of his subscription. The Old Company was given a term of three years within which it was to wind up its affairs; it was permitted to trade with India till the end of September 1701. The great majority of subscribers to the General Society were members of this Dowgate Association; but the Old Company contrived to subscribe more than a fourth of the capital in the name of its Treasurer; and thus, by a clever stroke, it

Parliament creates the New Company (1698)

became the leading proprietor in the New Company which was given a royal charter in pursuance of the Act of Parliament.

The Old Company did not lose heart even at this stage. The New Company had given its entire stock to Government as a loan; and its individual subscribers had the right to trade on their own account. It could not fit out ships; its credit was small and it had no settlements or agencies in India. It seemed as if "Parliament had but paralysed the Old Company with a grievous wound and brought into the world another (the New Company) that was crippled from its birth."

The Situation between the two Companies

The tide soon began to turn in favour of the Old Company. It got from King and Parliament a bill that preserved its existence, though it did not continue its monopoly. The Parliamentary election of 1700 was fought, among other issues, over the question of the India trade Both the Companies were strongly represented in the new Parliament; and the King reminded both about the desirability of their proposed union, over which there began protracted negotiations In 1702, on the eve of the War of Spanish Succession, when the trade of both had become badly disorganised owing to the fierce rivalry between their respective servants in India, and both knew that their trade would be greatly injured by French privateers, they consented to a union, the capital and the dead stock of both the Companies going to the United Company.*

Preliminaries towards their Union (1702)

The servants of the two Companies were viciously fighting in India; and both were saved from ruin and destruction only by the absence of powerful European rivals, by the decadence of the Dutch power and by the growing impotence of the Mughal Empire. But even as matters stood, the English trade was greatly injured by Mughal extortion and oppression. The New

Quarrels between their Servants in India

* Each Company gained by this union. The immediate result of this amalgamation was a very appreciable rise in the value of the stock of both Companies. But, in spite of the benefits accruing from amalgamation, the United Company had more or less to start with no working capital at all and even with a deficit; it had to rely largely on its territorial revenues.

Company foolishly determined to set up three Presidencies in imitating those of the old and appointed Presidents to them with the title of King's Consuls. Immediately an open warfare began between these and the Old Company's Governors. The latter put their rivals to shame and humiliation in Bengal and Madras; but in Bombay the Old Company suffered a heavy setback. The New Company also sent out a royal ambassador, Sir William Norris, who wasted a heavy sum of money in useless extravagance and produced no impression at all upon Aurangzib whom he visited. In fact the Mughal Emperor declared that the English were mainly responsible for the piracies committed on Mughal ships and refused to give Norris's Company any *firmans* for trade. This embassy injured all the European traders in India.*

Embassy of Norris (1702)

It was very difficult to establish a workable organisation for the United Company and to reconcile their servants in India According to the Union of 1702, "a cumbrous machinery of co-existent Courts of Directors for the two Companies (for their separate affairs) and a Superior Court of Managers (for the United Company)" was set up, but did not work smoothly. Government brought about a complete amalgamation of the two Companies and compelled both to submit all their differences and disputes to the arbitration of the Earl of Godolphin. A Bill was passed in Parliament to this effect; and on September 29, 1708, the decision of Godolphin was delivered and accepted. The Old Company surrendered its charters and became merged with the New Company under the name of the United East India Company. The United Company had to its credit a loan taken by Government of more than three million pounds; and its

Godolphin's Award and the Final Union of 1708

* This result was very largely due to the uncertainty in the situation between the two Companies, both in India and at home, their bitter rivalry and to the Mughal governors holding the Company's servants responsible for the acts of piracy committed by Englishmen. To these troubles there was added the probability of civil war in the Mughal Empire owing to Aurangzib's advanced age. (See H. Das : *The Embassy of Sir William Norris*). Some even suspected the New Company to have been engineered by Dutch jealousy of the Old, taking advantage of the Dutch sympathies of King William III.

privileges were not to cease until after three years' notice to be given after 1726, and until its loan should have been entirely repaid by Government. The Union was not merely economical, but corporate and personal also. The leading spirits of the two Companies were the leading spirits of the United Company. "The Old Company may seem to have been swamped by the new; in theory perhaps it was so; but in fact and historically the continuity of the ancient body was maintained."*

Significance of the Union

By the union the position of the Company was greatly strengthened; henceforward no Ministry could easily threaten the Company with extinction; and the interests of the Company and the State were welded together indissolubly for nearly a century. After the union there followed a period of silent development marked by the quiet nursing of energies and resources which were to secure the English victory over the French. "It leaves the British in India on the brink of a new era. They had already begun to acquire garrisons, revenues and territorial possessions . .. The Factory Period was finally closed. Henceforward there was to be no retrograde step. Though they knew it not, and though the goal was far distant, the English in India had definitely entered upon the course which, in its latter end, was to merge into the overlordship of the peoples of Hindustan from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas."†

* Beckles Wilson: *Ledger and Sword*, Vol. II, pp. 38-39.

† Hunter: *History of British India*, Vol. I, pp. 383-384.

Higher ideals presented themselves to the officials both at the East India House and in the East Indies. According to Bruce's *Annals* (Letter Book, Feb., 1701) an orderly plan in the correspondence between the Company and its servants came to be introduced and followed only from 1701.

SECTION IV

THE SITUATION ON THE EVE OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH STRUGGLE

The growing disintegration of the Mughal Empire which became marked after 1723, favoured the growth of English factories which became strong enough to defend themselves against local rulers. The overrunning of many parts of Hindustan and of South India by the Marathas added to the general confusion which was further intensified by the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah. The Nawabs of Bengal and the Carnatic, with whom the English had mostly to deal, and the Nizam of the Deccan were friendly to the European traders in their dominions and found them useful for supplying them with arms and with customs revenue. At home, the new Hanoverian dynasty started an era of peace and rapid development of trade from which the East India Company benefited. Its monopoly of the India trade was extended to 1733 by Parliament which also empowered it to seize interlopers. Government always supported the Company against its European rivals. It grew jealous of the Ostend Company formed by the Austrian Emperor in 1717; and it contrived, by means of a triple Alliance between France, England and Holland, to force the Emperor to wind up his Company which was suspended in 1727 and completely suppressed four years later. The Ostend Company had established settlements at Banki-bazaar on the Hugli and at Covelong near Madras. The English and the Dutch persuaded the Nawab of Bengal to destroy the former; and the latter died a natural death. It would have been far better had the English allowed the Ostenders to flourish, for then they would have served as a counterpoise to the French and the Dutch Companies to whom they were more hostile than to the English.

Growth of the Company after the Union

The Ostend Company

In 1726, King George I granted the Company a new charter confirming their monopoly with ampler powers. Subsequently Parliament extended its charter to the year 1766, with the usual

stipulation of three years' notice for termination. When England plunged into the War of the Austrian Succession in 1742, the Company offered to lend a million pounds to Government on condition that its monopoly should terminate only after 1780; and that its monopoly alone should cease at that date and not its existence as a trading body.

Increasing Strength of the Company in England

In Bengal, Calcutta grew in strength and prosperity, though Nawab Murshid Kuli Khan (1704-1725) was rather jealous of the wealth and power of the English. The latter had sent an embassy under John Surman to the Emperor Farruk Siyar (1713), which succeeded in obtaining a *firman* ordering the Nawab not to meddle with the English and continuing all their privileges. They prospered in their trade, got much of the coasting traffic into their hands, continued to be on good terms with their European neighbours on the Hugli (*viz.*, the French at Chandernagar and the Dutch at Chinsurah) and became friends with Nawab Shuja Khan (1725-39), the successor of Murshid Kuli Khan. Ali Vardi Khan, the deputy-governor of Bihar, revolted and contrived to kill the son of Shuja Khan and himself became the Nawab in 1740. He did not trouble or oppress the European settlements, and respected their privileges; and he even foretold that they would in a short time become masters of many parts of the country. He was greatly troubled by the repeated invasions of Raghuji Bhonsle, the Maratha Raja of Berar who occupied Orissa, frequently invaded Bengal and on one occasion plundered Murshidabad itself. It was during one of these Maratha inroads that the English at Calcutta obtained permission from the Nawab to dig an entrenchment round the city, still kept up in popular memory as the Maratha Ditch. Calcutta grew fast in population, but its fort remained weak. Ali Vardi Khan died in 1756 and was succeeded by his grandson, Siraj-ud-daula. The English in Bengal were more apprehensive of the doings of the Nawab and the Emperor than of the activities of the Dutch and the French.

The Development of Calcutta

Under the Nawabs of Bengal

The Position of Bombay

In Bombay, the position of the English was at its weakest. The trouble from Kanhoji Angria continued; he continued to occupy the island of Khanderi and frequently threatened the safety of Bombay itself. His depredations extended all along the coast as far south as Cochin and injured the subordinate English agencies at Surat, Karwar, Tellicherry and Anjengo. As if these were not enough, further trouble was given by the Arab pirates of Muscat. Kanhoji Angria died in 1729; but his successors continued to be hostile. After some time the position of the English improved; they made a treaty of friendship with the Peishwa, who had just then conquered Bassein from the Portuguese (1739).

Bombay was the weakest of the three Presidencies, though from the point of view of its fortifications it was considered superior to both Madras and Calcutta. The story of the destruction of the Angria power and the storming of their fortress, Vijayadrug (Gheria), in alliance with the Peishwa will be told later. Gradually the English became free from every one of the dangers that beset them, *viz*, the Angria power, the Sidis, the Mughal authority over Gujarat and Surat which was shattered by the Marathas after 1730 and the Peishwas who were befriended

The Growth of Madras (1698-1746)

In South India, Madras steadily grew in prosperity and strength in the half century that preceded the outbreak of the Anglo-French wars The town came to be extended by the absorption of several neighbouring villages; its municipal corporation was reorganised in 1727 The rival powers that now struggled in the Carnatic did not at all perceive the significance of the imperceptible and gradual strengthening of the English Presidency which enjoyed a revenue of about £30,000 every year, mostly from trade. There was not much territorial expansion; and the only foot-holds of the English on the Coromandel Coast besides Madras were Fort St. David with the neighbouring town of Cuddalore, and the factories at Vizagapatam and Masulipatam.

In 1739, the Carnatic was seriously disturbed by a big Maratha irruption under Raghuji Bhonsle. In order to understand the events connected with the Carnatic, we have to go back to the Mughal capture of Jinji from the Marathas in 1698. Zulfikar Khan, the Mughal *generalissimo* in the south, entrusted the government of the Carnatic to Daud Khan, a brave Pathan soldier. After the death of Aurangzib, when Zulfikar Khan departed for Hindustan, Daud Khan was entrusted with the whole of the Deccan; and he appointed to the Carnatic one of his own officials, Saadatullah Khan, who was later confirmed as Nawab by Nizam-ul-Mulk when the latter established his authority in the Deccan in 1723 After the death of Saadatullah in 1732, his nephew, Dost Ali, became the Nawab. Chanda Sahib, a son-in-law of Dost Ali and a man of great energy, took advantage of a disputed succession in the Nayak kingdom of Trichinopoly-Madura, seized the fort of Trichinopoly, extinguished the Nayak line and ruled the whole territory in the name of the Nawab (1736) There was also the small, but rich, Maratha kingdom of Tanjore, ruled by the descendants of its founder, Vyankoji, a half-brother of the great Sivaji

The History of the Carnatic (1698-1744)

The Dynasty of Nawab Saadatullah Khan

Chanda Sahib

Chanda Sahib was always friendly to the French and, under pretext of taking part in a disputed succession at Tanjore, captured the port of Karikal and gave it over to Governor Dumas of Pondicherry (1738) with whom he was on intimate terms.

Taking advantage of Nizam-ul-Mulk's absence at Delhi in the crisis of Nadir Shah's invasion, the Peishwa, Baji Rao, himself advanced on Aurangabad, while Raghuji Bhonsle of Berar led a powerful expedition into the Carnatic. Dost Ali tried to stem the Maratha torrent but was slain in battle; the Marathas spread all over the land and threatened even the neighbourhood of Madras and Pondicherry

The Maratha Invasion of 1740-41

Safdar Ali, the son of Dost Ali and the new Nawab, was very jealous of Chanda Sahib and persuaded the returning Marathas to turn on his brother-in-law. Consequently they invested Trichinopoly; Chanda Sahib surrendered after some resistance and was carried off a prisoner to Satara, where he remained a captive for nearly eight years (1741). The French thus lost a valuable ally. Murari Rao of Gooty, a brave Maratha adventurer, was appointed the Maratha governor of Trichinopoly.*

Confusion in the Carnatic

Soon afterwards Safdar Ali was assassinated in a palace revolution; and his throne went to his son who was a mere boy The Nizam who had meanwhile returned from Delhi to the Deccan, undertook a powerful expedition in order to reorganise the Carnatic and assert his own overlordship over it. Everyone submitted to him and even the Marathas retired from Trichinopoly before him. The boy-ruler of the Carnatic was recognised as the rightful Nawab by Nizam-ul-Mulk; but he was soon murdered and the Nizam as the suzerain promptly appointed to the vacant masnad, Anwar-ud-din who had served as the governor of Chicacole in the Northern Sarkars and was the guardian of the boy regent Nawab (1744). It was this Nawab Anwar-ud-din that was ruling when the Anglo-French struggle broke out. Benyon was Governor of Madras during all these years of confusion in the Carnatic, and he was succeeded in March 1744 by Nicholas Morse Soon after Morse's accession, news reached Madras that England and France were at war in Europe. But the English at Madras were more concerned with the Maratha and Carnatic politics than with distant European affairs. They were anxious about their trade and settlements and did not as yet excite jealousy in the minds of the rulers. "They had not yet extended their ambition to the renown attainable by feats of arms."

The Expedition of the Nizam

Accession of Nawab Anwar-ud-din (1744)

* For a fuller account of these events, see Elphinstone: *Rise of the British Power in the East*, ed. by Colebrooke, Chap. III; and M. Wilks: *Historical Sketches of South India* (2nd ed.), Vol. I.

Effect of the Company's Trade on Indian Trade and Shipping

Even in its beginning, the Indo-English commerce had, like the Dutch and Portuguese trade before it, a tendency to smother the Indian hold on trade and shipping. The coastal and foreign trade of India more and more slipped from Indian hands; and the loss became greater as time went on. In this movement of the transfer of the foreign trade of India to European hands, it is the Dutch that first enforced the most thorough-going action; and the English followed them.* The growth of the Company's trade and shipping, while having an adverse effect on Indian shipping and trade, strengthened largely the mercantile marine of England.

* "The constant depradations, frequent piracies, naval fights, sporadic hostilities of these Europeans amongst themselves and with the Asiatic powers, intimidated Indian merchants and shippers. A positive discouragement was the result of the stringent measures which were deliberately adopted, to monopolise, corner and control the purchase and sale of important merchandise, so that Indians and generally all Asiatics were excluded from every lucrative branch of the foreign trade of the country. Along with these are to be counted the great concessions of lower customs duties, freedom from transit dues, as well as from harassment and exactions on the way at the numerous toll-houses. These three categories of causes narrowed down the activities of Indian merchants to the inland trade alone." Balkrishna : *Commercial Relations*, pp. 163-4.

CHAPTER III

THE ANGLO-FRENCH STRUGGLE IN SOUTH INDIA— FIRST PHASE, 1746-1751

SECTION I

THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION EXTENDED TO INDIA (1744-48)

Dupleix became the Governor of Pondicherry in 1741; he had been previously chief of the settlement of Chandernagar for a number of years and had developed it into a prosperous and flourishing town. He had amassed a large fortune by means of private trade and advanced his own funds for the Company's objects. While at Chandernagar, Dupleix married a lady of great ability and vigour of mind who well seconded him in all his ambitious projects and was an expert in intrigue. She was very fond of power and by her excessive intrigue, injured the fair name of her husband.*

Dupleix's Governorship

Dupleix saw that the affairs of the Carnatic were going from bad to worse and Pondicherry, which was exposed to danger, was in no efficient condition of defence, either against an attack by an European rival on the sea-side or even by a strong Indian power attacking on the land side. At his accession he found Pondicherry suffering severely from the effects of the late Maratha raid of the land and from a serious famine. He worked hard to purify the administration of the settlement and to gain the esteem and the good-will of the Indian rulers of the country. He began to fortify Pondicherry on the sea-side, in spite of the orders of the Directors of his Company to stop all fortifications and expenditure on construction; and he even supplied funds for the purpose from his own private resources. When he found that the family of Dost Ali who were fast friends with the French were set aside by a new house, that of Anwar-ud-din, he began to cultivate sedulously the good-will of the new Nawab.

He strengthens Pondicherry

* See *Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai*—(1736-61)—*Eng. Trans*, Vol. V, pp. 347-48.

The War of the Austrian Succession broke out in Europe in 1740; and early in the succeeding year it was rumoured that hostilities which had been declared between England and France would be extended to their Indian settlements also. The English welcomed at first such a prospect, as war would bring to their aid British ships and troops which would help them to put down French encroachments. On the other hand, the French had not taken into their calculations the possibility of a war with the English; and most of their settlements were ill-fortified. In spite of Dupleix's labours, Pondicherry itself was not in a position to resist a strong European enemy. Of course the French planned to get power by means of alliances with the Indian powers; but the extension of the European war to India upset all their calculations for the time being.

Effect of the War on both Sides

For some months before March 1744, when war was formally declared between England and France, hostilities had seemed imminent Dupleix had hoped to arrange for an understanding that neutrality should be preserved in India; and he even addressed the three English Presidencies to this effect. The French Government had, even in 1742, approached the English Government for a convention of neutrality between their respective Companies in India The English were in reality eager for war and warned Dupleix that they could not control the operations of the ships of the Royal Navy that might arrive on the coast. And, as a matter of fact, the English Government had sent a squadron of ships under Commodore Barnet with orders to capture all French vessels in the East and to help Madras in attacking Pondicherry.

Dupleix's Attempts to preserve Neutrality

Dupleix, foiled in one plan, set upon another immediately. He appealed to Nawab Anwar-ud-din with the request that he might prohibit the English from attacking the French in his jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Nawab wrote to Morse, the English Governor, that he would be held responsible for any injury that the English might inflict on the French:

His Appeal to the Nawab

and he added that if the French were to threaten the English in a similar manner, he would prohibit them likewise. Thus Dupleix gained his object. The English felt that they could not disobey the Nawab's wishes and Commodore Barnet who had reached the Madras coast with his squadron, sailed away from the coast without attacking Pondicherry which he could have done easily (1745).

La Bourdonnais' Expedition

Meanwhile, Mahe de La Bourdonnais, the enterprising French Governor of Mauritius and Bourbon, fitted out a fleet with the resources at his disposal and from the Company's ships that were available in the islands. He also made up a good complement of soldiers by impressing *Coffres* from Madagascar, provisioned and prepared himself for a long campaign and sailed for the Bay of Bengal in June 1746 He had received a letter from Dupleix requesting immediate help; and on his way to Pondicherry, he encountered the English fleet in an indecisive action. The English commander made off for Ceylon with a view to refit his ships and to get any possible reinforcements; and by the time he reappeared, La Bourdonnais had increased his armament. This so alarmed the English captain that he abandoned the Coromandel Coast and sailed for Bengal. The withdrawal of the English fleet left the coast clear for the French whose ships now commanded the whole of the coast, while Madras lay unprotected.

His Capture of Madras (Sept. 1746)

Morse at Madras had only a very small garrison with which to defend himself. He claimed protection from the Nawab, but met with no effective response. Both Dupleix and La Bourdonnais were resolved on the capture of Madras and regarded it as a certainty from the day of the disappearance of the English squadron. La Bourdonnais appeared with his ships and a portion of the Pondicherry garrison before Madras (September 4, 1746). The French landed and erected some batteries in the Indian town which had been abandoned

by the English troops, and after a short bombardment, received the surrender of the Fort (September 10.)

Quarrel between La Bourdonnais and Dupleix

Now arose a quarrel between the two French leaders about which there has been considerable controversy. La Bourdonnais was at first disposed to be guided by the advice of Dupleix about the disposal of Madras. He had some discussion with the English regarding the ransom of the place, in the course of which mention had been made of a stipulated present to himself. Dupleix had resolved from the first that the place should not be given back to the English and that all discussion about the ransom should be given up. He pointed out the danger that would ensue from a restoration of Madras into English hands; but La Bourdonnais was unwilling to submit to Dupleix's dictatorial demands. Tension between the two increased, and La Bourdonnais insisted on carrying out his original plan and hastily concluded an agreement for the French evacuation of Madras, while a hurricane swept away a good portion of his fleet.

French Victory over the Nawab's Army (Oct. 1746)

After La Bourdonnais departed from the coast with his crippled squadron, Dupleix denounced his treaty of ransom, declared that he would not give up Madras and openly defied Nawab Anwar-ud-din who had demanded, and in a way been satisfied, that Madras should be given up to him to do his worst. The Nawab now sent a large body of men under his son, Mahfuz Khan, to wrest Madras from the French. The Muhammadan troops blockaded the place; but a body of French soldiers sallied out, routed the enemy and forced them to flee to San Thomè, where they were easily dispersed by a body of French troops who advanced from Pondicherry. Historians are fond of pointing to this battle, though not quite accurately, as being the first definite occasion in which the charm of Mussalman superiority in the field was broken and as being the first considerable success for over a century obtained by a

small number of disciplined European troops over a huge body of Indians *

French Attempts to capture Fort St. David

The Nawab was frightened out of his prey. Dupleix had definitely broken with him and made himself free from all danger on his side. He was anxious to expel the English from Fort St. David which was their only remaining possession on the coast. In the course of the next eighteen months he made four unsuccessful attempts to capture that place which was only at a little distance from Pondicherry and was not better fortified than Madras was. Every attempt of Dupleix to capture Fort St. David angered the Nawab more and more against him. In the absence of a fleet, the French could not easily get provisions and other things by the sea. They had now to garrison Madras, Pondicherry and Karikal; and to add to their difficulties, an English squadron appeared on the coast frightening Dupleix into fearing that Pondicherry might be captured in his absence. The Nawab sent a body of horsemen to assist the English at Fort St David. In January 1748, Dupleix launched his third attack on Fort St David, but as the English squadron appeared on the coast, the French had to retreat immediately. This condition of stalemate continued for some months, till a French fleet appeared on the coast; but it did nothing to help Dupleix whose last attack on Fort St David was frustrated by its gallant defence by Major Lawrence.

* H. Dodwell: *Dupleix and Clive: The Beginning of Empire* (1920), p 20. Of course Roe, Bernier and others had declared that the Mughal troops lacked discipline and efficiency and asserted the superiority of European troops. The Battle of the Adyar River, as this is called, announced "the value of that development of arms and tactics which had been introduced in the preceding eighty years." Infantry troopers had been armed with musket and bayonet; cannon had become very much more efficient and Mussalman horsemen could never stand against the steady charge of such infantry and artillery. The Muslim troops had no good guns; and their matchlock-men were worthless. It was the European military equipment of the 18th century that gave a great advantage to English and French troops as against their Indian opponents.

A powerful English squadron under Admiral Boscawen reached the coast in July 1748 with the definite object of reducing Pondicherry. If the English had carefully conducted their siege of Pondicherry, they could have succeeded. Their choice of a camping ground and disposition of batteries were bad, while the French defended themselves with vigour. Boscawen had to raise the siege after two months; and this was "a conspicuous success for Dupleix and a conspicuous failure for the English."

Failure of English Attack on Pondicherry (1748)

While Boscawen was lying before Fort St. David, news came of the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle according to which there was to be a mutual exchange of prisoners and places taken in the war. Madras was handed back to the English in 1749; and Boscawen sailed back to Europe, while Dupleix was freed from all fear of English attacks.

Treaty concluded

Section II. Effects of the War on both the Parties

Thus closed the first phase of the Anglo-French struggle in India. The European treaty, which ended it, endeavoured to restore the *status quo ante* to both the parties The war had proved destructive to the trade of both the Companies; and both expected that their respective servants in India would settle down to peaceful trade But causes were operating to make impossible any continuance of peaceful relations between the English and the French in India. The Indian rulers had seen clearly the efficiency and strength of troops disciplined by European officers and equipped with European arms, as compared with their own; and they perceived the advantages of an alliance with one or the other of these two powers. They offered money, territory and other privileges which might attract the Europeans to their service; and the latter could not easily resist these tempta-

Effect of the War on the Indian Powers

tions and follow a policy of strict non-interference in the affairs of the country-powers. Again, each side had a great number of troops which had been gathered together in India in the late war. These were a source of great expense; and their possession gave them a consciousness of their own strength and served as an inducement to employ them with some advantage Thus two new factors now served to complicate their position, *viz.*, "strength of forces and a consciousness of this strength, when compared with that of the surrounding native powers."*

and on the two Parties

The effect of the late war on the French was to raise their military reputation. Their capture of Madras, victory over Mahfuz Khan and successful defence of Pondicherry against the English gave them prestige Dupleix's fertile mind was set to work seriously on the Indian situation; and his political ambition now soared higher than ever. The stage was indeed set "for the great projects which he began to develop in the very year in which he gave back Madras to the English." The death of the great Nizam-ul-Mulk at an advanced age occurred in June 1748, and it was predicted everywhere that general anarchy would set in and the hold of Anwar-ud-din, already weak, would be further weakened in the Carnatic. Nasir Jang, the second son of the Nizam, who had stayed by the side of his father, promptly assumed the title of the Subhadar of the Deccan.

French Reputation raised

The Death of Nizam-ul-Mulk (June 1748)

* Rapson: *The Struggle between England and France for Supremacy in India* (1887), p. 46. "While the events which had just preceded the war showed how uncertain and unsettled the Indian government of South India had become, the events of the war itself showed that the Europeans were quite equal to taking a decisive part in Indian affairs, and that they had little to fear from any armies that Indian princes were likely at that time to bring against them. The power which was preponderant at sea might thus become preponderant on land." *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. II, Chap. V, p. 124.

Disputed Succession

The Nizam's eldest son, Ghazi-ud-din, had always remained at Delhi, busy with imperial politics. But Muzaffar Jang, a favourite grandson, who was the governor of Bijapur and Adoni, now claimed the throne and gave out that his grandfather had nominated him to be his successor by a will; and a disputed struggle was thus imminent in the Deccan.

Position of Anwar-ud-din

The death of Nizam-ul-Mulk had affected Anwar-ud-din greatly. He feared that troubles would be created by the adherents of the family of Saadatullah who were still in power in many places in the Carnatic. He was afraid in particular of Murtaza Ali Khan of Vellore who had been implicated in the murder of the two previous Nawabs and was known to be planning his own overthrow Now news reached him that Chanda Sahib who had been carried away as prisoner by the Marathas, had been released and was marching south with a large body of men Chanda Sahib had all along been intriguing for his release and establishment as Nawab of the Carnatic, as being the representative of the old dispossessed family He had been in constant communication with Dupleix; and his own family was living at Pondicherry. At last he obtained his release from captivity in 1748; and Dupleix claimed for himself at a later period the whole credit for that release Soon after his release Chanda Sahib joined Muzaffar Jang and helped in raising money and reinforcements for him. He had arranged with Dupleix for the help of French troops to fight against Anwar-ud-din; and he succeeded in persuading Muzaffar Jang, first to seize the Carnatic and then to proceed to the conquest of the Deccan. As Muzaffar Jang and Chanda Sahib descended into the Carnatic, they were joined by the latter's son, Raza Sahib, accompanied by a body of French troops (1749). At Ambur, where the old Nawab Anwar-ud-din awaited their coming, they got

Chanda Sahib's Alliance with Muzaffar Jang (1749)

and with Dupleix

a decisive victory, in which the brunt of the fighting was really borne by the French troops. Anwar-ud-din was slain; his brother and elder son were made prisoners; while his younger son, Muhammad Ali, fled to Trichinopoly, of which he was then governor (Aug. 1749).

His Victory at Ambur (1749)

Thus the French began their active participation in the political struggles of the country. On the other side the English were not quiet either The loss of Madras in the late war had not injured them irreparably. Calcutta and Bombay, both better fortified and larger than Madras, had not been affected by the struggle Fort St David had proved invulnerable to Dupleix's attacks. The English fleet had maintained, on the whole, its superiority at sea and reduced French commerce to a low level. The temptation to interfere in Indian politics was equally operative on their side Boscawen took possession of San Thomé, an Indo-Portuguese town to the south of Madras, for fear that Chanda Sahib might give it over to Dupleix who wanted its possession as a counterpoise to the loss of Madras (1749). Earlier in the same year, the English were asked by a dispossessed ruler of Tanjore to help him to regain his throne, in return for which the port of Devicotta at the mouth of the Coleroon was to be ceded to them. They readily closed in with the offer. Though they were not able to dethrone the reigning prince, they contrived to capture Devicotta in the possession of which they were confirmed by the Raja, so that they might not give him further trouble. The original applicant for help was not thought of and the English even undertook to keep him under surveillance at Madras. Comment on this action of the English is needless. This was the first point of their interference in country politics.*

The English show Ambition

They acquire San Thome

and Devicotta (1749)

* The occupation of Devicotta was a belated reply to the occupal tion of Karikal by the French some years earlier with the help of Chanda Sahib. "It restored in that part of the Carnatic the balance which had inclined in favour of the French."

SECTION III. THE SUCCESSES OF THE FRENCH (1749-1751)

After the victory of Ambur, Muzaffar Jang and Chanda Sahib entered Arcot in triumph; and the latter was formally installed as the Nawab of the Carnatic by Muzaffar Jang who claimed, as the rightful ruler of the Deccan, to be the overlord of South India. After spending some days in festivity, they proceeded to Pondicherry where they were lavishly entertained. In return for French help which was so valuable to them, they granted Dupleix in full right the *jaghirs* of Villiyanallur and Bahur in the vicinity of Pondicherry; while Muzaffar Jang promised to grant the French the district of Masulipatam as soon as his authority should be established in that region.*

Dupleix gets fresh Privileges

Dupleix urged that Chanda Sahib should proceed immediately against Trichinopoly and drive Muhammad Ali out of it; he saw clearly that he would never be the real master of the Carnatic in Chanda Sahib's name, unless Muhammad Ali whom the English now began to support, should be completely destroyed. When Muzaffar Jang and Chanda Sahib set out for Trichinopoly with the help of a French force, they turned off against Tanjore where they expected the ruler to pay them a considerable sum of money. Tanjore, however, resisted all their attacks and kept the allies inactive before it for three months; while the English openly encouraged the Raja and led him to expect that he would be helped by Nasir Jang, the rightful Nizam, who would be shortly proceeding to punish these rebels.

The Danger from Muhammad Ali

Thus the English were trying to seize the opportunities that came in their way. Soon after getting possession of San Thomè, they sent a body of troops to Muhammad Ali at Trichinopoly. They wrote to Nasir Jang about the significance of the battle of Ambur and about the

The Counter-measures of the English

* It was as an answer to this addition to Pondicherry territory that Admiral Boscawen who was still on the Madras coast, occupied San Thomé on behalf of Muhammad Ali, as already noticed.

danger to his own power that would result if Muzaffar Jang and Chanda Sahib were not promptly suppressed. They perceived that their entire trade, and even their very existence, were threatened by Dupleix; and they took all measures possible for safeguarding their interests.*

The Coming of Nasir Jang into the Carnatic

At last Nasir Jang made up his mind to proceed to the Carnatic to restore order. His entry into the field took Dupleix by surprise and compelled the French and Chanda Sahib to raise the siege of Tanjore and fall quickly upon Pondicherry. Nasir Jang advanced with his huge army to within fifteen miles of that place. He had been joined by a few English soldiers; but, at the critical moment, the French troops refused to fight and retreated to Pondicherry. Muzaffar Jang, seeing the French desert him, cast himself on the mercy of Nasir Jang who promptly made him a prisoner. Chanda Sahib, however, stuck fast to his old allies, and withdrew with the French into Pondicherry.

French Capture of Jinji

Dupleix presented a bold front to Nasir Jang; and the French troop even made a successful sortie on the enemy's camp. Nasir Jang then retired to Arcot where he remained inactive for six months Meanwhile the French occupied several places in the vicinity of Jinji, which fortress itself, considered almost impregnable, was carried off by a brilliant feat of arms by Bussy who afterwards became so famous The French capture of Jinji greatly raised their rising fame. On the other side, Dupleix sent out some troops by sea to Masulipatam and occupied it as well. Nasir Jang

* " In fact the English learnt Dupleix's lesson with greater promptness than they have been usually credited with. They saw at a glance the advantages which would accrue to the French from the establishment of a French Nawab. They also saw the advantages that the English would obtain if they assisted in the overthrow of the usurper (Chanda Sahib)...The English Governor sent help to Muhammad Ali, confident that at Nasir Jang's coming, the rebellion (of Chanda Sahib, Muzaffar Jang and the French) would collapse with hardly a struggle... ..They did all in their power to hasten the coming of Nasir Jang.....When Nasir Jang at last arrived in the Carnatic, they sent Lawrence to join him with a body of troops. (*The Private Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai*, Vol. VI Introduction by H. Dodwell, pp. xvii & xviii).

now resolved to recapture Jinji and marched from Arcot; but the rains had, by this time, set in; his army suffered from want of provisions; and the treachery of his Pathan vassals, the Nawabs of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Savanur, with whom Dupleix had been intriguing, led to his discomfiture at every turn. He was slain in a *melee* on the field of battle; and the imprisoned Muzaffar Jang was set free by the traitors and raised to the throne under French auspices (December 1750).

Death of Nasir Jang

Muzaffar Jang returned to Pondicherry where he was received warmly by Dupleix who was now the complete master of the situation. Chanda Sahib was confirmed in the Nawabship of the Carnatic, and Dupleix was appointed the representative of the Nizam in all the country to the south of the Krishna. The French Governor now thought that he could ignore Muhammad Ali whom he could crush at leisure and that the English would acquiesce in his new rights of controlling the affairs of the Carnatic. Muzaffar Jang left Pondicherry for his capital in January 1751 accompanied by a French force under Bussy who had become very prominent in the recent events. The new Nizam depended for the maintenance of his power and even for his personal safety, on the support and protection of his French troops Scarcely had the new Nizam begun his march to his capital, when the Pathan chiefs of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Savanur, who were discontented with their share of the spoils after Nasir Jang's death, raised a tumult in the course of which Muzaffar Jang and a few of his supporters were cut to pieces. Bussy cleverly persuaded the chief men of the army to agree to the choice of a new Nizam. Thus Salabat Jang, one of the surviving younger brothers of Nasir Jang, was raised to the throne of the Deccan. He promptly confirmed the French in all their privileges and made Bussy a nobleman of the Mughal Empire; and French influence with the Nizam continued firm as before (1751).

Dupleix's Zenith

Bussy powerful with the Nizams, Muzaffar Jang

and Salabat Jang

During all these successive triumphs of the French, the English firmly stuck on to their ally, Muhammad Ali, to whom they sent a large body of Europeans and whom they advised not to agree to any proposals for compromise that might be made by Dupleix. Saunders, the new English Governor, perceived the gravity of the English situation and clearly realised that the English fortunes in South India depended on the fate of Muhammad Ali. Chanda Sahib now prepared to cross the Coleroon and march against Trichinopoly in person. The tedious operations that followed in the three years, 1751-54, were very complicated; and the ultimate English success in this struggle really turned the tide against the French and doomed the chances of their dominion in South India. In these operations the English and the French did not appear anywhere as principals, but only as auxiliaries of the Indian rivals, the French on behalf of Chanda Sahib and the English for Muhammad Ali For a long time there were no decisive operations on either side. Chanda Sahib and the French occupied the island of Srirangam to the north of Trichinopoly and encamped on the south bank of the Kaveri to the east of the Fort. The English troops were twice reinforced from Madras; but were not well-disciplined, while the French troops were equally bad. Each party tried to amuse the other with futile negotiations; and the French siege of Trichinopoly when it began was neither vigorous nor full and never able to subject the town to a strict blockade. By the end of 1751, Muhammad Ali had secured the assistance of the ruler of Mysore by promising him the cession of Trichinopoly; he had also obtained the support of the famous Maratha adventurer, Murari Rao of Gooty, and of the Raja of Tanjore who was an enemy of Chanda Sahib. Above all the genius of Clive had suggested to the English Governor the feasibility of the capture of Arcot which was weakly defended; and his advance against the place, his easy capture of it and his glorious repulse of an attack made by the expelled

The English cling on to Muhammad Ali

Long-drawn Operations round Trichinopoly

Clive's Diversion—His Capture of Arcot (Sep. 1751)

garrison, made a great impression on the enemy at Trichinopoly and indirectly struck a serious blow at French prestige (September 1751). Clive, thus brought into prominence, held on to Arcot with bitter tenacity against a formidable array of 4,000 troops sent by Chanda Sahib. This and the failure of Dupleix to win any decisive success over the English formed "the turning point in the eastern career of the English."

New Allies for Muhammad Ali

CHAPTER IV

THE ANGLO-FRENCH STRUGGLE—SECOND PHASE 1752-1755

SECTION I. FRENCH FAILURE BEFORE TRICHINOPOLY (1752-54)—THE SITUATION IN THE CARNATIC

Clive's gallant defence of Arcot against Chanda Sahib's best troops was followed by the accession of Murari Rao to the side of Muhammad Ali and by a decisive defeat which the French and Chanda Sahib's troops suffered at English hands at Kaveripakam, near Arcot, where they had taken up a strong position. This sudden change of fortune struck Law, the French commander at Trichinopoly, with a sort of paralysis. Major Lawrence, Clive's friend and patron, had just returned from England, and was entrusted with an expedition against Trichinopoly. Accompanied by Clive, he marched towards the besieged fort to bring about a decisive issue. Dupleix was well aware that if Lawrence and Clive should join Muhammad Ali, the consequences would be disastrous to his side; and he ordered Law to intercept the English and repel them at any cost. But Law was inactive, and Lawrence distracted his attention and advanced by an unexpected road to Trichinopoly, bringing relief and provisions which provided that place with supplies for several months.

Lawrence and Clive at Trichinopoly (1752)

He then attacked Law's camp very vigorously; and the latter foolishly crossed the Coleroon and took refuge in the Island of Srirangam which was within cannon-shot of the English forces and could be easily blockaded by him. The English set to work to blockade Law and cut off any reinforcements that came to him. Chanda Sahib saw the danger of the position taken up by Law; Dupleix deemed it as the worst act of folly that could

The French and Chanda Sahib cooped up in Srirangam

be committed, resolved to send reinforcements from Pondicherry and asked Law to fall back upon the latter place, so as to allow of the reinforcements joining him at a distance from the English camp.

Clive suggested to Lawrence that if a portion of the English troops should be stationed on the north side of the Coleroon and the rest remained south of the Kaveri (the island of Srirangam being between the two rivers), Law's communications could be entirely cut off from either side and he could be forced to surrender. Thus Clive was sent with a part of the army to the north so as to intercept the reinforcements coming from Pondicherry; and he succeeded both in repulsing a sortie made on him by Law and in forcing the advancing reinforcements to retreat; and thus he destroyed every hope of escape of the French and Chanda Sahib. The latter made a desperate effort to gain the Tanjoreans over to his side, in the belief that the latter might aid his escape to Karikal. Law surrendered with all his troops (June 1752); and Chanda Sahib who trusted to the generosity of his enemies and gave himself up to the Tanjore general, was beheaded by the latter, Lawrence not caring to interfere in the affair. Thus ended the French siege of Trichinopoly. "This disaster, news of which reached Europe early in the following January, largely contributed to determine the French court to recall Dupleix and reverse his Indian policy. But in India, nothing could shake Dupleix's energy and confidence or change his resolute attitude."*

Their Surrender (June 1752)

The surrender of Law and the death of Chanda Sahib left Muhammad Ali the undisputed Nawab of the Carnatic, and the English the masters of the situation. But the Mysoreans and Murari Rao were easily persuaded by Dupleix to withdraw from the side of Muhammad Ali, while Tanjore adopted an attitude of neutrality. The Mysoreans demanded that Trichinopoly should be ceded to them according to a previous promise. The English might have been decisive; but after spending some time in inaction, they returned

Dupleix tries to retrieve the Situation

* *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, p. 130.

to the coast, leaving only a small detachment at Trichinopoly. Meanwhile Dupleix reconstructed his plans and boldly declared that he had the right to act in the name of the Nizam and that Raza Sahib, the son of Chanda Sahib, was his nominee and consequently was the rightful Nawab. An attacking English force was repulsed before Jinji. Elated by this success, Dupleix resolved to attack Fort St. David; but Lawrence took up the command and pursued the French almost to the limits of Pondicherry territory, after defeating them decisively. According to the rules of war then prevalent, Lawrence refrained from entering into French territory proper, as the two nations were not directly at war, though Dupleix had not scrupled to capture at sea some auxiliary troops of the English. Clive had, in the meanwhile, cleared the region round Madras and seized Covelong and Chingleput which were in French hands. Thus, at the end of 1752, the French retained only Pondicherry and Jinji having lost their other possessions to the English.

Further Successes of the English

But Dupleix did not abandon hope He persuaded Murari Rao to join the French side openly; and later the Mysoreans also agreed to join him on condition that Trichinopoly was to be given to them when it should be taken and began a close blockade of the place. In the beginning of 1753, Lawrence hastened to the relief of Trichinopoly for the second time The French leaders were now more careful; they had the advantage of possessing excellent cavalry and were, besides, strong in numbers. For some time the situation of Lawrence was very insecure; he depended for his supplies on the friendly Raja of Pudukottah; but they were often intercepted by the French. Elsewhere in the Carnatic the French were successful; they drove away Muhammad Ali's troops from Arcot and captured Tiruvathi, a strong temple-fort near Cuddalore. Lawrence, however, won a decisive victory over the French in an attack on that place; he followed it up with another success in which he took prisoner the French commander himself. At last Main-

The Second Siege of Trichinopoly by the French (1753)

ville, the new French commander, resolved to carry Trichinopoly by surprise and made a carefully-planned attack on it; the French secured the outer wall, but were driven back with great loss by the English troops who took a number of prisoners. This English success (November 1753) saved Trichinopoly from the most serious danger that befell it in the course of the war

and its Failure

Dupleix now began to realise that he must "sacrifice something to ill-luck" and agreed to discuss terms of peace with Saunders, the English Governor of Madras. Indeed the French Government and the Company had grown weary of his schemes and insisted that his intrigues and futile campaigns should cease. Then the French and the English Commissioners met to discuss the terms at the neutral Dutch settlement of Sadras (January 1754) The views of the two parties were totally irreconcilable with each other The English insisted that, as a basis of negotiations, Muhammad Ali should be recognised as the Nawab of the Carnatic, while the French demanded that Salabat Jang should be recognised as the Nizam and he should be left free, as overlord, to arrange for the government of the Carnatic as he chose. *Sanads* were also produced, purporting to come from Salabat Jang, appointing Dupleix to the governorship of all the country to the south of the Krishna. It was impossible for the English to agree to the French demands; and the negotiations were broken off after a few days.

Futile Conference at Sadras

The operations round Trichinopoly were not affected by these negotiations Lawrence could now only stand on the defensive; he could not easily drive the French away, as he was deficient in cavalry; while the French army was too small to invest or storm Trichinopoly and could only intercept English convoys and plunder the territories of Tanjore and Pudukottah from which Lawrence was getting supplies.* Their alliance with the Mysoreans was broken off, while Murari Rao actually

Finally the French attempted to destroy the dam on the Kaveri River on which the prosperity of Tanjore so much depended. This act threw the Raja of Tanjore firmly into English hands.

quitted their camp. It was in the course of these operations that two Indian soldiers came into great prominence. One was the famous Hyder Ali who fought as a captain on the Mysore side and later became the ruler of Mysore and a most formidable enemy of the English. The other was Yusuf Khan, a brave Hindu convert to Islam, who was the captain of all the sepoys in the English service, and who later helped to subdue the Madura and Tinnevelly country for Muhammad Ali and ruled over it vigorously for a time.

Indecisive Issue before Trichinopoly (1714)

Mainville, the French commander, continued his attacks undaunted, and, like Dupleix, never despaired of taking Trichinopoly But in August (1754) news came that Godeheu, a Director of the Company, had landed at Pondicherry with strict instructions to stop the war and make peace.

The French Government had been disillusioned and lost their faith in Dupleix They received frequent representations from the English Government against the continuance of hostilities between their respective Companies in India at a time when the two nations were at peace in Europe. Moreover they looked more to aggrandisement in North America than in India. Since the failure of the Conference at Sadras, the English Government began to prepare and send a powerful squadron to India. Consequently the French Government determined to remove Dupleix from his post and to make peace with the English.

The French Government supersede Dupleix (August 1754)

SECTION II

GODEHEU AND THE TREATY OF PONDICHERRY—DUPLEIX'S ACHIEVEMENT

Godeheu opened negotiations with Saunders soon after he landed at Pondicherry. A truce was concluded for three months in October 1754, and a few days after it was signed, Dupleix departed for Europe. Godeheu recalled Mainville from Trichinopoly, though Dupleix advised him to push on the operations at that place vigorously

Godeheu concludes Peace

and to maintain Bussy at Hyderabad and strengthen the French hold over the Northern Sarkars. The reinforcements that Godeheu brought with him would, if they had been sent to Trichinopoly before the expected arrival of the English fleet under Admiral Watson, have secured a definite advantage for the French side. But Godeheu concluded a peace (Treaty of Pondicherry) in January 1755, according to which both the English and the French should renounce all native titles and dignities and not interfere in Indian politics; the English were to have Madras, Fort St. David and Devicotta and the French, Pondicherry and an equal territory to that of the English; in the Northern Sarkars, the French were to have Masulipatam, while, north of the Krishna, each party was to have an equal number of factories. No new forts were to be erected by either party and no mention was made of Muhammad Ali or of Dupleix's pretensions to the rulership of the Carnatic. These articles laid down the principle of equal possessions not only in the Carnatic, but also in the Northern Sarkars where the French had obtained extensive claims. But the latter did not give up their hold over the Sarkars; and Bussy remained at the Nizam's court on the same terms as before The terms of the treaty were only provisional; and on the outbreak of the next war in 1756, the French were in possession of the same territory that they had held at the time of Dupleix's resignation. The treaty indeed ruined all French hopes in the Carnatic; but it did not destroy their position in the Deccan.

The Treaty of Pondicherry (1755)

Controversy has raged round the point whether Godeheu ruined the schemes of Dupleix's ambition and abandoned French interests. Historians who have based themselves on the various memoirs of Dupleix, have maintained that Godeheu, in his eagerness to placate the English, condemned the whole of Dupleix's policy and destroyed all chances of French success in the field.* But he did not

Its Effect on the French Position

* Malleson (*History of the French in India*) says that Godeheu rejected Dupleix's advice which would have secured French domination and persevered in an inaction which saved the enemy from destruction, "simply because action would have justified the long-pursued policy of Dupleix." (p. 424).

condemn the whole of Dupleix's policy; the provisional treaty contrived to retain for the French their hold over the Sarkars and to relieve them of the burden of war, in which they had been involved by that policy. It placed the French Company in a position "where it could decide whether to give up its acquisitions, or send such a force as would effectively break English resistance."*

Causes of Dupleix's Failure

Dupleix's departure to Europe naturally involves a consideration of the causes which brought about the failure of his schemes His initial successes got for him the admiration of his Company and the title of Marquis. But the failure of the French before Trichinopoly and the surrender of Law shook the Company's confidence in him Their trade was greatly injured by the war; and their hopes of profit from their territorial acquisitions were not realised As already noted, the French Government were anxious, for several reasons, to conclude peace with the English, brought about the Conference of Sadras and when it failed, became more insistent on peace, specially as the British were threatening to send out a powerful armament to India. Finance was the stumbling-block of Dupleix from first to last. His reverses which began from the time of Clive's capture of Arcot disabled him from collecting his expected revenues in the Carnatic; and it was very hard for him to maintain his army and pay it from month to month Also he was under the impression that the English Company would ultimately disavow Muhammad Ali who was a rebel, according to his contention, against

Lack of Finance, etc.

* Dodwell, in his *Dupleix and Clive* (p. 81), says that Godeheu's diplomacy was not candid, but accorded precisely with French interests; and that "not Godeheu, but the English Council, need justification for a treaty which gave everything in words, but nothing in fact." Godeheu only came down in his demands after the arrival of Watson's fleet with a strong force on board; the peace was in no sense humiliating to the French. Godeheu fully appreciated the work of Bussy. Lastly the peace was only provisional and required ratification by both Companies at home. "That ratification never came, for the outbreak of the Seven Years' War occurred before the decision of the home authorities was known. Therefore even the slight territorial changes in the draft treaty were never made.. ...it was the outbreak of hostilities in 1756 and not Godeheu's treaty which ruined the French settlements in India."—P.E Roberts: *History of British India to the end of the E. I. Company*, pp. 115-6.

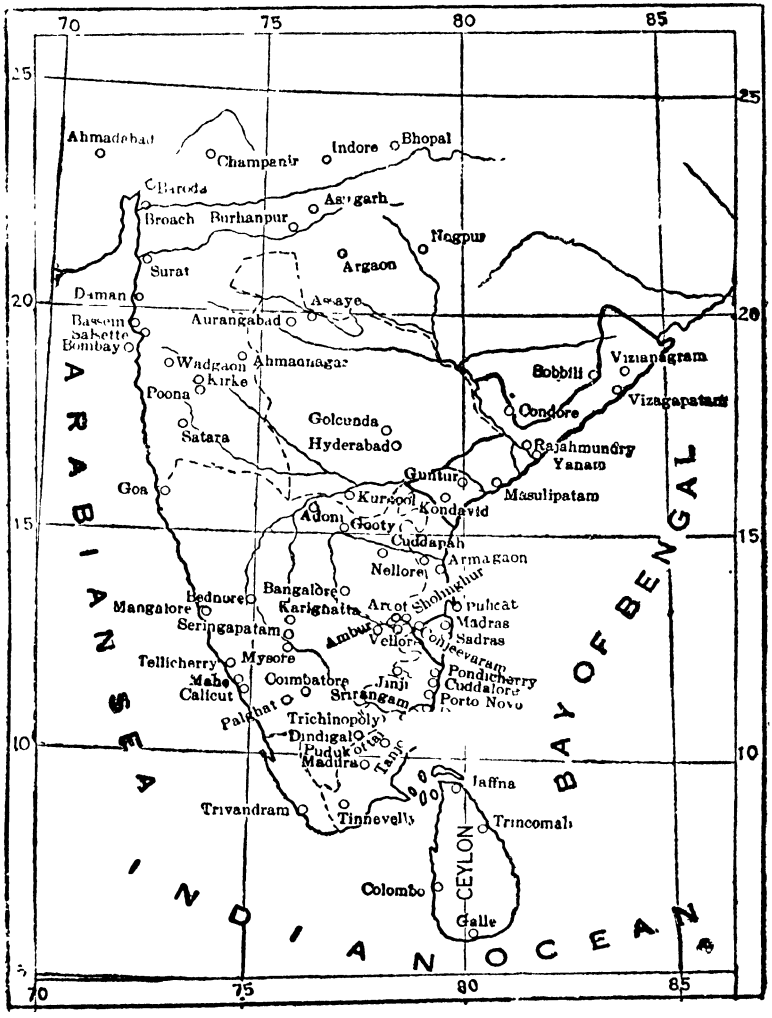
his overlord, the Nizam. So great was his belief in the justice of his own cause, and he showed such an unaccommodating spirit that did much "to provoke opposition in Europe, quite as much as in India" Moreover the Company did not support him in his plans; but he himself did not make them understand these; he was himself uncertain whether he would be able to carry them through and began to conceal his aims partially from his masters. The Company and the French king had definite motives for caution and for not sacrificing important interests elsewhere which could be secured by peace with the English Above all, Dupleix's aim to govern the Carnatic himself—he claimed to be the Nawab under a grant of Salabat Jang—was impossible, because of the French ignorance of the language and customs and political usages of the people. "He could not do other than preserve all the forms and all the abuses of the native government." Again, in his policy, there was the weakness arising from the mingling of private advantages and presents with public policy, such as marked later the conduct of the English in Bengal. From a personal point of view Dupleix staked his private wealth upon the success of his public policy and lost it along with the latter His administration came, as a consequence, to be "honey-combed with what to-day we should call flagrant corruption" This corruption was one of the causes which discredited his management His wars never paid themselves; and a portion of their expenditure had to be met out of the Company's funds; the balance came from other sources. He could not make the Carnatic war pay its way. "Like the Deccan it was too poor It was ruinous to dispute it against another European power. Dupleix's schemes and policy demanded a wealthier province than either the Carnatic or the Deccan for their realisation."*

Corruption

It is difficult to form a correct estimate of Dupleix's achievements and place in history. His fate after retirement was sad. For some time after he reached France, he was well-treated; and it even seemed probable that he might be sent back to India as Governor. But his claims

Estimate of His Achievements

* Dodwell's *Dupleix and Clive*, p. 118.



MAP OF SOUTH INDIA
Illustrating the French and the Mysore Wars

for compensation were refused by the Company persistently; and he wore out his life and the remaining fortune in litigation for the settlement of his claims, and died in 1764 in sore sickness and disappointment. His achievements and character have been exaggerated by many historians. Malleson regarded him as a great administrator and diplomat with a wonderful capacity for organisation and great persistence and tenacity of purpose. On the other side he has been painted in comparatively dark colours. Thornton says that his character was made up, to a large extent, of vanity, ambition and duplicity, while Vincent Smith points to his low morality in money matters and lack of military talents and even of personal courage But both extremes are wide of the mark There was no doubt that, along with splendid gifts, he lacked in calm and plain judgment. His plans were boldly and skilfully formed; but they were not pursued with much caution or definiteness. He interfered much with the details of military operations and with the discretion of commanders. He resorted to duplicity and intrigue frequently and was fond of pomp and undue ostentation But his failure could not be said to have arisen merely from his accidental and personal defects or even from the mere lack of adequate personal resources on his part, but depended on deeper and larger causes. Even had he continued in power after 1754, he could not have considerably improved the fortunes of the French in India

Conflicting Views

But, in spite of his defects and ultimate failure, he constitutes a striking and brilliant figure That his plans were not entirely chimerical, the English themselves proved later by adopting them He was the real founder of European ascendancy in India; "the first who made an extensive use of disciplined sepoys; the first who quitted the ports on the sea and marched an army into the heart of the continent; the first above all, who discovered the illusion of the Mughal greatness and turned to his own purpose, the awe with which weaker minds still regarded that gigantic phantom."* In

Real Elements of Greatness in his Work

* Ephinstone: *The Rise of the British Power in the East* (ed. by Colebrooke) pp.226-7.

spite of his overhauling ambition, we should give him credit for his political conceptions and for his having raised French prestige and power to a great, though short-lived, height.

SECTION III

BUSSY IN THE DECCAN—AFFAIRS BEFORE TRICHINOPOLY

Bussy's career in the Deccan afforded lessons to Clive and we can note many parallels with it in Clive's career in Bengal.

Bussy's Position in the Deccan

It was seen how Salabat Jang was anxious, even more than Muzaffar Jang, for French support and confirmed the grants to the French of Masulipatam and Divy Island, besides several neighbouring villages, on the occasion of his elevation After the Nizam reached Hyderabad, he pressed Bussy to stay on with him and accompany him to Aurangabad in the north-western corner of his dominion; and in return for this service the French got further grants, including the appointment of Dupleix as the governor of all the country south of the Krishna with power to enjoy its surplus revenues (middle of 1751). Subsequent events served but to augment the French influence. The Marathas, under their Peishwa, Balaji Baji Rao, invaded the Deccan and actually advanced upon Aurangabad. Balaji supported Ghazi-ud-din Khan, the eldest son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had hitherto remained at Delhi and now put forward a claim to his father's throne. Strengthened by Bussy and the French artillery,

His Services to Salabat Jang

Salabat Jang carried the war into the enemy's country. Balaji, though he had made peace, deemed it prudent to support Ghazi-ud-din and even sought the help of the English and sent his *vakils* to both Madras and Bombay. But neither Presidency could give him effective help; Bombay was "too closely wedded to peace and trade to seize the opportunity;" Madras was well aware of the importance of the occasion, but could not send troops by land to join him, as Bussy lay on the road.

Ghazi-ud-din was now supported by both the Peishwa and Raghuji Bhonsle of Berar who advanced with a numerous

force; Bussy felt himself to be in a serious situation and even proposed to retire with Salabat Jang to Masulipatam or to Pondicherry. But this crisis was averted when Ghazi-ud-din was poisoned at Aurangabad (October 1752) by one of his step-mothers. Bussy had now to deal only with the Maratha invaders. He was strong enough to check their advance but not to win a decisive victory over them; and he concluded an agreement by which they were to get the concessions that had been promised them by Ghazi-ud-din Thus Bussy contrived to maintain Salabat Jang on his throne and enabled him to tide over the crisis.* The district of Kondavid, adjacent to that of Masulipatam, was made over to Bussy and the French by the grateful Nizam (1752); and for the time the French ascendancy was unquestioned.

He gets the District of Kondavid (1752)

But troubles soon began. The new minister of the Nizam, Sayyad Lashkar Khan, who had succeeded Raja Raghunath Das, a person very favourable to French interests, was secretly inimical to Bussy. The Nizam's finances were in a desperate condition, and the army was in considerable arrears. Bussy's contingent was a great drain on the revenues of the state; while the French were accused of having carried away all the accumulated treasures of the Deccan. Above all, Bussy himself withdrew to Masulipatam on account of illness. During his absence from the Nizam's court, Sayyad Lashkar Khan created an occasion for scattering the French troops at different places in the state and persuaded Salabat Jang to dismiss his French body-guard. He even entered into a correspondence with the English whom he planned to use as a lever against Bussy.

Temporary Difficulties of Bussy

* Ghazi-ud-din had, previous to his death, made overtures to the French that they should withdraw their assistance from Salabat Jang; and when his offer was refused, he formally appointed Muhammad Ali to be Nawab of the Carnatic, in order to spite Dupleix.

Dupleix clearly perceived the danger that threatened the French influence in the Deccan and instructed Bussy to return immediately to Hyderabad (1753).

Bussy's Triumph—The Cession of the Northern Sarkars to him (1753)

The latter was fully alive to the instability of the French influence with the Nizam, and he had very little hope of help from the Carnatic where the French fortunes were rapidly declining. He, however, succeeded in quickly restoring order among his troops and set for Salabat Jang's camp at Aurangabad. His enemies easily bent before him. The Sarkars of Guntur, Rajahmundry, Ellore and Chicacole were now granted to him personally for the maintenance of the French troops; and the Nizam agreed to retain his French body-guard and not at all to interfere in the affairs of the Carnatic (November 1753).

The French occupation of the new territories was not entirely peaceful It did not bring any ready money that was so much wanted, nor were Salabat Jang's orders readily obeyed by the turbulent Zamindars of these districts. At the same time war broke out between the Nizam and Raghuji Bhonsle. Bussy had to accompany Salabat Jang in the campaign against the Marathas; and meanwhile Jafar Ali Khan, the Mussalman governor of the Sarkars, defied French authority He garrisoned the fort of Rajahmundry and sought English assistance All this affected greatly the collection of revenues. Bussy himself had to march into the Sarkars with the bulk of his troops, in order to stabilise the French administration, particularly in the districts of Rajahmundry and Chicacole, where the Raja of Vizianagram, the chief renter, was very hostile and had to be most tactfully managed.* The main endeavour of Bussy was to collect from these Sarkars enough money to meet the expenses of his troops in the Deccan. After this, Bussy returned to Hyderabad towards the end of 1754, shortly after

The Establishment of French Authority in the Sarkars

* In the course of the French attempts at settlement, Jafar Ali invited the Marathas to ravage the Chicacole country, who made the French occupation more difficult.

Dupleix had departed for Europe. Both Godeheu and his successor, De Leyrit, continued to maintain Bussy and the French contingent at the Nizam's court; the Treaty of Pondicherry did not, as we saw, actually extend its operations to the Deccan. But the departure of Dupleix from India shook the confidence of the Nizam and his nobles in the strength of the French nation; and Bussy strove hard to remove the impression of weakness that the treaty had created.

The Effect on Bussy of the Treaty of Pondicherry

In 1755, Salabat Jang proceeded against the kingdom of Mysore, in order to collect arrears of tribute which, he said, were due to him as the Mughal viceroy of all the country to the south of the Vindhyas. Bussy was in a difficult situation. At Trichinopoly the Mysoreans were French allies; and if he should refuse to help Salabat Jang, the latter would send away the French and call in the aid of the English. He had perforce to accompany the Nizam into Mysore which was at the same time attacked by the Marathas. He succeeded in persuading the Mysoreans to make their peace with both the Nizam and the Marathas (1755) and in getting a good round sum for the former. Thus the French influence in the Deccan continued to remain as bright as before. But the anti-French party at Hyderabad had grown strong. Shah Nawaz Khan, the new minister of Salabat Jang, tried hard to get rid of Bussy and the French An expedition had to be sent against the turbulent Nawab of Savanur and Murari Rao of Gooty who defied both the Nizam and the Peishwa and against whom both now combined. Bussy brought Murari Rao to submission and secured for the French a full release of all his claims on them for services done before Trichinopoly Thus Shah Nawaz Khan got his opportunity. He now persuaded Salabat Jang to believe that Bussy was not true to his salt, and charged him with treason and urged his instant dismissal. Balaji Baji Rao hoped that the Frenchman would take service with him when he should be sent away by the Nizam; and all that Bussy could do was

Bussy's Settlement with Mysore (1755)

His Dismissal by Salabat Jang (1756)

to accept his dismissal calmly (1756). He retired quickly to Hyderabad, intending to march down to Masulipatam from thence; but he feared a combination of the Nizam and the Peishwa and a possible appearance on the scene of the English to whom an urgent request for help had been sent; and he sent an urgent message to Pondicherry, explaining his serious position and demanding immediate help. At Hyderabad, which was violently hostile to him, he entrenched himself in a fortified enclosure and was soon strengthened by French reinforcements from Masulipatam This bold stand made a powerful impression upon the feeble mind of Salabat Jang, who did not get the expected help from the English. When the Nizam's request for help reached Madras, the English agreed heartily to the proposal and prepared to send a detachment to the Deccan But they now received news of the capture of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-daula (June 1756) and of the complete destruction of their power in Bengal; and they had to renounce all their other activities and turn their entire attention to that region Thus Bussy triumphed over his enemies and quietly resumed his place in the Nizam's court (August 1756).

and Restoration to his former Position

Towards the end of 1756, news arrived of the out-break of the Seven Years' War; and Bussy turned his attention to the Northern Sarkars, to watch the English factories on the coast and to subdue the hilly regions of the districts. He captured the English factories (chief among them being Vizagapatam) easily and even thought of sending a portion of his troops to Bengal to the assistance of Chandernagar which was attacked by Clive and Watson* and captured in March

Bussy in the Sarkars —His Capture of English Factories (1757)

* The English fleet under Watson with Clive was sent to attack the pirate fort of Gheriah on the west coast, instead of against Bussy, as was desired by Madras. The result of this action was to enable Bussy to continue in power in the Deccan, but ultimately to make Clive and Watson free for their important work in Bengal.

1757. He reduced some troublesome renters and zamindars, of whom the most prominent was the Raja of Bobbili; he took the fortress of Bobbili by assault and on the advice of the rival Raja of Vizianagram, put to the sword the entire garrison.* Thus Bussy spent the epoch-making year of 1757; he was even tempted by Siraj-ud-daula to march into Orissa and Bengal and help him against Clive; but the latter quickly forestalled him and followed up the capture of Chandernagar with the decisive victory of Plassey.

His final Achievement in Hyderabad and Departure for Pondicherry (1758)

While Bussy was thus employed in the Sarkars, a conspiracy was hatched against Salabat Jang by Shah Nawaz Khan with the object of expelling the French and raising to the throne Nizam Ali, a younger brother of the ruler. Bussy marched to Hyderabad early in 1758 and strove to restore the authority of Salabat Jang. Shah Nawaz Khan was killed in a tumult and Nizam Ali fled away. Bussy had succeeded in restoring some order and stability in the state when he was peremptorily recalled to Pondicherry by Count de Lally who ordered him to return with all his troops, except those needed for the defence of Masulipatam. Clive, now triumphant in Bengal, despatched a force under Colonel Forde who defeated the French at Condore, captured Masulipatam and held it with great difficulty (1758-59); while Salabat Jang gave by a treaty to the English, "without any obligation of service in return," the districts formerly held by Bussy (April 1759).

English Conquest of the Sarkars (1758-59)

Bussy's Achievements

Bussy's departure from Hyderabad is usually regarded as a foolish mistake and an unnecessary sacrifice of French power in the Deccan. But it is well to remember that, had he taken part in the Carnatic struggles, he might have turned the tide in favour of the French; and thus Dupleix might have secured

* The desperate defence of Bobbili and the murder of the Raja of Vizianagram by two avenging survivors of the Bobbili house are clearly described by Orme and form the theme of a popular Telugu ballad.

some success; also, while the French gained territorial concessions in the Sarkars, these were difficult to keep and did not bring in any substantial revenue, not even paying for the maintenance of his troops. When he left the Deccan, his fabric of power almost immediately vanished. Thus "the advantages derived from Bussy's exploits were showy, rather than substantial, and the policy which sought them was fundamentally unsound." Yet he was a remarkable figure and conducted very skilfully both political and military affairs. He pioneered the way for the control of Indian princes and was the prototype of the British residents at the courts of Indian states He did not approve blindly of all the projects of Dupleix and supplied the latter with the necessary leverage of authority from the Nizam with which he could counteract the claims of Muhammad Ali to be the rightful Nawab. Above all, he supplied Clive with an example of conduct; and the latter might be regarded as his political successor.*

Their Lack of permanent Benefit

To return to the affairs in the Carnatic: The Treaty of Pondicherry left the position of the two parties very vague. The English hoped to consolidate, without any breach of the treaty, the power of Nawab Muhammad Ali in the still unsubdued parts of the Carnatic, especially in Madura and Tinnevelly. Godeheu's successor, De Leyrit, was soon convinced that a fresh war was inevitable and began to prepare for such

English and French Operations in the Carnatic (1755-56)

* Bussy furnished an object-lesson to Clive in the years after Plassey; both encountered and overcame the same problems; dealing with weak and untrustworthy princes, carefully guarding against the designs of intriguing nobles and rival European powers and facing the same financial difficulties. "Clive's relations with Jafar Ali were just the same as Bussy's with Salabat Jang.....Less smooth and debonnaire, his (Clive's) forceful character and more secure position enabled him to obtain an even greater ascendancy than Bussy had been able to accomplish.....but apart from these differences in character and position, Clive had to encounter the same problems as Bussy and commonly adopted the solutions which the latter had devised."—Dodwell: *Dupleix and Clive*, p. 102.

Bussy, an object-lesson to Clive

a contingency. The Mysore troops still fighting round Trichinopoly with the hope of getting possession of it, retired owing to an invasion of their own territory by the Nizam and the Marathas; but before retiring they made over the Island of Srirangam to the French with whom they had kept up their alliance (1755).

Inevitability of War

The English sent a considerable portion of their troops to help Mahfuz Khan, the brother of Muhammad Ali, in the reduction of the Madura and Tinnevelly districts; they also got from the Nawab an assignment of the revenues of certain districts The French regarded these acts as interferences in native affairs, and threatened to retaliate. The English fleet under Watson which was on the coast, was soon joined at Bombay by Clive with a large body of troops early in 1756; and both proceeded, in conjunction with the Peishwa, to destroy Gheriah, the stronghold of the Maratha chief, the Angria They then returned to the Coromandel Coast and awaited events.

Outbreak of the Seven Years' War (1756)

In May 1756, the Seven Years' War broke out; and the news of the outbreak reached India towards the close of that year De Leyrit heard that a powerful armament would be soon sent to India to retrieve the lost dominant position of the French He sent all available troops to Trichinopoly, to attack it; but a relieving English force compelled them to retreat (June 1757). The rest of the year was occupied with minor operations in which the French were a little successful.

The respective Positions of both Powers in the Carnatic on the eve of Lally's Arrival (1758)

In April 1758, when Lally arrived at Pondicherry with a powerful French force, the situation in the Carnatic was more favourable to the French than to the English. The latter had sent all available troops under Clive in the previous year to Bengal; and their main army was shut up in Trichinopoly; their fleet under Watson was in the Hugli, while Madras and Fort St. David had to be strongly garrisoned. The French

had in their possession numerous forts in the Carnatic and were superior on land, and also at sea on the Coromandel Coast, at least till the end of 1758. How Lally failed in his attempt, in spite of these initial advantages, will be detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE REVOLUTION IN BENGAL: FINAL FRENCH FAILURE IN SOUTH INDIA (1757—1761)

SECTION I. THE REVOLUTION IN BENGAL (1756-57)—PLASSEY

Bengal was the real base from which the British Indian dominion began to develop. After Calcutta was raised to be a Presidency (1700), it grew up steadily in strength and prosperity; its fortifications were strengthened and powers extended by Mughal grants. Nawab Ali Vardi Khan did not trouble or oppress the European settlements in his dominions and fully appreciated the benefits that European trade was conferring on his people. In addition to the English at Calcutta, there were the French settlement of Chandernagar and the Dutch possession of Chinsurah, both situated higher up the Hugli than the English Presidency. Ali Vardi Khan regarded with some suspicion the growing power of the English, their strong fort and numerous ships and their prosperous factories at Dacca, Kasimbazar and Patna. He had news of the revolution that was taking place in the Carnatic, of the rapid rise of Dupleix into prominence and the ultimate triumph of the English and their ally, Muhammad Ali When he was urged by some of his advisers to expel the English from Calcutta, he is said to have remarked thus:—"It is now difficult to extinguish the fire on land (internal rebellion); but should the sea be in flames (if the naval strength of England be added to the forces of rebellion), who can put it out?"

The English in Bengal under Ali Vardi Khan

In 1752, Ali Vardi Khan designated as his successor his grand-nephew, Siraj-ud-daula, a young man of whom neither the English nor the Indians had anything good to say. When the old Nawab died early in 1756, he warned his successor against the ambitions and fast-rising

Accession of Siraj-ud-daula (1756)

power of the Europeans. Siraj-ud-daula's first act after his accession was to seize the English factory at Kasimbazar which was close to his capital, Murshidabad; and he followed it up by advancing on Calcutta which was but weakly defended and capturing it; while Drake, the Governor, and several of the Council took refuge in ships on the river (June 1756). The defence of Calcutta was even shabbier than the resistance put up by Madras against La Bourdonnais in 1746; and only one brave man, Holwell, sustained it for a day or two.

His Capture of Calcutta (June 1756)

Siraj-ud-daula's hatred of the English was due to a number of causes He had exaggerated ideas about the wealth of the English at Calcutta to whom some persons of his court had gone for protection from his displeasure and consequent vengeance A war was then imminent between England and France; and the Nawab heard that Calcutta was being strengthened. When he ordered Governor Drake not to strengthen the walls of Fort William, the latter replied that the English must be expected to strengthen themselves against a possible French attack; and this added to the Nawab's growing fear of the English power. He imagined that the Europeans were preparing to repeat in Bengal what they had already done in the Carnatic; and he sent at the same time threatening messages to the French and the Dutch. The most important reason for the Nawab's attack seems to have been an idea that the English had taken advantage of Ali Vardi Khan's illness to strengthen their fort, whereas Drake had only mounted a few guns on the river-side wall against a possible French attack and had left the land-side entirely unprotected.

His Enmity towards the English

The easy fall of Calcutta into the Nawab's hands was mainly due to lack of organisation and leadership on the part of the English. When the Nawab captured the outposts, the Governor and the commandant deserted the Fort; and after a short defence by Holwell, it sur-

The Black Hole Tragedy

rendered. Siraj-ud-daula made anxious inquiries about the treasure which the Fort was supposed to contain and ordered the English prisoners to be shut up for the night in the so-called Black Hole, a room in the Fort not even 20 feet square, from which only 23 out of 146 emerged alive after a most sultry night* (said to have been the hottest and the sultriest in the year). But it will serve no useful end at this time to recall in detail the incidents of the tragedy, as it has been called.

Expedition under Clive sent from Madras

When the news of the loss of Calcutta reached Madras, its Governor was planning to send an expedition to the Nizam's capital, in order to destroy French dominance at that court. He now wisely resolved to direct the expedition to Bengal and to supplement it with a naval squadron under Admiral Watson that was then on the coast; and he entrusted Clive with the command of the forces. Orme, the well-known historian of the Anglo-French struggles, who was then a member of the Madras Council, urged upon the Governor the supreme need of recovering Calcutta and the fact that a small expedition would only "weaken Madras without vindicating the position of the

Controversy over it

* A school of writers has been maintaining that no such incident as the Black Hole Tragedy had ever occurred, that no mention is made of it in contemporary Muhammadan histories or Hindu tradition, that Holwell's narrative of it—Holwell was among those imprisoned and the few that survived—was marked by inaccuracies and some contradictions, and some English authorities failed to mention it in papers or letters written at the time; and later it was maintained that there was no evidence for the existence of the monument in memory of the tragedy which Holwell erected. Lord Curzon, who was Governor-General of India in the years 1899-1905 and who erected a new monument in the place of the dismantled Holwell's monument, adduces elaborate evidence that the monument was in existence for 80 years till it was demolished finally; and it is maintained on the other side that, making allowances for Holwell's exaggerations, the main outlines of the narrative of the incidents still remain, and that contemporary authorities like Lord Clive, Admiral Watson and Governor Pigot made references to it. See Curzon's *British Government in India*, Vol. I, Chap. VII; Busteed: *Echoes of Old Calcutta*, 4th Ed., Chap. II; *Bengal, Past and Present*, July 1915 and January, 1916; C. R. Wilson: (ed.) *Old Fort William in Bengal*, Vol. I, Introduction, pp. XXIII, *et seq.*; and *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, p. 156, *note*. (*Continued on the next page*)

English in Bengal." The choice of Clive as commander was considered to be very fortunate. The expedition took a long time to reach the mouth of the Hugli; but it easily defeated a body of the Nawab's troops who tried to oppose its march to Calcutta, recovered Fort William and plundered the town of Hugli (January 1757).

English Treaty with the Nawab

The Nawab became alarmed and planned that the French should mediate. But news of war between England and France had arrived; and there could be no chance of French mediation. He advanced upon Calcutta and haughtily rejected the terms that Clive offered. But a night attack that the English delivered on his camp, though not quite successful, greatly alarmed him and drove him into concluding a treaty. According to its terms, the English were confirmed in all their previous privileges and were to receive all the plunder that the Nawab had taken from them, while they could fortify Calcutta as they pleased and coin rupees which were to be current throughout Bengal. This treaty was more convenient than "glorious" for the English. Now that war had been declared with France, Clive felt himself unequal to fight the Nawab and the French together; and the English success had been in no way decisive. "Indeed, had the French followed the English example and thrown every available man into Bengal, the immediate course of events must have been very different." But Bussy had been strengthened with all the French forces that could be spared;

Siraj-ud-daula's part in it

Siraj-ud-daula himself did not seem to have been personally responsible for this tragedy; and had he been awake at the time, he might have prevented the tragedy. There are, however, many instances of the Nawab's barbarous cruelty to his victims. According to Holwell's narrative, the severity of treatment was due to the instigation of Amin Chand, a rich banker and merchant of Calcutta, who had been recently vexed with the English and was intriguing with the Nawab; but the nature and extent of his intrigues have not been fully ascertained. He was shortly to act another notorious part as the intermediary in the negotiations between the English and the Nawab.

and now none could go from Pondicherry to the rescue of the French in Bengal.*

English Capture of Chandernagar

But Clive was not at all easy in mind. He had to meet the possible enmity of the French at Chandernagar. For some time both the parties attempted to secure the support of the Nawab who hoped that both would weaken themselves by a mutual struggle. For his own part Clive did not intend to leave Chandernagar behind him in his prospective struggle with the Nawab. If Bussy should join the French at Chandernagar as was thought likely the Nawab would court his friendship; if the French joined the Nawab, Clive's path would not be easy at all. At last the Nawab was persuaded to give an ambiguous letter to the English, permitting them to attack Chandernagar.† An assault on the place, both from land and river, drove the French to surrender (March 1757).

Its Effect

Clive's timely capture of Chandernagar was a decisive event. It took away much of what remained of the faith of Indians in French prestige and deprived the Nawab of a possible ally against the the English. Moreover, it deprived the French islands of Bourbon and Mauritius of their habitual supplies of grain from Bengal "so that they were in the greatest difficulty to feed or provision the squadrons sent out by the French in 1757 and 1758." Thus, indirectly, it helped to weaken the French fleets which might have kept up Lally's initial successes in his struggle with the English in South India.

* "Just as in 1751 the despatch of Bussy to the Deccan had disabled Dupleix from completing his designs in the Carnatic, so now in 1757 the need of maintaining Bussy's position prevented them from interfering with effect in Bengal."—(*Cambridge History*, Vol. V, p. 145).

† A rumour that Ahmad Shah Abdali, then in Delhi, also was planning to invade Bengal forced the Nawab to seek to get help from the English and mollify them with this permission to attack the French town.

Now the Nawab was convinced that the sacrifice he had made of the French was in vain; he wrote to Bussy entreating him to come to his deliverance. He was more afraid than ever that the English might launch a sudden attack on him and feebly displayed outbreaks of hostile feelings against them. Meanwhile Clive was convinced that a recurrence of hostilities with the Nawab was only a question of time. At any time he might be called upon to proceed to Madras; and then he would have "to choose between leaving Calcutta to the mercy of Siraj-ud-daula or Madras to the mercy of the French" who were expected every day to arrive in strength upon the coast Fortune now played into his hands. The chief nobles of Murshidabad, who were disgusted with the insolence of the Nawab, formed a conspiracy to dethrone him in favour of Mir Jafar Ali, the *Bakshi* and a brother-in-law of the late Nawab

Clive's Position

The family of the Jagat Seths, the great Hindu bankers of Bengal who had largely helped the establishment of Ali Vardi Khan's power, were ill-treated by the Nawab and now approached the English Rai Durlabh who held the post of *Diwan* was superseded by a low favourite while guns were planted against the palace of Mir Jafar. All the old officials had been removed The Nawab had alienated the court and the camp alike by his tyranny Since he could no longer rely on immediate French help in Bengal, the conspirators turned to Clive for assistance and support. The English were now induced to take the questionable course of supporting a plot against a ruler who was legally their ally; and this first false step led to others of which the most discreditable was Clive's double-dealing with Amin Chand* who

Conspiracy against the Nawab

* Amin Chand (Omichand) had been suspected of playing false to the English when Siraj-ud-daula captured Calcutta. In spite of this he was allowed to participate in the plot to supersede the Nawab. Unsuccessful efforts were made to keep him out of the affair; he now demanded a very large sum as hush-money for not divulging the plot to Siraj-ud-daula. The English agent at Murshidabad had certain proof of his having behaved with treachery. It was necessary to keep his mouth shut until things should become ripe for action; and hence the English Council at Calcutta decided on the expediency of a double treaty,

Amin Chand and his part

Clive's Treaty with Mir Jafar and the Conspirators

acted as the intermediary between the conspirators and the English. The terms of the treaty between Mir Jafar and the English included the surrender of all French fugitives and factories, the restitution of all English losses, the right to fortify their factories at Dacca and Kasimbazar, and the recognition of English sovereignty over Calcutta The treaty also granted the English the territory later known as the Twenty-Four Parganahs and stipulated that no forts should be built by the Nawab on the river below the town of Hugli.

Clive's Advance on the Nawab

Clive began his march from Calcutta upon Siraj-ud-daula immediately after he received the treaty from Mir Jafar. He had 3,000 men with him, of whom 800 were Europeans; but his sepoys were veterans seasoned under Lawrence. His main fear was as to Mir Jafar, if the latter did not stand up to his engagements, there might be disaster for the English. It was suspected that, at the best, Mir Jafar would only stand aside from his master and wait the issue of the battle It was, however, now too late for Clive to withdraw or hold back Therefore, without even waiting for instructions from Calcutta, he forced an engagement on the enemy, and advanced to the historic battle-field of Plassey (June 22, 1757).

in one copy of which Amin Chand's claims were to be inserted; while the real copy contained no such clause. In order to deceive the victim, Watson's signature, which was refused by him, was added by some person to the false copy. This trick, usually ascribed to Clive, has done more harm to his reputation than any other charge brought against him, and his biographers, from Macaulay downwards, have been forced to put up laboured apologies for his conduct. Clive thought that the trick of the sham treaty was the only way by which Mir Jafar and the Englishmen at the Nawab's capital could be saved from the wrath of the Nawab, if Amin Chand should disclose to him the conspiracy, and by which he might be kept loyal to his fellow conspirators. "It was a regrettable expedient; nor is it clear why the English should have ever thought of employing a man they had reason to distrust.....and however the means employed may be condemned, it is impossible to sympathise with one who sought so persistently to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds." (Dodwell: *Dupleix and Clive*, pp. 132-3). Clive himself justified his action, when examined by the Committee of the House of Commons, as "warrantable in such a case." Malcolm's *Life of Lord Clive*, Vol. I (1836), p. 249, *note*

On the following day was fought the memorable battle, which has been regarded as the real foundation-stone of British Indian dominion. Clive knew that the battle would decide whether the English should enjoy in Bengal the dominance that Bussy enjoyed in the Deccan or whether they should be thrust back with disaster on Calcutta The battle was begun by the enemy cannonading the English position and by Clive replying to it The enemy fell back upon their own camp early in the afternoon, and the English troops advanced and occupied two mounds close to their entrenchments. The Nawab thought that the battle was lost and fled in hot haste to his capital; and his army quickly dispersed. The English triumph was complete* and Clive quickly advanced with Mir Jafar to Murshidabad and contrived to secure the person of Siraj-ud-daula. Had the latter succeeded in escaping into Bihar as he attempted, Clive might have had great trouble in placing Mir Jafar on the *masnad* in complete security. Siraj-ud-daula was, however, caught as he was attempting to escape and put to death by Miran, Mir Jafar's son. The treasury of Murshidabad was found to contain moneys far below the general expectation. According to a separate agreement entered into by Mir Jafar with the English leaders, considerable gifts had to be given to Clive and his colleagues; and what remained was not equal to discharge the other obligations that Mir Jafar had undertaken. So jewels had to be given in lieu of part of the sum; and the remainder was left to be settled as the revenues should come in.†

The Battle of Plassey (June 1757)

End of Siraj-ud-daula

The new Position of the English

* A comparison is drawn between the English victory at Plassey and the French victory over the troops of Nasir Jang near Jinji, shortly before his death. Mir Jafar and Rai Durlabh played the same treacherous part in the battle that the Pathan Nawabs played in the camp of Nasir Jang. Only the circumstances of the death of Nasir Jang differed from those that brought about the death of Siraj-ud-daula.

† These sordid transactions detract from the glory of Clive's achievements. But in this matter Clive and his companions were but following the examples of Dupleix and Bussy and were only

After Plassey, the English position in Bengal resembled that of the French in the Deccan. The new Nawab, Mir Jafar, was a creature of their choice; their troops formed the only effective military power in the province; and Clive was the real power behind the throne.

SECTION II. CLIVE'S FIRST GOVERNMENT IN BENGAL (1757-60)

THE RULE OF MIR JAFAR

Weak Position of Mir Jafar

Mir Jafar was a weak ruler. The Muhammadan nobles despised him on account of his weakness and also because he was raised to the throne mainly by the support of Hindu bankers and the English. He had imprudently promised large sums of money to the English Company and their leaders and soldiers. As we saw, he had to give away jewels and assign away the revenues of several districts in anticipation He expected that his generous gifts to Clive and other English leaders would make them relax their demands on him on account of the Company; but they would not do so and insisted on a full payment of all the sums that he had promised. He began to quarrel with the English and resolved to get rid of the chief Hindu officials under him like Rai Durlabh, the *diwan*, and Raja Ram Narayan, the deputy-governor of Bihar, both of whom he suspected of English leanings. Moreover he drove into open rebellion two great Hindu zamindars whose risings Clive had to put down, and whom he had to protect later on from the Nawab's vengeance. Raja Ram Narayan was accused of planning an alliance with the Nawab Vizier of Oudh against his own master; and Clive who accompanied the Nawab to Patna, had to protect the Raja and to secure for him a reconciliation with his master.

doing what their contemporaries generally did. "Here our judgment must fall upon the age rather than upon the individuals; but none the less, the acceptance of the presents was of evil example; and could Clive have looked on to 1765, perhaps he would have refrained from laying up for himself untold bitterness."—*Cambridge History*, Vol. II, p. 151.

Thus Clive speedily found out the weakness and insincerity of the Nawab; moreover, Miran, his son, attempted to create confusion in Murshidabad. Clive had to support, as a settled rule, all the ministers of the Nawab against oppression on condition that they performed their duties efficiently. He had to guarantee the safety of Rai Durlabh and Ram Narayan and at the same time to avoid an open breach with the Nawab or any lowering of his dignity. He succeeded in imposing his will on the Nawab and in making him fulfil all his engagements with the English. Thus the stability of the native government depended upon the support and good-will of the English leader.

Clive supports his Officials against Oppression

Clive had also to stand forth as the protector of the provinces from external invasion. Hitherto, he occupied an anomalous position in Calcutta, still remaining technically a servant of the Madras Government. In spite of a curious scheme of rotation governors, Clive was invited to act as Governor till a permanent arrangement could be made. In the middle of 1758 a despatch arrived from the Company, appointing Clive to the post of Governor of Fort William that he was virtually occupying. This was soon after Lally's arrival on the Coromandel Coast; and it was good that Clive was strengthened in his position because the Nawab had been hoping to get French help and was suspected of seeking a correspondence with Pondicherry.

Clive made Governor of Fort William (1758)

About the same time, Ali Gauohar, a Mughal prince, better known by his later title of Shah Alam, fled from Delhi which was in the throes of a revolution and took refuge with Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab Vizier of Oudh. He planned to occupy Bihar and Bengal for himself and gave out that his father, the Mughal Emperor, had given the provinces over to himself. Early in 1759 he advanced upon Patna with a large army, and many of the *zamindars* of Bihar joined him. Raja Ram Narayan, the deputy-governor of Bihar, had at first pretended submission

He repulses Shah Alam from Bihar (1759)

to the invader, but later repulsed an attack made on Patna by him; and he ably defended the place till English help arrived. Clive advanced quickly into Bihar, punished the rebellious *zamindars* and placed a garrison in Patna. All this he did, in spite of the fact that he had despatched half the available forces under Colonel Forde to attack the French in the Northern Sarkars in order to relieve the pressure put by Lally on the English at Madras. Mir Jafar expressed his gratitude to Clive for this timely protection. He granted a *jaghir* to his protector, consisting of the quit-rent which he had reserved for himself when he granted the district of the Twenty-four Parganahs to the Company at his accession. This quit-rent was to be paid by the Company to Clive instead of to the Nawab; and the territory granted came to be known as Clive's *Jaghir*. Moreover, the minister of the nominal Emperor of Delhi who was pleased at the repulse of the rebel prince. Shah Alam, from Bihar, sent a *sanad* (grant) of recognition to Mir Jafar as the rightful Nawab of Bengal as well as a title of honour to Clive; and the Nawab's grant to Clive was ostensibly for the maintenance of this title.

and sends Forde to the Northern Sarkars

Clive's Jaghir

Shortly afterwards, Clive contrived to strike down the Dutch, the only remaining European rival power. The Dutch settlement of Chinsurah was getting to be jealous of the growing ascendancy of the English. Clive had obstructed Dutch trade in salt-petre (so necessary for making gun-powder) in order to prevent it from reaching the French and injured their trade in opium and their cloth-investment for Europe. The Dutch consequently resolved to strengthen their position, asked for reinforcements from Batavia and intrigued with the unfaithful Mir Jafar.* Their chief at Chinsurah was, however, slow and irresolute; and before the squadron from Java could reach

He destroys the Dutch Power at Chinsurah

* The Dutch were "in fact, in exactly the same position which the English would have occupied on the Coromandel Coast, had they allowed the French quietly to establish Chanda Sahib as Nawab of Arcot." (Dodwell: p. 152).

Bengal, Clive promptly acted. He barred the advance of the Dutch fleet up the Hugli, allowed them to begin the attack and then routed them utterly by land and sea (November 1759). The Dutch acknowledged themselves to be the aggressors and agreed to pay compensation. Thus Clive defeated them both in diplomacy and at arms The Dutch Government in Europe made loud complaints against Clive but without any effect. Mir Jafar was in terror lest Clive should punish him for his intrigues with the Dutch.

His Achievements during his first Governorship

By the beginning of 1760, Clive had fully secured the safety of Bengal and Bihar from all foes, European and Indian. His health had begun to fail, and he departed in February for Europe. Thus ended Clive's first government of Bengal. In the course of just over three years, he had established the undisputed ascendancy of the English in the province, overthrown one Nawab and set up another and destroyed French and Dutch rivalry. While building up English supremacy in Bengal, he had helped in the driving of the French out of the Northern Sarkars. He had gained the good-will of influential Hindus who found in him their sure protection against the Nawab's tyranny. He had learnt to avoid dangers and pitfalls from the examples of Dupleix and Bussy and succeeded, unlike them, in building up an enduring dominion. "In short, he had displayed in Bengal as a statesman the same high qualities as he had displayed in the Carnatic as a soldier and in a higher degree." But it should be understood that it was only his personality that maintained the position of the English whose power was "a matter of personal influence and military force." The dangers by which English dominion was beset displayed themselves prominently as soon as his master-hand was withdrawn from the direction of affairs.

SECTION III

THE FINAL FAILURE OF THE FRENCH IN SOUTH INDIA (1758-1761)

When the Seven Years' War broke out, the French Government resolved to strike a decisive blow at the English power in India and sent a large armament under Count de Lally, an impetuous soldier, to the East. Lally was a brave and incorruptible soldier, but had no clear vision, was insolent and repulsive in his manners and would not listen to the views and opinions of others. His companion, D'Ache, who commanded the squadron, was as impatient and irritable as himself; and there was lack of co-operation between the two leaders. Lally was entrusted with the two-fold task of purifying the French administration and driving out the English.*

The Expedition of Lally—His Character

At the moment of Lally's landing at Pondicherry, both Madras and Pondicherry were bare of troops† The first part of the French armament had indeed arrived in the latter part of the year, but did nothing worth noting When Lally sighted Pondicherry, his squadron came into action with the English fleet under Pococke who had succeeded Watson and had left Bengal in order to cruise in the Coromandel waters The action that ensued was indecisive; but the advantage seems to have lain mainly with the English, though

Situation at his Arrival

* The French Government in India had grown laxer under De Leyrit, the successor of Dupleix. Lally's mission of purifying it and checking abuses was similar to the commission of Clive, when he was sent to Bengal for the second time in 1765 "Clive achieved his task at the cost of a persecution which was carried even beyond his grave. But even Clive could not have reformed the administration of Bengal, if he had also been engaged in warfare with a European power. Yet Lally was asked to drive out the English and reform Pondicherry in the same breath. Thus an impossible task had been confided to a man possessed of energy and talent, but lacking all sense of statesmanship." (Dodwell: p. 161). The control of the squadron was reserved for D'Ache, so that Lally might find himself at any time deprived of its co-operation.

† A large portion of the English troops was in Bengal, while the bulk of the French forces were with Bussy and before Trichinopoly; the French were garrisoning several forts which they had recently captured.

they were too crippled to pursue the enemy. It did not prevent the landing of Lally at Pondicherry.

His Capture of Fort St. David

On the very day on which he landed, Lally marched a portion of the army against Fort St. David. He easily occupied the large town of Cuddalore lying to the south and after some days secured the Fort itself by assault. The fortifications of the place were defective in some points; but it was capable of holding out for a much longer period than it did; and its fall produced a great impression upon the country powers Lally next secured the surrender of Devicotta (at the mouth of the Coleroon); and everybody expected that he would immediately turn to the capture of Madras. Pigot, the Governor of Madras, appealed to Clive for reinforcements; but the latter was convinced that Lally could not take Madras so long as it was well-supplied with provisions and money; and moreover he hesitated to weaken his own position in Bengal by despatching any considerable portion of his troops to South India.

Lack of Union among the French Leaders

Lally's temper soon began to produce an ugly situation. Even during the course of the siege of Fort St David, he became impatient with De Leyrit, the French Governor, and openly quarrelled with him. He indiscriminately impressed all classes of Indians into his service; and this caused great alarm among the Indian population of Pondicherry. When Lally proposed to march against Madras, De Leyrit protested that he was unable to furnish him with money or means of transport, while D'Ache absolutely refused to attack Pococke. This refusal of the fleet to co-operate with him rendered any attempt on Madras futile till the English fleet should definitely retire from the coast on account of the monsoon. Two courses were open to him. He might drive the English out of the places they still held in the Arcot country and isolate them in Madras; or he might proceed to Tanjore and Trichinopoly where he could gain plunder, but from which he could not at all affect the main issue of the struggle.

Unfortunately Lally chose the latter course and marched against Tanjore, whose ruler had executed a bond for a large sum of money to Chanda Sahib, which had been handed over to Dupleix. Lally proceeded to Karikal and ravaged the country on his way to Tanjore; and after some fruitless negotiation, he began a regular siege of that place. But his ammunition ran out and his provisions were short; while Karikal, the base of his supplies, was threatened by the English fleet. Soon he was forced to raise the siege of Tanjore, spiked his guns and retreated to Karikal and thence to Pondicherry.

Lally's March to Tanjore

The English fleet had again engaged the French squadron in an indecisive fight. As in the previous case, French losses were heavy; and D'Ache feared to meet the English fleet again But, instead of remaining near the coast, he sailed away with his fleet for Mauritius against the united opinion of Lally and the French Governor.

The French Fleet sails away

The futile Tanjore expedition discredited Lally very much; the sailing away of D'Ache greatly weakened his position; and now another mistake of his led to a greater calamity. Before proceeding to Tanjore, Lally had peremptorily ordered Bussy and Moracin, the Governor of the Northern Sarkars, to join him with all their available troops, leaving at Masulipatam only a small force under Conflans, an incapable soldier. No sooner did Bussy depart for Pondicherry than Ananda Raz, the Raja of Vizianagram, revolted against the French authority, took Vizagapatam by assault and sent urgent appeals to the English at Calcutta and at Madras for assistance in expelling the French. Madras was itself threatened with a siege and could not send any help. But Clive resolved, in spite of his own difficulties, to send away half his troops "to hasten the final victory which he foresaw over the French." Colonel Forde, Clive's "right-hand man," sailed from Calcutta immediately. His first

Bussy re-called from the Deccan

Clive sends Forde to the Northern Sarkars (1758)

object was to prevent Lally from receiving reinforcements from the Sarkars. He came to an agreement with Ananda Raz, and after uniting with the latter's forces, met Conflans in battle at Condore, a little to the north of Rajahmundry, and secured a decisive victory. This led to the immediate occupation of Rajahmundry which was not even defended by the enemy. Condore was one of the most important victories of the English in India; it struck the first decisive blow at the ascendancy of the French in the Deccan and finally destroyed the confidence that the Nizam reposed in them. For the present, Forde was unable to march on Masulipatam to which Conflans had retreated, mainly on account of want of funds and guns and the vacillation of Ananda Raz.

Forde's Victory at Condore

A few days before the battle of Condore was fought, Lally began the long threatened siege of Madras. In the interval between his retreat from Tanjore and his siege of Madras, he seized Arcot and there proclaimed Raza Sahib, the son of Chanda Sahib, as the rightful Nawab of the Carnatic. He was joined by Bussy* at this place; but this did not bring him money and supplies of which he was in the greatest need. Without money and with an unpaid soldiery, Lally proceeded to lay siege to Madras, "resolved, as he said, to stake Pondicherry against Madras."

Lally's Siege of Madras (1758-59)

* The two men, Lally and Bussy, were as poles asunder in temper and character. Bussy was an able soldier, skilled in statecraft; while Lally had a supreme contempt for diplomacy and negotiations. Bussy had established French ascendancy in the Deccan by his courage and skill and consolidated it by his tact; he held French ascendancy in the Deccan to be of supreme importance for their hold over the Northern Sarkars. Lally was convinced that the propping up of French dominion by diplomacy was a vain hope and the French could have no firm hold over the country, until the English were driven out of it. Bussy strove hard to persuade Lally to permit him to return to Hyderabad. But the latter grew suspicious of his sincerity and came to hate him as a personal foe. Bussy was alienated by Lally's attitude and would not co-operate with him heartily.

Lawrence, the veteran English general, was in command at Madras. He and Governor Pigot had strongly provisioned the Fort and fixed on Chingleput as their barrier post. Lally began the siege in December 1758. But he received no assistance from Pondicherry, his provisions quickly ran short, his sepoys deserted in numbers and his soldiers became unruly. The siege operations were slow for lack of artillery and ammunition. But Lally pursued on with great determination and contrived to bombard the Fort.* At last in February 1759, English ships were sighted approaching the coast; and immediately Lally broke up his camp and retreated. Lally's siege of Madras is held to be one of the most significant episodes in the growth of the British power in India. The success of the English defence was mainly due to the wise leadership of Lawrence and Pigot, the bravery of the English garrison, the splendid counter-stroke of Clive who effected a diversion in the Northern Sarkars and the timely appearance of the English fleet on the coast †

Its Failure—English Defence

With the raising of the siege of Madras, Lally's hopes of driving the English out of the Peninsula completely vanished This French failure was followed by another set-back to their power in the Northern Sarkars. Colonel Forde now advanced against Masulipatam and secured it after a slight struggle The English capture of Masulipatam greatly troubled Salabat Jang who lost all hopes of recovering the Sarkars as well as his faith in the French. He opened

English Capture of Masulipatam and Treaty with Salabat Jang (1759)

* The English forces at Chingleput reinforced by Yusuf Khan, their brave sepoy-captain, who came from Trichinopoly, aimed at the breaking of the French cordon round Fort St. George, but could not do so. Lally's hopes sank steadily under stress of his difficulties and the resolute defence of the Fort; he lost all hopes of success when he heard of the sighting of the English fleet and complained that his men were more interested in the plunder of the Black Town (the unprotected Indian town of Madras) than in the seige-operations.

† Lally seems to have actually planned to abandon the siege, two days before the appearance of the English fleet, though his actual retreat began only after it.

negotiations with the English and concluded a treaty with them in May 1759, by which they promised to drive out the remaining French troops in the Sarkars. Such was the end of the short-lived French dominion in the Deccan and the beginning of the long-standing alliance since subsisting between the British power and the Nizam. The treaty of 1759 granted the English the seaport of Masulipatam and the surrounding territory in *inam* and bound Salabat Jang to exclude the French from his dominions. These acquisitions were confirmed by a grant of the Mughal Emperor in 1765 at the time when Clive got the *Diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Demoralisation of the French

Meanwhile, the war in the Carnatic dragged on. After the French raised the siege of Madras, both the parties were inactive for some time. Lally had continual disputes with the Pondicherry Council, and suffered greatly from lack of money. His troops became utterly demoralised; and the garrison in some of the forts in French possession even made overtures to the enemy. D'Ache's squadron, which had meanwhile returned to the Coromandel Coast, did not bring any relief, and it sailed away never to return, after fighting an indecisive action with the English fleet. From this time the coast was in continuous occupation of the English fleet. Lally had no hopes of getting any reinforcements from France; his troops were in considerable arrears of pay and on the verge of mutiny; and he now resorted to the country powers as a last source of help.

Coote's Victory at Wandewash

Colonel (afterwards Sir Eyre) Coote, the new English commander, resolved to strike an effective blow at the fort of Wandewash, which, with the exception of Arcot, was the most important place still in the occupation of the French in the Carnatic. After Coote took the fort by storm, Lally made an attempt to recover it. In the battle which followed, the English won a decisive victory; Bussy himself was taken prisoner and the French lost heavily in men and guns. The moral effect of the English victory was great. Coote followed up his glorious triumph by capturing Arcot and

the neighbouring fortresses in French occupation; in the beginning of 1760, the French possessions were reduced to Pondicherry, Jinji and Karikal; and Lally was forced to fall back on Pondicherry and to avoid action in the open field.

The unexpected appearance of a new ally to Lally in the shape of Hyder Ali of Mysore gave some respite to Lally. He had already made fruitless overtures to Basalat Jang, one of the brothers of the Nizam, and to Murari Rao, the Maratha adventurer. He now negotiated a treaty with Hyder Ali who had just established his supremacy over the Mysore state and who agreed to help the French with a body of horse and artillery, on condition that Madura and Tinnevelly were to be given to him in the event of French success. His troops ravaged the Carnatic and for some time kept the English army busy; but they withdrew quickly both from the French alliance and from Pondicherry when they saw how hopeless the latter's situation was. Hyder was also hampered by the outbreak of a threatened domestic revolution and he did not desire to risk it by his absence from the scene.

Lally seeks the Help of Hyder Ali

Lally now found himself unable to get the help of any country power. He was hemmed in closer and closer by the advancing English lines; but he continued to maintain a bold front. The resistance of Pondicherry was protracted till January 1761 In August 1760, Coote began the blockade of Pondicherry and soon captured all its outposts Lally continued the resistance in spite of increasing stringency of provisions, and demoralisation of the inhabitants and continued lack of co-operation between him and the Council. In December, Coote opened fire on the defences of Pondicherry; while the closely-guarding English squadron prevented any food-supplies from coming in. On January 15, 1761, Pondicherry surrendered at discretion; Jinji followed suit; while Mahe, on the Malabar Coast, was also reduced. By April 1761, there remained not a single place for the French in India. The English ruthlessly demolished all

The Siege of Pondicherry (1760)

Its Surrender (January 1761)

the fortifications of Pondicherry; and the demolition shows "with what long-continued fear the Council at Madras regarded their ancient enemy." The fate of Lally was miserable. When he returned to France, he was thrown into prison and later shamefully put to death. The French power never recovered from this ruin in India. The defeat of Lally in the Carnatic and the government of Clive in Bengal had fully established English ascendancy in both the regions. Though Pondicherry and other settlements were restored to the French by the Treaty of Paris (1763) that concluded the Seven Years' War, they had been dismantled and rendered defenceless, "with their trade annihilated, with their influence gone, with the curse of defeat and failure stamped upon their habitations" The rapid growth of English ascendancy in the generation that followed the Seven Years' War, rendered any revival of French danger very improbable. When the next European war broke out between the two nations in 1778, Pondicherry was easily occupied by an English force France, indeed, sent out in 1781, a powerful fleet under Admiral Suffrein and a body of soldiers under the veteran Bussy, to help Hyder Ali, then the most formidable enemy of the English. Suffrein engaged the English fleet in several closely contested fights off the Coromandel and Ceylon coasts, but could gain nothing by his victories owing to his lack of a land-base; while Bussy landed on the coast only in 1783, after Hyder Ali's death, when the scene of operation was shifted from the coast. Moreover, he had lost all his ancient energy and did nothing like his old achievements at all. This French war which was ended by the Peace of Versailles, has been called the final struggle of the French for empire in South India,* though subsequent attempts were made by them in the course of the Revolutionary and the Napoleonic Wars to destroy

Final French Struggle for Dominions in South India (1781-83)

Suffrein and Bussy in South India

* Malleson: *Final French Struggles in India and on the Indian Seas* (1878)—See Introduction.

British commerce in Indian seas and they continued to maintain diplomatic representatives in the courts of Indian princes, like the Peishwa and Tippu Sultan who seemed most likely to come into conflict with the English power. The later apprehensions of a French combination with Russia in the reign of Napoleon with a view to make a land-attack on India would form a separate chapter of history.

Later French Attempts

The complete destruction of the French power, which seemed to occupy such a strong position in the years 1746-52, is the result of the operation of many factors, some remote and some proximate, some ephemeral and others more fundamental On the whole, we may conclude that the French Company was inferior to its rival in organisation, finance and vitality. From its very inception it was completely under Government direction and control, being managed by the King's Commissaries, it was marked by the lethargy and want of enterprise that characterised the reign of Louis XV (1715-1774); while the European and other wars of France in the period greatly detracted from the attention and support that the French Government could give to Indian schemes and affairs. The French Company, unlike the English one, lacked in the support of a strong and wealthy trading class It was financially unsound even when it began the struggle in India. Very few ships left for France with Indian goods and no large sums of money were despatched to India to revive the declining trade of the French settlements. There was a marked decline in their trade after 1751; funds in India were always insufficient; and it was seen how Dupleix and Lally and even Bussy with his other sources of revenue, were always suffering from financial embarrassments The French were often compelled to evade their financial obligations. Dupleix frequently

Causes of French Failure

Weakness of the French Company

Lack of Trade and Money

borrowed on his personal credit; and lack of funds was one of the chief factors that brought about the final failure of Lally. On the other hand, the English were much better off as regards their financial position. Even during the years of active war, the English carried on a considerable amount of trade; and they did on the whole, "make their conquests pay." All the wars and conquests of the French were never really self-supporting; and even Bussy experienced often the effects of this feature.

Contrast with the English Position

Again, the French representatives in India were on the whole, a group of less capable men than the English leaders Except Dupleix, and to some extent Lally and Bussy, the other French leaders were inconspicuous Even Dupleix was marked by serious faults of temper and character, and his vision was clouded by undue ambition. Lally was much hated as a leader and lacked all the qualities of a statesman. Bussy was clever as a diplomat and brave as a soldier; but even he could not build up an enduring dominion in the Deccan; nor could he efficiently co-operate with Lally. The lack of harmony and co-operation among the French leaders thus went far towards destroying their chances of success. Dupleix was not ably seconded by his lieutenants; and Lally's quarrels with De Leyrit were notorious. On the other hand, cordiality and harmony marked the conduct of the English leaders. Lawrence always took a paternal interest in Clive who warmly reciprocated the affection. The civil authorities of the English warmly supported the plans and efforts of their generals. Thus Saunders and Pigot easily furthered the work of Clive, Lawrence and Coote. The English had an array of able captains and cautious diplomats in Lawrence, Clive, Coote, Saunders, Pigot and Forde.

Defects of French Leaders in India

Unity among Englishmen

In another aspect also, English superiority was well-marked. Most of the pitched battles resulted in victories for the English; and it is said that the English soldiers were more enduring and the sepoys on their side were under better discipline and more loyal to their employers than those on the French side. Thus actual military superiority in the field was mostly on the side of the English.

English Superiority on Land

And this feature was accompanied by and largely due to their superiority at sea. This naval superiority was marked in all the phases of the struggle; and the English fleet always came to the rescue of their principal settlements and relieved them from the greatest perils. It is now accepted as an axiomatic truth that an extensive dominion across the seas cannot be held and maintained by any nation unless it should be powerful at sea and able to hold its lines of communication with its transmarine territories. This, France found herself unable to do in the wars of the 18th century; and England rapidly built up her naval supremacy in these wars and made it an assured fact at the close of the Seven Years' War. The decline of the French navy would in any case, even if the schemes of Dupleix should have borne fruit, have helped the English to win finally. Captain Mahan, a noted student of the part played by sea-power in history, explains at great length the consequences, to both the parties, of their respective naval strength in all their colonial and commercial struggles of which the Indian wars formed a prominent phase.*

and on Sea

The Influence of Sea-power

Clive's contributions towards the final English success should be stressed firmly. The significance of his capture of Arcot in bringing about the failure of the French and Chanda Sahib before Trichinopoly has been already pointed out. Also the steadiness with which he clung to Bengal, after estab-

Clive's Services

* *The influence of Sea-Power upon History*, pp. 254-329.

lishing English supremacy there, without abandoning it in order to help Madras against Lally, was of immense importance, as the conquest of Bengal really gave the English "the sinews of war and a firm base of operations on the mainland." Bengal was the real key to Indian dominion; and its possession gave the English after 1757 an invincible strength and great superiority in finance. His destruction of Chandernagar and despatch of Forde to reduce the Northern Sarkars in Bussy's absence were no mean advantages given by him in the last phase of the struggle.

Effect of the English Hold on Bengal

All the contributing causes should be duly viewed in their proper perspective, without over-valuing some and underrating other factors To sum up, it may be said that the English success was due to a variety of causes—"the greater commercial prosperity of her trade with India; her superiority in the hard hand-to-hand fighting in Southern India, the severely practical genius of Lord Clive; her general ascendancy on the sea which became particularly marked during the Seven Years' War, the wealth and resources she was able to draw after 1757 from her occupation of Bengal, and lastly the greater vigour and capacity of her national government, which, less entangled than that of France in European wars, had the leisure to direct tis chief energies at a most critical time to the field of maritime and colonial expansion."

Summary of Factors

CHAPTER VI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL DOWN TO 1772

SECTION I. REVOLUTION AND CHANGING NAWABS (1760-1765)

The departure of Clive for England was followed by a period of rule very discreditable to the English Mir Jafar whose complicity in the recent Dutch affair was much suspected, became very unmanageable; and Holwell who succeeded Clive in the governorship, could not impose his authority either on the Company's servants or on the Nawab. He was succeeded after a few months by Vansittart who was a well-meaning, but weak man, unable either to judge men or carry on a vigorous administration. The English officials were practically uncontrolled; they abused their power, claimed all sorts of trade privileges for themselves and their agents and extorted presents from wealthy Indians. The weak government of the Nawab was speedily reduced to bankruptcy by the diminution of revenue as well as by its own extravagance. Holwell had himself suggested a plan for the assumption of the direct rule of Bengal by the Company. Major Caillaud who was in charge of the English forces in Bihar and had to beat away another invasion of Shah Alam, bitterly complained that both Mir Jafar and his son, Miran, failed to support him. A short while afterwards Miran met his death, killed by lightning, it was believed. Now Mir Kasim, a son-in-law of the Nawab, came forward to profit by this situation. Mir Jafar already weakened in mind, became insane after hearing of the death of his son; and Mir Kasim had been already intriguing with Caillaud and Holwell and had been promised the deputy-governorship of Bihar. Now he claimed to

Misrule in Bengal. Holwell and Vansittart (1760-65)

Supersession of Mir Jafar (1760)

be the *Chota* Nawab and demanded to be appointed *Diwan*. Vansittart, the new Governor, concluded a treaty with Mir Kasim that he should be made the *Diwan* with a guarantee of succession to the Nawabship and that the English should be given the districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong, so that their forces could be maintained from the revenues of these territories, without being dependent upon the Nawab's uncertain payments. Mir Kasim also agreed to pay the outstanding debts of Nawab Mir Jafar to the Company (Treaty of the 27th September, 1760). Vansittart and Caillaud went to Murshidabad and forcibly occupied Mir Jafar's palace, when he refused to submit to the authority of Mir Kasim. He was compelled to resign office; and the throne was immediately given to Mir Kasim. Thus the change in the Nawabship was effected. But a mere change of rulers was not the real remedy; the only solvent lay in a change of the system.

English Treaty with Mir Kasim

The English had deposed one Nawab only to establish another "with equal political power and greater personal capacity." They did nothing to reconcile the conflicting interests of themselves and the Nawab; nor was their agreement with the new Nawab so explicit and clear "as to exclude future cases of misunderstanding." To make matters worse this transaction was accompanied by grants of large sums to the principal stage-managers, including Holwell,* whose share seems to have been fixed beforehand.

Futility of the Change in the Nawabship

Mir Kasim hoped that, after the concessions he had made to the English, they would leave him alone. The Mughal prince, Shah Alam, who had been staying on in Bihar and who now assumed the imperial title, since his father, the Emperor, had been assassinated, negotiated with the English; and Mir Kasim, now that he had become the Nawab, suspected that the latter

Mir Kasim overcomes Difficulties

* "While the revolution cannot be fairly criticised either as a breach of public faith, or (with a possible exception) as the fruit of private greed, it was nevertheless the greatest political blunder that the English had yet committed in India.....The English scheme was impracticable: and led its authors on to most dangerous ground." (Dodwell: *Dupleix and Clive*, p. 206.)

would obtain the Subhadari of Bengal for themselves. This was, indeed, the idea of Vansittart, but was not approved by his Council; and thus the plan came to nothing. Mir Kasim who greatly feared an alliance between the English and Shah Alam, breathed freely only when the latter moved away into Oudh without English assistance. He now contrived to get rid of Raja Ram Narayan, whom Clive had consistently protected and whom Vansittart now delivered over into the Nawab's vengeful hands. Vansittart did not see that this act would bring about a reaction and affect the credit of the English. There now remained none of the checks which Clive had imposed upon the Nawab's power. Mir Kasim had secured the dismissal and death of Ram Narayan,* and the abandoning of an alliance between the fugitive Emperor and the English; "It was now certain, that, unless the English would be content to relapse into the position they had held before 1756, they would have to fight for it, so much had they lost by Holwell's venal policy and Vansittart's blundering optimism."

Beginning of Trade Disputes (1762)

Now the Nawab questioned the legality of the English privileges in the internal trade of Bengal. Soon a dispute arose regarding transit duties which led to an open rupture between him and the Calcutta Government. Mughal imperial *firmans* had conferred on the English, even before the days of Plassey, complete liberty of trade and exemption from transit duties. The servants of the Company had always claimed that this privilege authorised them to trade freely in articles such as salt, betel and tobacco in spite of the Nawab's prohibition. After the English triumph of 1757, though no such definite rights were included in the treaty between the English and Mir Jafar, a *sanad* issued by the latter permitted the English to carry on trade of any sort, "but without any express authorisation of the inland trade." Under Clive, there was no great extension of the existing privileges of the English; but under his successors, these privileges were greatly extended, and Indian merchants openly

* S. H. Askeri on *Raja Ram Narain*, in the "Indian Historical Quarterly," (1938, pt. I.)

bought and sold the right of free trade under the names of the Company's servants.*

English abuse of their Privileges

Mir Kasim was too wise to demand the abolition of this right at the time of his installation. After he had secured his position, he began to complain of the misconduct of the Indian agents (*gomastahs*) of the English traders. All the inland trade of Bengal had become a monopoly in the hands of the English and their agents; and a large number of Indian traders got and used the Company's *dastaks* (permits) fraudulently. These *gomastahs* and others frequently oppressed ryots and merchants, lorded it over the country and everywhere defied the Nawab's officers. Mir Kasim complained, naturally and justly enough, that his revenue was diminished, his subjects were injured and his authority was brought into contempt. He carried the complaints to the Calcutta Council; but the majority were greedy of personal gain and would not listen to him or even agree to the moderate terms proposed by their own moderate-minded colleagues, Vansittart and Hastings. The known disagreement between the Nawab and the English Council encouraged the former's officials to obstruct English trade; on the other side, the misconduct of the Indian agents of the English gave every colour to the Nawab's demands. When Vansittart and the Nawab arrived at a method of deciding disputes through the Indian *faujdars*, the Council charged the Governor with corrupt motives and with a betrayal of English officials to the Nawab's jurisdiction. They rejected the proposed agreement and resolved that, in future, the English should trade duty-free, except for a 2½ per cent. levy on their salt and that English agents should be subject only to English control. Thereupon the Nawab resolved to abolish all duties and refused to give any preferential terms for the English trade. The Council became

Rupture between the Nawab and the English Council

* For a full treatment of the topic, see Dodwell: *Dupleix and Clive*, Chap. V, pp. 214-220; and *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, pp. 170-1.

furious and declared that, by the total abolition of duties, the Nawab had violated the spirit of his treaty with the English.

Ellis attacks Patna (1763)

The Nawab now refused to receive the English deputation sent to remonstrate with him; and matters rushed to a head when the hasty-tempered Ellis, the chief of the English factory at Patna, attacked that town and occupied it (June 1763). But the English forces were wanting in discipline; and on the same day the town was recovered by the Nawab's troops who took all the English of the station prisoners.

Outbreak of War

Mir Kasim had all along been suspecting that the English had designs to overthrow him, and he had removed his residence from Murshidabad to Monghyr; he had also reduced the expenditure of his household, dismissed the worthless favourites of his predecessor and had gathered an army of his own; he had removed every pro-English official from his service and even entered into negotiations with the Nawab Vizier of Oudh. He took into his service deserters from the Company's forces and imposed European drill and discipline on his troops, besides establishing arsenals for the casting of guns and the making of ammunition and muskets. He had greatly increased his prestige by getting the surrender of Ram Narayan; he knew that Vansittart was feeble and the Council divided; and he had the support of his nobles who had been estranged from the English.

The Position of Mir Kasim

Ellis' failure at Patna was followed by the murder of Amyatt, the English emissary. When news of these events reached Calcutta, the Council instantly declared war against Mir Kasim and proclaimed the restoration of Mir Jafar to the Nawabship. Mir Kasim had a fairly disciplined force of nearly 20,000 men and captured Kasimbazar. Meanwhile an English army advanced from

Mir Jafar restored to the Nawabship

Calcutta, took possession of Murshidabad and advanced towards Monghyr, winning two contested fights at Gheria and Udayanala. Mir Kasim now withdrew from Monghyr to Patna; he suspected and put to death his Armenian commander-in-chief, Gurgin Khan; and when the English were laying siege to Monghyr, he had all the English prisoners in Patna slain by an infamous German soldier in his service, Walter Reinhardt by name and known commonly to Indians as Sombre or Samru. This massacre rendered all reconciliation between the Nawab and the English impossible. When the English army appeared before Patna, Mir Kasim had already abandoned it; he now escaped with a large treasure into Oudh. The English commander proceeded to the Karmanasa River which was the dividing line between Bihar and Oudh and there awaited further instructions from Calcutta. The infamous Samru had a very adventurous career and succeeded ultimately in founding a small principality in the neighbourhood of Delhi, where both himself and his talented Indian wife, Begam Samru, played a prominent part in the decaying politics of the Mughal court *

English Victories and Advance to Patna

Mir Kasim's Flight to Oudh (1764)

The Nawab Vizier of Oudh, Shuja-ud-daula, was prepared to take advantage of this confusion; he had the fugitive Emperor, Shah Alam, clinging to him and inwardly hoped to get possession of Bengal and Bihar for himself The three Muhammadan princes, Mir Kasim, Shah Alam and Shuja-ud-daula, now advanced against Patna which the English had occupied. But the Oudh troops were not ready for action; while there was a strong inclination to mutiny on the part of the English forces which were now commanded by an incompetent man, Carnac. There were in the English army a number of French troops

Advance of the Nawab Vizier, Shah Alam and Mir Kasim

* See Chap. II of Keene: *Hindustan under Freelances* (1770-1820) B. Banerjea: *Begam Samru*; and Chap. 75 of W. Sleeman's *Rambles and Recollections*, ed. by V. A. Smith. See M. J. Seth: *The Armenians in India* (1937) for Gurgin Khan.

who had deserted Lally and come over to the English side; and great difficulty was experienced in getting supplies. The new Nawab, Mir Jafar, was now with the army and opposed any invasion of Shuja-ud-daula's country. The consequence was that the latter was allowed to complete his preparations in quiet; and the English troops fell back upon Patna while the enemy entered Bihar (April 1764), and fought several inconclusive engagements. At last Major Munro took charge of the English troops, vigorously suppressed disaffection and indiscipline among them, crossed the Sone river and inflicted a decisive defeat on the enemy at Buxar (October). This victory had important consequences; Oudh was overrun by Fletcher who succeeded Munro in the command; Allahabad and Chunar were quickly taken possession of; and Shuja-ud-daula did not dare to face another battle with the English. But he refused to surrender Mir Kasim and fled into the interior of his kingdom and thence into Rohilkhand. Shah Alam came over to the English side immediately after Buxar and requested an alliance with them. Mir Kasim disappeared into obscurity and poverty; while his infamous servant, Samru, took service with the Jat ruler of Bharatpur.

Decisive English Victory at Buxar (Oct. 1764)

Its Effects

The English victory at Buxar deserves, as one writer says, "far more than Plassey to be considered as the origin of the British power in India." It put an end to the unstable system under which the English had to exercise a constant control over the Nawab and to protect themselves against any hostile influence that might arise at his court. Under Clive this defective arrangement worked satisfactorily enough; but after him the system fell into confusion; and an unwise change in the Nawabship had led to a bloody war. This system was unfortunate alike to the English, the Nawab and the people and had resulted in chaos and corruption arising out of the incapacity of the Nawab and the avarice of the English. But now Clive was on his way to India to

set things right. He had been raised to the Peerage and appointed Governor of Bengal with supreme control over all political affairs and assisted by a select committee of four members of the Council to be chosen by himself. His return was greatly welcomed by the people and likened to the "coming of the rain upon the parched earth."

The Return of Clive to Bengal (May 1765)

Section II. The Second Government of Clive (1765-1767)

Lord Clive landed at Calcutta in May 1765. On his way up the Bay he learnt that Mir Jafar, the restored Nawab, had died in the previous February. The Nawab had not fulfilled the provisions of his treaty and been a hindrance to the operations of the war. Nandakumar, his minister, was believed to have betrayed the English plans to the enemy and greatly embarrassed the English. The Council had recognised, on Mir Jafar's death, his son, Najim-ud-daula, as his successor, only on condition that a nominee of the English was to conduct the administration in the name of the Nawab who was to remain a mere figure-head. Nandakumar was forcibly removed from the Nawab's court and Muhammad Riza Khan was appointed the Nawab's deputy. Clive was indignant that this arrangement should have been determined on the eve of his arrival; but it was good from the point of view of policy, though it was accompanied by the usual extraction of large presents by the members of the Council, in defiance of explicit orders received from the Directors.

Recognition of the new Nawab

Clive had intended to appoint a minor grandson of Mir Jafar as Nawab; but he did not set aside Najim-ud-daula, as he had been duly installed; and he only limited the authority of the deputy Nawab, Muhammad Riza Khan, and associated two Hindu noblemen with him. He found the treasury at Murshidabad depleted and

Clive's Settlement with the Nawab

declared that "blacks and whites had united together to plunder the Nawab's treasury." He, however, left the conduct of Governor Spencer (who had succeeded Vansittart and had enthroned the new Nawab) and his Council to be properly dealt with by the Court of Directors.

His Settlement with the Nawab Vizier

Clive also found that Vansittart had promised Oudh to the Emperor; and he was convinced that Shah Alam would not be able to maintain himself in that province without English help and would be the cause of great complications in the future. He sent Carnac to open negotiations with Shuja-ud-daula who now resolved to trust himself to the English. He proceeded to Allahabad to make a stable settlement with the Nawab Vizier and the Emperor (August 1765). According to this agreement, Shuja-ud-daula was restored to his territories with the exception of the districts of Allahabad and Karra which were to be given over to the Emperor. In return the Nawab Vizier was to pay the Company 50 lakhs of rupees and to enter into a defensive alliance with them. He was grateful for having been restored to his dominions which he could not have regained by the sword and became a firm ally of the English. Shah Alam was given the districts of Allahabad and Karra and was guaranteed 26 lakhs a year from the revenues of Bengal, in return for a grant (which he bestowed on the Company) of the *Diwani* (the right of collecting the revenue) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa (though the last-named province was, with the exception of Midnapur, in Maratha hands).

and with Shah Alam (1765)

The English Acquisition of the Diwani—Its good and bad Features

The English acquisition of the *Diwani* "involved the complete control of the finances of the province, and carried to its completion that process of the extrusion of the Nawab's power which had been almost secured by the arrangement of February, 1765." This plan had its disadvantages as well as its advantages. It paid tribute only to a shadow and acknowledged that shadow's power of appointing the *Diwan*

while the English usurped his power of appointing the Nawab. Again, it gave to Shah Alam an independent territory and a strong fort (Allahabad) from which, if he were cleverer than he was, he might have become a formidable enemy of the English But Clive, though he did not give Shah Alam the territory of Oudh, which had been almost promised to him, but in which he could not have maintained himself, did not abandon him entirely Moreover, the Emperor's grant was not wholly valueless from one point of view. "The prestige of his name still carried a certain weight with Indian princes, and his confirmation was usually desired, though no one thought of paying the least obedience to his commands" Also the French and the Dutch who still continued in Bengal could not easily dispute the validity of the *firman* of the Emperor, phantom though he was[1]

Wisdom of Clive's Settlement

Clive refused to countenance Shah Alam's extravagant schemes, he had no desire to weaken Oudh which was suited to be a buffer-state interposed between the English dominion in Bengal and the confusion prevailing in Northern India He resolutely set his face against any further expansion of the English power and wanted it to be rigorously confined to its present limits Dupleix and Bussy had dreamt of extending French influence even into Northern India, and Caillaud, one of Clive's lieutenants, had wondered in 1759, when Shah Alam was driven out of Bengal for the first time, whether "Clive should not remain another year in India and make a Great Mughal as well as a Nawab of Bengal." Holwell and Vansittart, Coote and Munro had all entertained hopes of a triumphant advance of the English up to Delhi. But Clive wisely refrained from such projects. As matters then stood, the English were dangerous to and feared only by those powers that wished to attack them. But this step

[1] For a fuller estimate of the merits and demerits of the settlement, see Elphinstone: *Rise of the British Power in the East*, Chap. X, on the grant of the Diwani with the supplementary note of the Editor, Colebrooke; Dodwell, p. 247; Mill's *History of British India* (1858), Vol. III, pp. 286-7; and Forrest's *Life of Lord Clive*, Vol. II, p. 289.

would have raised every Indian power, Maratha, Muhammadan and Rajput, against them. On the eve of his departure to England, Clive reaffirmed these views in an important state-paper, wherein he declared that a march to Delhi would be a vain and fruitless project and warned the English against any offensive war, except for the defence of Bengal and of the Nawab Vizier's dominions which constituted their buffer-state. Thus he satisfactorily secured the position of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh and the relation between the English and the Emperor.* Though the latter part of the scheme broke down, the policy of non-interference and of having a buffer-state for protection, was perceived and acted on by his successors till practically the close of the century.

His Restraint

Clive's settlement of the government of Bengal was of great significance. The Company, as the legitimate *Diwan*, took over all the revenues of the provinces. In theory the government was now shared between the Nawab *Nazim* and the Company. The former derived his authority from a grant of the Mughal Emperor and was responsible for the defence of the country, the maintenance of public peace and the administration of justice. The *Diwan* or the holder of the *Diwani* collected the revenues of the provinces, was responsible for all expenditure and paid to the Emperor the surplus as his share. So far the position was clear; but there was a further complication. Clive disbanded the Nawab's army and took over the military defence of the country. The Nawab was relieved altogether from the work of the *Nazim* and was to be merely the nominal head of the provinces, being paid a yearly stipend of 53 lakhs; thus he was practically pensioned off; and the Company held the theoretical *Diwani* right from Shah Alam's grant and had practically got also the powers of the *Nizamat*. But still the English servants of the Company could not personally undertake either the duties of the *Diwan*, or those of the *Nazim*. They appointed deputy-Nawabs

The System of Double Government

Its practical Working

* Forrest's *Bengal and Madras Papers*, Vol. III (1757-85)—Select Committee of Fort William—Proceedings of 16th January, 1767.

for the two provinces of Bengal and Bihar; these were nominally to be appointed by the Nawab with the sanction of the Company; and they were to conduct the entire administration, both civil and revenue, with the help of their own servants. It was only in 1769 that English Supervisors, afterwards known as Collectors, were appointed to control the work of the Indian revenue officials.

Its Aims

This settlement of the administration of Bengal was known as Clive's Double Government and satisfied several aims. It stabilised the position of the English and legally defined it; and it provided "a transitional stage between the acquisition of power and the assumption of administration. If the Company had openly taken over all the powers of the Nawab, it would have roused the jealousy of the French and the Dutch and given the English Parliament and Cabinet a justification to interfere with the Company which they so much desired. "The problem was therefore how to secure effective and legitimate power in Bengal without alarming the Company's enemies, foreign and domestic." Clive's settlement was directed to that end and "not to the improvement of the administration of the country." Hence arose the complexity of the arrangements and the unwillingness to take up the work of the actual government. The settlement is found fault with, as having only sanctioned the continuance of the corrupt rule that marked the Nawab's days. But Clive knew that the English servants of the Company were too few to take up the entire work of government; and besides they lacked the necessary training, knowledge and experience for the task. Clive himself never wanted that the system or the personnel of the administration should be suddenly changed. His scheme avoided responsibility for the administration which continued to remain in the hands of the Indian officials and to follow the traditional methods.

The Double Government was, however, from one point of view, a mere sham; because it was no real division of the administration between the English and the Nawab. But it was useful as "the bridge over the interval between native administration and British administration." It relieved the English of the responsibilities of government and secured ample provision, not only for the maintenance of the army, but also for the purchase of all commodities required for the Company in India and China. This is the reason why the system was so warmly approved by the Directors.[1] The system, however, produced the worst possible results in the next few years.

Its Usefulness—Its bad effects were inevitable

Administrative reforms in the Company's civil and military services form the last great achievement of Clive. He first tried to put down the evil of private trade and the receiving of presents by the English officials. He made use of the Select Committee which was set up within the Council as the instrument of his reforms and rigorously enforced the Company's orders regarding presents. These orders rose out of disputes concerning Clive's *jaghir*; and his own enforcement of the new rules created endless accusations against him and begat intense hatred of him by the Bengal civilians. He superseded the claims of the Bengal officials in appointments to vacancies that arose in the Council and filled them with men from Madras; and he effectively put down all opposition to his will. But he could not win the Directors over to his side in the matter of increasing the salaries of the officials. As an alternative, he attempted to regularise the existing practice by granting a monopoly of the trade in salt to the superior servants of the Company in graduated shares. The Directors did not grasp the real nature of the arrangement and would not agree to it. The reforms effected by Clive in the Civil Service included (1) the sweeping away of presents and perquisites, (2) the restriction to certain persons only of the privilege of transporting goods duty-free, (3) the restriction of

Clive's Reform of the Civil Service

[1] J. Talboys Wheeler: *Early Records of British India*, p. 351.

the right of private trade by officials, (4) the setting apart of a portion of the revenue derived from the monopoly of salt as a partial compensation for the officials and (5) the prohibition of the members of Council from holding the posts of agents in the *mofussil*.

His Reforms in the Army

Clive's military reforms were equally important The English troops had been granted by Mir Jafar an extra allowance called the *double batta*, so long as they were in the field fighting for him Mir Kasim had continued the system and had assigned to the Company, for this purpose among others, the revenues of three districts The Directors now ordered Clive to stop this payment. When Clive issued the necessary order, as many as 200 officers resigned in a single day, hoping thus to force the Governor to yield to their clamour. Clive coolly accepted their resignations put the officers under arrest and calmly proceeded to recruit fresh men from Madras to take their places He put down the threatened mutiny in a fortnight and effectively suppressed the spirit of insubordination which was largely roused by the order prohibiting the receiving of presents and perquisites He contrived to reorganise the Bengal Army and to better its tone; and he also instituted a fund for the relief of disabled officers and of the widows of those who died in service.

Clive's Departure to England (1767)

Clive's work in India was now complete. His health having become very poor, he sailed for England early in 1767 At home he was first treated with great honour both by the Directors and by the Ministry. After some dabbling in party-politics, he discovered that party interests did not always coincide with imperial interests and refused to attach himself to either party. But he had numerous enemies both among the Directors and among the retired servants of the Company They contrived, by their agitation to persuade the House of Commons to institute in 1772 an inquiry into his conduct and acts, many of which had not been above suspicion of

Parliamentary Inquiry into his Acts (1772-74)

corruption. Clive, however, was not the man to submit patiently to such attacks and boldly defended himself in a speech which excited the admiration of Lord Chatham. The specific charges against him related to his dealings with Siraj-ud-daula, his deception of Amin Chand by the fictitious treaty, and his acquisition of vast wealth by vexatious monopolies of trade and other means. The Commons resolved that Clive, in the acquisition of his wealth, had abused "the powers with which he had been entrusted;" but they would not pass a vote of censure against him; and they finally passed a resolution that he had rendered great and meritorious services to his country. For two years Clive's persecution in the Commons dragged on. Worn out with humiliation of spirit and disease and suffering, Clive died by his own hand in a moment of excruciating agony (November 1774).

His Death (1774)

Apart from views that hold that Clive did not keep his hands pure in his transactions and that, in his second administration of Bengal, he did not do much to fulfil his mission, either through incapacity or through unpopularity, his services to the British Empire of India were undoubtedly great. First, it was his capture and subsequent defence of Arcot and vigorous fighting round Trichinopoly in co-operation with Lawrence in 1751 and 52 that brought about the initial frustration of Dupleix's schemes. He quickly learnt his soldiering from General Lawrence and his diplomacy from Governor Saunders, perceived the mistakes and false steps of Dupleix and profited by them largely. After his return from England in 1756, he co-operated with the Maratha power in putting down the pirate strong-hold of Gheriah on the Bombay coast. By his victory of Plassey, he planted British supremacy over Bengal and supplied the necessary leverage for the final crushing of the French in the Carnatic and in the Northern Sarkars. Bengal was the real base from which British dominion developed in India. In establishing British supremacy over the Nawab of Bengal, Clive carefully avoided the errors and excesses of Dupleix when he enjoyed similar influence in the Carnatic. On the other hand, he was fully aware

His Services to the Cause of the British Indian Empire

of the difficulties and dangers of the new position which the English had acquired. On his return to England (in 1760), he attempted to capture the Court of Directors and to make them follow a more intelligent policy with reference to their Indian government and to reorganise their whole system of administration. During his second Governorship of Bengal, he established Oudh as an effective buffer-state and enunciated a definite frontier policy. He tried to give a sort of legal basis to the English power in Bengal and to effect some reforms in the civil and military services of the Company. It was from now that the English Company assumed power after power and entered deeper and deeper into the details of administration. Besides administrative talents, Clive displayed in this epoch, elements of far-seeing statesmanship as well as astuteness of diplomacy. His military skill had always been of a high order and was compared by Lord Chatham with that of Frederick the Great of Prussia.*

His Enunciation of a definite Frontier Policy and his Reforms

His Capacity

Section III. Misgovernment in Bengal (1767-1772)

From the departure of Clive to the arrival of Warren Hastings as Governor in 1772, Verelst and Cartier were successively Governors Under their weak rule, the people suffered the worst evils, due for the greater part to the defects of Clive's system of Double Government which now prevailed in the provinces except in the four districts (the 24-Parganahs, Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong) that were directly governed by the English. The Nawab's share in the administration was a sham; his officials were mostly strangers to the provinces and merely supported the *zamindars* in oppressing the people. The English left everything to be done in the

Recrudescence of Misgovernment

* For a fuller estimate of Clive's achievements, etc., see Dodwell, pp. 270-2; Forrest's *Life of Lord Clive*, Vol. II, p. 342; Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, Vol. III, Chap. XVIII; and Mill, Book IV, Chaps. VII and IX; K. J. Minney: *Clive*.

name of the Nizamat; the Directors had ordered that the *Nizamat* was not to be interfered with; an English Resident was appointed at Murshidabad; but he was able to do nothing.

Decay of the Country

Many of the cultivators, unable to bear the extortions, deserted their fields and turned vagabonds and dacoits. When young Englishmen, with little or no knowledge of revenue administration, were appointed in 1769, as Supervisors over the native revenue officials, they became exacting and oppressive also.

English Oppression

The English officials abused their rights of private trading and continued to enjoy the monopoly of trade in salt, betel-nut and other articles; and their agents oppressed the people as in the days of Mir Kasim Neither Muhammad Riza Khan, the deputy-Nawab, nor his officials could check this private trade or inhibit the practices of the *gomastahs*. Verelst who continued as Governor till 1769, was conscious of all these defects and drew up a valuable memorandum in which he reviewed the causes of the vicious system of administration which prevailed.

Drainage of Wealth from the Land

Every year the Company took away a great quantity of money from Bengal. Bullion was largely exported to China and other countries which supplied goods for the Company's home-trade In the course of three years, more than five millions sterling were taken out in bullion from Bengal. The result was a great scarcity in the currency of the country with all its consequent evils which damaged trade.

The Great Famine of 1770

During the Governorship of Cartier (1769-71) a great famine ravaged the province and carried away nearly a third of the whole population. It was very virulent in Bihar, and Raja Shitab Rai, its deputy-governor, reported that more than 50 poor wretches died daily in the streets of Patna, while in the severest season the mortality was three times as great. Sir W. W. Hunter thus wrote of the effects of

this famine—"The husbandmen sold their cattle; they sold their implements of agriculture; they devoured their seed-grain; they sold their sons and daughters till at length no buyers of children could be found. They ate the leaves of the trees and the grass of the field; and in June 1770, the Resident of the *Durbar* (at Murshidabad) affirmed that the living were feeding on the dead."* To add to the horrors of the famine, fever and small-pox broke out virulently in the great cities; and the streets of Murshidabad were littered with promiscuous heaps of the dying and the dead. The famine ended by the end of 1770; and there was a plentiful harvest in the next season. But the desolation caused was frightful More than one-third of the general population and half the cultivators had perished; and in spite of the abundant crops of 1771, land continued to fall out of tillage The English officials who inspected the different districts found "the finest part of the province desolated by famine, the lands abandoned and the revenue falling into decay."

Its Severity and Effects

But the Indian officials of the *Nizamat* continued, during all this time, to grind down the peasants and *zamindars* alike; and on various pretexts they frequently sold away the customary rights and the estates of the *zamindars*. The English abuse of their trade-monopoly resulted in the entire ruin of the silk manufactures for which Bengal was so famous. Verelst had indeed a scheme for protecting the cultivating tenants from the *zamindars* and for controlling the revenue collectors by means of English Supervisors Cartier did nothing important. Finally the Directors woke up to a sense of their duty and appointed to the Governorship Warren Hastings, an old servant of theirs, who was then second in the Madras Council and who assumed charge of Bengal in 1772.

Callousness of the Administration

* *Annals of Rural Bengal* (1868), p. 26; and Wheeler: *Early Records of British India.*

The Period but a Prelude to Hastings' Rule

The whole of this period, 1767-72, was, in fact, little more than an introduction to the rule of Hastings which was "the formative epoch of British Indian History." It was now that the stage was set for the events of his memorable Governorship.* The Marathas were slowly recovering from the effects of their disaster at Panipat and beginning to interfere through Mahadji Sindia in the affairs of the Doab. At their instigation the Emperor abandoned English protection and quitted Allahabad and went off to Delhi with the Marathas. Shuja-ud-daula continued, in spite of bickerings, firm in his alliance; and the English were having trouble with the Bhonsle ruler of Nagpur who had established his hold over Orissa. Also the Company was beginning to take into its own hands a share of the actual administration, and the puppet Nawab had become more of a puppet than ever. Also Parliament now began its first serious interference with the Indian administration of the Company

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* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. 5, p. 160.

CHAPTER VII

THE ENGLISH IN MADRAS: THE CARNATIC AND MYSORE

SECTION I. THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT

The fortunes of the English in South India had been raised to the highest pitch by their capture of Pondicherry. They had firmly established their power in the Carnatic, whose Nawab, Muhammad Ali, became a mere puppet in their hands. The protection of the Carnatic now devolved on the Madras Government which had, however, no means of supporting a large army except from the Nawab's revenues. The Nawab, being wasteful and extravagant, had involved himself in heavy debt. His revenues had fallen into arrears in almost every district; and many of his officials were openly rebelling against his authority. The English had got from him the district of Chingleput, known as the Madras *Jaghir*, almost by compulsion (1763). They desired that he should pay the expenses of the late war with the French, which, they declared, was fought mainly on his account and for his benefit, and otherwise made extravagant demands upon him.

The English and Nawab Muhammad Ali

In Bengal, the English had attained to military supremacy by one victory; but in Madras they acquired it after a protracted struggle with the French. The trade of Bengal was very profitable, and the English Company and its servants enjoyed the privilege of exemption from duties on their goods. After the overthrow of the French, the importance of the Carnatic to the English largely diminished. Many of its districts, both in the south and in the west, were in the hands of unruly and rebellious *poligars* who had to be suppressed only with English military help. Nawab Mir Kasim

Comparison between the English Power in Bengal and in the Carnatic

of Bengal was a strong and determined ruler who removed the seat of his administration to Monghyr in order to be free from the dominating influence of Calcutta and strengthen his own hands. Muhammad Ali left his own capital, Arcot, and began to live among the English at Madras. He never tried honestly to pay off the claims of the Company, drifted more and more into debt and made assignments of his revenues to his English money-lenders, till the collections of almost the whole of his dominions were in the hands of his creditors. His loans bore high rates of interest, and he justified his action by maintaining that he would have had to pay higher rates to Indian money-lenders.

The Nawab's Debts

In 1766, the Company reduced the interest payable to the Nawab's creditors to 10 per cent But in spite of these and other measures, the Nawab's debts went on increasing. These debts greatly profited his English creditors and enabled him to exercise a pernicious influence over the Madras Council most members of which were his creditors and to put undue coercion on the Raja of Tanjore

Interference in Tanjore

The Nawab proposed to the English the spoliation of the Raja of Tanjore who, he alleged, had long refrained from paying the stipulated tribute due to him. The Raja, Pratap Singh, was compelled by the English to pay a large sum of money, as well as an annual tribute The Nawab also picked a quarrel with the Rajah over the matter of the repairing of a dam across the Kaveri river at the head of the latter's kingdom. This quarrel had also to be settled by the English.

Suppression of Yusuf Khan

The Nawab then asked that the English should put down two rebellious officers of his, Murtiza Ali of Vellore (who was a relative and rival of Chanda Sahib and was the very last of the puppet Nawabs whom Dupleix had set up), and Yusuf Khan, a Hindu convert and a brave soldier of fortune, who had become the governor of Madura

and Tinnevelly. Yusuf Khan was a captain of sepoys in the Company's service and had rendered valuable services to them in the wars with the French. He had subdued most of the southern *poligars*, overrun the regions of Sivaganga and Ramnad which were the home of the turbulent Maravas and even exacted tribute from the distant ruler of Travancore. Unfortunately, he raised the standard of rebellion against the Nawab, was besieged in Madura by an English force, captured and executed. According to the high authority of Malcolm, he was "the bravest and ablest of the native soldiers that ever served the English in India."* But what was obtained from these two rebels did not satisfy either the Nawab's expectations or the Company's requirements. The subsequent administration of the Madura and Tinnevelly country by the Nawab's officials brought back all the previous confusion.

In Bengal, the English acquired the *Diwani* and usurped the *Nizamat* In Madras, Muhammad Ali continued to remain both *Diwan* and *Nazim* of the Carnatic; but the Company virtually enjoyed all real power. Though the Nawab mortgaged many parts of his dominions to the English, the latter were not anxious to take over the direct administration of these areas; and even in the *Jaghir* district, the revenue was ultimately leased out to the Nawab himself.

The English and the Northern Sarkars

One of the provisions of Clive's Treaty of Allahabad exempted Nawab Muhammad Ali from his traditional dependence on the Nizam and got for him from the puppet Mughal Emperor the title of Wallajah. Another provision gave to the English a legal right to hold the Northern Sarkars, which had been wrested by Forde from the French in 1758-59 and had remained for some years in a very unsettled condition. They had in a manner been given over to the English by the Nizam in 1759, and Shah Alam now made a formal and free grant of them to the English. Before this time, the Nizam Salabat Jang had been set aside and subsequently put to death

* See for his life, S. C. Hill's *Yusuf Khan, the Rebel Commandant* (1914), Chaps. 3, 8 and 15; and Nelson: *The Madura Country, A Manual* (1867), Part III, Ch. XI.

by his stronger younger brother, Nizam Ali. The new Nizam was at first not prepared to acquiesce in this grant; and the Government of Madras was not bold enough to incur his enmity and concluded a separate treaty with him by which they agreed to hold the Sarkars from him in return for an annual tribute. The Sarkar of Guntur was excepted from this arrangement and reserved to be held in *jaghir* for life by Basalat Jang, one of the brothers of the Nizam. Both parties agreed to assist each other when necessary. This agreement of mutual assistance was aimed directly against the rising power of Hyder Ali of Mysore, against whom the Nizam had already entered into alliance with the Marathas (1766).

Treaty with the Nizam (1766)

Section II. The First Mysore War (1767-69): The Rise of Hyder

The fickle and restless Nizam Ali did not long abide by the spirit of his treaty; and his unfaithfulness involved the English in a war with Hyder. They were on hostile terms with the latter and had sent a force under Colonel Smith against him. But, curiously enough, Hyder and Nizam Ali joined forces in the very sight of the English army. The English had placed their chief hope on an alliance between themselves, the Nizam and the Marathas. The Marathas had been quietly bought off by Hyder, and now Nizam Ali followed suit. In the war that followed, known as the First Mysore War, the English were left to themselves to bear the full brunt of Hyder's attack.

Outbreak of War with Mysore

Hyder and the Nizam joined their forces and attacked Colonel Smith at Changamah and at Tiruvannamalai but were driven back. The English had not enough cavalry troopers with them to keep the enemy's sepoys out of the Carnatic; and moreover there were bickerings among their commanding officers. Hyder became careful not to put himself within the immediate fire of the English guns. Shortly afterwards the Nizam changed sides again and confirmed his

Shifty Policy of the Nizam

former treaty obligations with the English. He saw that he could never expect with Hyder's help to crush the English and recover the Carnatic for himself and that Hyder only planned to use him as a tool for his own purposes The Nizam's peace made but little difference in the course of the war Mangalore was indeed captured by a force sent from Bombay; but it was quickly recovered by Hyder. Between the weak Nizam and the weaker Muhammad Ali, the English could achieve nothing decisive Their finances were crippled because the Carnatic continued to be ravaged by Hyder's cavalry. Hyder offered on one occasion to cede the district of Baramahal (parts of Salem and Coimbatore) and make peace. But neither the English Council, nor their greedy ally, Muhammad Ali, would agree to this. Hyder finally tried a bold stroke.

Hyder's Operations

He suddenly descended with a large army into the Baramahal region and went down the Kaveri valley by rapid marches into Tanjore from whose Raja he levied tribute Then passing through Cuddalore, he suddenly appeared in the neighbourhood of Madras whose Council was thoroughly frightened Hyder thus became the master of the situation and dictated his own terms of peace. Mutual restoration of conquered territories, exchange of prisoners and mutual assistance in defensive wars were agreed upon in the Treaty of Madras which ended the war. As to Muhammad Ali, he angrily refused to be a party to this treaty; and Hyder ignored him only too gladly. The best excuse that the English gave for this discreditable treaty was that "they had made peace, because they had no money to make war." "The general conduct of the war, incompetent as it had been, was a small evil, compared with the purposeless, undecided policy by which it was preceded and followed."*

His Descent on Madras

The Treaty of Madras

* "At this time the interests of Southern and Western India were closely connected; the Marathas, the Nizam, Hyder Ali and the English at Bombay and Madras, were in close and intimate association from which they could not escape. Moreover the interests of the three Indian powers were mutually destructive.....In these circumstances the obvious course for the English was to avoid entanglements with any of the parties.....In

Hyder Ali was the most formidable enemy that the English had to encounter in that epoch. His remarkable and rapid rise to the entire mastery of the Mysore kingdom is interesting. Mysore was originally a dependent principality of the kingdom of Vijayanagar. It grew in power during the decline of that Hindu empire and formally asserted its independence about 1650. Its ruling dynasty, known as Wodeyars, came about 1730 under the influence of two able men, Devaraj, the *Dalawai* (head of the army), and Nanjaraj, the minister. Hyder was the son of an obscure soldier who rose to be the captain of the fort of Bangalore. He began life as an adventurer, attracted the notice of Nanjaraj, by his coolness and courage and soon got the command of a small body of men and the charge of Devanahalli, then a frontier fortress of the kingdom (1749). The attacks which Mysore suffered from the Nizam and the Marathas gave Hyder further opportunities to distinguish himself. Shortly afterwards, Nanjaraj took part in the Anglo-French struggles round Trichinopoly; and Hyder accompanied him and took part in the operations. In the end he contrived to become the *faujdar* of Dindigul (1775) Here he enlisted a considerable body of horsemen and peons, organised a regular system of plunder and built with the aid of skilled European officers a regular battery of artillery and an arsenal for himself. In 1757 and again in 1759, he was called upon to defend Mysore against Maratha invasions. In the latter year, after having driven out the invaders, he triumphantly entered the capital, Seringapatam, where the Raja welcomed him with the title of Fateh

Hyder Ali's Rise

He gets Hold of Dindigul (1755)

the first place their interests were divided between the rival Presidencies of Madras and Bombay.....In the second place the action of the Madras Presidency was hampered by the conduct of its *protege*, the Nawab Walajah.....In the third place, the local governments were always liable to the interference of the home authorities, sometimes ill-informed, sometimes ill-authorised, but at this time generally incalculable."—H. H. Dodwell in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, p. 277. See also Willes : *A History of Mysore* (Madras ed., Vol. I).

Hyder Bahadur (Victorious Lord Hyder). Soon Hyder contrived to get rid of Nanjaraj and became himself the regent of the kingdom. The French realised his great power and begged him for help on the occasion of their last struggle round Pondicherry; but he could not take advantage of that offer on account of some domestic troubles. By another bold coup he got rid of Khande Rao, the new minister, whom he defeated and imprisoned in an iron cage. His usurpation of power was now complete, though he pretended a nominal submission to the Raja. He soon began a career of conquest in all directions including Bednore (to which he gave the name of Haidarnagar), Malabar and Coimbatore and the districts as far north as the Krishna. What he could not gain by force he contrived to win by stratagem. On the death of the nominal Raja in 1766, he stood forth openly as the ruler of Mysore and allowed his successor only the shadow of the title. His usurpation brought about a coalition against him of the Marathas and the Nizam who descended on his dominions (1767).*

He becomes Regent of Mysore

His Conquest of Bednore, etc.

The Marathas advanced first; they attacked the fort of Sira and overran all Hyder's eastern districts before the Nizam joined them. Hyder persuaded them to retire by means of a heavy bribe and induced Nizam Ali to join him in an alliance against the English. Their united forces descended into the Carnatic plain and attacked the English army under Colonel Smith, as told above. The first Mysore War followed; and it ended with Hyder securing the victory, both morally and materially.

He comes successfully out of the First Mysore War

* For the rise of Hyder Ali, see *The History of Hyder Naik* of Hussein Ali Khan Kirmani, translated by W. Miles (1842)—Chap. II, *et seq.*, and Bowring's *Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan* (Rulers of India); and Wilks' *History of Mysore*, Chapters VII, X, XI & XII, in Vol. I of 2nd Edition. Also *The Mysore Gazetteer* (Revised), Vol. II, Part IV.

Soon after his war with the English, Hyder had to face a fresh invasion of the Marathas who quickly overran the whole of his northern and north-eastern districts and drove him to take shelter in his capital (1770-71). Hyder begged the English at Madras to afford him help at this critical moment, according to the terms of his treaty, and he even offered to cede Baramahal and pay a large sum to them He also threatened to call in the aid of the French as a last resort. But Muhammad Ali, who bitterly hated the upstart Hyder, would not hear of the English assisting him On the other hand, he even demanded that the English should ally themselves with the Marathas against him. Muhammad Ali was then strongly supported by Sir John Lindsay whom the Government of England itself had sent out as its envoy to him In the course of the war between Hyder and the Marathas, Lindsay did his utmost to bring the English Company in on the side of the Marathas; and his successor, Harland, actually entered into negotiations for a treaty with the Peishwa, Madhava Rao.

His War with the Marathas (1770-71)

The English refuse to help him

In the end Hyder was left to shift for himself and had to pay to the Marathas a large indemnity and cede to them some valuable districts like Bangalore and Kolar which diminished his dominions He never forgave the English for "their treacherous and cowardly abandonment of him" on this occasion.

Hyder's Hate of the English

SECTION III. THE CARNATIC AND TANJORE AFFAIRS

The Madras Council was not then composed of able and honest men. The Directors had not approved of the Treaty of Madras and accused the Madras Council of "irresolution as men, disability as negotiators and weakness and deficiency as politicians." King George III himself was inclined to take up the cause of Muhammad Ali who had

Muhammad Ali's Intrigues

appealed to him as a brother sovereign for the redress of the many injustices which, he protested, he had suffered at the hands of the Madras Government; and his Majesty's Government had, therefore, sent their own envoys, like Lindsay, to listen to the Nawab's complaints This greatly strengthened Muhammad Ali's position; and he now began to make impossible demands on the Company. He was elated at the humiliation of his enemy, Hyder Ali; and thought the treaty with the Marathas that he so much desired was not brought about, he entreated (and partly persuaded) the Madras Council to agree to attack and capture the kingdom of Tanjore As has been seen above, Tanjore had agreed to pay an annual tribute to the Nawab by a treaty of 1762 which Governor Pigot had succeeded in bringing about. The Nawab now declared that the Tanjore Raja had broken that treaty, partly by neglecting to pay the stipulated tribute and partly by intriguing with Hyder Ali and with Yusuf Khan, the rebel commandant at Madura. He was also accused of intriguing with the Marathas The Madras Council affected to believe these charges Their first attack on Tanjore took place in 1771; two years later the Raja was again attacked by an English force which took his fort by assault, imprisoned his family and gave over his kingdom to the Nawab. About the same time punitive troops were sent to reduce the two powerful *poligars* of Ramnad and Sivaganga

His Charges against the Raja of Tanjore who is deprived of his Kingdom (1773)

This disgraceful action of the English in securing Tanjore for the Nawab produced an intense agitation in Egland. It was condemned by the Court of Directors who declared that the Raja's deposition was unjust and violent. They sent orders that Tanjore was to be restored to the Raja, dismissed the Governor who authorised his deposition and sent out in his place their former Governor, Pigot, who had so efficiently defended Madras against Lally. Pigot proceeded to undo the mischief; he restored Tanjore to the Raja and fixed the annual tribute due from him. But this brought the Governor into violent hostility not only with the Nawab, but

Governor Pigot restores him

also with his creditors who had acquired interests in Tanjore after its annexation. At the head of these creditors was Paul Benfield, a junior servant of the Company, who claimed a large sum as being due to him from the Nawab; many of the members of the Council were personally interested in the enforcement of the claim, as they had also similar fraudulent transactions with the Nawab. They had a majority; and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Robert Fletcher, a man of truculent disposition, was on their side Grievous dissensions soon broke out in the Madras Council, similar to those which were then going on between the Governor-General, Warren Hastings, and his Councillors at Calcutta. Unlike the cautious Hastings, Pigot foolishly placed his principal opponents under suspension. The opposition conspired to seize the Government and imprison Pigot, in this conspiracy, Benfield and the Nawab were concerned; and in the end the poor Governor was arrested and placed in confinement (1776). Pigot died in the following year while still in confinement. The Government of Bengal which had become supreme over the other Presidencies by virtue of the Regulating Act of 1773 did nothing in the matter, as it had a great deal of trouble on its own hands.

Pigot's Quarrel with his Council

His Imprisonment and Death (1776-7)

The usurping majority of the Council were ultimately recalled to England, tried and fined. Benfield himself escaped any punishment. The truth was that "ill-judged interference from England had weakened the stability of the English Government in India," and the Nawab had profited by unwise encouragement from the British Cabinet and created numerous troubles for the Madras Council which was itself largely tainted with corruption. Thus the situation in Madras grew from bad to worse; and in the midst of this came the Second War with Hyder.

The real Cause of the Trouble

Sir Thomas Rumbold, the new Governor, continued the corrupt traditions of his predecessors. He attempted to make a settlement with the zamindars of the Northern Sarkars. At that time there was war with the Marathas which was provoked by the foolishness of the Bombay Government and cost the English a great deal of strain and expense. War was also declared with France which joined the revolted American colonies (1778). Rumbold now negotiated with Basalat Jang, the brother of the Nizam, who was in enjoyment of the Guntur Sarkar and contrived to get a cession of it from him The Nizam was ruffled by this action; the Governor-General, Warren Hastings, realised the danger of alienating the Nizam at this critical moment and promptly secured the restoration of Guntur to his brother. This affair led to a bitter quarrel between the Madras and Bengal Governments, and made the Nizam very suspicious of the English at the very moment when the war with Hyder was about to break out.

Continued Misgovernment

Ailenation of he Nizam

Hyder himself had an eye on Guntur; he was very angry when the English endeavoured to gain possession of it When the war with the French broke out, Sir Hector Munro, Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, besieged and captured Pondicherry and destroyed its fortifications (1778). Other French towns like Chandernagar and Karikal were also easily taken; and only the small port of Mahe on the Malabar Coast remained in French hands. Hyder claimed, by reason of his conquest, full sovereignty over the Malabar Coast including its European settlements. He maintained that Mahe was under his protection; but in spite of this claim, the Madras Council sent an expedition through his territory; and the place was taken by storm (March 1779). Besides this cause of offence, Hyder had other reasons for declaring war with the English. In the outbreak of the war between the Marathas and the English, Nana Farnavis, the virtual head of the Poona Government, had promised to relieve him from all Maratha claims

Provocation of Hyder

His Grounds of Quarrel with the English

of tribute and further to allow him to extend his northern boundary to the Kishna. Again, when Rumbold quarrelled with the Nizam, Hyder was glad as this freed him from any anxiety as to any active combination of the English with the latter. He had been embittered against the English who would neither renew the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance that they concluded with him in 1769, nor carry out its spirit in their action. Also he was well prepared for a war. His army was well-organised, having been disciplined by French officers; and his artillery was efficient and up-to-date And though old, he displayed great mental vigour and declared that he would root out the English from South India. Thus his feelings of hostility were well-known to the English. In 1779, they sent the pious Danish missionary, Swartz, with an offer of peace to Hyder

Futility of Swartz's Mission to Him (1779)

Swartz had been doing very good educational work in Tanjore and Trichinopoly and was greatly influential with the Tanjore Raja He was one of the gentlest and most successful missionaries that have appeared in India Hyder was gracious and kind to the missionary, but was bitter in his denunciation of the conduct of the English. Swartz bears testimony to Hyder's expeditious conduct of business and his great memory and discernment.*

Combination of the Nizam, the Marathas and Hyder

As we saw, the Madras Government had alienated Nizam Ali also who took a large number of French soldiers into his service There was formed a general confederacy between the Nizam, the Marathas and Hyder to attempt the total expulsion of the English from India. To add to all these, the Madras Government was totally incompetent to guage the situation, or prepare to meet it; it did not make any effective preparations to resist Hyder and deluded itself with hopes of a lasting peace. Muhammad

Muhammad Ali's Position

Ali had been urging the Government to make effective preparations for facing an invasion; but he had become "a Cassandra, without the interposition of

* H. Pearson's *Life of Swartz*, Vol. I, p. 319.

Apollo;" and his predictions and warnings were all discredited, the more so because his troops were always mutinous for want of pay and threatened very often to desert to Hyder's side. He continued, as usual, to pay no one and borrow from every one who would lend; and "he repaid these loans and the imaginary services by which he was still deluded, chiefly by bonds; some payable at stated, some at indefinite periods; all eventually charged on the revenues of the country."*

Imbecility of the Madras Government

Above all, Whitehill, who just now succeeded Rumbold in the Governorship, was the embodiment of corruption and incompetence; and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hector Munro, the hero of Bascar, had become weak-minded and irresolute. There was absolutely no preparation made at Madras till news was received that Hyder's cavalry was already plundering the Carnatic.

SECTION IV. THE SECOND MYSORE WAR (1780-84)

Hyder's Invasion of the Carnatic—Victory over Baillie

Hyder descended into the Carnatic with a large army, marking his path with plunder and destruction. Soon "the black columns of smoke of the burning villages were visible from St. Thomas' Mount and the bleeding victims were pouring into Madras itself." Munro took his stand at Conjeevaram instead of near Madras; and Hyder cut off at Palur nearly a detachment under Colonel Baillie which was on its way to join the Commander-in-Chief. Munro displayed marked incapacity in not moving at all to the rescue of the force which was so near; he retreated in panic into Madras. Hyder also captured Arcot; and he was daily expecting a French fleet on the coast. The position of the English at Madras was in the greatest danger.

Warren Hastings saves the Situation

This disastrous opening of the war would have had the most serious consequences, but for Warren Hastings, to whom the Madras Government now applied for support, rising equal to the occasion. The Governor-General showed the greatest promptitude and energy and saved the

* Wilks: Vol. I (2nd edition), p. 448.

situation. Though the Maratha war was still pressing on his resources, Hastings managed to send to the Carnatic the veteran general, Sir Eyre Coote, with all troops that could be spared from Bengal. In the beginning of 1781, Coote took the field in person and relieved Chingleput as well as Wandiwash which was in serious danger and was bravely defended by Captain Flint, and he next compelled Hyder to raise the siege of Vellore. When a French fleet appeared off the Coromandel Coast, Hyder moved down on Cuddalore, intending to occupy it as a depot for the French troops that he was expecting to land. Coote, though hampered by lack of sufficient cavalry and by a superfluity of artillery and camp-followers, followed him closely. Hyder avoided coming to close grips with Coote, withdrew into the interior and began to ravage the territory of the hapless ruler of Tanjore

Sir Eyre Coote takes the Field

The French fleet had moved off to Mauritius in the meantime; and the English forces could not command a greater extent of territory than was covered by their guns On one occasion, Coote moved out to Chidambaram, but being repulsed, retired to Porto Novo. Encouraged by this, Hyder placed himself between the English position and Cuddalore and awaited battle. Meanwhile, the English admiral who had been cruising in the Arabian Sea, arrived off Cuddalore; and Coote boldly attacked Hyder's position near Porto Novo. After a severe struggle, Hyder had to retire from the field, himself narrowly escaping capture (July 1781). Retreating into the interior, Hyder risked another issue with the English and fought another battle on the site of his previous victory at Palur over Baillie, thinking that fortune would befriend him there. He was, however, defeated;

His Victories at Porto Novo (1781)

he was again beaten at Sholinghur and driven further into the interior by Coote. But all these exhausted the resources of the English sooner than those of the enemy. "Neither in this year, nor in 1782, did Coote make the least progress towards driving Hyder out of the Nawab's possessions, while English resources and finances steadily decayed."

and at Sholinghur

Hyder did not, after his defeat at Sholinghur, venture again to attack Coote who, however, quickly retreated to Madras.

Lord Macartney Governor of Madras

Coote's strategy baffled Hyder's plans, but his expectations were defeated by his own lack of equipment and want of supplies. Lord Macartney, who now became the Governor of Madras, was a statesman of experience and honour. As war had now been declared with the Dutch, he attacked Negapatam with which Hyder had lost no time in opening negotiations and captured it and quickly followed it up with the capture of Trincomale in Ceylon which was in Dutch hands at that time. Moreover, Macartney made an arrangement with Nawab Muhammad Ali who did not contribute anything to the defence of his dominions and who often impeded the movements of the troops Coote had vigorously protested against the venality and profligacy of the Nawab's court; and now Macartney compelled him, after repeated evasions, to resign the revenues of the Carnatic to the Company for a period of five years at the least, with a reservation of one-sixth for his personal expenditure and for the payment of his creditors.

His Capture of Negapatam

His Treaty with Muhammad Ali (1781)

Colonel Braithwaite, who was employed in establishing the Nawab's authority in Tanjore, was surprised by a large body of horse under Tipu, the son of Hyder. But as if to counter-balance this reverse, the British garrison in Tellicherry (the only fortified factory of the English in Malabar) made a brave sortie and repelled its besiegers; and this emboldened the conquered Nairs to rise in rebellion throughout Malabar and even roused a reaction in Coorg against Hyder (1782).

English Vicissitudes

After this, Hyder became despondent. He had been foiled in every engagement with Coote; and the revolt in Malabar soon began to extend into Mysore. He saw that his French allies had deceived him, they had promised to come to his ossistance, but failed him for nearly two years. The

Hyder's Despondency

west coast was the most vulnerable point of his dominions; and the enemy had begun to attack it.

Operations of the French Fleet (1782)

Meanwhile, the French fleet had reappeared in the Indian waters, under the command of Suffren, a very capable admiral, early in 1782. He fought in the course of that year four hotly-contested engagements with the English fleet and displayed superior tactical skill. But "on the whole the English held their own by a stubborn resistance against superior concentrations." Suffren indeed landed about 2,000 men under the command of an incompetent officer whose junction with Hyder led to no change in the military situation.

Inutility of French Reinforcements to Hyder

Only Trincomale was captured by Suffren, the English fleet not being able to relieve it in time. Hyder and the French captain with him were not able to attack Coote who was engaged in relieving Wandiwash. In his turn, Coote attempted to capture Arni, the chief depot of Hyder in the Carnatic, but failed in his turn and returned to Madras.

Plight of Madras (1782)

Macartney now received information that a second French force was arriving under the veteran Bussy, he was afraid that, with Trincomale in the hands of Suffren and Hyder master of the Carnatic, Madras itself might be in danger from the French navy, particularly as the English fleet retired from the Bay to Bombay to refit. Madras was then torn by a famine; the ravages of Hyder drove the inhabitants of the neighbouring parts into the city and many died of disease and starvation. In addition to all these, Coote returned to Bengal on account of ill-health.

The Vulnerability of the West Coast

This indecisive and long-drawn campaign in the Carnatic was conceived on false lines. If Hyder was to be effectively subdued, war should be carried into his own dominion, which was very vulnerable on the west coast; it was open to attack both by the English and by the

Marathas with whom peace was about to be concluded. Colonel Humberstone landed with some Bombay troops at Calicut and advanced against Palghat. Hyder sent Tipu with a large force against this new enemy; but the latter was repulsed in an attack with great loss. Hyder resolved to leave the Carnatic and go to the west coast; but suddenly he heard that a French fleet had actually arrived off Porto Novo and had even landed some soldiers. In spite of English successes, the French troops got possession of Cuddalore and contrived to join Hyder's camp. Meanwhile, Tipu was gaining some small successes near Palghat. Just when the struggle was about to be renewed in the Carnatic, Hyder died in camp near Arcot. His death was kept a secret till Tipu arrived on the scene, and by liberal grants to the army, succeeded peacefully to the throne.

English Attack of it

Hyder's Death (December 1782)

The English might have struck a decisive blow against the Mysore army before Tipu's arrival. But they missed the chance. On the other hand, Tipu abandoned the operations in the Carnatic and withdrew to the west coast. Bussy, the famous French soldier, though now an old man, had landed at Cuddalore (1783). If he had promptly united with Tipu, he might have put the English in great peril, particularly since Coote's succession was inert As it was, Bussy and Tipu did not unite. Bussy indeed fought a very indecisive action with the English near Cuddalore. Suffren fought at the same time a severe action with the English fleet which put back to Madras to refit. Bussy got emboldened and even planned an attack on the English camp; but the announcement that peace had been arranged between England and France in Europe led to the stopping of hostilities; and the English army in the Carnatic was saved.* Bussy put an end to all opera-

Tipu withdraws to the West Coast (1783)

Bussy and Tipu do not unite

Critical Battle of Cuddalore

* Malleson says that this suspension of arms was most unfortunate for France and the last escape of the English (*Final French Struggles in India* [1878], pp. 74-5). Wilson thus remarks on this :—"It seems probable that but for the opportune occurrence of peace with France, the south of India would have been lost to the English. The annihilation of

tions and withdrew all French troops from Tipu's service (July, 1783).

Meanwhile, the Bombay Government had equipped an expedition under General Mathews to attack Mangalore and Bednore. Soon, Honowar and Mangalore fell into English hands; Bednore also followed suit; and Tipu could only recover it with great effort, while Mangalore resisted him heroically for many months. Yet another expedition was despatched under Colonel Fullerton which reduced Dindigul, Coimbatore and Palghat and prepared to march against Seringapatam itself from the south-east. If the English had been sufficiently enterprising and vigorous, their forces might have advanced into Seringapatam itself and dictated peace. But Lord Macartney, the Governor of Madras, who was bent on making peace, ignored the instructions of the Governor-General and sent commissioners to negotiate for a final truce. Hastings saw that the only honourable way to peace was to dictate it at Tipu's capital, as Hyder had done in the previous war at the gates of Madras. But Macartney persisted in his own course, and concluded, on not very honourable terms, the Treaty of Mangalore (March 1784) on the basis of a mutual restitution of conquests. Tipu made it appear as if the English had anxiously solicited peace; and the Madras Government strengthened this impression by its submissive meekness in the conduct of the negotiations.

English Operations on the West Coast (1783)

Advance of Fullerton to Palghat

Macartney sues for Peace— Treaty of Mangalore (March 1784)

It was the genius and presence of mind of Hastings combined with the exertions of Coote that saved the Madras Presidency in this critical war which was largely the consequence of the incompetence, the vacillation and the corruption of the Madras Government itself. Hastings had contrived, in the course of the war, to destroy the last vestiges of the Dutch power in India

Contribution of Hastings to English Success

the army at Cuddalore would have been followed by the siege of Madras' and there was little chance of defending it successfully against Tippu and the French."

and take their settlement of Negapatam. The Carnatic was intensely ravaged, while the Northern Sarkars were corruptly administered. From the first, the resources of Madras had been totally unequal to the strain. The assignment of the Carnatic revenues by the Nawab to the Madras Government, made in 1781, did not improve the position very much. But the Nawab did not allow his revenue officials to pay to the English all that they collected. Macartney appointed a special committee (the Committee of Assigned Revenue) to manage the business of collection and introduce reforms in the Nawab's administration. The Nawab disliked this committee's interference, and contrived to have it vetoed by the Governor-General who had previously approved it and finally had it cancelled by orders from the Directors in 1785. Thereupon, Macartney resigned office in disgust, rather than carry out a policy which would revive misgovernment. The Government of Madras had also great difficulties in reconciling the position of the officers of the Royal Army with that of the Company's officers. These were rendered worse by the frequent grounds of quarrel that cropped up between the Madras and the Bengal Governments.

Difficulties of the Madras Government

Continued troubles from Muhammad Ali

CHAPTER VIII

WARREN HASTINGS IN BENGAL

SECTION I. HASTINGS, GOVERNOR OF BENGAL (1772-74)

Warren Hastings, the first and one of the most important of the Indian Governors-General, came out to India in 1749, at the early age of eighteen, as a writer in the Company's service. He spent the first few years of his official life in the factories of Calcutta and Kasimbazar, where he displayed great skill and steadiness, being very tactful in his dealings, both with his Dutch rivals and with the Indian traders. He served as a volunteer in Clive's avenging campaign of 1756-57, and was employed by him as a trusty agent in the negotiations with Siraj-ud-daula. After Plassey, Hastings became the English Resident at the court of Mir Jafar, secured the confirmation of the Company's title to the district of the 24 Parganas, and took part in the revolution that led to the raising of Mir Kasim to the Nawabship. He became, shortly afterwards, a member of the Calcutta Council and was frequently employed on diplomatic missions to the Nawab's court; along with Vansittart, he strove to maintain peace with Mir Kasim, but unsuccessfully. After the victory of Buxar, Hastings left for England; he returned in 1769 as Second in Council at Madras where he strove to restore peace in the Carnatic which had been ravaged by Hyder and to adjust the relations between Muhammad Ali and the Raja of Tanjore. In the beginning of 1772 he was transferred to Bengal as Second in the Calcutta Council, with the right of succession to the Governorship which he soon secured (April 1772)

Early Career of Hastings

His Governorship of Bengal (1772-74)

In the task of reconstructing the administration, which Hastings took on hand, he was much encouraged by a letter

that he had from Lord Clive, advising him "to set the public interest above all private claims, to trust his own judgment rather than that of others, to plan carefully and act daringly in times of danger, never entertaining a thought of miscarriage till the misfortune actually happened, and even then setting to work upon new schemes, with an opinion that time and perseverance would get the better of everything."* Hastings first put an end to the system of Double Government which had so woefully failed and which he was now authorised by the Directors to demolish. He dismissed the two Deputy Nawabs (Muhammad Riza Khan and Raja Shitab Rai) and put them on their trial for peculation.†

End of the Double Government

He abolished the system of the Indian revenue-collectors and appointed English collectors in their stead. He grouped the districts later on and placed English Commissioners over the groups. In the place of two Revenue Boards which had been established at Murshidabad and at Patna, Hastings created one Board at Calcutta and removed the treasury (*khalsa*) to it. He also did away with the magisterial and judicial powers of the *zamindars* and *faujdars* and created, in each district, civil and criminal courts of which the Collector was the head. He established at Calcutta, two courts of appeal for civil and criminal cases; over the *Sadr Diwani Adalat* (the chief civil court for the provinces), the Governor himself and two members of his Council sat as judges; over the other court, the *Sadr Nizamat Adalat*, there sat an Indian judge appointed by the Council. The judges in both the courts were assisted by Indian assessors, Brahman *Pandits* and Mussalman *Maulvis*, who were skilled in expounding points of Hindu and Muhammadan law. All

Administrative Reforms

* Oswell: *Rulers of India, Sketches of*; Vol. II, p. 62. For an account of his work at reform, see Chap. VI of Moncton Jones' *Warren Hastings in Bengal*, 1772-74.

† After a long trial, Shitab Rai was honourably acquitted and re-appointed to high office in Patna; Riza Khan was also acquitted; but Hastings believed that he was culpable. Maharaja Nanda Kumar who had been the Nawab's minister and subsequently disgraced, was employed in their prosecution. He was an enemy of Hastings and became more embittered against him in consequence of this.

these reforms were effected within the first year of Hastings' governorship.

Other Improvements

In other departments also Hastings' reforming hand was quickly seen. He improved the Company's trade, and tried to repress the corrupt practices of the English officials. He broke down the monopoly that they had set up, during the recent famine, in salt, tobacco, betel-nut, and rice.* He cut down the stipend allowed to the Nawab to less than half of what it was; at the same time he reduced the expenses of the young Nawab's household, and appointed Mani Begam, the widow of Mir Jafar, to be his guardian and Raja Gurdas, son of Nandakumar, to be the *Diwan* of his household. Hastings bitterly disliked Nandakumar; but the Directors had bidden him use his services; and he saw his way to using him through his son, and possibly he hoped thereby to destroy the influence of Muhammad Riza Khan with the Nawab. Hastings also strengthened the police officials, and placed the police control of each district in the hands of a separate officer; he prohibited the use of the *korah* in the *cutcherry* for punishing recalcitrant *ryots* and *zamindars*.

Suppression of Bandits

He put down dacoity which was widely prevalent and strove to disperse the *Sanyasis*, a band of wandering ascetics from the country to the south of the Himalayas, who regularly stole young boys in their wanderings through the province and committed other atrocities also. They once dispersed an English force sent against them in Rangpur; and Hastings had to post troops along the frontier to guard against their incursions.†

* With regard to matters of trade, his letters of this epoch show "his conversance with all kinds of practical details, the keenness of his appetite for fresh knowledge, and the readiness with which he could turn from larger subjects to discuss some new method of preparing silk-thread, or to give advice about the purchase of cocoons."—L. J. Trotter's *Warren Hastings, A Biography* (1910), p. 94.

† *Sanyasi and Fakir Raiders of Bengal.*

Soon Hastings found that the Collectors appointed by him were unequal to the fiscal duties of which they had no previous experience. He, therefore, transferred their revenue duties to Indian *amils* who were controlled by a Committee of Revenue at Calcutta which was to dispose of complaints made by the cultivators. English officials were also sent as Commissioners to visit the districts which were grouped into six divisions. Each of these divisions was controlled by a Provincial Council of five members who were authorised to hear appeals, inquire into revenue accounts and investigate revenue tenures.

Provincial Councils

Hastings also planned a code of Hindu and Muhammadan law for the guidance of his new courts. A good digest of Muhammadan law had been made by Aurangzib; and it was now made use of. The Hindu law was in a chaotic condition; and *Pandits* were invited by Hastings to Calcutta to produce a comprehensive code; it was translated from the original Sanskrit into Persian; and Mr Halhed, a civil servant of the Company, rendered it into English in 1775.*

Digest of Indian Law

The Governor removed many of the imposts that hampered the inland trade of the country and adopted a law and uniform customs duty. He brought the opium and salt trade completely under Government control and started a bank at Calcutta; and he prohibited all servants of the Company from having any share either in the farming out of the revenues or in Government contracts.

Economic Reforms

In Kuch-Bihar, a small state lying at the foot of the Bhutan Himalayas, there was an invasion by the Bhutias; and the Raja appealed to Calcutta for help. A small sepoy force was sent to his assistance; and the invaders were quickly compelled to terms. Out of this campaign arose the first British

Mission to Tibet

* The *Code* was dedicated to Hastings himself; it gave a sense of confidence to the people and enabled the courts to decide cases with certainty and despatch. Parts of it were sent by Hastings to the great judge of England, Lord Mansfield, as a proof that the Indians were "not in the savage state in which they have been unfairly represented."

mission sent to Tibet. Bogle, a young civilian, was sent to Bhutan and thence into Tibet with the view of ascertaining the feasibility of trade with that country. The envoy was also instructed to note carefully the features of the people whom he met on the way and to learn all that he could of the course of the Brahmaputra. The mission was not much of a success; and it was forced to return owing to the pressure of Chinese influence on the authorities at Lhassa.* This was the only contact between Tibet and India for more than a century.

External Troubles

Trouble was also brewing outside the British frontier. The Maratha power had already recovered from the blow which it sustained at Panipat. In 1769 an army sent by the Peishwa levied blackmail on the Jats and the Rajputs and swept over Rohilkhand, a region lying to the north-west of Oudh and recently conquered by the Rohillas, a tribe of Yusufzai origin and of warlike habits. They even threatened the Nawab Vizier of Oudh, on whom they threatened vengeance for his having helped their enemies at Panipat. They entered Delhi in triumph in 1770 and at once invited thither Shah Alam who had been living peacefully for some years at Allahabad as the pensioner of the English Company. The weak-minded Emperor was attracted by the prospect of once more sitting on the throne of his ancestors; and in spite of the dissuasions of the Calcutta Council, set forth from Allahabad in May 1771, with a small force which he had collected and entered the capital on Christmas Day. Though he co-operated with them in a campaign into Rohilkhand, he soon found himself helpless and was compelled to surrender into their hands the districts of Karra and Allahabad which Clive had given to him. Hastings would not allow the transference of these two districts which linked Bihar with Oudh into the hands of the Marathas who were now the most formidable enemy of the English in Northern India. He quickly sent troops to occupy these districts and cut off the annual tribute that was being paid to the Emperor.

Departure of Shah Alam from Allahabad (1771)

* Markham's *Narrative of Bogle's Mission* (Trubner & Co., 1876) is very interesting and gives a good account of Tibet at the time.

The Rohillas and the Nawab Vizier

From the time that the Marathas began to attack Rohilkhand, the Rohilla chiefs, Hafiz Rahmat Khan and others, became alarmed and saw that their only chance of escape was by an alliance with the Nawab Vizier, who had expelled a similar Maratha invasion twelve years before. The Nawab himself was alarmed at the Maratha preparations and proposed to Hastings that he would buy back those districts which he had forfeited in 1765 and also give a handsome subsidy to the English, if they would help him in crushing the Rohillas, of whom he was always suspicious and whose internecine quarrels frequently tempted the Marathas to make incursions into their country. Already the Rohillas had concluded a treaty with the Nawab, promising him 40 lakhs on condition of his expelling the Marathas from their country. Early in 1773 the invading Marathas were forced to retire when they were opposed by the combined troops of the Company and the Nawab. But when the Nawab claimed the payment of the stipulated sum from Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the latter evaded the demand on one plea or another; and the Nawab Vizier resolved upon the humiliation of the Rohillas.

Hastings concludes the Treaty of Benares (1773)

Now Hastings concluded at Benares a treaty (August 1773), agreeing to cede to him the districts of Karra and Allahabad, in return for a sum of 50 lakhs and supply him with British troops in his projected conquest of Rohilkhand. The English were to get a large subsidy at the end of the campaign and also the important fortress of Chunar on the Ganges, a little above Benares, which would greatly strengthen their hold on the route into the upper Gangetic basin.

His Reasons

Many reasons led to Hastings' compliance with the Nawab's demands. His fear of the Marathas who would renew their raids on the first opportunity and his belief in the Nawab's loyalty to the English were the most prominent ones; moreover, he wanted to better the finances of the Company and to round

off the territory of Oudh by the annexation of the Rohilla country and by the consequent extension of the Oudh frontier to the natural barrier formed by the Himalayas and the upper Ganges. He was strongly convinced that a Rohilla alliance with the Marathas would endanger the safety not only of Oudh, but of Bihar and Bengal as well.* His action was approved by his Council, as it was the practice of the age to hire out the Company's troops in aid of an ally. The Directors, however, found fault with his arrangement "not upon moral, but upon purely political grounds."

The Rohilla War

A short campaign against the Rohillas led to their decisive defeat at Miranpur Katra and to the disruption of their power and the death of Hafiz Rahmat Khan: the Nawab Vizier whose troops took precious little part in the battle, plundered the Rohilla camp to the fullest extent; but he rewarded the English troops with a handsome share of the profit Rough measures were used in putting down further resistance. Rohilkhand was annexed to Oudh; many Rohillas crossed the Ganges and migrated to the west; and Faizullah Khan the son of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, was allowed to retain his father's fief of Rampur. The political result was that a safe barrier was erected for the buffer-state of Oudh; and more than forty years passed in peace without Rohilkhand being threatened or attacked by the Marathas. "The occupation of that province gave to Oudh and Bengal that permanent protection against the most dangerous of our Indian enemies which it had been the aim of Hastings to secure."†

Its Results

* According to Hastings, the Nawab Vizier would secure by the annexation of Rohilkhand, "a complete, compact state shut in effectually from foreign invasions by the Ganges.....while he would remain equally accessible for our forces.....whether for hostilities or for protection.. ..." It would undoubtedly, by bringing his frontier nearer to the Marathas, to whom. singly, he would be no match, render him more dependent on us and cement the union more firmly between us."—Forrest's *Administration of Warren Hastings.*

† Strachey's *Hastings and the Rohilla War*, p. 264.

Charge against Hastings on this Count

The harsh measures undertaken in the conquest of Rohilkhand were later made a serious charge against Hastings and formed the first attack on him before Parliament. Though it is true that the actual conduct of the war was not beyond criticism, and the policy underlying it was not above fault, Mill and Macaulay "wasted a good deal of sentiment and falsified a good deal of history" on the Rohillas, their pastoral simplicity and the cruelty that attended their defeat, particularly the callousness of Hastings to their sufferings "History furnishes no more striking instance of the growth and vitality of a slander".* The truth is that the whole transaction was an error in judgment and further vitiated on its financial side.

Section II. Parliamentary Interference and the Regulating Act

Hastings' work as the Governor of Bengal, though heavy, was smooth, and he had a free hand both with his Council at Calcutta and the Court of Directors at London Now new fetters were put on his freedom; and the rest of his Indian career was one long course of hard fighting with opponents in Council and opponents in England. This new situation arose out of the passing of the Regulating Act which revised the entire machinery of the Company and of its Indian administration.

When the news of Clive's acquisition of the *Diwani* reached England, it was proposed in the Court of Proprietors that Government be requested to extend the duration of the Company's Charter on consideration of the Crown being admitted to participate in the benefits of the Company's new gain. In 1766, the House of Commons appointed a Committee to inquire into the affairs of the Company which were bad at the time.

* See Forrest's *Selections from the State-Papers of Warren Hastings*, Introduction, p. xxi: he continues: "The Rohilla atrocities owe their birth to the malignity of Champion and Francis; their growth to the rhetoric of Burke, and their wide diffusion to the brilliance and pellucid clearness of Macaulary's style. ' Lyall says that "the expedition against the Rohillas was wrong in principle, for they had not provoked us, and the Vizier could only be relied upon to abuse his advantages." —*Warren Hastings*, p. 49.—A. M. Davies effectively refutes the charge that Hastings hired out British troops as mercenaries of an Indian ruler—*Warren Hastings* (1934), p. 8.

Interest in India fast spread throughout England. Parliament passed an Act compelling the Company to pay a subsidy to the nation of £ 400,000 as a sort of tribute for its growing Indian dominion. Clive who knew better the straitened finances of the Company, condemned this Act as an unreasonable extortion; but Parliament was determined to profit by the territorial acquisitions in the East; as a consequence the company's dividend was restricted. The Act showed that Parliament had the right to interfere at will with the Company's affairs; but it did not press to a settlement the question of the Company's sovereignty in India.

Beginning of Parliamentary Interference

Clive had previously written to Chatham, suggesting the withdrawal of its Indian dominions from the Company; and the latter communicated to Lord Shelburne a plan for "diverting to the public treasury the territorial, as distinguished from the mercantile, revenues of the Company. The question that agitated the public mind then was whether a body of British merchants had any lawful right to conquer and acquire foreign territory except for the Crown." In 1769, another Act of Parliament compelled the Company to the annual contribution of £ 400,000 and the export of at least £ 300,000 worth of British manufactures. Everybody believed that the Company was making great fortunes in India; but in reality it encountered great difficulties; and it had to borrow repeatedly from the Bank of England. It ordered a Commission to go to India and inquire why all its hopes of wealth were foiled. The Cabinet also interfered in the Company's Indian affairs; and on the representation of the friends of Nawab Muhammad Ali, Lindsay and Harland were sent over successively as the King's Commissioners to render support to the Nawab. In 1772, the King's speech, on the occasion of the opening of Parliament, recommended new laws for the

Clive's Aim

The Company's Position

British possessions in India; in April, the Commons appointed a Select Committee of Inquiry into the Company's affairs. Soon the Company besought the Ministry for a loan for relieving itself from its embarrassments. This was made the starting point of a fresh inquiry by a Secret Committee into the books and affairs of the Company. The Select Committee recommended that the State should take over all those acquisitions of the Company got either by military force or by political treaty; and it also accused Clive of receiving moneys which rightfully belonged to the Company.

Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry (1772)

Their increasing difficulties compelled the Court of Directors to petition Parliament for a big loan This request was used as a pretext to impose fresh conditions on the Company. Lord North introduced a series of proposals in Parliament, tending to a change in the constitution of the Company, and an Act based on these resolutions was passed (October 1773), known as the Regulating Act which was to come into force in India from August 1774. This Act made a radical change not only in the constitution of the Company, but also in its relations to the Crown. From this time forth, the Company should be regarded as being "almost entirely in the hands of the Ministers of the Crown, and only so far responsible to Parliament as were the Ministers themselves."* It was the first measure adopted by Parliament to establish an efficient government for India; and it was naturally exposed to fierce criticism. Burke, who afterwards became such a violent opponent of the Company, passionately denounced the Act as "a violation of the Charter of the Company, and a spoliation of private individuals."†

Passing of the Regulating Act (1773)

* *Early Chartered Companies*, p. 141.

† Contemporary opinion on the merits of the act was very varied—See A. M. Davies: *Warren Hastings*, p. 142.

The constitution of the Company in England was modified slightly by the Act. The Directors were to hold office for four years, instead of for one year; and only those shareholders who had held £ 1,000 of stock for twelve months at least were to vote in the Court of Proprietors. The object was to increase the sense of responsibility of those who were at the head of the Company's affairs and to check the corruption prevailing at the elections of the Directors.

Changes in the Constitution of the Company

The Governor of Bengal was to have authority over the other Presidencies, which were forbidden to make war or conclude treaties on their own account. He was to be styled the Governor-General of Bengal and was to be assisted by four Councillors. The first Governor-General and the first Councillors were named in the Act itself and were to hold office for five years. Afterwards their successors were to be chosen by the Company. In the Governor-General's Council, the vote of the majority was final; and only in the event of a tie, was the Governor-General given a casting vote.

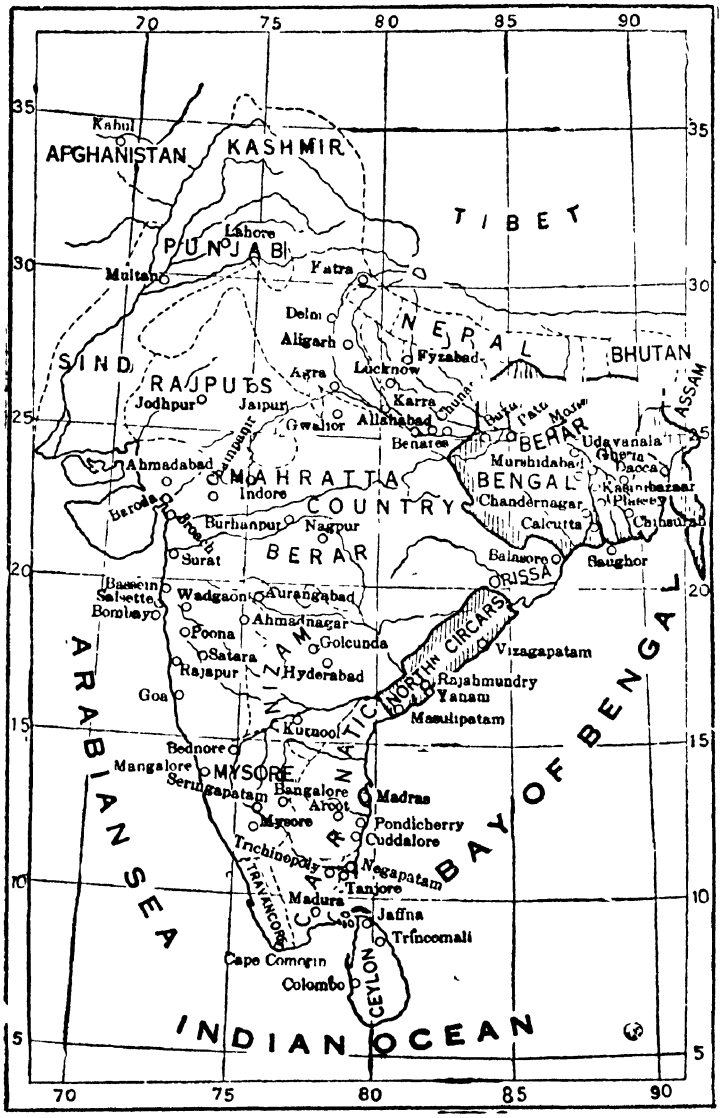
Governor-General of Bengal and Council

The Governor-General and Council were given power to make regulations, known as Ordinances, for the Company's dominions. These were not to conflict with the laws of England and were not to be valid until they were duly registered and published in the Supreme Court which was also created by the Act; and they might also be vetoed by the King-in-Council.

Ordinances

The Supreme Court consisting of a Chief Justice and three other Judges appointed by the Crown, was also created; it was empowered to exercise civil, criminal, admiralty and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Its jurisdiction was to extend to all *British* subjects residing in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; it made use of a British jury in the trial of all offences and was a court of record and a court of jail delivery. An appeal from it was to lie to the King-in-Council.

The Supreme Court



MAP OF INDIA

Showing the British possessions about 1765 A. D.
and the British Campaigns in Bengal and North India (1756-82)

Other Provisions

Other provisions of the Act prohibited the officials of the Company from receiving presents or indulging in trade. These aimed at the removal of the abuses to which public attention had been prominently directed in England and which had been the target of attack of both the parties.

Defects of the Act

The conflicts between Hastings who was nominated as the first Governor-General and retained his office till 1785 and his Councillors, and between the Council and the Supreme Court are directly traceable to the defective provisions of the Regulating Act. The Act was obscurely worded as to the nature and extent of the authority possessed by the Governor-General and his Council, the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the relation between the Governor-General's Council and the Court. The difficulties of smooth working between Hastings and his Councillors produced frequent friction. As regards the Supreme Court, its aim was to control the Company's officials and to prevent the oppression of the natives of the country. But there was no means of ascertaining how far the Court could question the legality of the orders of the Councillors and the Governor-General who were personally exempt from its coercive jurisdiction. The law that it administered was English law unsuited to Indian life and conditions; and it was not certain whether the court could exercise jurisdiction over the whole native population or only over those employed by the Company.*

Its good Effect

But in spite of these defects the Act should be valued, because it constituted the first step towards the bringing of India under the control of the British Parliament, as already pointed out. It was also the first attempt made to apply to Indians, regular principles of law and justice and to reform the abuses in the Indian services. It was on the whole "an honest attempt to deal with a difficult problem." The very defects of the Act brought about the impeachment of Hastings which deeply stirred English political consciousness.

* *Vide*, pp. 58-55 of C. P. Ilbert's *The Government of India* (3rd edition).

Section III. Hastings and the Administration

Hastings as Governor-General

Hastings was chosen Governor-General on account of his worth and capacity, though his views on the act were not cared for at all. But it was rumoured that Lord Clive himself would not have refused the appointment. Of the old Council, only Barwell was retained; and the three other Councillors, General Sir John Clavering, Colonel Monson and Philip Francis were sent out from England Clavering and Monson were soldiers and had little intellectual or administrative ability, but they were influential in Parliament and were supported by the Crown. Francis was of the Whig party; and his connection—sufficiently established—with the Junius Letters, has provoked the suggestion that the appointment was a reward for their discontinuance * From the very first the new Councillors set themselves defiantly against Hastings and his loyal supporter, Barwell They condemned almost everything done during his Governorship of Bengal, *viz.*, the transfer of Allahabad and Korah to the Nawab Vizier, the Rohilla War and the new revenue arrangements They cancelled the old settlement with Oudh and entered into a fresh agreement with the new Nawab Vizier, Asaf-ud-daula, who had lately succeeded his father, Shuja-ud-daula. They increased the subsidies due from him, and compelled him to cede to the Company the revenues of the Benares district, against the protest of Hastings They were not content with attacking the Governor-General's public policy and lent a willing ear to all sorts of stories and allegations

The Majority of the Council—Philip Francis

Hastings Powerless (1774 76)

* Junius or not, Francis was an expert in the art of scurrilous writing and malignant denunciation; he was ambitious and resolved to be supreme in Bengal, he absorbed "Clive's plans and prejudices on everything relative to the Government of India" and regarded himself as "the depository of justice, charged to correct great abuses" with which, in his mind, Hastings was intimately associated. He quickly attached, even before he reached Calcutta, Clavering and Monson to his side, effectively imbued them with his views and made them "obsequious imitators of his temper and pliant tools for his schemes." In fact he had "armed himself with three votes in the place of one."—See Weitzman's *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis* (1929), pp. 20-22.

against his personal character. Francis was very anxious to show to the Court of Directors that Hastings had acted in flagrant disobedience to their orders and only his recall could save Bengal; also he was endeavouring to convince the Ministry and Parliament how the Company's rule was oppressive and he was himself indispensable for ensuring the good government of the land.*

Nandakumar

Soon several charges were brought against Hastings by informers and enemies. Francis was quite at home in this atmosphere of scandals and charges. Maharaja Nandakumar now accused Hastings before the Council, of having accepted a large bribe from the widow of Mir Jafar and his own son, on their appointment to be the guardian and the *diwan*, respectively, of the Nawab's household. The majority, in spite of Hastings' refusal to submit to their jurisdiction, found that the charge was substantiated and ordered him to pay back the amount into the public treasury. Hastings charged Nandakumar with conspiracy and brought him to trial before the Supreme Court which had also been established. Nandakumar was now accused of forgery by a private enemy of his, tried before the Supreme Court by a jury of Englishmen and found guilty. He was sentenced to death and hanged (August 1775). His appeals for protection to the majority were unheeded by them. With Nandakumar's death, the charges against Hastings were dropped; and it was generally believed that he paid the penalty of death "nominally for forgery, but really for having dared to accuse the Governor-General."

His Trial and Execution (1775)

The Justice of the Measure

The idea that Hastings and the Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, who was an old school friend of his, deliberately schemed and destroyed Nandakumar by a judicial murder is regarded as baseless.† There is no solid proof forthcoming for this belief. But death-penalty was too serious

* Weitzman's *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis* (1929), p. 33.

† Sir James Stephen's *Nuncomar and Impey* tries to prove that the trial was fair, but does not say anything definite on the question of Nandakumar's guilt or on the applicability, in this instance, of the

a punishment for the crime of forgery and it was doubtful whether the Supreme Court had any jurisdiction over the Indian subjects of the Company.

Francis in a Minority (1776-80)

Francis found that Nandakumar hanged would serve his purpose to greater effect than Nandakumar alive; he suggested that Hastings conspired with Impey in getting a troublesome witness of his own guilt out of the way. The struggle of Hastings with the majority continued unbroken for over two years. In September 1776, Monson died, reducing the Council to four including the Governor-General; and the Governor-General now regained predominance, with the steady support of Barwell and his own casting vote. He at once reversed the evil measures of the majority and made his own vigour felt in the administration and in foreign policy. But in 1777, there came the "curious and confused incident of Hastings' conditional resignation."* Lord North and the Ministry at home did not like him; they attempted to secure his recall as early as 1775. This and his difficulties in his Council induced him to authorise his agent in England to place his resignation conditionally in the hands of the Directors. But this was before Monson's death which changed the situation entirely. The Directors had accepted the resignation and appointed one, Mr. Wheler, to succeed to the place of Clavering who would, under the Act, become the Governor-General. Hastings withdrew his original instructions two months after they had been sent; he now repudiated his resignation; and Clavering put himself in the wrong by trying to usurp his place in a violent and precipitate manner. There ensued a deadlock; and the question was referred to the Judges of the Supreme Court who decided in favour of Hastings con-

Hastings' Conditional Resignation

English law making forgery a capital crime. There is also the further question of the severity of the penalty for which the Judges seemed to have been wholly responsible. Macaulay's *Essay* would make of Impey a monster of iniquity and insist on the corrupt bargain alleged to have been struck between him and Hastings.

* See Davies : pp. 228 *et seq*, account of the Convulsion of Four Days.

tinuing as Governor-General. Shortly afterwards Clavering died (1777). Hastings thus contrived to secure his own dominance in the Council, in spite of Wheler supporting Francis. Hastings was continued in his office for a further term in 1779, and Sir Eyre Coote who succeeded Clavering as the Commander-in-Chief, would not support Francis, though Hastings often found him intractable and difficult. All these reverses so worked upon Francis that he became miserable. After the incident of the famous duel between the two, Francis finally retired from India in November 1780.* For the rest of his term of office, Hastings had no great difficulty from his Councillors, although towards the end they opposed him on certain questions. It must be admitted, however, that Hastings disapproved of his colleagues in proportion that they disagreed with him.

Francis returns to England (1780)

The turn of the tide in the Council in favour of Hastings was quickly followed by his victory over the Supreme Court also In the first place, the Court claimed jurisdiction over everyone in the Provinces and refused to recognise any sovereignty as residing in the titular Nawab. Hastings and his Council denied this power to the Court and declared that the zamindars were not British subjects and continued to be the subjects of the Nawab. The Court had jurisdiction over British subjects; but the words were not carefully defined and might be interpreted to comprehend, in one sense, the whole population of Bengal, in another sense, to mean no more than born Britishers, and in a third sense to denote only the inhabitants of Calcutta, the Presidency town. The differences arose over the question whether the Court had jurisdiction over the zamindars, over the English and

Conflict between the Council and the Supreme Court

* Hastings had indeed made one last attempt at an understanding with Francis, on the subject of the operations of the Maratha war then proceeding. When he accused Francis of violating the so-called compact, the duel followed. Hastings deliberately accused Francis of lack of truth and honour. After his mortification in the duel, Francis retired to England, baffled in both his hopes, *viz.*, the humiliation of Hastings and the securing for himself of the Governor-General's position. In England he continued is campaign against Hastings.

native officials of the Company employed in revenue collection for oppressive acts done by them and over actions preferred against the judicial officers of the Company for acts done in their official capacity. Frequent collisions occurred between the officers of the Supreme Court and the officers of the revenue and other departments.

Grounds of Dispute

Hastings worked out a plan in 1776 for amalgamating the Supreme Court and the Company's *Sadar* Courts. It was wrecked by the majority; and with its failure, the gulf between the Court and the Council widened. The trouble culminated in two famous cases. In the Patna Case, the Supreme Court claimed the right to try actions against the Indian judicial servants of the Company. In the more famous Cossijurah Case, the point was whether the Supreme Court had the right of jurisdiction over every inhabitant of the provinces and particularly over the zamindars. The Court became very unpopular, but thought it was its duty to protect the people against the oppressions of the European magistrates and their native agents.*

Hastings solves the Difficulty (1780)

Hastings solved the whole difficulty by making Impey Judge of the *Sadar Diwani Adalat* and thus giving him control over the country courts. This plan had two advantages; it avoided friction between the executive and the judiciary; and it made the Sadar Court effective, instead of being shadowy as it was. But it aroused violent opposition in England, where it was believed that Impey had been bribed by Hastings into complaisance and he had made the Supreme Court dependent on the Company's officials whose actions it was intended to supervise. It led to Impey's recall and impeachment. In 1781, a Parliamentary inquiry was held into the administration of justice in Bengal; and an Amending Act

* The troubles centred round two famous cases, known as the Patna case (1777-79) and the Kasijora case (1779-80). Sir James Stephen holds that the Supreme Court had more justification on its side than the Council. (See *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, pp. 243-4). Also E. B. Impey's *Memoirs of Sir Elijah Impey.*

was passed which settled the points at dispute between the Court and the Council, substantially in favour of the latter.

Amending Act of 1781

The Governor-General and Council were not to be subject to the Supreme Court's jurisdiction for any act done by them in their public capacity. The Court was to have no jurisdiction in matters of revenue or revenue collection according to the usages of the people. No Indian was to be tried by the Court by reason of his being a land-holder or revenue-farmer; and lastly, all cases concerning Englishmen were to be tried by it; also it was to have jurisdiction over all the inhabitants of Calcutta; but Hindu and Muhammadan law was to be applied in all private civil causes. Thus the Council gained its points; and the Court lost its claims, largely on account of the harshness and complexity of its procedure which created a general impression of its tyrannous attitude towards litigants and the public.

Though continually thwarted by his Council during all these years, Hastings continued to plod on at the work of improving the administration The revenue arrangements that he had at first introduced did not prove a success. The revenue demands had been fixed too high; many zamindars had failed to pay; and their estates had to be sold by auction

Further Revenue Reforms

The theory was that property in the land vested in the state, the zamindar was not a permanent hereditary official and the Company, in its capacity as the Diwan, had the right to let out estates on lease. On the other side, the claim of the zamindar rested on two assumptions; "either he was a permanent official with an hereditary right to collect the revenue of the state, or he possessed a proprietary right in the soil."* Hastings proposed that the estates should be sold at auction or farmed out at leases and the lessees should be allowed settlements for life. The majority in the Council recommended a permanent settlement of the revenue. But the Directors rejected both the proposals. Hastings tried to modify the rigour

* Ascoli: *Early Revenue History of Bengal and the Fifth Report*, p. 34

of the system of selling the estates of the defaulting *zamindars* by auction. The situation was however only rendered worse by adopting annual settlements with the *zamindars* and by inquiring into the resources of each estate. The revenue demand declined to some extent; but in spite of this fact, arrears continued to increase *

The Arrangements of 1781

In 1781, drastic reforms were introduced The Committee of Revenue at Calcutta was placed in full control Provincial Councils were abolished; and Collectors were appointed over the various districts. The whole revenue administration was centralised; Collectors were only to be the instruments of collecting the revenue. Settlements were made with the *zamindars* for varying periods not exceeding three years; and in 1784 annual settlements were once more resorted to.

Other Administrative Measures

Hastings also improved, as was seen above, the Company's courts. District judicial officers, apart from the Collectors, were appointed to the civil courts in the *mofussil;* and they were given power as magistrates to apprehend *dacoits* and other offenders Criminal courts continued to be in the hands of Indian judges; but greater care was taken to check their work. The Revenue Collectors of the districts continued to have charge of all the revenue suits.

* "From 1765 to 1786, the policy of the Council had continued to fluctuate. At the outset they had put their trust in a time-worn, effete and corrupt system, bequeathed by the decadent Mughal power..... The efforts at gaining local knowledge, first by European Supervisors, then by native *Amins*—both efforts being failures—had led the Council to abandon any effort in that direction, and to hope that a central authority aloof from the corruption of the country, would be able, almost unaided, to control an unknown and antiquated system." *Ibid*, p. 36. The period, however, saw some progress in the attainment of solid knowledge of land revenue administration by the men on the spot. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, p. 432.

Hastings was also a zealous patron of learning and arts. Under his auspices, Major Rennell and a band of able surveyors carried on a wide and scientific survey of all the Bengal and Hindustan country, which extended later even to Burma and Tartary. In the last year of his rule, he helped to found the Asiatic Society of Bengal, whose first President, Sir William Jones, a Judge of the Supreme Court, was the first noted Englishman to unfold to the West the priceless treasures of Sanskrit and Persian learning.* As seen above, he carried out a codification of Hindu Law; and he encouraged scholars like Halhed, Anderson and Hamilton to translate and systematise the chief sources of Hindu and Muhammadan Law. He patronised the translation of the *Ain-i-Akbari* by Gladwin, one of the earliest English Orientalists; and he established, largely at his own expense, a College (the Calcutta *Madrassa*) for promoting learning among the Muhammadan youth of the Presidency. He greatly interested himself in painting and art and also in the work of civilising and humanising the wild tribes living on the borders of Bengal, as in Bhagalpur where much good work was done by a young official, Cleveland by name. We saw how he sent a mission to Bhutan and Tibet with a view to the opening of trade relations with those regions.

Hastings, a Patron of Learning and Art

SECTION IV

THE MARATHAS AND THEIR FIRST WAR WITH THE ENGLISH

In spite of his desire to avoid further wars and complications, the Bombay Government committed Hastings to a war with the Maratha power. The Marathas had rapidly recovered from the effects of their disastrous defeat at Panipat. Their new Peishwa, Madhava Rao I (1761-72), though young and kept for some years under control by his uncle, the ill-starred Raghunatha Rao, quickly asserted his power and showed

The 4th Peishwa Madhava Rao I (1761-72)

* *Life and Works of Sir W. Jones—ed.* by Lord Teignmarth (18 volumes.)

himself to be a ruler of capacity. He broke free from the restraint of his unpopular uncle who thereupon joined the Nizam and advanced upon Poona with an army of Maratha and Mughal troops. Madhava Rao submitted to his uncle in order to save himself at this crisis and to preserve the integrity of the Maratha state (1763).

Opposition of Raghunatha Rao and Janoji Bhonsle

Raghunatha Rao's dominance and the violent disposition of his wife, Anandi Bai, who was ever his evil genius, soon led to further bickerings among the Maratha confederate chiefs and to the revival of quarrels between the Peishwa and his uncle. Janoji Bhonsle of Berar made war upon the Peishwa; and the latter allied himself with his hereditary enemy, the Nizam, to punish the Bhonsle (1766). Malhar Rao Holkar, the founder of the Indore State, who was a staunch adherent of the Peishwa, died at this time. His state passed under the rule of his capable and pious daughter-in-law, Ahalya Bai, and her military commander, Tukoji Rao This diminished the support that the Holkar State gave to the Peishwa; and it also gave Mahadji Sindhia, the rival of the Holkar, a great ascendancy at Poona and in the politics of Northern India.

Madhava Rao had taken into his service in 1763, Balaji Janardhan, better known as Nana Phadnavis, from the office of *Phadnavis* or chief accountant, which he occupied. Nana Phadnavis was opposed to Raghunatha Rao's dominance; and under his inspiration the Peishwa was strengthened in his attempt to overcome the opposition of his uncle and Janoji Bhonsle. Hyder Ali of Mysore had extended his northern frontier to the Krishna river and driven the Marathas beyond Dharwar. Madhava Rao had thus to lead an expedition against Mysore in 1764; but though he won, he had to grant a most favourable peace to the enemy, on account of his uncle's secret dealings. Again, two years later, he marched against Hyder Ali who was simultaneously attacked by the combined troops of Nizam

Nana Phadnavis

The first and second Expeditions against Hyder Ali (1764-7)

Ali and the English. Hyder bought off the Marathas with a heavy sum of money and induced the fickle Nizam to desert the English and come over to his side (1767), as we saw in connection with the First Mysore War.

Maratha Invasion of Hindusthan

Madhava Rao sent an army across the Chambal into Hindustan to operate against the Rajputs, the Jats and the Rohillas. Mahadji Sindia who accompanied this army, was confirmed by the Peishwa in his power, although his right to rule was not quite legal He was very capable and courageous and had been severely wounded at Panipat from which disaster he had escaped along with Nana Phadnavis He was now the only surviving son of Ranoji Sindia, Jayappa and other brothers of his having died. Raghunatha Rao disliked him and tried to oust him from the succession But the Peishwa stood firmly by him

Mahadji Sindia restores Shah Alam to the Delhi Throne (1771)

Mahadji Sindia and Tukoji Rao Holkar levied tribute from the Rajput princes and from the Jats of Bharatpur Mahadji wanted to harry the Rohilla country in revenge for Panipat; he crossed the Jumna, drove the Rohillas across the Ganges and soon overawed the whole Doab. He now conceived the idea of inducing Shah Alam to leave Allahabad and exchange English for Maratha protection In December 1771, the poor Emperor, escorted by a large Maratha army, entered Delhi. Sindia pressed on the Emperor the necessity of conquering Rohilkhand, advanced into the region with a powerful army in 1772, drove the chiefs to the hills and plundered the people The Emperor soon found himself a prisoner in Maratha hands and bitterly regretted his abandonment of English protection and the fort of Allahabad.

The Death of Madhava Rao (1772)

Madhava Rao who had meanwhile marched south to drive back Hyder Ali, was forced by illness to abandon the expedition and to return to Poona (1770). He died of consumption two years later, shortening a life "so precious to his people, by his arduous and un-

ceasing toil." His death swept away "the only barrier which restrained the floods of political intrigue"*

The new Peishwa was Narayana Rao, the seventeen-year-old brother of Madhava Rao, who had died childless. He was heedless and somewhat lacking in courage; Raghunatha Rao fretted at his restraint, having been suspected of treachery and put under confinement by the Peishwa; his wife, Anandi Bai, moved a deep-laid scheme to destroy Narayana Rao and put her husband on the throne A number of discontented nobles and captains abetted her and secured her object by effecting the brutal murder of the young Peishwa in the very presence of Raghunatha Rao† in the palace at Poona Raghunatha Rao strove hard to convince the people of his innocence of the crime, but the idea that the guilt was his rapidly gained ground On the tenth day after the death of Narayana Rao, Nana Phadnavis and eleven others, known in history as the *Barabhai* or twelve brothers, bound themselves by a solemn oath to prevent Raghunatha Rao from becoming the Peishwa. The latter, however, secured his own recognition by the nominal Raja at Satara and began to rule When he was away fighting against the Nizam, who, as usual, had joined the Bhonsle ruler of Berar and against Hyder who tried to recover from the Marathas his lost possessions, he received news of the imminent birth of a posthumus child to the late

Peishwa Narayana Rao (1772-73)

Raghunatha Rao's Usurpation and the Opposition Regency Council

* It had been truly said that the battle of Panipat was not more fatal to the solidarity of the Maratha empire than the early death of Madhava Rao. He was a fine and just ruler and fought boldly and vigorously against the growing corruption and intrigue of Maratha politics. His death undermined what little was left of the foundations of the Maratha greatness laid by Sivaji. See Grant-Duff. *A History of the Mahrattas*, Ch. XXIII; and Kincaid and Parasnis: *A History of the Maratha People*, Vol. III, Chap. LVI.—Selections from *The Peshwa Daftar*, No. 37

† Raghunatha Rao pretended that he was entirely guiltless in the matter and the Peishwa was the victim of a military tumult. Anandi Bai is said to have changed the word (*darave*) (= seize) into *marave* (= kill) in the paper her husband wrote, promising to distribute a reward among the infantry, provided they seized Narayana Rao. He was fully cognisant of the conspiracy, but possibly aimed at the imprisonment of his nephew, whose murder was due to the sinister intervention of Anandi Bai.

Peishwa and hurried back to Poona. Gangabai,* the widow of Narayana Rao, had been safely lodged in Purandhar fort as she was enceinte and a son was born to her in April 1774. Immediately, the *Barabhai* confederates cleverly formed themselves into a Council of Regency for the child whom they proclaimed to be the rightful Peishwa. They had taken the precaution to put Raghunatha Rao's adherents out of the way; he lost heart and the support of Holkar and Sindia on whom he relied. He sought the support of the Gaekwar of Baroda and turned to the Bombay Government for assistance. From now (1775) Raghunatha Rao became "a mere pawn in the complicated intrigues and consequent struggles, in which the Maratha leaders gradually played more and more for their own individual aggrandisement and but little for the cause of the Maratha state, thus facilitating the ultimate supremacy of the English."

The English and Raghunatha Rao

The Bombay Government had offered in 1774 to assist Raghunatha Rao on condition that, on becoming Peishwa, he should cede Bassein, Salsette and the neighbouring islands to the English. But he refused to cede Bassein which was the scene of the great victory of his uncle, Chimnaji Appa over the Portuguese. Shortly afterwards when the English heard that a Portuguese force was preparing to capture Salsette, they took the offensive in their own hands, and reduced the island of Salsette. Raghunatha Rao accepted the fact, having been defeated by Hari Phadke, the general of the Regency Council; and he now entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the English and agreed to cede Salsette and Bassein to them in return for a contingent of 3,000 men including Europeans (March 1775). This Treaty of Surat, as it is called, was followed by an English victory over the army of the Poona Regency Council and by the adhesion of some Maratha chiefs to the side of Raghunatha Rao.

Treaty of Surat (1775)

* Ganga Bai had proposed to become *sati* ; but Anandi Bai, who was conscious of her guilt, feared the effect of a *sati's* curse and had her confined in a room till her husband's funeral was complete. Thus she herself placed a trump card in her enemies' hands, as Ganga Bai was pregnant.

Meanwhile the Supreme Council at Calcutta resented the conclusion by the Bombay Government of the Treaty of Surat without their permission, declared it invalid and condemned the war with the Poona Regency as being "impolitic, dangerous, unauthorised and unjust." Hastings himself, though he did not want a Maratha war on his hands just now, saw that it was too late for the English to draw back and the only honourable course was to fight to the end.* But the majority were against him, quashed the Treaty of Surat and sent an agent to negotiate with Nana Phadnavis, thus belittling the authority and lowering the prestige of the Bombay Government in the eyes of the Marathas. They thus played into the hands of the Maratha Regency and concluded the Treaty of Purandhar (1776) by which the English were to give up the cause of Raghunatha Rao and support the Regency in return for the retention of Salsette and a money payment. The Bombay Government was furious that its treaty should have been thus set aside; and the luckless Raghunatha Rao who could not understand English vacillation, declared that he would carry on the struggle with his own resources and appealed for support to Mahadji Sindia, but without avail. Meanwhile despatches arrived from the Court of Directors approving the Treaty of Surat and directing that Salsette should be retained by the English. The Bombay Government was thus greatly elated.

The Treaty of Purandhar (1776)

Early in 1777, a French adventurer, St Lubin, who pretended to be an emissary of King Louis XV, was received with great honour at Poona. The rumour of a French intrigue with the Maratha government put up all Englishmen against the Poona Regency; England was then in the thick of her struggle with the revolted American Colonies to whom the French were about to render help. Nana Phadnavis knew the worthlessness of the promise of French support, but resolved to use this as a further weapon

Attitude of Nana Phadnavis

* See pp xv and xvi of the Introduction of Forrest's *Selections from the Sate Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat* (1885).

in his own hands. The Bombay Government were more than ever confident of the wisdom of their own action and demanded the instant support of Raghunatha Rao. Now news arrived of an open war between England and France. There were serious quarrels in the Poona Council. There was an abortive conspiracy to get rid of Nana Phadnavis who was restored to power and still coquetted with St. Lubin. Raghunatha Rao renewed his offers; and the Bombay Government feared Nana Phadnavis's designs on Salsette. They decided that Raghunatha Rao should be installed at Poona as regent for the baby Peishwa. They sent an army which marched along with Raghunatha Rao on Poona. Nana Phadnavis had, however, made extensive preparations, secured the support of Holkar and Sindia and arranged to resist all attempts of the Calcutta Government to send reinforcements overland from Bengal. He sent a very strong army against the invaders, harried the villages that lay on the road to Poona and so depressed the spirit of the English army which surrendered at Wadgaon to the enemy Raghunatha Rao grasped the situation and deserted to Sindia's camp. The English agreed to give up Salsette and all that they got by treaties since 1773 and to countermand the advance of troops from Bengal. For long afterwards the English in Bombay did not recover the prestige they had lost by this disgraceful convention (January 1779).

War begins

Convention of Wadgaon (1779)

Hastings had already taken energetic steps and sent overland an expedition under General Goddard which had got as far as Burhanpur on the Tapti when news of Wadgaon reached it. Hastings at once repudiated the convention, though he desired that the promise made to the Sindia should be kept up. Goddard made a rapid march to Surat in order to prevent any further reverse. The Bombay Government repudiated the convention as having been unauthorised by it. Meanwhile Sindia, who had mediated for the English at Wadgaon and aimed at becoming the arbiter between Nana Phadnavis and the English, allowed Raghuna-

Hastings comes to the Rescue

tha Rao to escape to Broach. Nana Phadnavis, however, entered into an alliance with Hyder Ali and Nizam Ali and insisted that both Raghunatha Rao and Salsette should be given up to him as a preliminary to further negotiations; and thus war began again.

Goddard's Operations in Gujarat

Goddard resolved to conduct operations in Gujarat rather than in Maharashtra, as Surat would serve as a good base of operations for the English. He took Ahmedabad by storm (1780) and drove away the armies of Sindia and Holkar which had advanced to repulse him. The crafty Sindia refused a decisive issue, and wished to draw Goddard farther and farther from his base. It has been already told how, at this time Hyder Ali, to whom Nana Phadnavis agreed to cede the lands lying between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra, made a very formidable attack on the English in Madras and descended on the Carnatic (Second Mysore War). The Nizam also supported him; and a French fleet was expected on the east coast.

Popham's Capture of Gwalior (1780)

Hastings extricated English fortunes from out of these difficulties. Finding that a diversion in Central India would draw both Sindia and Holkar from Gujarat, he despatched a force under Captain Popham from Bengal to support the Rana of Gohad who now declared himself to be independent of the Peishwa. Popham took, by a brilliant escalade, the strong fortress of Gwalior which was considered impregnable. This feat greatly enhanced the prestige of the English; and the Sindia, being dismayed at its loss, abandoned the confederacy and hurried into Malwa. The Bhonsle Raja of Berar who was from the first half-hearted in his support of Nana Phadnavis and who had not attacked Bengal as he was asked to do, was now bought off by Hastings and induced to withdraw his forces. Goddard now captured Bassein which was a serious blow to Nana Phadnavis and created as much consternation as that caused by the capture of Gwalior; he now

English secure Bassein

isolated the Gaekwar and prevented his union with the Poona government which was not helped by the Nizam in any active manner.

Hastings proceeded to take advantage of the isolation of Nana Phadnavis. He had already secured the Bhonsle. Now Sindia, sobered by the loss of Gwalior, came to be convinced that his real advantage lay in coming to terms with the English and signed a treaty with them (1781). By this he agreed to effect a peace between the Poona Council and the English and to stand guarantee for its observance. Hastings was particularly anxious that the Marathas should be induced to attack Hyder Ali whose operations in the Carnatic were very fierce In May 1782. the Treaty of Salbai was signed. All the conquests made by the English were to be restored to the Marathas Raghunatha Rao was to be pensioned off; Sindia was to be given Broach in consideration of his services and generosity to the English at Wadgaon The English retained Salsette and secured the independence of the Gaekwar. This treaty formed a turning-point in the history of the English in India and put the English relations with the Marathas on an entirely new basis. It secured peace with their confederacy for twenty years and established "the dominance of the British as the controlling factor in Indian politics." It was a great achievement of Hastings' genius and ability in tiding over a serious crisis and formed the turning-point in the career of Mahadji Sindia who now broke away completely from his vassalage to Poona and the Peishwa and Nana Phadnavis.*

Isolation of Nana Phadnavis

The Treaty of Salbai (1782)

and its Effect

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, pp. 271-2. The subsequent rise of the English in 1818 to the position of the paramount power was an inevitable result of the position gained by the Treaty of Salbai.

SECTION V. THE CLOSE OF HASTINGS' RULE—HIS IMPEACHMENT

The years 1780 and 1781 were the most troublesome for Hastings. With Hyder Ali ravaging the Carnatic, peace not yet within sight with the Marathas, and French fleets cruising in the Bay, Hastings found his hands full To add to these, there was the never-ceasing malignity of Francis, who retired from India at the end of 1780 with a great grudge against the Governor-General and the Chief Justice. Against the former, he had the "crowning mortification of a wound received in a duel of his own provoking" Hastings continued to be persecuted by Francis even in England; the latter fanned the flame of public indignation against Hastings' administration, captured the press and a section of the Court of Directors in his own favour. Two Parliamentary Committees of Inquiry which had been formed were also influenced by him to gather evidence against the Governor-General. When, in 1782, Lord North's Ministry fell and was succeeded by the Rockingham-Shelburne Ministry, Burke who controlled Rockingham insisted on active measures being pursued against Hastings. The reports of the Select Committees were written by Burke with the assistance of Francis; and a demand was made for a complete change in the constitution of the Company and for the recall of Impey. This was followed by a war of pamphlets. The dealings of Hastings with Chait Singh in 1781, news of which reached England, were seized upon as additional material for damning him At the end of 1782, both Fox and Burke denounced Hastings in open Parliament; and a Bill was planned for the removal of Hastings and the succession of Lord Cornwallis who had rank and influence. The Bill provided also for the settlement of the land-revenue with the zamindars and pledged the Company to a policy of non-intervention. But before the Bill could be passed in Parliament, the Shelburne Ministry had been forced out of office on the question of peace with America and replaced by the Coalition Ministry of Fox and North (March 1783).

Persecution of Hastings in England

Plan to dismiss him

In spite of all these quick changes in the Ministry, "the Fox-Burke influence inspired by Francis, dominated them all" News of the conclusion of the Treaty of Salbai and Hastings' own "Narrative of Events at Benares" which was now published by his agent, turned public opinion to some extent in his favour; and the Court of Proprietors who had been consistently his staunch supporters, voted him their "thanks for his long and invaluable services;" and he was deemed by one partisan to be "the Chatham of the East" But in spite of this turn in the tide, Fox, urged on by Burke and Francis, presented in Parliament his India Bills in November 1783, and prefaced them with a long speech on Indian mis-government

Fox's India Bills 1783)

Fox had been set in motion by Burke who had been in turn "wound up to a dangerous pitch by Francis" The main bill adopted the administrative system sketched by Francis and advocated non-intervention, deprecating schemes of conquest and extension of dominion It demanded the complete annihilation of the Company's power and proposed to abolish the Courts of Proprietors and Directors and to replace them by two bodies of Commissioners One of these was to control the commercial affairs of the Company; the other which was the more important, was to take charge of all political affairs, including the appointment and dismissal of all officials from the Governor-General downwards They were named in the Bill itself and were to hold office by Parliamentary appointment for four years. Herein was seen the fatal weakness of the Bill The enemies of Fox asserted that he desired to transfer the entire patronage of the Company into the hands of the Ministry; and such patronage could enable the Ministers to command large Parliamentary majorities and keep themselves indefinitely in power. Burke supported the Bill in a brilliant speech in which he acknowledged his indebtedness to Francis for his knowledge of Indian affairs.* Had the Bill passed, the Coalition Ministry, unpopular as it was and bitterly opposed

Their real Object

* "This man, whose deep reach of thought, whose large legislative conceptions and whose grand plans of policy, make the most shining parts of our reports, from whence we have learned all our lessons, if we have learned any good ones.....has had no other reward and no other

by the King, might have retained power almost indefinitely. In spite of the vehement opposition of the Directors, the eloquence of Burke and the influence of Fox enabled the Bill to pass through the Commons easily. It would have passed the Lords also and become law, but for the open hostility of the King who contrived to have it thrown out through his exertions. This defeat sealed the fate of the Ministry which was immediately dismissed by the King. For the first time in the annals of Parliament, Indian affairs had deeply and radically affected the fate of Government. The defeated ministers raged against Hastings as one of the causes of their overthrow.

The Defeat of the Bills

The Ministry of the Younger Pitt which came into office, included a number of men professing friendship for Hastings. It was named by Lord Gower as "the Hastings Administration," while the expelled Coalition was more than ever violent against the Governor-General. A war of pamphlets ensued; and Francis continued vindictive as ever, urging the need for a new system of administration for India. Pitt who had dissolved Parliament and come in with a decided majority, brought in his famous India Bill (August 1784) which was easily passed by Parliament and became law. Its effect and significance came to be felt with the departure of Hastings from India. This was the situation in England at the close of Hastings' rule in India.

Accession of the Pitt Ministry

Pitt's India Bill passed (Aug. 1784)

To revert to India:—The Company's treasury had been seriously drained by the Maratha War and by the struggle with Hyder Ali. Hastings was thus forced to desperate expedients for raising money somehow; among other resources, he turned to Raja Chait Singh of Benares. Chait Singh had succeeded his father, Balwant Singh, in the Benares *Raj* which was a fief under the Nawab

Hastings' Demands on Chait Singh of Benares

distinction but that *inward shine of the soul* which a good conscience can always bestow on itself."—P. 157 of Weitzman's *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis.*

Vizier of Oudh originally, but transferred to the Company by treaty. On the outbreak of the Maratha War in 1778, Hastings demanded from Chait Singh a special sum of 5 lakhs of rupees in addition to the regular tribute due from him. The same demand was made and got from the Raja for the next two years. The Raja pleaded that his treaty with the English exempted him from all contributions beyond his normal tribute His plea was not heeded; troops were ordered to march into his territory; and a new demand was made upon him in 1780, that he should provide the Company with 2,000 cavalry, or at least 1,000 which he said, he was ready to send, but was not accepted by Hastings The latter now resolved to inflict on Chait Singh an immense fine of 50 lakhs for his contumacy.* The Raja made an abject submission when Hastings proceeded to Benares to enforce his demand, and he was put under arrest. The Raja's troops, however, rose in insurrection and killed some English sepoys with their officers. Chait Singh, afraid of being further involved, escaped in the confusion from prison; and Hastings was in great danger and fled for safety to Chunar. He displayed an admirable presence of mind, gathered all available troops and had the insurrection promptly quelled. Chait Singh pleaded his innocence but was hunted out; and Hastings proclaimed a nephew of his as the new ruler and increased the tribute due from him.

Hastings at Benares (1781)—Insurrection

The Calcutta Council defended Hastings' precipitate action; but the whole incident was later made a count in the impeachment. The charge was on the ground that Chait Singh was an independent prince and not a zamindar and not accountable to the Company. Hastings treated him as a zamindar, though his position was defective in one point. It was also maintained that Chait Singh had got a condition in the treaty of 1775 that no higher contribution would be levied from him. Hastings' treatment of him was "merciless and vin-

The Merits of the Case

* See Hastings' *A Narrative of the Insurrection which happened in the Zamindary of Benares* (1782)—in which he says—"I was resolved to draw from his (Chait Singh's) guilt, the means of relief to the Company's distresses." Hastings had a scheme for securing the revenues and bettering the administration of Benares.

dictive;" and the heavy fine imposed on him could only be justified on the ground that the political situation demanded it. Benares took a long time to recover from the exactions and the effects of the rising; and this fact is in itself a serious indictment on Hastings' action *

Hastings and the Nawab Vizier

Having failed in making Chait Singh pay a large sum, Hastings had to seek out some other source of supply. The Nawab Vizier, Asaf-ud-daula, owed the Company a crore and a half of rupees and was pressed for payment He now met Hastings at Chunar and pleaded that his finances were quite exhausted and he could not even maintain the English troops at his capital, as stipulated by treaty. Unlike his father, he was indolent and extravagant and under the influence of worthless favourites Hastings was convinced that the Nawab Vizier was in a bad way. He demanded a complete change of the system of administration At the time of his accession, Asaf-ud-daula had been compelled by the majority in the Council to enter into a new treaty by which he was to pay a heavier sum for the maintenance of the English troops in his service; and also he was not to touch a large quantity of treasure amounting to nearly two crores of rupees which had been accumulated by his father and which was now in the possession of the Begams, *viz.*, the mother and widow of Shuja-ud-daula. The Begams also enjoyed large *jaghirs* and claimed all the properties in their possession under a will which was never produced Asaf-ud-daula claimed that the properties were unjustly withheld from him. His mother had given him a large sum on condition that he and the Company guaranteed that no more sum should be demanded from her; and the guarantee was given (1775).

The Begams of Oudh

The Treaty of Chunar (1781)

In 1781, the Nawab Vizier declared to Hastings that, since he was deprived of the treasure that was rightfully his, he had no means of discharging his debts; and the treasure of the Begams was really state-money from which state-debts ought to be paid. Hastings now made a new

* Torrens: *Empire in Asia* (1872), p. 136.

treaty with the Nawab Vizier by which the latter agreed to reform his administration and his army, to resume the *jaghirs* held by worthless favourites and to practise strict economy under the direction of the British Resident. In return, Hastings agreed to the proposal of the Nawab Vizier that he might be allowed to resume the estates and seize the treasure of the Begams. The Company's protection being thus withdrawn from the Begams, the Nawab was free to despoil them. But he now shrank from "carrying out against his mother and grandmother an agreement which affected his favourites also." Hastings sternly ordered the Resident to see that the Nawab did not halt or shrink from taking strong measures against the Begams. Their forces were disarmed; their *jaghirs* were resumed; and their palace was blockaded by English troops until they submitted. After some resistance, the treasure was given up to the Nawab by the eunuch captains of the Begams. Out of it and out of the revenues of the *jaghirs* that were resumed, the Nawab's debt to the Company was paid. The Begams were not molested, and their agents were not unduly pressed, at least not more severely than the practice of the times allowed.

The Begams forced to give up their Treasure

Hastings was really responsible for what was done; the Nawab and the Resident were only reluctant instruments for enforcing his will.* Hastings justified his spoliation of the Begams by stating that they had supported the rising of Chait Singh and had even fomented a rebellion against the Nawab Vizier.† But the whole conduct of the Governor-General was vitiated by the fact that he was offered and accepted a bribe of ten lakhs from the Nawab Vizier in

The Nature of the Transaction

* The theory will not be sustainable in the light of the records that Hastings was not responsible for what his agents were doing at Fyzabad and that the latter were merely carrying out the wishes of the Nawab. See *Cambridge History*, Vol. V, pp. 800-1. An attempt is made by Davies to exonerate Hastings from all blame in this matter. See his *Warren Hastings*, pp. 314-16.

† The evidence for this rests mainly upon the affidavits taken by Impey at Lucknow, in an injudicious attempt to support the Governor-General. This was used later in the defence of Hastings.

1781; and he employed the sum in the Company's service, and later reported it to the Directors and requested them to make a present of it to himself. The whole transaction, in spite of the circumstances which impelled on Hastings to it was "a sordid, shabby and sorry business," both for the Governor-General and for Oudh.

Hastings and Faizullah Khan

In yet another case, Hastings interfered with not good results. Faizullah Khan of Rampur, the only Rohilla chief that was left in possession of territory, had governed his state well and had solicited and got a special treaty with the English. He was required in 1780 to furnish 5,000 horse for the general defence of the frontiers of the Nawab's and English dominions. When Faizullah offered a lesser number of troops, Hastings got angry with him and agreed to the Nawab Vizier's proposal to resume his *jaghir*. Faizullah was saved from the loss of his estate, as Hastings fortunately postponed for a time the execution of his order. And the Court of Directors condemned the whole transaction; and Rampur was secured permanently to Faizullah and his successors.

His Attempts at Reform in Oudh and Benares

The last acts of Hastings were devoted to attempts at the reconstruction of the administration in Benares and Oudh. He himself visited Lucknow in 1784, re-adjusted the finances of the state and re-stored the *jaghirs* to the Begams, who quickly became reconciled to him. But no permanent improvement in the govern-ment was effected. In Benares, Hastings suggested a scheme for securing the revenues and the rights of the ryots and for removing worthless officials; but nothing came of it. He even wanted to interfere in the politics of the distracted Mughal court at Delhi, but fortunately dropped the idea, though Shah Alam would have been only too glad to come again under British protection.

Hastings' Departure from India (1785)

Hastings had been contemplating for some time retirement from office. The violent opposition manifested by the Shelburne and the Coalition Ministries had indeed been followed by the decidedly friendly ministry of Pitt and by a more kindly attitude from the Court of Directors. Impey was recalled in 1783 And early in the next year, Mrs Hastings, 'his beloved Marian,' whom he had married a few years before in India, and who was "the very pole-star of his being" and in Gleig's words, "his friend, his confidant, his solace and his supreme delight," also left for home. Hastings would have preferred to accompany her; but the uncompleted negotiations with Tipu Sultan, the affairs of Oudh which demanded a personal visit from him to Lucknow and an impending famine in Upper India which threatened Bengal, made him stay on till the beginning of 1785 When news of Pitt's India Bill reached him, he was convinced that his resignation was "expected and desired" He left Calcutta on the 1st February 1785, amidst the farewell cheers of the men who had served him long and devotedly, and was succeeded in office by Sir John Macpherson, senior Member of Council, who had first been in service in Madras and under the Nawab of Arcot with whom he had intrigued and later sat in Parliament and who acted as Governor-General for nearly two years.

His Reception in England

Dundas, the new Minister for India under Pitt's Bill, received Hastings kindly; and the latter gave him the 'Memorial on the State of India' which he had drawn up during the voyage and is regarded as a valuable document. Pitt was cold towards him; and Burke openly threatened an impeachment; and the opposition gathered in volume and intensity * The preliminaries of the impeachment began in 1786 ,and the trial lasted more than seven years. It was grounded on 22 charges of which the Rohilla War, the trial and execution of Nandakumar, the treatment of the Nawab

The Impeachment

* " Burke, Fox, Dundas, Sheridan—all the host of brilliant orator arrayed against Hastings, were the actors in a stupendous dramas conceived by the tortured brain of Philip Francis."—Weitzman, p. 171.

of Bengal, the affair of Chait Singh and the affair of the Begams were prominent A committee of 19 Managers headed by Burke himself was appointed by the Commons to conduct the trial of Hastings before the Lords; and they were aided in all possible ways by Francis In 1788, Impey was also accused before the Commons on various charges including the murder of Nandakumar, but was quickly acquitted after a vigorous defence The defence of Hastings was conducted by eminent lawyers; and the accusers were merely Parliamentary orators and debators who put forward "an absurd hotch-potch of charges" and varnished them with a coat of "the false and histrionic glitter of an elaborate and self-conscious display" The Whigs used the impeachment for the manifestation of their humanitarian sentiments and "for the exercise of their vituperation"* By 1791 many of the charges were dropped, except those dealing with Chait Singh, the Begams of Oudh and fraudulent contracts and presents Hastings was acquitted on all the counts on which verdict was given but the highest minorities against him were on the charges relating to the Begams of Oudh and to Chait Singh's treatment†

Estimate of His Services

Hastings lived to a ripe old age; and though broken in fortune and spirit, he never lost faith in the righteousness of his own cause. His career was not entirely immaculate; and morally he possessed "certain magnificent qualities with a certain alloy of hardihood and un-

* Mill and Wilson's *History of British India* (1858), Vol V, p 126. Note by W. remarks that "the investigation was not instituted to ascertain truth, but to fix criminality on Hastings."

† The impeachment was 'cumbrous, ineffective and anachronistic. Over the whole episode of the trial, there lies a false and histrionic glitter. By selecting this form of inquiry, the Commons defeated their own ends. It inflicted unnecessary suffering on the accused; it wearied the world by its interminable length (spread over seven sessions of Parliament and 148 sittings of the court).....and even had Hastings been really guilty of some of the counts brought against him, he would have been more than adequately punished by the long-drawn mental torture to which he was subjected."—P. E. Roberts in *The Journal of Indian History*, Vol. III, p. 131.

The impeachment, however, marked no turning point in history; and Burke only put into words "what Hastings had already put into practice, that goverment is a trust to be exercised primarily in the interests of the governed." (Davie, p. 510).

scrupulousness." He got occasionally entangled in dubious transactions and tolerated even the worst jobbery. Macaulay, though a hostile critic, wrote in his famous *Essay*, in the highest terms of his internal and external administration thus:—"He dissolved the double government. He transferred the direction of affairs to English hands. Out of a frightful anarchy he educed at least a rude and imperfect order ..... The only quarter in which Britain lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings In spite of the utmost exertions of both European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our country in the East had been greatly augmented."* No other Englishman has left a more lasting or greater impression on the Indian mind than Hastings for cool courage and statesmanship in times of crisis; and he estimated his own achievements at a very high level.†

His Work

It is good to remember that while Hastings was being impeached, his administrative system was used as a basis for the further reforms of Lord Cornwallis; but "in the policy of the home government, in the settlement of the land in Bengal, in the foreign policy recommended to the Indian Councils and in the education of public opinion, the Francis tradition survived."‡ He has remained and will continue to remain the subject of controversy; but his real greatness is obvious.

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* *Historical Essays* (Oxford edition) 1918, pp. 594-5.

† In his reply to the impeachment, he declared:—"The valour of others acquired, I enlarged and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you hold there; I preserved it; I sent forth its armies with an effectual, but an economic hand, through unknown and hostile regions to the support of your other possessions; to the retrieval of one (Bombay) from degradation and dishonour; and of the other (Madras) from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were, of your formation or that of others, not of mine.....I won over enemies."

‡ Weitzman, p. 196.

CHAPTER IX

LORD CORNWALLIS AND SIR JOHN SHORE (1786—1798)

SECTION I. THE RULE OF MACPHERSON AND PITT'S INDIA BILL

The departure of Hastings left the Government in the hands of Mr., afterwards Sir John, Macpherson, the senior Member of Council. Certain of his previous transactions in Madras had been very shady, he had been agent to Nawab Muhammad Ali and had even once been dismissed from the Company's service. But he contrived to get himself restored and appointed a member of the Bengal Council; and the agent of Muhammad Ali thus became the co-adjutor and eventually the successor of Hastings. During his Governor-Generalship which lasted for nearly two years (1785-86), he displayed some success in effecting economy and financial reform. Otherwise his administration was not noteworthy; however, he offered to assist the Marathas on the eve of their war with Tipu Sultan, an act that gave great offence to the latter and was in fact a breach of the Treaty of Mangalore.

Macpherson Governor-General (Feby. 1785—Septr. 1786)

Lord Macartney who had been the Governor of Madras during the late Mysore War, now pressed for his appointment as Governor-General with a grant of special powers to him to override a hostile majority in the Council. Pitt and Dundas did not like some of his demands and appointed Lord Cornwallis to the place. Cornwallis had considerable reputation as a general and as a diplomat. He had been referred to in the Commons as a person eminently fitted for the situation; and his surrender to the American general, Washington, at York Town which decided the question of the independence of the revolted American Colonies, had not destroyed his credit. He possessed in a full measure, the confidence of Pitt and Dundas who was the President of the Board of

Appointment of Lord Cornwallis

Control; and he was a nobleman of high rank and character and possessed great ability and sound judgment. Though he had no Indian experience, he was unfettered by local interests and prejudices. Thus, "by a singular caprice of circumstances, the man who had lost America was sent out to govern India, and the man who had saved India (Hastings) was subjected to a prosecution" Cornwallis arrived in India in September 1786 and found all the three Presidencies at peace. He (Cornwallis) was strongly persuaded by Pitt in 1785 to accept the Governor-Generalship, but refused The proposal was repeated in February 1786; and he accepted it on his own terms He was empowered by a special act of Parliament, to adopt, suspend or repeal a law on his own responsibility and to be both Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief.

It has been seen how Pitt found himself bound to pass an India Act, which he had denounced when he was in opposition

Pitt's India Bill (1784)

Unlike Fox he gave no offence to vested interests and avoided both the transfer of patronage from the Company to the Ministry and the appearance of radically altering the constitution of the Company He retained the Courts of Directors and Proprietors and left their power over appointments intact But he took care to embody in his Act the essential principle of Fox's Bill, *viz*, that of placing the Company "in direct and permanent subordination to a body representing the British Government." The Directors were allowed to continue to manage their commercial affairs as before; but all political matters connected with India were now brought under a new department of Government known as the Board of Control. This Board was to consist of six Commissioners appointed by the King; and its President became in fact, though not in name, a new Secretary of State for India. The members were unpaid and had no patronage. They were to consist of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, one of the Secretaries of State for the time being and four Privy Councillors, holding office during the king's pleasure. They were "to superintend, direct and control all acts, operations and concerns which in anywise relate to the civil or military government or revenues of the British territorial possessions in

The Board of Control

the East Indies." They were to have an effective control over the entire correspondence of the Directors to and from India; the latter body could send no orders to India without the sanction of the Board of Control.* A Committee of Secrecy was formed from among the Directors consisting of the Chairman, the Deputy-Chairman and the Senior Director. When the Board of Control issued orders enjoining secrecy, this Committee was bound to transmit these orders to India without informing the other Directors.

The Committee of Secrecy of the Directors

The Court of Proprietors became an insignificant body; and its powers were limited to the receiving of dividends and the electing of the Directors. The Crown got the right to recall any servant of the Company and thus exercised a wholesome control over the Directors' monopoly of patronage.†

Other Changes of the Bill

In the Government of India itself few changes were made. The Governor-General's Council was to consist of three, instead of four, members, one of whom was to be the Commander-in-Chief. Each of the other Presidencies was to have a Governor and three Councillors of whom the Commander-in-Chief of the Presidency Army was to be one. All these were to be appointed by the Court of Directors, but might be removed either by the Crown or by the Directors. Only covenanted servants of the Company were to be qualified to become members of Council. The Governor-General or Governor was

Re organisation of the Government in India

* "The Board might approve, disapprove or modify the despatches proposed to be sent by the Directors, might require the Directors to send out the despatches as modified and in case of neglect or delay, might require their own orders to be sent out, without waiting for the concurrence of the Directors." They were to have access to all papers and instruments of the Company.—Ilbert: *Government of India* (III Ed., Historical Introduction, p. 68).

† "Pitt and his most trusted friend Dundas soon obtained the power and patronage of India"—p. 18 of Forrest's *Selections from the State-Papers of the Governor-Generals of India: Cornwallis*, Vol. I, Introduction.

to have a casting vote. The control of the Governor-General over the subordinate Presidencies was enlarged and was declared to embrace "all such points as relate to any transactions with the country powers, or to war or peace, or to the application of the revenues or forces of such Presidencies in time of war." Thus the Governments of Madras and Bombay were strictly prohibited from making war or peace of their own accord, except in cases of emergency; and even the disposal of their revenues was to be approved by the Governor-General

Non-Intervention Policy enunciated

It was also declared in the Act. that "the pursuit of schemes of conquest was repugnant to the wish, the honour and the policy of the British nation;" and even the Governor-General was definitely precluded from making war or peace with Indian powers without express sanction of the Directors or of the Secret Committee.

Other Reforms effected in India

Also all British subjects were made amenable to the courts in British India or England for acts done by them in the dominions of Indian rulers The receipt of presents by the Company's servants was to be deemed extortion and to be punishable as such; and each one was to declare on oath the amount of property that he had secured in India. A special court consisting of three Judges, four Peers and six members of the House of Commons was constituted for the trial of offences committed by the British in India

The Double Government created by this Act

Pitt's Bill was designed to control the political policy and activity of the Directors, while leaving them entire freedom in commercial affairs and in matters of patronage. Thus it introduced what came to be known as a new Double Government of India—by the Court of Directors and by the Board of Control The authority of the Board of Control was, however, made supreme; because though the Directors actually compiled the despatches, they could not be forwarded without the scrutiny and revision of the Board. Soon all political power came to

be centred in the hands of the President of the Board of Control who became a kind of Secretary of State for India. The senior Commissioner of the Board other than the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State came to be known as the President, and he "occupied a position in the government of the day, corresponding to some extent to that of the modern Secretary of State for India." The Board as such soon became a shadow and practically ceased to function The Governor-General and other officials of the Company soon saw that though they were appointed by the Directors, they had to be on good terms with the Ministry and particularly with the President of the Board of Control * But the Company retained thier right of revision and their share in the home direction of Indian affairs was still substantial.

Its Consequence

Pitt soon perceived the defects of his Act and tried to remedy some of them by an Amending Act passed in 1786. This was, as noted above, to satisfy Cornwallis in his demands before he could be persuaded to accept office. The Directors were empowered to unite in the same person both the offices of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief; and as Lord Cornwallis insisted that the powers of the Governor-General should be enlarged as a condition of his accepting office, this union was effected in his own person. Another provision was made with the same view, empowering the Governor-General to over-ride an opposing majority of his Councillors and act on his own initiative. At the same time the condition of the approval of the Crown of the choice of the Governor-General was repealed; but this was not of much consequence as the King still retained the very effective power of recall.

Amending Act of 1786

* The Act of 1784 "palsied the right arm of the Company, already weakened by the Regulating Act of 1773. With its sinister limb, it could still indite despatches; it could still regulate its house-hold and its commerce.....But the privilege of initiative and the free power of the sword were gone. In military and political matters it was no longer a free agent; it had lost its sovereignty and independence."—Beckles Wilson's *Ledger and Sword*, Vol. II, p. 308.

SECTION II. LORD CORNWALLIS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

For the first three years of his rule, Cornwallis was busy with the task of purifying the internal administration. During this interval and Macpherson's tenure of power, Mahadji Sindia had grown very powerful In 1784, Sindia made the phantom Mughal Emperor sign a commission appointing the Peishwa as *Vakil-i-Mutlaq* (vicegerent of the empire) and received from the Peishwa for himself a commission to be his deputy in that office. Soon after the departure of Hastings, Sindia made a demand on the English for arrears of tribute from Bengal due to the Mughal Emperor The Government of Macpherson promptly denied the validity of Sindia's claim and vigorously insisted on its immediate withdrawal; and their demand was followed by a disavowal of the claims made by both the Sindia and Shah Alam, his puppet

English Relations with Mahadji Sindia

In 1786, the Peishwa's government formed an alliance with the Nizam against Tipu Sultan. According to the Treaty of Mangalore, the English Government was bound not to help the enemies of Tipu Macpherson, however, went to the other extreme of offering to the Marathas English military help for defending their dominions against Tipu's aggressions. Cornwallis did not countenance this measure, as it would have involved an unnecessary war and thus a breach of the prohibition definitely laid down in Pitt's Act. When he refused to fulfil the engagement entered into by Macpherson, Nana Phadnavis, the head of the Poona administration, declared that "he was greatly pained and shocked at the duplicity of the new Governor."

and with the Maratha Government

Soon afterwards he entered into the settlement of the affairs of Oudh, to the mutual advantage of the Company and the Nawab Vizier. Hyder Beg Khan, the Vizier's minister, visited the Governor-General and held that he would not easily believe that the English Government did not desire to

exploit Oudh for their own commercial gain.* At last, after protracted negotiations, it was agreed that the English troops should remain in Oudh which was to pay annually fifty lakhs of rupees (1787). In the following year a commercial treaty was concluded with the Nawab-Vizier by which his power of levying duties was limited. The Nawab-Vizier was also enabled to repudiate some of the usurious debts he had got into and was advised to rule his dominions with justice and vigour.

Settlement with Oudh

Cornwallis next proceeded to settle the English relations with the Nizam For years Nizam Ali had been threatened by Tipu; and in his own defence he had arranged for an alliance with the Marathas in 1784. But Tipu was too strong for both. he embarked on a vigorous policy of aggression; he put down some revolts in Malabar and Coorg where he converted by force great numbers of Christians and Hindus to Islam and established a reign of terror. He next attacked the Maratha frontier which greatly alarmed Nana Phadnavis The latter perceived the imbecility of the Nizam and applied to the English Government for help The promise of help made by Macpherson was vetoed by Cornwallis; and thus when war broke out between the Marathas and Tipu, it was not decisively conducted on either side. and soon peace was made (1787). The Marathas got some accession of territory; the Nizam secured Adoni; and Tipu agreed to pay a tribute. It is not at all clear why Tipu so suddenly climbed down and made a disadvantageous peace; probably he feared the English were about to join the coalition against him.†

Mutual Relations of the Marathas, the Nizam and Tipu

* Cornwallis wrote that he often quoted the proverb, "Whoever has been stung by a snake is frightened when he sees a rope."

† The worsening relations of the English with Tipu are detailed in the *Poona Residency Correspondence*, Vol. 3—The Allies' War with Tipu Sultan (1790-93), (1937).

Now that the Nizam was free from danger on the side of Mysore, Cornwallis demanded from him the cession of the Guntur Sarkar which, according to the treaty of 1768, was to be given up to the English after the death of its then holder, Basalat Jang (who died in 1782). The English had claimed the reversion before; but the Nizam had put off the claim on various pretexts. Now Nizam Ali declared his readiness to give up Guntur, provided the English fulfilled their part of the treaty of 1768, *i.e*, to help him to recover certain districts seized from him by Hyder Ali. By the treaties of Madras (1769) and of Mangalore (1784) the right of the Mysore Sultan to all the territories under his rule, had been recognised by the English. Cornwallis thus found himself placed in a difficult situation and could not promise anything definitely to the Nizam. The latter, who had been always suspicious of the good faith of the English, now sent an embassy to Tipu himself with a copy of the *Quran* for his acceptance, warning him of the growing power of the English, and urging him to mutual friendship and alliance (1788). Tipu thereupon proposed a marriage connection between his own and the Nizam's families This was, however, rejected by the proud Nizam Ali who would not enter into an alliance with the upstart family of Hyder. The only result was that both became estranged more than ever.

English Claim of the Guntur Sarkar

Rupture between the Nizam and Tipu (1788)

Cornwallis could not agree to the Nizam's demand Pitt's Act expressly forbade him from forming unnecessary alliances with the Indian powers. He therefore hit upon a compromise. He felt convinced that Tipu was only waiting for an occasion to attack the English Tipu had written to the French at Pondicherry that he would go to war with the English on the first opportunity. Cornwallis, though not free to take the initiative and begin the war himself, offered to help the Nizam with forces against any power not in explicit alliance with the Company. At the same time, he expressly excluded Tipu

English Settlement with the Nizam (1788)

from the list of English allies. Thus he was not averse to helping the Nizam if the latter should begin a war with Tipu; and the Nizam agreed to the cession of the Guntur Sarkar (1788).

Meanwhile Tipu had himself decided on war. He had violated the Treaty of Mangalore by detaining in brutal custody some British prisoners; he had sent an emissary to Paris to open secret negotiations with the Governor of Pondicherry; and he planned to invade and plunder the Carnatic, as his father had done, as soon as war should break out between the two countries. He was anxious to obtain control over the State of Travancore which he desired as another outlet to the sea. Travancore had been placed under British protection by the Treaty of Mangalore. The Raja of Travancore had purchased from the Dutch two towns on his northern frontier, *viz.*, Cranganore and Ayacottah. In return for previous help rendered, Cochin had ceded to Travancore certain districts across which lines of fortifications had been erected by the latter power between the mountains and the sea. The two towns of Cranganore and Ayacottah were situated at the extremity of the lines and essential to their security. Tipu demanded the cession to himself of these towns on the ground that they really belonged to his tributary, the Raja of Cochin, and that their sale by the Dutch was invalid. He attacked the Lines but was vigorously repulsed with loss; he now renewed his attack with redoubled vigour and carried them by storm (1789-90). Diplomatic and military arrangements were speeded up consequent on Tipu's attack on the Travancore Lines.

Tipu's Aggressions on the Lines of Travancore

Cornwallis had previously ordered the Governor of Madras to give vigorous support to Travancore as against Tipu. But the Madras Government was corrupt and inefficient as during the previous Mysore Wars and did nothing effective while Tipu was attacking the Lines. Cornwallis suspended

War declared (1790)

the Madras Governor and appointed General Medows from Bombay to be the Governor as well as the Commander-in-Chief, and urged him to begin the campaign vigorously. Medows quickly occupied all the low country to the south-east of Mysore and captured Dindigul, Palghat and Coimbatore. But when the English army ascended into the Mysore plateau, it was driven skilfully back by Tipu. Meanwhile a force from Bombay had landed on the Malabar Coast and secured Cannanore

Campaign of General Medows

Before this, Cornwallis had formed an alliance with the Marathas and Nizam Ali, binding them to combine against Tipu on the basis of an equal division of the conquered territories (July 1790) The Marathas now vigorously helped and captured Dharwar in the north of Tipu's dominions. Only the Nizam was inactive (1790). But Tipu contrived to descend into the Carnatic and advanced as far as Trichinopoly, plundering Srirangam and other places. His embassy to Louis XVI did not meet with any good response.* He sounded General Medows for peace, while still in the Carnatic, but with no success.

Alliance with the Marathas and Nizam Ali

Cornwallis was not satisfied with the results of the campaign of 1790. He resolved to conduct the war himself and proceeded to Madras where he assumed the command-in-chief of the forces (1791). Having assembled his army at Vellore, he marched up to the Mysore plateau and evading an action with Tipu, captured

Cornwallis takes up the supreme Command

* The natural probity of the King's mind would not permit him to adopt the measure (suggested by his minister). He said, "This resembles the affair of America which I never think of without regret. My youth was taken advantage of at that time; and we suffer for it now; the lesson is too severe to be forgotten." (The *Mysore Gazetteer* (new edition), Vol. II, Part IV, pp. 259-60).

Bangalore, one of his strongest forts after repulsing an attack. Some places yielded to the English army which was now joined by the Nizam's troops who, though showy, proved ineffective In May, Lord Cornwallis marched on Seringapatam, while another English force under Abercrombie moved from the west coast to join him.

His Capture of Bangalore (1791)

At Karighatta, the English gained a skilful victory over Tipu; but incessant rain and lack of supplies prevented them from enjoying the fruits of their victory. The enemy was becoming increasingly vigilant; and Cornwallis retreated swiftly, abandoning all his heavy baggage and burying his battery; and he was saved from possible disaster only by the opportune arrival of the Maratha forces.

Victory at Karighatta

During the rest of the year, the English were engaged in capturing Nandidrug and several other hill-forts, while the Marathas who were bent upon plunder, frittered away their resources and even suffered a set-back at the hands of Kamar-ud-din, a general of Tipu.

Other Operations of the Year

Early in the next year, Cornwallis took the field again at the head of an army, the like of which had not been seen in South India up to that time. The equipment and supplies were vast, and they justified the exclamation of Tipu:—"It is not what I see of the resources of the English that I dread, but what I do not see." Cornwallis was joined by the forces of the Nizam and the Marathas operating on the north-east and north-west respectively and later also by Abercrombie's force from Malabar. He reached Seringapatam almost unopposed and began a regular siege of the place (February 1792), in the course of which he repulsed a heavy attack of the enemy after a desperate contest. Tipu began to tremble for his safety when the English occupied all the northern redoubts and crossed over to the island, and General Abercrombie occupied a position

Cornwallis' Second Campaign

English Blockade of Seringapatam

on the south-west. He negotiated and submitted to the harsh terms imposed upon him. He had to cede half his territories to the allies, pay the very large amount of 3 crores and 30 lakhs of rupees, release all prisoners that he had and deliver his two elder sons as hostages for the due fulfilment of the treaty. Cornwallis gave the most generous treatment to the hostage princes and subsequently ordered their release Tipu, conscious that the bulk of his troops were disheartened, consented after a great mental struggle to these conditions. The English got, as their portion of the ceded territories, Malabar, Dindigul and the Baramahal region; the Maratha boundary was extended to the Tungabhadra on the south as it did in 1779 The Raja of Coorg who had greatly helped the Bombay army and had to be secured from Tipu's vengeance was taken under British protection The protectorate over Coorg was specially valuable to the English as it gave access to the Mysore plateau from the west The Baramahal region contained important fortresses and some of the passes through which the Mysoreans had hitherto made inroads into the Carnatic The Nizam was given back all his former possessions to the north of the Tungabhadra as well as Cuddapah to the south, which he had lost about the same time. The Treaty of Seringapatam thus made, restored a temporary balance among the powers of South India and greatly enhanced the prestige of the English Cornwallis got great credit for his successful conduct of the war and the title of Marquis as a reward. Naturally enough the fame of Cornwallis was eclipsed later by Wellesley's destruction of Tipu's power in 1799. It should be noted that Cornwallis fought against an yet unweakened enemy, with imperfect allies and equipment.* A very fine statue of the Governor-General was erected by the grateful citizens of Madras, and a frieze on its basement depicts the scene of the reception of Tipu's sons by the Governor-General. The statue now stands in the hall of the Connemara Public Library, Madras.

Tipu's Negotiations

Terms of the Treaty of Seringapatam (1792)

* See Sir J. N. Sarkar's editorial introduction to *The Allies' War with Tipu Sultan (1790-93).*

The Treaty of Seringapatam has been criticised by some as having exacted too much from Tipu and by others on the ground that enough curb was not put upon his ambition General Medows actually proposed the dethronement of the Sultan and the restoration of the Hindu ruling family Had this course been adopted, the subsequent war might have been avoided; but it would have offended English opinion at home and gone against the spirit of the Act of 1784 A wholesale annexation of Tipu's kingdom would have displeased both the Nizam and the Marathas and upset the political balance too much in favour of the English and imposed on them responsibilities for which they were not then wholly equal "Subsequent events proved that both Cornwallis and the Ministry had under-estimated not only the capacity of the enemy, but also the possibilities of a settlement " Both the Nizam and the Marathas were convinced that they could not defend themselves from Tipu's aggressions without British help. Cornwallis himself thus wrote to the Board of Control about the treaty:—"We have effectually crippled our enemy without making our friends too formidable."*

Criticism of Cornwallis's Settlement

The Mysore War was the one large exception to Cornwallis's policy of peace He had to reduce Pondicherry just before his departure for Europe (1793), war having then broken out between England and Revolutionary France. He had also to settle the succession to the throne of Tanjore which was disputed between Amar Singh, the brother of the late Raja, and Serfoji, his adopted son. After the temporary sequestration of Tanjore in Lord Pigot's time, the Raja was restored in 1776; but hardly had the kingdom recovered from the effects of Muhammad Ali's occupation (1773-76), when it was devastated by Hyder

Affairs in Tanjore

* For a criticism of the settlement, see Mackenzie: *Sketch of the War with Tippoo Sultan* (1794); Wilks' *Mysore* (Madras edition), Vol. II, pp. 260-2; V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India*, p. 561; and Miles' *History of the Reign of Tipu Sultan*, pp. 155-6. Raymond, the French General employed by the Nizam, wrote that peace seemed to have been " entirely reestablished after this war at all events for the great powers like the Nizam and the Marathas."

Ali who remained in occupation for several months. The effects of the devastation were so great that agriculture never recovered its level till the close of the 18th century. Amar Singh who first usurped the throne, made a treaty with the English in 1787 by which the latter got the right of taking the revenue collection into their own hands in time of war. Another treaty was concluded in 1792. The young Serfoji who was associated with the revered name of Swartz, appealed to the Governor-General; and as the result of an inquiry, he was regarded as the rightfully adopted son of the late Raja.* His restoration was effected later.

Treaty with Muhammad Ali (1792)

Cornwallis also induced Nawab Muhammad Ali to arrange for the liquidation of his debts and to promise to observe faithfully the conditions of the former treaties entered into with him. In 1792, he agreed, in a fresh treaty, to hand over the entire management of the Carnatic, in time of war, to the English and to pay a fixed annual sum for the maintenance of a British force. This treaty did not work satisfactorily owing to the Nawab's incompetence and growing age. Cornwallis could do nothing to avert the growing alienation of the Nizam and the Marathas whose relations were becoming very much strained and culminated in an open rupture.

Section III. The Administrative Reforms of Cornwallis—The Permanent Revenue Settlement

Administrative Reforms of Cornwallis

Cornwallis effected far-reaching administrative reforms. In the first three years of his rule he successfully checked the abuses practised by the officials and defined their duties and responsibilities. He purified the public service and enjoined on all officials a high sense of duty and conduct. At the same time he increased their salaries and placed them above temptations and he also abolish-

* See Venkasami Row's *Manual of the Tanjore District*, pp. 813-21.

ed their jobbing agencies, contracts and sinecures. He also boldly resisted the requests of the Directors and other persons in England who recommended their favourites and dependents for Indian appointments. In spite of these healthy measures, he did one serious injustice to Indians and shut them out completely from the higher places in Government service. The natives of the country could rise to be only *Darogahs* (police officials) with a monthly salary of Rs. 25 or *Munsiffs* who decided petty civil cases and lived upon commissions.*

Exclusion of Indians from high Appointments

A comprehensive reform of the civil and criminal courts of the Company was carried out The duties of the revenue collector were entirely separated from those of the civil judge. Detailed regulations were issued covering all sides of the work of the Collector. The Secretariat of the Government was also reorganised. The Board of Revenue and the Collectors of Districts lost all judicial powers; and civil courts were established in every district, presided over by English Judges who were assisted by Indian assessors in respect of Hindu and Muhammadan laws. These courts had jurisdiction over all Indians, while British subjects were amenable to the Supreme Court. All appeals from these *Zillah* (District) Courts were heard by four Courts of Appeal which sat at Calcutta, Dacca, Murshidabad and Patna respectively. From their decisions a further appeal lay

Judicial Reforms

Civil Courts

* Dr. Marshman has very feelingly commented upon this injustice to Indians as follows:—"Under all former conquerors, civil and military offices, with few exceptions, were open to the natives of the country who might aspire with confidence to the post of minister and to the command of armies. But under the impolitic system established in 1793, the prospects of legitimate and honourable ambition were altogether closed against the natives of the country. If the peculiar nature of British rule rendered it necessary to retain all political and military power in the hands of Europeans, this was no reason for denying the natives every opportunity of rising to distinction in the judicial departments for which they were eminently qualified by their industrious habits and their natural sagacity, not less than by the knowledge they possessed of the language and character of their fellow-countrymen. The fatal effects of their exclusion were speedily visible in the disrepute and inefficiency of the whole administration." (*History of India*, Part I, pp. 476-77).

to the Sudder Court at Calcutta In the last resort an appeal lay to the Privy Council.

Criminal Courts

Criminal courts were also reformed on much the same lines Every district was divided into a number of small areas over each of which a *Darogah* was appointed who had authority to arrest offenders and take bail from them. The Judges of the *Zillah* Courts had magisterial powers and were authorised to decide small cases. In other cases they were to send the accused for trial before the Judges of Circuit, *i.e.*, the Judges of the four Courts of Appeal who proceeded on circuit from district to district in their jurisdiction and held jail deliveries twice a year The Criminal Sudder Court at Calcutta was the appellate court in all matters.

Features of the Reforms

The law administered by the Muhammadan rulers was retained as the criminal code of these courts. But many of its harsh provisions were softened and its absurdities corrected. Cornwallis improved the code of regulations drawn up by Sir Elijah Impey for the conduct of these courts. The regulations were cumbrous and involved a procedure full of technical formalities and pedantic rules, but "according to the authority of John Stuart Mill, in a far less degree, than the courts in England at the period" Cornwallis has also been severely criticised for introducing wholesale European agency in the administration of the courts. But he deemed it essential as a remedy for the widespread corruption which prevailed; and the judicial subordinate service which has since grown into one of the most efficient limbs of Government, has been created by "the slow product of experience and education." The so-called Cornwallis Code had, however, one great merit. It established "the supremacy of the law and law courts over all persons whatever, the foundation of civil liberty."* It made Collectors and all officers of Govern-

* Ross: *Cornwallis Correspondence*, Vol. II, p. 558. See also pp. 446-7 of the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, for an estimate of the administrative reforms.

ment amenable to the courts and thus realised an important principle of liberty, *viz*, the right of everyone to bring any official, however high, before the courts for any wrong done to him.

Reforms in Land Revenue

The most important of Cornwallis's administrative acts was his permanent settlement of the revenue The settlement of the land revenue was a very important part of the administration, and on it depended not only the financial stability of the administration, but also the prosperity of the people. In Bengal, the revenue collectors, long known as zamindars, had gradually made their offices hereditary and usurped police and judicial functions also. The zamindar assumed not infrequently, the title of Raja and became the real ruler of his district or estate When the Company assumed the *Diwani*, they treated the zamindars as simple collectors of revenue, and they leased out the right of the zamindar, *i.e.* the right of collecting the revenue, to the highest bidder, usually for a term of years Bengal was depopulated and impoverished by the great famine of 1770. Many zamindars could not pay up their dues, and the English Collectors were inexperienced and were ignorant of the customs of the country. The experiments of Hastings first a quinquennial settlement, then annual settlements and a centralisation of the revenue machinery, have been noted. He was anxious to acquire as much information as possible about land tenures and while making settlement with the zamindars, desired to project the actual cultivators from oppression

Previous Experiments

The Directors were alarmed at the steady deterioration of the revenue collection; they saw that annual collections left the zamindars heavily in arrears and did not benefit any class, and they recommended a moderate permanent assessment as more beneficial to Government and people alike and they condemned the employment of temporary renters and farmers who had no interest in the land, defrauded the state and oppressed the ryots and preferred that

The Directors' Order of 1786

settlements should be made with the old zamindars. These instructions were conveyed to Lord Cornwallis soon after he landed in the country along with John Shore, an old servant of the Company and the ablest revenue authority of those days. The Governor-General did not think such a plan feasible. Already there had been effected changes in the revenue administration; a certain amount of decentralisation was brought about; the provinces were divided into districts, each controlled directly by a Collector; and the latter was subjected to the general control of the Board of Revenue, which now took the place of the previous Committee of Revenue. These reforms were effected by Shore; and they were made the basis for further investigations In 1787 and 1788 annual settlements were made by the Collectors; and in the following year regulations were issued for a decennial settlement. In the discussions which led to these regulations, one section headed by James Grant, tried to show that the zamindar had no permanent right, whether as proprietor of the soil or as an official who collected and paid the rent and the state was not bound by any definite limits in its demands from him. Another party, headed by Shore, maintained that the proprietory right in the land belonged to the zamindar and the state was entitled only to a customary revenue from him * There were other points of difference between the two sections regarding the assessment; and Shore declared that, for an accurate settlement, the proportion of rent actually paid, and the actual collections and payments made by zamindars and farmers should both be ascertained. He advocated a direct settlement for ten years with the zamindars as the only one consistent with good administration and the improvement of the country. Many other officials also advocated a settlement with the zamindars; and some of them were for a permanent settlement. Lord Cornwallis stuck fast to the instructions of the Directors and declared that a ten years' lease would be

Revenue Reforms of 1786

The Controversy over the Settlement

* For details, see Ascoli's *Early Revenue History of Bengal and the Fifth Report*, Chaps. V and VI ; Grant's Case and Shore's Case.

equivalent to farming and would not give the zamindars sufficient inducement to ensure the clearance of the extensive jungle which he estimated at one-third of the total area of the province. Shore maintained that a permanent settlement would result in an unfair distribution of the assessment, particularly in the absence of any survey Cornwallis's final minute issued in 1790 the rules for the decennial settlement; and it said that at the end of the period, it would probably be made permanent. In March 1793, these settlements in Bengal and Bihar were declared to be permanent, in accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors The settlement thus made was nearly double the assessment that prevailed in the beginning of the 18th century and double the collections made in the first year of the Company's Diwani (1765-66) * The assessment was as high as it could possibly have been made; and "it was possible to raise it so high, because it was declared to be final and permanent" It is Regulation I of the series of Regulations that were passed by the Supreme Council in May 1793 and collectively known as the Cornwallis Code.

Shore's Views and the Settlement of 1790

Permanent Settlement of 1793

This permanent settlement with the zamindars was no hastily devised measure; nor did it emanate solely from Cornwallis, imbued with ideas of English land-lordism. A settlement with the zamindars was agreeable to most of the revenue officials of the country; and a permanent settlement was advocated by many of them. It was based on information acquired during many years of inquiry; and it had the full support of the home authorities, being sanctioned by the Directors and by Pitt and Dundas.†

* See R. C. Dutt's *Economic History of India under Early British Rule*, 5th ed., pp. 92-93.

† In 1798 the land-tax was made perpetual in England; and landlords were enabled to redeem the tax altogether by payment of a lump-sum.

This measure of Cornwallis has been condemned vigorously by one set of people and extolled equally loudly by another set

Opinions on the Effects of the Act

In many respects it has worked well; the zamindar class which was rapidly decaying in the previous period of confusion, now grew up into "a position of assured independence, if not of much political power." They had now an incentive to improve their estates and bring waste land under cultivation. Their growing wealth has opened up new channels of trade and industry and new sources of philanthropy. The collection of land revenue became easy for Government; while the amount was less fluctuating than before. The opinion of Indian publicists, like the late R. C. Dutt, has been

Its beneficial Results

that the permanent settlement is a very great blessing; and Dutt strenuously advocated the introduction of a similar, though modified, settlement in other provinces also, as it would benefit the entire agricultural community.*

On the other hand, the opponents of the measure maintain that many of these advantages might also accrue under a system of periodic settlements. The zamindars, they say, have profited to an enormous extent, owing to the increased value of land-produce, while the ryots have suffered; their leases were withheld and their rents raised on a number of pretexts, and they were forced to pay many new demands. Government has tried its best by a series of rent-laws to guarantee to the cultivators their ancient holdings and to secure

Its alleged Evils and Defects

them from unjust evictions and encroachments and also enhancements of rent (like the Rent-Laws of 1859 and 1868, and the Tenancy Act of 1885). Again, it is also held that the zamindars who were mere revenue-farmers, were converted by the settlement of 1793 into the actual owners of the soil; while the old peasantry were reduced to the position of mere cultivators. The

* See his *Famines in India* (1900) where he maintains that a permanent settlement would have led to some accumulation of capital and improved the condition of land-lords and cultivators alike and made them more self-reliant in years of drought and failure of harvest (p. xii of Preface) And R. B. Ramsbotham: *Studies in the Revenue History of Bengal* (1769-87).

MAP OF INDIA

Showing the British Possessions about 1792 A. D.

payments to be made by the zamindars were fixed on the basis of the rent-rates charged upon them in 1789, "at a fixed sum of money without reference to the future changes in the selling value of the land and its yearly harvests." The land-revenue has been prevented from growing along with the rise in prices and with the increasing needs of Government which has had to resort to new, and often questionable, means of taxation to make up for the deficiency. According to Government apologists, the permanent settlement has not prevented famine in Bengal and is no protection against its incidence and consequences and that, had it not been for the rent acts, the tenantry would be very much worse off than they are now.* The settlement of 1793 had three objects in view: (1) the securing of a stable minimum revenue and its punctual payment; (2) the extension of cultivation; and (3) the progress and improvement of agriculture; and according to some the measure has not secured any one of these objects. The extension of cultivation was due to the natural increase in population, and not to the settlement. It did not succeed, till about 30 years after its inception, in ensuring punctual payment and there were numerous forced sales of estates on account of non-payment Improvement of agriculture has not at all been a consequence of the measure.† Apart from these points of criticism, the Act of 1793 has been held to be a very wise measure on the whole, and the consequences flowing from its operation beneficial.‡

Renewal of the Charter (1793)

Before Cornwallis left India, Parliament had passed the Charter Act of 1793 which renewed the Company's life for a period of 20 years. In 1788, a second declaratory act had been passed which rivetted more firmly the fetters of Crown control on the Company; and the Directors were required to lay annually before Parliament an account of the Company's receipts and disbursements; and the Board of

* *Land Revenue Policy of the Indian Government*, 1902, pp. 6-7.

† Chaudhuri's *History and Economics of the Land-System in Bengal*, p. 84.

‡ Marshman has characterised it as "the broadest and most important administrative act which the British Government has adopted since its establishment in India." 4th ed., Part I of his History, p. 478.

Control got the right to send royal troops to India and charge their expenses to the Company. The latter measure was the first step towards converting all the troops in India into the King's forces.

Its Features

Now English merchants protested vigorously against the continuance of the Company's trade monopoly in the East and the exclusion of Britishers from any share in it. But the Ministry opposed the change as, by the throwing of the Indian trade open to all, the Company's profits would be diminished and the payment of their debts retarded; also it was feared that India would be soon colonised by Englishmen in large numbers and would be lost to Britain like America. A small concession was given in the Charter Act to Englishmen to trade with India to a certain extent annually; but missionaries were prevented from going to India except under license, as it was feared that their teachings would provoke a revolution among the people. The Charter Act was thus a faithful reflection of the narrow views of the Englishmen of the age. The changes made in the Government of India were very slight. The Governor-General's power to over-ride his Council was emphasised; and similar powers were given to the Governors of Madras and Bombay.

Section IV. The Administration of Sir John Shore: The Maratha Confederacy (1793-98)

Sir John Shore, Governor-General (1793-98)

Sir John Shore, the new Governor-General, was a distinguished member of the Company's service and one of the chief authors of the permanent revenue settlement of 1793. Both Pitt and Dundas had been greatly impressed by his candour, industry and talents, while Cornwallis who had maintained that the Governor-Generalship should always go to a nobleman from England, was prepared to make an exception in favour of Shore.

The first question that Shore had to deal with was about the never-ending quarrels of the Marathas with the Nizam. We saw how Mahadji Sindia's power had grown considerably since the Treaty of Salbai. His military strength grew side by side with his political influence; he employed the famous soldier, Count de Boigne, and other European military adventurers in training his infantry and created an army drilled and equipped on European lines He secured control over Delhi and the title of *Vakil-i-Mutlaq* (Vicegerent of the Empire) and got firm hold of the Doab and of the towns of Agra and Aligarh. There was secret hostility between him and Nana Phadnavis who looked on his dominance in Hindustan with suspicion. On one occasion, the Nana had to suppress a plot to depose the minor Peishwa, Madhava Rao II, and raise to power Baji Rao, the son of Raghunatha Rao who had meanwhile died in retirement; and he suspected that this plot might have been fomented by Sindia (1785).

The Growth of Mahadji Sindia's Power

His Rivalry with Nana Phadnavis

Soon a war broke out between the Peishwa and Tipu Sultan, in which as we saw, Cornwallis refused to give the Marathas the help that had been promised by his predecessor. The war dragged on for some time and was ended by a peace which was, on the whole, favourable to the Marathas (1787).

Maratha War with Tipu (1786-87)

Meanwhile Mahadji Sindia had got into difficulties, he was in great need of money for the maintenance of his growing army; his demands for tribute from the Rajput rulers were resisted; there was furious faction strife in Delhi; and his forces were driven from Jaipur by a combination of Rajput and Mughal troops under one Muhammad Beg and his nephew, Ismail Beg. Thereupon a young and energetic Rohilla chief, by name Ghulam Khadir, the son of Zabita Khan, wrung from the weak Emperor the title of *Amir-ul-Umara*, took possession of Delhi and Aligarh

Revolution in Delhi (1788)

with the help of Ismail Beg (1788), plundered the imperial palace and brutally ill-treated the Emperor and his household. Shah Alam was blinded and kept captive. Unfortunately for the ruffian, Ismail Beg broke away from Ghulam Khadir; and Nana Phadnavis who got alarmed at the resurrection of Mussulman power in Delhi, sent strong reinforcements to Sindia. The latter succeeded in recovering Delhi took a bloody revenge on Ghulam Khadir whom he captured and put to a horrible death and re-seated the blinded Shah Alam on the throne (1789). Ismail Beg was routed in Rajputana and his Rajput allies were humbled in the course of 1790 The army of Sindia was now all-powerful; it had been elaborately organised with the help of de Boigne who was "one of the most upright and able soldiers then in India and knew the principles of scientific warfare and how to apply them to the peoples and conditions of India".*

Sindia's Victories over his Enemies

De Boigne and his Work

De Boigne equipped his troops in European style, recruited them from the best available material, had them trained by European officers and artillerists and contrived to raise three good brigades with a battery of artillery, a siege-train and the necessary complement of protecting cavalry. His 'New Model' army† had enabled Sindia to assert his supremacy over Rajputs, Jats and Mughals alike, and at the same time to suppress the rivalry of Tukoji Holkar, the general of Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore, who now broke out into open hostility and was promptly defeated by de Boigne near Ajmere, in spite of the fact that he himself was served by an able European soldier, by name Dudrenec, in imitation of Sindia. Tukoji's defeat made Sindia's position in Northern India one of unchallenged supremacy He offered to join the English in the confederacy against Tipu and perhaps contemplated the overthrow of Nana Phadnavis and aimed at making himself the dictator of the Maratha confederacy.

* Keene: *Madhava Rau Sindhia* (*Rulers of India*), p. 148.

† See for details of de Boigne's work as general and administrator Keene's *Hindustan under Freelances* (1770-1820), Chap. V.

Sindia at Poona (1792-94)

Shortly after his victory over Ismail Beg, Sindia got from the puppet Emperor patents making the Peishwa's office of *Vakil-i-Mutlaq* and his own position as deputy of the Vakil hereditary. He then marched with a strong force, but without causing any alarm, to Poona where he arrived shortly before Tukoji's defeat. In the Peishwa's *durbar*, he behaved with the utmost humility, claiming to be nothing more than his ancestor, the founder of his dynasty, was, a village *patel* and the hereditary slipper-bearer of the Peishwa.* He carefully avoided an open rupture with Nana Phadnavis who was suspicious of all this affectation His main object was to gain the confidence of the young Peishwa and to persuade him that he could easily become independent of Nana's tutelage and to secure for himself the recognition of his position in Hindustan

His Schemes and Death (1794)

It was by no means easy to shake the Peishwa's confidence in Nana Phadnavis, and the latter always demanded that Mahadji should give an account of the revenues of the districts he had conquered and been ruling nominally on behalf of the Peishwa, whenever the latter claimed that he should be given the entire management of affairs in Hindustan The Nana was angry when he heard of Tukoji Holkar's defeat; and it seemed as if an open rupture might break out between the two He had expected that Tukoji's rising would send Sindia away from Poona; but de Boigne's victory over Holkar rendered him powerless for the moment. However, a clash was avoided. Perhaps Mahadji might have ultimately prevailed over his rival, in spite of a strong opposition to his views;† but suddenly death overtook him in the midst of his schemes (February 1794). Sindia never meant to cut himself off from Poona, as he might have easily done. "The roots of his power were

* Sir John Malcolm testifies that Mahadji "made himself a sovereign by calling himself a servant."—*Central India*, Vol. I, p. 125.

† See p. 89 of Macdonald's *Memoir of the Life of the late Nana Phadnavis* (1851), edited by H. G Rawlinson (1927). For a contrast of the aims and character of the Sindia and Nana Phadnavis, see G. S. Sardesai's *Main Currents of Maratha History*, Lecture V.

in the Empire of which the Peishwa was the actual head; and it was only as a branch of that Empire that Sindia ruled in Hindustan "* He purchased the reality of power by a show of subordination, but never forgot his real object in the midst of his assumed humility He was served by all his followers with fidelity and affection; and the *Memoire of Count de Boigne* written by that general's son reveals the moral character, the tenacity of purpose and good faith of the man He was succeeded by his young grand-nephew, Daulat Rao Sindia, who soon got into difficulties, in spite of his being countenanced by Holkar and other Maratha chiefs

Accession of Daulat Rao Sindia

The position of the Maratha confederacy in the state system of India was at this time very anomalous. The Peishwa was under the close tutelage of Nana Phadnavis, and the subordinate members of the confederacy had thrown off all control by the Peishwa's government and become practically independent Mudaji Bhonsle of Berar, who was helpful to the English in the First Maratha War, had died in 1788; and his son, Raghuji, had secured the succession from the Peishwa after some trouble, but he generally kept aloof from Poona politics. The Gaekwar State which had previously concluded an alliance with the English, fell into confusion after the death of its regent, Fateh Singh, in 1798 Govind Rao, the brother of the regent had to fight against a rival; he was supported by Mahadji Sindia; and he ultimately got recognition from the Peishwa

Anomalous Position of the Maratha Confederacy - The Bhonsle, Gaekwar and Holkar

* Keene: *Madhava Rao Sindhia*, p. 184. Mahadji contrived to "rule and fight with unremitting vigour in Hindustan, while he trimmed the diplomatic balance at Poona, further, contriving to stand well with the Nana, be respected by Holkar, and preserve the friendly neutrality of the British." He also "abstained from doing violence to Maratha loyalty or drawing his sword in quarrels about the succession; he did not resist the British when he found them to be in earnest; and he never drove Holkar to despair." p. 196.

only through British mediation in 1793. The Holkar State continued to be ruled with great ability by Ahalya Bai, the widowed daughter-in-law of Malhar Rao Holkar, its founder, for nearly 30 years (1766-95), with the loyal help of her general, Tukoji, who was a member of the Holkar clan but was no relation of the ruling family. Her internal administration was just and beneficial and was marked by a maternal regard for her people; and her rule forms "too proud an epoch in the history of the house of Holkar to be passed over".* Tukoji was elevated by her to the headship of the state and the command of the army, and was, throughout, more than obedient to her. He collected the revenues and tributes due from regions outside Malwa which continued under the direct control of Ahalya Bai; and this dual authority in the Holkar State subsisted without any hitch till the death of the pious queen in 1795. She was succeeded by the aged Tukoji who assumed sole power; but his death, two years later, was followed by contests which devastated the country. Daulat Rao Sindia interfered in the succession which was disputed between the sons of Tukoji and became for the time the complete master of the Indore State

Ahalya Bai and Tukoji Holkar

Death of Tukoji (1797)

The death of Mahadji Sindia left Nana Phadnavis without a rival. The Peishwa was now completely under his sway, and he now utilised a foreign war to raise to a higher point his own supremacy. Mutual distrust and intrigue had hitherto prevented the Maratha confederacy from offering a united front to the enemies. Now, the Peishwa renewed his claims upon the Nizam for arrears of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*, in which all the Maratha chiefs expected to share. The Nizam delayed a settlement, employed a French officer,

War with the Nizam

* See the eulogistic account of the queen, her character and rule by Sir J. Malcolm in his *Memoir of Central India* (1824), Vol. I, pp. 151, *et seq.* Malcolm says that her success in internal administration was "altogether wonderful." See also Mr. M. Burway's *Life of Ahalya Bai Holkar.*

Francois de Raymond, to increase his trained battalions, and prepared for war. Raymond's efficient battalions raised Nizam Ali's hopes of an easy victory over the Marathas; he provoked them into a declaration of hostilities, assembled his army at Bidar and openly talked of sacking Poona itself Nana Phadnavis was strongly supported by the forces of Daulat Rao Sindia, Tukoji Holkar, Raghuji Bhonsle, Govind Rao Gaekwar and other chiefs; and the powerful Maratha armament, numbering more than 130,000 cavalry and infantry, besides Pindaris or irregular horsemen who had always clung on to the skirts of the Maratha forces, met the enemy at Kharda near Ahmednagar on the frontier of the Nizam s territory.

Last united Action of the Maratha Confederacy

Battle of Kharda

The Nizam had sent an appeal to Sir John Shore for assistance, under the terms of the treaty of 1790. But the Governor-General resolved to remain neutral, as he did not desire to give offence to the Marathas which might result in a serious war and drain his treasury. He was also anxious to obey implicitly the acts of Parliament which discouraged all native alliances; and he told the Nizam that he saw no reason to help one old ally as against another. But the Nizam protested that, in becoming a party to the treaty of 1790, he had trusted "to the good faith of the British Government and not to the treachery of the Marathas." Nana Phadnavis was not slow to perceive the feebleness of the Governor-General and hastened his preparations. The high reputation that the English had acquired by their prompt succour of the Raja of Travancore as against the aggressions of Tipu Sultan in 1789, was now sacrificed by Shore on grounds of expediency and economy

Shore refuses to help the Nizam

Its Effect

The Maratha confederates—it was the last time they assembled together under the banner of the Peishwa—had a comparatively easy victory. The severest action took place between Raymond's disciplined battalions and those

Defeat of the Nizam

of Sindia under Perron. But while as yet the struggle remained undecided, Nizam Ali ordered, in the midst of the battle, a general retirement; and this converted the Mughals into a beaten army. They were surrounded in Kharda fort and forced after a few days to consent to a very humiliating peace. Nana Phadnavis insisted that all the region from the Tapti to the fort of Parinda as well as the fort of Daulatabad should be ceded to the Marathas, besides three crores by way of indemnity and arrears of tribute and a large sum and lands to Raghuji Bhonsle (January 1795)

Its Political Effect

This victory was regarded by the Marathas as one of their greatest triumphs, and the merit of the achievement belonged wholly to Nana Phadnavis, who now became the foremost figure in India The Nizam was very indignant with the English for their treacherous abandonment of him in this crisis; he dismissed all the English battalions in his service, increased the French contingent in his pay and showed great partiality to the French at his court.

Sudden Death of the Peishwa (1795)

The Marathas would have further humiliated the Nizam, but for the sudden death of their young Peishwa, who, in a fit of impatience at the galling tutelage in which he was kept by Nana Phadnavis, threw himself, as was believed by many, down from the terrace of his palace at Poona and died (October 1795) This incident pulled down the Nana from the pinnacle of his glory The Nana had made himself obnoxious to the young Peishwa by refusing to release from prison Baji Rao, the son of Raghunatha Rao, whom he had been keeping under guard, for fear that he might attempt a revolution Both the Peishwa, Madhava Rao, and his cousin, Baji Rao, had been carrying on a secret mutual correspondence; and its revelation to the Nana produced a violent altercation between him and his young ward. This incident aggravated the malady from which the young

man was suffering; and his tragic end* was the precursor of Nana's own subsequent fall from power. No other event in Maratha history has been the subject of greater discussion than this, except perhaps the death of Afzal Khan.

Revolution in Poona. Final Accession of Baji Rao II (1796)

Baji Rao now claimed the Peishwaship on the ground of his own kinship to the late Peishwa as well as of his nomination as successor by him. Nana Phadnavis knew that Baji Rao bitterly hated him and tried to get the support of Daulat Rao Sindia and Raghuji Bhonsle for the adoption of a son by the widow of Madhava Rao Baji Rao on his side won over the Sindia and his minister; and the Nana resolved to anticipate Daulat Rao by himself releasing Baji Rao from restraint and acknowledging him as the Peishwa Baji Rao broke his understanding with Sindia and caught at the offer of the Nana who secured as the essential condition of his support, his own continuance as the first minister. Daulat Rao Sindia and another faction which was opposed to the Nana, contrived to place Chimnaji, the younger brother of Baji Rao, on the throne, and to drive Nana Phadnavis out of Poona By a counter-stroke of the latter, Baji got reinstated as Peishwa, and the Nana was confirmed as the chief minister (1796) The latter tried to get the support of Tukoji Holkar and even of the Nizam by promising to restore all the territories ceded by him and return the fine imposed by the humiliating treaty of 1795

Breakdown of Nana Phadnavis' Power

"The misfortunes that had united Baji Rao and Nana Phadnavis had no sooner disappeared than their old hatred revived." Baji Rao refused to restore to the Nizam the promised territory; while Tukoji, the faithful friend of the Nana, died, and Daulat Rao Sindia became the arbiter of the destinies of the Holkar state for

* Grant-Duff believed that the Peishwa threw himself down from the terrace deliberately, but there are evidences that the fall was more accidental and due to a temporary derangement of the mind. See for a discussion of this incident, Kincaid and Parasnis' *A History of the Maratha People*, Vol. III, pp. 178-179; and Khare's *Life of Nana Phadnavis*, and Macdonald's *Memoir of the Life of the late Nana Phadnavis* (edition of Rawlinson), p. 108.

the time. Baji Rao actively intrigued to bring about the break-up of the party of Nana Phadnavis and got him imprisoned by Sindia. The result was that Daulat Rao was made all-powerful in Poona which was even abandoned to be plundered for several days by his officers, the extortions being sanctioned by the Peishwa himself in the satisfaction of the claims for payment that Sindia made. For several days Poona suffered some of the "horrors that Delhi had experienced from invaders like Nadir Shah." As if these were not enough, the descendant of the old Bhonsle Rajas of Sivaji's house, who was still allowed to have a nominal rule at Satara, made a bid to regain the position of his forefathers, but without success Daulat Rao had, in the interval, alienated the widows of Mahadji Sindia; and they now openly joined the Peishwa's party. Hostilities occurred between the troops of Baji Rao and Daulat Rao; and the former at once signed an offensive and defensive alliance with Nizam Ali for the overthrow of the powerful Sindia. Sindia rose however equal to the occasion; he released Nana Phadnavis from prison, and persuaded Nizam Ali to repudiate his alliance with Baji Rao. Hence Baji Rao, despairing of opposing his enemies successfully, was reconciled to both Daulat Rao and Nana Phadnavis (1798). The Nana resumed his position as the first minister, but he never regained the full support and confidence of his master. Such was the state of the Maratha powers when Wellesley succeeded Shore in the Governor-Generalship. Thus the Maratha confederacy was torn by internecine strife and intrigue and was rapidly proceeding to its disruption. The Peishwaship had lost all its reputation; and its ablest and last supporter, Nana Phadnavis, was nearing his grave.

Disruption among the Marathas

The most remarkable event of Shore's administration was the change which he made in the Oudh succession. Cornwallis's treaty of 1787 granted the Nawab a remission of his tribute for the maintenance of British troops and cut down the pay and presents received by the Company's officials in

New Treaty of the English with Oudh (1797)

Oudh; it gave an assurance that the English would make no further demand on the state. The commercial treaty of the next year was indeed fair and liberal. Shore asked the Nawab Vizier to add to his former subsidy the expense of two regiments; and he proceeded to Lucknow in 1797 and enforced his demands in person, besides taking and detaining in English custody the minister of the Vizier. Asaf-ud-daula was already old, and he took this so much to heart that he fell ill and refused medicine, saying, "There is no cure for a broken heart." He died a few months later.

Vizier Ali's Deposition—Accession of Sadat Ali and fresh Treaty with the English (1798)

As usual, the English took advantage of a fresh succession to strengthen their hold on the Nawabi. First, Shore recognised the succession of Vizier Ali, a natural son of the late Nawab. Soon he became convinced that the new ruler was of ignoble birth and was moreover violent in temper and anti-English in disposition and that it would be injurious to the state as well as to the English power to continue him in the Nawabship He proceeded to Benares and proposed to Sadat Ali, the brother of Asaf-ud-daula, that he would be made the Vizier, if he consented to increase the subsidy and to agree to stipulated payments Sadat Ali promptly accepted the conditions and was installed in power at Lucknow by the Governor-General who proceeded to Oudh a second time (1798); and forthwith a new treaty was concluded with him by which he consented to place all his military forces exclusively under British control and ceded the fort of Allahabad to the Company All Europeans except the servants of the Company were to be banished from Oudh. This treaty† prepared the way for the more onerous and significant treaty of 1801 which Wellesley imposed on the state.

* *Dacoity in Excelsis or the Spoliation of Oude*, 1st ed., p. 34.

† It was "in its principal stipulations absolutely stinking of rupees." *Ibid*, p. 35. Mill impugns Shore's decision in the succession, but it is defended in the *Life of Lord Teignmouth*, Vol. I, Appendix V.

During his second visit to Lucknow, Shore was in danger of an attack by the disorderly followers of Vizier Ali. But he held his ground firmly and forced the deposed prince into quiet submission. Shortly before this, he had to face a widespread disaffection among the officers of the Company's army who were jealous of the regiments of the Crown which were also stationed in the country (1795-96) Cornwallis and Dundas had desired that the Company s army should be amalgamated with the forces of the Crown. Many officers of the Company's troops rose up in disaffection, Shore gave way in his weakness to their demands, unlike Clive who dealt very firmly with a similar situation more than thirty years before. He restored the double batta to the troops and improved the pay of the officers * These concessions displeased Dundas and the Board of Control who requested Lord Cornwallis to go back to India and reassume the Governor-Generalship. When Cornwallis refused the offer, it was made to Lord Mornington (afterwards Marquess Wellesley), a friend and follower of Pitt, a trained statesman and for four years a leading member of the Board of Control. He took charge of his office from Shore in May 1798 Shore lived for long after his retirement and was raised to the Peerage as Lord Teignmouth He was threatened with an impeachment which, however, did not come about

Disaffection of the Company's Officers

Retirement of Shore

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* See Cardew: *The White Mutiny*, p. 6.

rights of the cultivators as it was intended to do. Munro held that the Collector should have magisterial power and control of the police, as his revenue duties brought him into intimate contact with the people. He was appointed in 1814 as Special Commissioner for effecting administrative changes; and in 1816 regulations were passed restoring to the Collectors magisterial authority and police control, creating Indian District Munsiffs to try civil causes of small value and empowering village headmen to try petty suits and summon *panchayats* for agreed arbitration in all suits Munro attached great importance to the *panchayat* as being a product of indigenous habits and usages.

Munro's Regulations

Village Headmen and Panchayats

By 1818 all ideas of extending the zamindari system and of introducing the village system were completely given up and instructions were issued for the introduction of a modified ryotwari system, and Munro himself, as Governor of Madras (1820-27), finally introduced these regulations. He did all he could to foster village institutions and schools, but with no great success, and he could not effect any great reduction in the burden of assessment.* The three great administrative achievements of the Madras Presidency in the period were the subjugation of the poligars, the establishment of judicial courts and the improvement of the revenue system.† It was only in 1822 that Munro could set on foot an inquiry into the state

Munro's Governorship (1820-27)

Achievements of the Epoch

* The permanency of assessment, urged by Munro, recognised and admitted by the Madras Government down to 1862, has been thrown overboard since; and the assessment is being increased at each recurring settlement on the bases of theoretical deductions and principles which are not appreciated by the people.

† For detailed accounts of these refer to Gleig's *Life and Correspondence of Sir Thomas Munro*, Vol. I, Chaps. 3-7; Arbuthnot's *Sir Thomas Munro: Selections from his Minutes*; *The Fifth Report* (Madras edition), Vol. II, pp. 1-127 and appendix; Kaye's *History of the Administration of the East India Company*, Chap. III of Part II and Dutt's *Economic History of India under Early British Rule*, Chaps. VII, VIII and IX.

of indigenous education and schools. Other matters could not be attended to, like the repair of irrigation works, the improvement of roads, prevention of famine and the promotion of industry.*

SECTION III

FURTHER ANNEXATIONS: OTHER MEASURES OF WELLESLEY

Acquisition of Surat

Wellesley took advantage of the death of the Nawab of Surat in 1800, to take over permanently the administration of that place. The new Nawab had to be content with the mere title, an annual grant of one lakh of rupees and one-fifth of the surplus revenues. In this case Wellesley asserted that the Company had succeeded to the power of the Mughal empire and could dispose, as it thought proper, of any claim to a rulership originally owning allegiance to that empire Surat Castle was already in possession of the Company; and Wellesley had demanded fresh concessions from the Nawab. The annexation of Surat was regarded as a very high-handed proceeding by Mill† and others; but perhaps it was the speediest means of securing good administration for the city.

The Problem of Oudh

The problem of Oudh was more complex and difficult. Sadat Ali, the new Nawab, soon became unpopular by his exactions. His rival, the profligate Vizier Ali, who had been pensioned and settled at Benares, had the British Resident murdered and raised a rebellion. He was soon captured and sent as a prisoner to Calcutta. In fear of his rival, Sadat Ali had asked for an increase of the British contingent. The

* It was during this period "India was converted from an exporter into an importer of cotton cloth. A French missionary has left us a vivid description of the ruin which that revolution brought upon the cloth-weavers of South India; but this aspect of the matter hardly attracted the attention of the Madras Government. Information was gathered about the prevalence of slavery in the Tamil country and on the west coast, but no action was taken." See p. 481 of Vol. V of the *Cambridge History*.

† "The most unceremonious act of dethronement which the English had yet performed, as the victim was the weakest and most obscure." Vol. VI, p. 208.

Governor-General deemed it necessary to station an army of 20,000 troops in order to be ready to resist the threatened invasion of Zeman Shah of Kabul. Sadat Ali had complained that his own troops could not be trusted and had requested an English force as a security for himself. Wellesley asked him to pay a much larger sum than before as subsidy and advised him to disband his own troops and thus pay for the additional British forces. When the Governor-General thus proposed to take over the entire military control of Oudh, the Nawab Vizier threatened to abdicate and then withdrew. The Governor-General eagerly caught at the offer and declared that the new Nawab should only reign and not govern, while the Company would take over the entire administration of the country. The Nawab Vizier would not resign; and Wellesley peremptorily demanded the surrender of the districts of the Doab and Rohilkhand—territories which, once in possession of the British, would surround Oudh with a ring-fence of British possessions and secure it from all external danger He had not demanded an abdication, but only required an increase in the English force and a guarantee for its maintenance; he now threatened an occupation of the state by British troops. The Nawab Vizier had to give way and entered into a new treaty (November 1801), by which he ceded the territories demanded in lieu of the subsidy and all future expenses of defence and promised free navigation of the Ganges and other rivers. The Nawab's military power vanished; and the new English acquisitions formed an effective barrier between his dominions and the danger of attack by foreign powers. Commerce increased and Allahabad quickly grew into prosperity. The settlement of the new districts was managed by a Commission under Henry Wellesley, a brother of the Governor-General, whose appointment was made the subject of severe criticism and charges of nepotism against Wellesley. There is no denying that the Oudh treaty was the most high-handed of all Wellesley's actions; "he would hardly have denied this, but he would have

Sadat Ali forced into a fresh Treaty (1801)

Criticism of the Measure

justified it."* The rectification of the military frontier was part of a larger scheme, and in itself an important measure at this crisis. But this intervention did not improve, in the long run, the condition of the people or the character of the Nawab's administration.

Embassy to Persia

The other important political measures of the Governor-General included the despatch of an embassy to Persia, which was to prevent the Shah from favouring the French—Napoleon had been planning a march of combined French and Russian troops, across Central Asia to Herat and the Indus—and to persuade him to give trouble to Zeman Shah. The famous soldier, John Malcolm was at the head of the mission; he tried to secure the cession of certain islands in the Persian Gulf and to get an agreement that the English and the Persians were to aid each other against aggressions on the part of the French and Zeman Shah But he did not succeed in getting the treaties put into force

Other Measures against the French

In 1801, Wellesley planned an expedition against the Isles of France which served as the strongholds of French privateers in the Indian Ocean and were "prolific sources of intrigue in peace, and of piracy and buccaneering in war." But owing to want of co-operation from the English squadron, he had to abandon the project He further thought of sending an expedition for the conquest of the Cape of Good Hope which, he declared, was an outpost of India He even fitted out a small force for the conquest of Egypt; it landed indeed in that country, but could do nothing owing to the conclusion of peace with France Had he captured Mauritius, he would have placed that island in direct relation to Indian defences. He regarded Ceylon as a bulwark for the defence of India and desired that it should be under the direct control of the Governor-General. When the Peace of Amiens was concluded, all the French and Dutch

Owen says that a careful consideration of the circumstances should modify, if not altogether remove, this impression (p. xvii of *A Selection from the Despatches, etc., of the Marquess Wellesley*).

settlements in English possession were ordered to be restored with the exception of the Dutch posts in Ceylon. Wellesley, however, anticipating the immediate renewal of war, refused to restore Pondicherry to a French squadron that reached it.

Schemes of Defence and of Military Reorganisation

The Governor-General also planned, with the aid of his brother, General Wellesley, a systematic and elaborate scheme of defence for the country. He endeavoured to secure the coast-line more effectively, as well as the frontier to the north-west beyond British jurisdiction. The west coast, largely in Maratha hands, was the most vulnerable point But the military and political control of Gujarat which was a security against north and west alike, was acquired by a treaty with the Gaekwar in 1802. He desired to have a higher proportion of European soldiers in the Indian army which he planned to enlarge and bring under one central authority and control, and to put an end to the practice of having separate armies for the three Presidencies. He feared that the large number of sepoys in the army might prove to be a danger; and he ignored the orders of the Directors to reduce the military forces at the close of 1801. The course of events and the Maratha wars justified his resolution

Reform of the Sudder Court

During all these years Wellesley laboured at the improvement of the administrative system and the reform of abuses He reformed the Sudder Court of Appeal at Calcutta, removed it from the immediate supervision of the Governor-General-in-Council and gave it a special body of judges who were selected from the ablest of the civil servants of the Company. He was anxious to get and exercise a greater amount of control over the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay and said that the Governor-General should be given the greatest possible freedom of action, and should always be an English nobleman of high rank and capacity. He desired that the young civil servants of the Company who arrived in India very ignorant and lived without any control,

should be disciplined and educated in their duties. For this purpose he erected the College of Fort William in 1800, where the writers, as the recruits to the civil service were then called, should reside for three years and study Indian languages, law and history. The Directors found fault with him for this measure of extravagance, reduced the scale of the college and limited its work to the teaching of vernacular languages to the Bengal civilians. As a counterpoise they set up, at Haileybury in England, a college where their nominees to the Indian services were taught the Indian languages, law, etc. In the course of the Directors' quarrel with Wellesley, they quarrelled also with the Board of Control and Lord Castlereagh as to their respective powers and maintained that the Board of Control had no power over matters of appointments and salaries. Wellesley had always appointed the ablest men he could find to the various offices of trust and responsibility under him. These were frequently set aside and replaced by the nominees of the Directors who were in many cases inefficient. Another charge against him was that he countenanced private Indian trade by Englishmen, merchants and others, to the detriment of the Company's monopoly. He encouraged the English merchants in India to employ Indian-built ships to carry cargoes to Europe; and he attempted to create a good Indian mercantile navy with a corresponding increase of trade. The Company's mercantile marine was indeed very efficient and well-equipped; but it kept freight at a high level, discouraged the use, by the Company, of India-built ships and consequently gave an advantage to foreign merchants. The Board of Control supported Wellesley, but not to the extent that he deemed necessary, for the efficient implementing of his policy and schemes. Wellesley also stood for the extension of the principle of free trade and declared that private traders should have an equal right with the Company to trade and should be given the required tonnage at the lowest possible freight. The Directors and Proprietors censured him for this course. He frequently protested against their interference with

Scheme of College of Fort William

Advocacy of Free Trade

his acts and patronage and even offered to resign in protest in 1802.

Hitch between him and the Directors

The wars and annexations of Wellesley involved huge expenditure and resulted in deficits which the Directors greatly disliked. But the Ministry was not yet prepared to let Wellesley go. Castlereagh and Pitt would not entrust the new acquisitions to a new and inexperienced successor; and the Directors, though carping at their Governor-General's policy, consented to let him remain in office till the beginning of 1804 and even wrote a letter which commended his great zeal and ability. The huge Government House which he built at Calcutta is a monument to his love of splendour and ostentation.

SECTION IV. THE TREATY OF BASSEIN AND WAR WITH THE MARATHAS: WELLESLEY'S RETIREMENT

The State of Peishwa Baji Rao II

The extension of British territory now marched with the boundary lines of Maratha dominion which formed a belt stretching across the peninsula from sea to sea. We saw how the Peishwa declined to enter the subsidiary system and he refused the offer of a portion of the territories conquered from Tipu, and he declined to allow the English to arbitrate in his disputes with the Nizam He had, however, allowed Daulat Rao Sindia to become all-powerful in his court, even after he had reconciled himself with Nana Phadnavis. Confusion reigned everywhere in the Maratha dominions. The Raja of Kolhapur was at open war with the Peishwa. The dominions of Sindia were ravaged by a rebel; and Jaswant Rao Holkar harried Malwa while the Rajput states were a continuous prey to their own internecine feuds and Maratha and other incursions. To crown all these, there occurred the death of Nana Phadnavis in March 1800; and "with him departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha government." The

Nana had always struggled to keep such power as remained to the Peishwa free from European influence. He continued till his death to cling to the worn-out idea of Maratha unity under the Peishwa and strove to keep up the confederacy to the best of his power. Though he fell a prey to faction and intrigue in his later years, he strove "to moderate the passions which would turn against each other the weapons which the Maratha chieftains should have only used against their foes." He was certainly a great statesman of the age; his acts were always those of a patriot; he respected the English and admired the vigour of their government, but was averse to the introduction of English influence in the state *

Services of Nana Phadnavis— His Death (1800)

The death of the Nana threw the Peishwa more firmly into the bondage of Daulat Rao Sindia He appealed for help to Jaswant Rao Holkar who had raised a considerable army of free-booters round him, of Bhils, Pindaris, Afghans and Marathas, including the notorious Amir Khan, the Pindari leader, and a strong nucleus of French-disciplined battalions He was an illegitimate son of Tukoji and now claimed to act on behalf of his legitimate nephew, Khande Rao Holkar, who was a prisoner at Poona He plundered the Sindia's dominions and got over Dudrenec and his disciplined regiments to his side Sindia had perforce to leave Poona to meet this formidable rival and was first defeated by him decisively near Ujjain, though later he was checked at Indore.

Tukoji Holkar wars with Sindia

* "Nana Farnavis was certainly a great statesman; his principal defects originated in the want of personal courage and in ambition not always restrained by principle. During the latter unhappy years of his life, on the testimony of both English and Maratha authority, he is entitled to the highest praise of having acted with the feelings and sincerity of a patriot" p. 156 of Macdonald's *Memoir of the Life of Nana Farnavis* (reprint of 1927) and p. 250 of Vol. II of Grant-Duff: "It cannot be denied that Nana Phadnavis was a great man, judged by almost any standard." p. 192 of Vol. III of *A History of the Maratha People* by Kincaid and Parasnis.

Baji Rao gloated over his accidentally won freedom from Sindia's tutelage and busied himself in bloody acts of revenge against his enemies. He caused a brother of Jaswant Rao Holkar to be dragged to death at the foot of an elephant. This brutal act incensed Jaswant Rao and made him march straight on Poona. A battle took place in the neighbourhood of Poona between him and the Peishwa's troops which had been joined by a portion of Sindia's army. Jaswant Rao was completely victorious and the Peishwa who had taken no part in the battle, fled to Singhad and Raighad and finally took shelter at Bassein under British protection. Jaswant Rao peeled Poona to the bones and raised Amrit Rao, an adopted brother of Baji Rao, to be the new Peishwa.

Baji Rao driven from Poona by Holkar

Baji Rao had, even before the battle, sought help from the English but would not agree to the conditions of the subsidiary treaty desired by them. He now signed the famous Treaty of Bassein by which a subsidiary force was to be permanently stationed in his dominions, territories for its support were to be ceded in perpetuity to the English, the Peishwa was to enter into no relations with any power without the sanction of the English and he should submit his claims on the Nizam and the Gaekwar to English arbitration. This treaty had far-reaching results. It completely paralysed the head of the Maratha confederacy and inflicted a blow on it from which it never recovered. The Maratha chiefs still continued to regard the Peishwa as the centre of their national unity. The treaty greatly alarmed them, as the English had not only the will, but also the power, to punish vigorously any breach of it. They saw in the submission of the Peishwa to English control, "the sure beginning of the last fight of the Marathas for existence" and that their independence would be destroyed by their acceptance of the subsidiary system. They could no longer remain in the confederacy and continue independent

He concludes the Treaty of Bassein (1802)

Implications of the Treaty—Its Consequences

of British control. According to Owen, the treaty changed the entire position of the English in Western India and converted the British Empire *in* India into the British Empire *of* India.* The moral influence of the treaty in the eyes of Wellesley was great; and he expected that the mutual divisions and jealousies of the Maratha powers and the fear of English arms might combine to avert an actual appeal to arms The treaty was interpreted as aiming to restore the efficiency of the Peishwa's government as against the other Maratha powers and was not intended as an instrument to govern the Maratha empire through the Peishwa The historian, Mill says that Wellesley ought to have recognised that a war with Sindia and Bhonsle would be the necessary minimum price to be paid for the treaty; that it did not produce an alliance with any of the other Maratha powers and did not diminish the danger of French reinforcements landing in India, and that "no shape which the confederation of the Maratha states had any chance to assume would have been so formidable to the English as that into which they were thrown by the Treaty of Bassein."†

Sindia and Bhonsle combine against the English

The English would not countenance the Holkar's enthronement of a new Peishwa. Sindia found that the prospects of his dominance at Poona were gone and declared that the treaty "took the turban from off his head." He tried to persuade Jaswant Rao to combine against the English; but the latter, either because of sluggishness or owing to blindness of vision, retired into Malwa and awaited the issue of events. He possibly desired to plunder the dominions of Sindia, in case he was involved in war with the English. Sindia crossed the Narmada, declined the English offer of a similar treaty with himself and negotiated with the Raja of Berar. After the restoration

* *Selections from the Wellington Despatches*, p. 46 of the Introduction.

† P. E. Roberts: *India under Wellesley*. Note on Chap. XVIII, p. 206-8.

of Baji Rao (May 1803) under General Wellesley's protection, events moved forward rapidly and assumed a threatening aspect. Sindia and Bhonsle resolved on war and united their forces near Burhanpur in Khandesh. They argued that it was the duty of the Peishwa to have consulted them and secured their consent also before he concluded the treaty of Bassein. General Wellesley whose despatches ably review the whole situation and defend the action of the English, brought matters to a crisis and asked them to retire peacefully on pain of war. Hostilities commenced (August 1803). The war was one of the most successful ever fought by the English in India and marked by fine strategy. There were four theatres of operations, *viz*, Northern Deccan, the neighbourhood of Delhi and Agra, Gujarat and Orissa General Wellesley was to operate with the main army in the Deccan. An army was stationed under General Stuart to keep the southern Maratha chiefs in check A similar force was posted in Gujarat. In the east an army was ready to invade Cuttack which was in Bhonsle's possession. In Hindustan General Lake, the Commander-in-Chief, was to destroy the French battalions of Sindia and to conquer all his dominions in the Doab, as well as Delhi and Agra. The Governor-General desired to extend the English frontier up to the upper Jumna, conquer portions of Bundelkhand and acquire Broach in Gujarat and Cuttack and Balasore in Orissa; while the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam was to be secured from Sindia's hands and taken under English protection.

Out-break of War (August 1803)

The English Plan of Operations

The campaigns in Gujarat and Cuttack were very easy. Bundelkhand was conquered with equal facility. The most serious portions of the conflict lay in the areas of the operations of Lake and Wellesley. The latter opened the Deccan campaign by an attack on Ahmednagar, Sindia's great arsenal in the territories south of the Narmada. He then advanced to Aurangabad and finally met the combined forces of the two enemies at Assaye, near the Ajanta

General Wellesley's Achievements— Assaye

pass, where he won a splendid victory which was, in the words of Grant-Duff, "a triumph more splendid than any recorded in Deccan history" (September 1803). The victory was in reality won over the French contingents of Sindia. Soon afterwards an even more decisive success was won at Argaon, to the east of Burhanpur, over the forces of Bhonsle. Shortly before this second victory, the English forces had captured the town of Burhanpur and the fortress of Asirgarh which were the last remaining possessions of Sindia in the Deccan Wellesley pursued up his victory at Argaon with the capture of the impregnable Gond stronghold, Gawilgarh, and prepared to march to Nagpur itself, the capital of Bhonsle. Sindia now made overtures of peace; and an armistice was concluded with him. Before the end of the year the Treaty of Deogaon was concluded with the Raja of Berar who accepted all the terms of a subsidiary alliance, except that of a resident force. He was to receive a British Resident at Nagpur, to submit all his claims on the Nizam to British arbitration and to appoint to his service no subject of any country at war with the English The provinces of Cuttack and Balasore, as well as all Bhonsle's territory west of the Wardha now came into English hands The former provinces connected the Presidencies of Bengal and Madras, and the latter territory was given over to the Nizam

Treaty of Deogaon with Bhonsle

General Lake's campaign in Hindustan was equally brilliant. He quickly broke up the efficient French battalions of Sindia now commanded by Perron. Perron had succeeded to all the influence and power of De Boigne and was practically a ruling potentate, on account of Sindia's prolonged stay in the Deccan; he collected tribute from the Rajput states, exercised control over Delhi, Agra and Aligarh, but was disinclined to cross swords with the English, being conscious that his master was not likely to tolerate his power much longer. When Lake captured Aligarh, Perron who was not prepared to fight against the English General resigned

Lake's Campaign

Sindia's service and was given a safe conduct to Lucknow. Bourquin, the inefficient successor of Perron, was defeated in the battle of Delhi, and Lake took under British protection the blind old Mughal Emperor. Lord Wellesley regarded this "as more important for the results it prevented than for the results it achieved," as the Mughal might have become a powerful aid to the cause of France under French agents. The Mughal Emperor was given a nominal sovereignty over Delhi and its immediate vicinity; but all real control was in the hands of the British Resident, who exercised a rigid supervision over the doings of the Mughal imperial court itself.

Acquisition of Delhi and the Custody of the Mughal Emperor

Lake shortly afterwards made a treaty with the Raja of Bharatpur and captured Agra At the famous battle of Laswari, marked by hard fighting and great slaughter, the rest of Sindia's French battalions were completely destroyed He had now lost Delhi and all his territory on both sides of the Jumna as well as the custody of the Mughal Emperor. His Deccan dominion had vanished and his ally, the Bhonsle Raja, had made peace. Foiled everywhere, he signed the Treaty of Sirji Anjengaon (December 1803), by which he ceded to the English all his dominions between the Jumna and the Ganges, Ahmadnagar, Broach in Gujarat, and all his lands north of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Gohad. He was not to employ the subjects of any nation at war with the English; and a modified form of the subsidiary alliance was imposed upon him. The Rajput rulers of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Bundi, and the Jat ruler of Bharatpur were received into alliance, but no tribute was exacted from them, nor any internal interference claimed. By treaty with the Rana of Gohad, the Company acquired the great fortress of Gwalior.

Battle of Laswari

Treaty of Sirji Anjengaon

Wellesley proudly declared that, by these two treaties (of Deogaon and Sirji Anjengaon), he had destroyed the military power of Sindia and Bhonsle as well as that of the French and extended English power as far as Delhi. There were, of course, various reasons for British success. Lake and Wellesley launched on the enemy attack after attack without allowing them any opportunity to rally or recover themselves. Sindia himself had been greatly weakened by his war with Holkar; and the Marathas had abandoned their old tactics of guerilla and predatory warfare. "Their European training and their formation into battalions and divisions had rendered them invincible against other Indian powers, but had only rendered them capable of showing a determined resistance in defeat to European armies" The Maratha armies had ceased to be really Maratha in racial composition and were made up of miscellaneous fighting material recruited from the Afghans, Pathans, Rajputs, Kolis, Gonds, Pindaris, etc The importance attached to infantry tactics and to artillery had, in the words of Munro, "reduced the war to a war of battles and sieges, instead of one of marches and convoys." The foreign or alien elements rapidly increased; and the Maratha armies came to be composed of mercenaries enlisted from all parts of India and commanded by adventurers, mostly European renegades. Their defeats were crushing and decisive. Their regular troops and heavy cannon hampered quick movements and daring marches and manœuvres. When once they were dispersed or destroyed, they could not be easily replaced, as the reserves of well-trained officers, artillery and war-material were scanty or non-existent with them. It was difficult for any Indian prince to repair his losses of cannon and trained soldiers; and a decisive defeat was really disastrous to him.*

Reasons for British Successes

Futility of the Forces of the Indian Rulers

* See Roberts' *Wellesley*, p. 232; and Lyall's *British Dominion in India* (4th edition), pp. 225-7. Lyall says: "The whole attempt of the native powers to imitate the military methods of Europe proved a delusion and a snare. It led them to suppose that they could put themselves on an equality with the English by a system that really placed them at a disadvantage, and to maintain, upon a false estimate of

Wellesley's view that the recent victories had raised the English power to a position of unchallenged supremacy and arbitration proved to be premature; he assumed, perhaps too readily, that the Indian powers would easily acquiesce in the claims that he put forward. Moreover the Ministry at home began to think that the Governor-General had gone considerably against the spirit of the Parliamentary Acts of 1784 and 1793 and increased the unwieldiness and complexity of government which could not be run by ordinary men. Wellesley was anxious to neutralise and isolate Holkar who had so far stood aloof, but had been looking with sullen resentment, on the English successes He had greatly increased his forces during the late war. He presumed to think that his immunity was due to the English fear of him and claimed the right to collect tribute from the Rajput states and the cession to him of the ancient possessions of his family in the Doab He threatened Hindustan with fire and sword and approached Sindia for an alliance, though to no purpose. War was declared with him in April 1804; and a comprehensive campaign was planned, by which Holkar was to be attacked from Gujarat, Malwa and the Deccan, and Lord Lake was to advance from the Doab At first Holkar was driven southward and Lake captured Rampur When the rains came, Lake retired to Cawnpore; and part of the army rested in an advanced base. Colonel Monson's premature and ill-judged advance into Rajputana, in order to join Murray's army from Gujarat ended in a disastrous retreat. He had not taken the usual precautions to cover his route, and found that Murray had retired and that he had to face the whole army of Holkar in a narrow pass without supplies or guides. He determined upon a retreat which became a disorderly rout owing to the

Danger from Holkar

War declared with him (April 1804)

Monson's retreat

their strength, large military establishments under foreign officers which it soon became the chief object of the English power to disband or destroy." And thus the English became supreme as they excelled all other states in the art of disciplined fighting and as their stability did not depend, in any event, upon the life or luck of a single ruler or general, or upon the issue of a single battle and their resources were backed up by an immense reserve of money, material and men.

enemy's harrassing movements. This retreat was the most signal defeat sustained by the English since the destruction of Baillie's force by Hyder Ali in 1780.* The Jat ruler of Bharatpur opened negotiations with the enemy; and the notorious Zalim Singh of Kotah refused to shelter the retreating troops

Its Effect

This success roused the dormant pride of the Marathas; and Sindia began to waver in his new loyalty. It proved, in the sequel, the final blow to Wellesley's position in India, as the Directors, when they heard of it, determined to recall him at once. It prolonged the operations to a miserable length

Even as it was, the depression in the English fortunes was but temporary Indore, the capital of Holkar, was

English Victories

captured He himself was driven back from Delhi which he threatened; and he was defeated decisively at Deeg and at Farrukhabad; and his fortunes were reduced to a low ebb by the end of 1804. But, again, the English arms met with a serious reverse. Lake was repulsed with heavy loss from Bharatpur whose Raja he wanted to punish for having

Reversal at Bharatpur

deserted to Holkar This failure caused "a disproportionate sensation in contemporary opinion," and the Jat ruler was allowed a treaty without his capital being captured. Sindia Raja became positively threatening in his attitude and objected strongly to the transference of Gwalior to the Rana of Gohad. Indeed, a secret alliance was being formed against the English between Holkar, Sindia, Amir Khan, the free-booter,

* It was sung in ribald songs of contempt in every bazaar. One song ran thus.—

Ghore par hauda (horses with howdahs)
Hathi par zin (elephants saddled)
Jaldi bhag gaya (off helter-skelter)
Kornail Monsin (Monson skedaddled).

The same rhyme with Hastings substituted for Monson, used to be sung about Hastings' flight from Benares on the occasion of Chait Singh's rebellion. General Wellesley wrote that both Monson and Murray seemed to have been afraid of Holkar and to have fled from him in different directions and that "Monson's disasters are really the greatest and most disgraceful to our military character of any that have ever occurred." Owen's *Wellesley Despatches*, p. 788.

and the Raja of Bharatpur. Sindia even crossed the Chambal with a large force; but the advance of an English army into Bundelkhand made him pause.

Cornwallis supersedes Wellesley (July 1805)

The Governor-General was anxious for peace and even made up his mind to pacify Sindia by restoring Gwalior to him But Monson's retreat and Lake s failure before Bharatpur had caused apprehension in England where the Ministry had already turned against Wellesley, while Charles Grant, one of his ablest opponents. became the head of the Directors The debt of the Company had greatly increased; and the Indian conquests were too large for profitable management. Wellesley was superseded by Cornwallis who had directions to make peace with the various powers Wellesley saw that this meant a complete reversal of his policy He was sure that he had actually broken Holkar's power But the new peace policy was carried out in a spirit of conciliation of enemies whose hatred was too deep to be assuaged by mere conciliation and forbearance from hostilities It left in the lurch weak states like Jaipur which looked to British protection and reverted Central India to more than a decade of anarchy and lawlessness

Reversal of Policy

Grounds of Dissatisfaction of the Directors with Wellesley

Even from the conclusion of the Treaty of Bassein, the Ministry had begun to find fault with Wellesley They denied the necessity of getting involved in the Maratha wars, and declared that, after Tipu's destruction, Maratha help was no more than a mere safeguard against distant danger. The Directors had always been urging a policy of non-intervention; and Wellesley had always been asserting that such a policy was impossible as well as dangerous. Both the Governor-General and his brother, General Wellesley, had been justifying the conclusion of the Treaty of Bassein and contending that it did not create the war which was unavoidable in the circumstances of the expansion of the English power and would have come sooner or later; and the Treaty

of Bassein only enabled the English to carry it on with better chances of success. The danger of the French troops of Sindia had also to be put down. Sir George Barlow, who was to succeed Cornwallis as Governor-General, fully supported the treaty at the time. Many others maintained that it was absolutely necessary for the defeat of French designs. The Court of Directors feared that the acquisitions of Wellesley would prove too great a burden and were dismayed that all the glory of the wars and victories accrued to the Crown and the nation and not to themselves It was the case of the Governor-General fighting and the Company paying The Directors accused Wellesley of increasing salaries and making appointments without their sanction. They complained of his habit of exploiting the *fait accompli*, *i.e* , of initiating negotiations himself and of communicating them to his Council or the Directors only when it was impossible or too late to withdraw. They declared that they were deprived of that control over the Indian Government to which they were entitled according to Pitt's Bill and complained also of the treatment accorded to them by the Board of Control and the Secret Committee *

His Recall

The reverses in the war with Holkar frightened even Lord Castlereagh, Wellesley's friend. Cornwallis was sent out immediately the news of Monson's retreat reached England. After Wellesley's retirement a series of attacks began on him in Parliament, while the Directors passed a vote of censure on him. It took the latter body thirty years to discover their mistake and to remove the censure by voting a statue and a money-grant for their famous Pro-Consul. He lived on for a number of years and died in 1842, full of honour and glory.

* See Chap. XXIII of Roberts' *India under Wellesley*, entitled the Governor-General, the Court of Directors and the Board of Control.

Section V. Cornwallis and Barlow (1805-07): Reversal of Wellesley's Policy

When the aged Cornwallis arrived in India, in very feeble health and at the most trying period of the year (July 1805), the Company was still at war with Holkar and hardly at peace with Sindia. He was resolved, he wrote, to restore the princes affected by the Maratha wars to their dignities, to abandon the position in Hindustan which had been secured by Wellesley's successes and to be freed from all alliances, obligations and territories beyond the Jumna. He lamented the frenzy for victory and conquest which possessed not only Lord Wellesley, but many of the high officials, including Malcolm. He wrote an elaborate despatch to Lord Lake, who was still keeping the field, asking him to conciliate Sindia by restoring Gwalior to him, to restore all Holkar's territories if he should come to reasonable terms, to abandon all the new acquisitions west of the Jumna and to give up even Delhi to Sindia and remove Shah Alam to Calcutta or some other place. Lake protested strongly against this new course; he urged that it would leave the Rajput states which had sought and secured British protection, to the tender mercies of Holkar and Sindia and to leave large bodies of free-booters under Amir Khan and other adventurers, free to roam about along the British frontier of the Jumna; he also urged that the Jumna above its junction with the Chambal was not a strong, natural or defensible barrier. When Cornwallis ordered Lake not to move except in self-defence lest Sindia should be provoked into a war, the latter threw up his command. Lord Cornwallis indeed prepared to go up the Ganges to the neighbourhood of Delhi to see that all his orders were fully carried out and to persuade Lake to withdraw his resignation. But he sickened in the course of the journey and died at Ghazipur (October 1805).

Cornwallis reverses Wellesley's Policy (1805)

His Death (October 1805)

The Governor-Generalship now devolved upon Sir George Barlow, the senior Member of Council, *ad interim*. He had ably served under three successive Governors-General and faithfully assisted Wellesley in carrying out his policy. He now as faithfully enforced the instructions of Lord Cornwallis, in the true spirit of a civil servant. He carried out a policy of non-intervention and ordered the abandonment of all concern in the affairs of every state beyond the Jumna, "as being in conformity with the principles laid down by the Parliament, with the orders of their honourable masters (the Directors) and with his own convictions of expediency." He was convinced that "a certain amount of dominion, local power and revenue could be cheaply sacrificed for tranquillity and security within a contracted circle." The English power could be indifferent to the prevalence of anarchy among the states beyond the frontier, and Indian princes might be allowed full scope for mutual war in order that they might find no leisure to invade British territories. This attitude produced consequences which, in the words of Metcalfe, himself a future Governor-General, brought "disgrace without compensation, treaties without security and peace without tranquillity."

Sir George Barlow, Provisional Governor-General (1805-07)

He enforces the new Policy

Meanwhile Lord Lake had been maintaining a firm attitude towards Sindia and Holkar. He had succeeded in getting an honourable treaty concluded with Sindia which confirmed the previous peace of Sirji Anjengaon and restored to him Gwalior and authority over Gohad; and the Company was to claim nothing to the south of the Chambal and precluded from entering into any alliances with the Rajput rulers of Jaipur, Jodhpur, etc. (Nov. 1805). Lake also tried hard to retrieve the military position with reference to Holkar, and hunted him into a flight northward towards Amritsar. Holkar appealed to the Sikhs whose chiefs (or sardars or misls) had established themselves in power on both sides of the Satlej;

Treaties with Sindia

MAP OF INDIA

Showing the British Possessions about 1805 A. D.

but Lake entered into an agreement with Ranjit Singh of Lahore, a young Sikh chieftain, who was fast laying the foundations of a powerful state, by which the latter promised not to help the fugitive in any manner and to compel him to quit the Punjab. Holkar found himself helpless and sued for terms. Lake was forced by the Governor-General to conclude a treaty at Rajpur Ghat which was unduly favourable to the enemy and granted to him much easier terms than he expected or deserved. His territories were restored to him; but he was to give up all his claims to the states of Bundi, Rampur and all places north of the Chambal as well as Bundelkhand and to entertain no Europeans in his service without the permission of the English. This treaty was further modified by the Governor-General who restored Rampur to Holkar and left the Raja of Bundi to his fate, although the latter had the strongest claims to English protection from the ravages of Holkar.

and with Holkar (1806)

Nor was this all. The Raja of Jaipur who had entered into a subsidiary alliance with Wellesley and who had rendered effective aid against Holkar, was left to his fate; and the promised protection was withdrawn from him by a declaration of Barlow withdrawing British protection from the Rajput states. Thus the English abandoned a faithful ally to suit their own convenience and, in the words of the envoy of the betrayed ruler of Jaipur, "made their faith subservient to their interest." In vain Lake protested against such disgraceful action. Jaipur was soon afterwards raided by Holkar who extorted a large sum of money from its ruler.

English Abandonment of the Rajputs

Holkar, finding out the nature of the new English policy, attempted to form a national league of the Maratha princes against the common enemy (the Company). He continued to be a menace to all Central India till his death in

Renewal of Anarchy

raging insanity in 1811.* The withdrawal of British protection left all the Rajput states at the mercy of Maratha and Pathan adventurers. The Rajput rulers were unable to unite against their common enemies and wasted themselves in fierce internecine conflict over the hand of the beautiful Princess Krishna Kumari, daughter of the Rana of Udaipur, who, "like Helen of old, involved in destruction her own and the rival houses."† A disastrous struggle ensued between the Rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur over her hand; and the Pathan free-booter, Amir Khan, freely fought on both sides, while the Rana of Udaipur was plundered mercilessly by Sindia and Amir Khan; and all Central India became a scene of desolation. Amir Khan suggested that the only solution to the problem was the death of the Princess herself; and one of the foulest murders ever known in history was committed when the Princess was forced by her father to drink from a poisoned cup. This tragic episode illustrates, more than other events, the demoralisation, ineptitude and anarchy into which the chivalrous Rajput princes had now fallen and from which they were to be extricated by the British power alone.

Futility of the new Policy

During all these years the Rajput chiefs including Zalim Singh of Kotah, had appealed repeatedly for British protection. They declared that there had always been in India some supreme power to which the weak looked for protection; and the English had now

* Jaswant Rao was 'never more than the leader of an army of plunderers, to whom he lent the aid of his talents, his name and his cause .....he had no esteem for the principles of good and regular government and never evinced the least desire to establish them."—pp. 255-7 of Malcolm's *A Memoir of Central India*, Vol. I.

† For a graphic and forceful account of the incident, refer to Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* (Popular edition)—Annals of Mewar, Chap. XVII, Vol. I, pp. 366-369. Tod was so impressed by the demeanour of the Udaipur Rana on the occasion of his meeting with Sindia at Eklinga, that he was kindled with "an enthusiastic desire for the restoration of his fallen condition which stimulated his perseverance to obtain that knowledge by which alone he might be enabled to benefit him." The result of Tod's enthusiastic labours was the monumental work which enabled the English to appreciate, at their full value, the chivalry and honour of the noble Rajput race.

See for a dramatic presentation of the episode—Edward Thompson's *Krishna Kumari* (1924) (*Contemporary British Dramatists*, Vol. X).

succeeded to this position and were morally bound to fulfil the duties attaching to it. Had Wellesley continued in office for a year, he would have effectually coerced Sindia and destroyed the power of Holkar and Amir Khan. The new policy brought indeed peace to the Company, but distraction to India. By abandoning defensive alliances which had been made, the Company endeavoured to check the advance of British authority to supremacy in India. But this attempt proved not only abortive, but disastrous and produced more than a decade of anarchy over a considerable area; and it afforded an opportunity for the dangerous growth of the new predatory power of the Pindaris, whom it fell to the lot of Lord Hastings to crush out.

The new policy of neutrality and non-intervention proved to be inadvisable even to Barlow The new Nizam, Sikandar Jah, who had succeeded Nizam Ali in 1803, considered himself, like others, free to act as he chose. He opened negotiations with Holkar and Sindia, assembled troops on his frontier and appeared to be anxious to get rid of British control. Barlow felt that this was allowing things to go too far; he abandoned his declared attitude of indifference, restored the pro-British minister who had been driven from power and forced the Nizam into the more direct control of the British Resident. He also resisted the attempt of the Directors to modify the Treaty of Bassein and to withdraw from all interference in Maratha politics; and he boldly declared that it would be folly to abandon the hold over the Peishwa on which depended British supremacy over the Marathas. He refused to recognise the pretensions to political supremacy in Central India that the Peishwa made and enforced on him vigorously all the conditions of Wellesley's treaty.

Barlow checks the Nizam

and the Peishwa

Barlow was successful in reducing expenditure; he converted the previous annual deficit into a surplus and placed the finances on an easy footing. For nearly twenty years surpluses accrued till the First Burmese War

Improvement of Finances

several Sikh *misls*. Ranjit himself who came to power at a very early age in 1792, had strengthened his position with great ability and tact, helped Zeman Shah when the latter descended into the Punjab in 1799 and had been confirmed as the ruler of Lahore which had always been deemed to be an Afghan possession. By 1806 Ranjit Singh had extended his authority over the different *misls* right down to the Sutlej. To the south of it lay the region of Sirhind occupied by a number of Sikh *chiefs*, known as the Malwa or Cis-Sutlej Sikhs, of whom the Rajas of Nabha, Jhind and Patiala were the most important. In the course of a quarrel between the Rajas of Patiala and Nabha, the latter applied to Ranjit Singh for aid. Ranjit Singh was only too anxious to interfere; he crossed the Sutlej in 1806 and compelled the submission of both chiefs to his power Next year he interfered again in the affairs of Patiala and levied contributions on the petty chiefs, seizing some of their forts and lands. He then wrote to the English, claiming all the country to the west of the Jumna except the stations actually in their occupation. The Sikh chiefs had appealed to Mr. Metcalfe, Resident at Delhi, for protection; and Lord Minto resolved to send a mission to Lahore to settle affairs amicably. Metcalfe who was chosen as the envoy, crossed the Sutlej and met Ranjit Singh, displayed great firmness and ability and showed the Sikh that the English were prepared to maintain their position by force of arms; while General Ochterlony advanced with an army to the banks of the river. Ranjit Singh was now convinced that the English were in real earnest; he abandoned his dreams of conquest and concluded a treaty at Amritsar with Metcalfe (April, 1809) by which the chiefs of Sirhind were declared to be under British protection and the British zone of control was extended to Ludhiana on the banks of the Sutlej where a garrison was stationed. Thus Lord Minto definitely acted against the policy of non-intervention in extending British protection to the Cis-Sutlej Sikh chiefs and confining the activities of Ranjit Singh to the Punjab.

Ranjit Singh

Metcalfe's Treaty with him (1809)

It was the fear of a French invasion from Turkey and Persia that formed one of the factors leading to the conclusion of an alliance with Ranjit Singh who loyally kept to his engagements till his death Down to the Treaty of Tilsit in 1807 between Napoleon and the Russian Tsar, English anxiety in India had been mainly in the direction of Maratha troubles. Russia had become a great Asiatic power pushing steadily eastward and southward from Turkestan; and the Franco-Russian alliance gave rise in the English mind to alarms of invasion by land. The English began to concern themselves more with the states on the western frontier* Afghanistan was distracted with domestic confusion, and Persia was not really strong enough to threaten India. In 1799 Malcolm had been sent on an embassy to Persia and concluded two treaties (1801), one of which was directed against the aggressions of Afghanistan and the extension of French influence in Persia An embassy was sent to Kabul under Mount-Stuart Elphinstone, to oppose the French and to thwart their possible plans of advance into India through Afghanistan Elphinstone was a man of great capacity and one of the statesmen of the Wellesley school. He met the Afghan ruler Shah Shujah, a brother of Zeman Shah at Peshawar But the latter was helpless on account of the rebellion of his brother who had seized Kabul and Kandahar and wanted from the English assistance in men and money. Minto refused to accede to this request and recalled the embassy. Shah Shuja however promised help against any French advance through Afghan territory But he was soon afterwards driven from the throne The only outcome of this embassy was a valuable account of Afghanistan and its people written by Elphinstone (*An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul*).

Fear of French Designs of Invasion by Land

Elphinstone's Embassy to Kabul (1809)

"No sooner, in fact, had the spectre of French troopships, hovering about our sea-coast, been finally laid under the waters of Trafalgar, than the apparition of European armies marching from the Caspian to the Oxus began to trouble the prophetic imagination of English statesmen."—Lyall's *British Dominion in India* (4th ed.), pp. 269-70.

In Persia also French influence was, for the time being, in the ascendant. Sir Harford Jones was sent as ambassador to the Persian court directly from England; while Lord Minto, desiring an embassy of his own, had despatched Malcolm to Teheran. Malcolm returned without effecting anything, and persuaded Minto to send an expedition to the Persian Gulf and occupy the island of Karrak which might be useful as a station of trade. Meanwhile Sir Harford Jones had effected the object of his mission successfully, *viz.*, the abandonment by the Shah of the French alliance. Minto sent Malcolm a second time to Persia; and the latter's tact and geniality gained for him the favour of the monarch. Shortly afterwards both the ambassadors were superseded by an envoy sent from England who began to reside at the Persian court permanently; and from this time the relations with Persia passed largely into the hands of the Home Government

Embassies to Persia (1809-10)

Another embassy was also sent to Sind which was ruled jointly by three brothers known as Amirs. A similar treaty was concluded with them by which they promised to exclude the French from their dominions

and to Sind

When Amir Khan, an adventurer, who was the principal ally of Holkar, marched into the dominions of Nagpur, to claim, as he said, certain jewels said to have been given him by Holkar, Minto ordered out an army against the Khan and compelled him to withdraw into his own territory. The Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur was not entitled by treaty to claim British protection; and Amir Khan protested and pleaded the terms of the English treaty with Holkar. But Minto insisted on his retirement promptly. But the latter's territories which had been occupied were restored to him; and no check was imposed on him. Thus the danger was allowed to grow again; and non-intervention was permitted to come back into its own.

Suppression of Amir Khan's Raids

Non-intervention partially abandoned

Minto also made a vigorous effort to put down piracy in the west coast and in the Persian Gulf. When Napoleon occupied Portugal in 1809, all the Portuguese possessions in India were seized, and a force was despatched to China to seize Macao, but recalled on the Chinese making a protest An expedition was fitted out to seize Mauritius, the headquarters of the French privateers in the Indian Ocean. The expedition succeeded in its object It also conquered the Dutch East Indies, since Holland had become a portion of Napoleon's empire. Amboyna and the neighbouring islands were easily occupied; and the populous and fertile island of Java was entrusted to the able hands of Sir Stamford Raffles, the famous Governor of Singapore

Capture of Mauritius and of the Dutch Indies (1809-11)

Lord Minto had accompanied the Java expedition, and when he returned, he had to take severe measures to repel the *Pindaris* who had burst into the province of Bundelkhand in great force In 1312 they extended their depradations from Central India to Bihar on the east Minto hesitated to take decisive action to put them down effectively, pending the sanction of the Directors, and their destruction had to be left to his successor It was indeed Minto's peculiar lot to be cast between the traditions of Wellesley and Hastings and to be always undefined in his attitude and policy, and he was recalled before he could take any decisive action

Sir George Barlow had not a good time of it as the Governor of Madras He was troubled by a rebellion in Travancore, fomented by the Raja's minister, Velu Tampi, and a widespread attempt at mutiny among the British officers of the Madras Army The Travancore rising was easily quelled (1809); and the two states of Travancore and Cochin whose subsidies were irregularly paid and whose administration was very inefficient, were taken over temporarily under direct British administration under the terms of the treaty of 1805.

Rising in Travancore

Barlow also attempted to effect retrenchment in the army expenditure and to cut down the tent contract allowance of the officers. His zeal and severity provoked a wholesale mutiny which turned out to be very serious at Seringapatam where the mutineers turned their guns against the troops sent against them. There were threatened disturbances in several other places. Lord Minto was alarmed, proceeded to Madras and tided over the crisis by his tact and moderation and by the loyal attitude of the Indian troops. A few of the ring-leaders were punished; but Barlow who had displayed a brave attitude all the while, was recalled *

The White Mutiny in Madras

Minto's administration was, on the whole, very just and greatly respected He suppressed dacoity which had become rife again in Bengal and improved the police forces He patronised vernacular literature and desired to start Sanskrit colleges at Nuddea and Tirhut But he was suspicious of the teachings of Christian missionaries and discouraged them He tried to pay off the old debt; and his financial administration was very creditable The only trouble he left untouched was that from the Pindaris † Everywhere else there was quiet and peace, though this was only the calm before the storm that was soon to burst out

Minto's Rule

In 1813 the Company s charter was renewed for another period of twenty years This provoked some good debates about India in Parliament. It was preceded by a most searching investigation into Indian affairs by a Committee of the House of Commons in the years 1808-12. It produced the famous Fifth Report which was published in 1812 and is still deemed to be a standard authority on Indian land-tenures and

Renewal of the Company's Charter in 1813—The Fifth Report

* See for a detailed narrative, Sir A. Cardew's *The White Mutiny* (1929).

† For their origin see *Origin of the Pindaris*, etc., by an Officer of the E. I. Company, published in 1818—Chap. V, pp. 94-104 of the Indian edition of 1928. For the Pindaris and their rise to prominence, see Col. J. Tod's account, published in the *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission*—Lahore Session (1937)—Vol. XIV.

"the best authority on the judicial and police arrangements of the time." The Directors struggled very hard for the maintenance of their trade monopoly But the Ministry of Castlereagh was totally opposed to its continuance; and trade with India was thrown open to all Englishmen, though the Company was allowed to keep up the monopoly of the China trade for twenty years more. Missionaries were allowed to come freely into the country;* and a sum was to be set apart every year for the promotion of education among the Indian youth. This is the beginning of regular educational enterprise by the British Indian Government. The Anglican Church was established in the country and a regular Bishop was appointed to Calcutta. European immigration was allowed under a strict system of licenses, though the venerable Warren Hastings, Sir John Shore and many other distinguished men pointed out the dangers of unrestricted European immigration into the country This Charter Act inflicted a serious blow on the trade of the Company and inaugurated the beginnings of private mercantile and industrial enterprise in the country. Otherwise, the Company was allowed to continue to have its share in the government of the country, though some would have liked to destroy it even then

Provisions of the Act

Lord Minto's action against missionaries had been much criticised, specially his forbidding of propagandist teaching in Calcutta. The fear of mutiny, caused by the Vellore insurrection had gone deep into his mind; he was afraid of any preachings against caste without any attempt at proving the falsity of Hindu doctrines. But there was, among the Europeans, 'a wide spread *preparatio evangeli*', and a desire was expressed by the Rev. Claudius Buchanan for the establishment of the Anglican Church in India.

CHAPTER XI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD HASTINGS

SECTION I. NEPALESE AND PINDARI WARS

On the resignation of Lord Minto, the Earl of Moira, later on created Marquess of Hastings, was appointed Governor-General. Sailing from Portsmouth on the 14th of April, 1813, he reached Calcutta on the 4th of October, after an arduous voyage of more than five months

The Earl of Moira (1813-23)

A nobleman of the highest order, exceedingly generous and affable, he was recommended to this office by his intimate friend, the Prince Regent, who, later, became George IV. He served for seven years in the War of American Independence and displayed conspicuous bravery in the Battle of the Bunker's Hill (June 1775). He was again with Lord Cornwallis when Philadelphia was taken. Returning to England in 1781, he sank into obscurity, taking little active part in politics. In the Cabinet crisis of 1812, the Prince Regent entrusted to Lord Hastings the delicate task of conducting negotiations with the members of the Whig Party with a view to retain it; but although he failed in the attempt, the entire transaction raised his credit, 'for the Prince approved of his services and the ministers appreciated his character.' Before he came to India he had condemned, from his seat in Parliament, the policy and principles of his predecessors, especially those of Lord Wellesley, as aggressive and ambitious; but like the latter, while in office, he became a convert to the view, "that our object in India ought to be to render the British Government paramount in effect, if not declaredly so, to hold the other states as vassals, though not in name, and to oblige them, in return for our guarantee and protection, to perform the two great feudatory duties of supporting our rule with all their forces, and submitting their mutual differences to our arbitration."

As has already been seen, Lord Minto had little leisure to devote to the affairs of Central India His energies were consumed in counteracting schemes of French aggrandisement and in sending diplomatic missions to distant Asiatic potentates. Even though Central India was in a much disturbed condition, he flattered himself that, except for the Pindari cloud, British India was in a state of perfect security Lord Hastings thought differently. "On my taking the reins of Government," he wrote, "seven different quarrels likely to demand the decision of arms, were transferred to me" The policy of non-intervention, steadily pursued during the years of Lord Minto's regime, had created in Northern India a position analogous to that which existed in Sir John Shore's days Everywhere there was a general contempt for the English and the native powers were conspiring to shake off the yoke of the British connection Lord Hastings perceived, soon after he assumed office, a general hatred of the Company cherished by the Indian rulers in general who disliked their overlords and oppressed their people The situation was bad in Hyderabad; and Metcalfe, the Resident at Delhi, urged the abolition of "the mischievous fiction of the 'King' in Delhi"

Condition of India in 1813

The neutral policy of non-intervention had permitted Sindia, Holkar and the Bhonsle Raja to do what they pleased within their respective jurisdictions. Taking advantage of British indifference towards the small Rajput States in the interior, they let loose their predatory hordes who plundered them The oppressed Rajput chiefs lodged in their agony a vigorous protest against the lawless acts of the Maratha rulers "They said that some power in India had always existed to which peaceable states submitted, and in return obtained its protection against the invasions of upstart chiefs and the armies of lawless banditti; that the British Government now occupied the place of that protecting power, and was the natural guardian to weak states which were continually exposed to the cruelties and oppression of robbers

Oppressive Native Rule

and plunderers, owing to the refusal of the British Government to protect them." Nor was this all The internal administration of these states was abominable Crushed by tyrants and ruined by exactions, society everywhere was in a state of dissolution The Holkar became insane; and Amir Khan, a free-booter and adventurer of the worst type, not only controlled his army, but became the chief prop of his throne. The Peishwa, smarting under the restrictions imposed on him by the Treaty of Bassein, was secretly attempting to consolidate his power and entered into negotiations with the other Maratha chiefs, not only to regain his old hold on the Maratha nation, but to drive the English out of India eventually.

Potential Enemies of the English

The Pindaris, the murderous gangs of whom we shall study in detail were now enlisting themselves in large numbers in the army of Sindia and Holkar; and the circle of their devastating raids was becoming wider and wider More efficient in fighting and better disciplined were the Pathans, yet another foe of the Rajput states. Disdaining to plunder the poor and the innocent and owning, like the Pindaris, no territorial relations, they levied systematic blackmail on princes and governments * Their leader was the formidable Pathan, Amir Khan, already alluded to 'He preferred the wild and exciting life of a captain of *condottiere* and, as such, made an excellent living out of the feuds he fomented and the disorder he created.'

* The Pindaris are first mentioned as bodies of irregular cavalry who helped the Bahmani Sultan in plundering the country to the south of the Krishna after the battle of Rakkas Tagdi (Talikota). They were next found in Aurangzeb's expeditions in the Deccan They were employed in Central India and the Central Provinces by the Maratha chiefs like Jaswant Rao Holkar and Daulat Rao Sindia and fixed their headquarters in Malwa under the protection of these rulers They received no pay, but enjoyed the right of plunder. In 1814 they numbered between twenty and thirty thousand men They took "the place in Indian armies caused vacant by the defection of the Maratha Bargir horse" (Appendix *B*, MSS relating to the origin, progress and present state of the Pindaris by Col. J. Tod (1815)—pp. 212-42—*Proceedings of the I.H.R. Commission*, Vol. XIV (1937)

When the Marquess of Hastings landed in Calcutta, he found that the issues arising from the border raids of the Gurkhas could be settled only by actual war. Thus it looked as if the fabric of British rule so laboriously raised was destined to be shaken to its very foundations. Lord Hastings, full of initiative and strength, took up the challenge; 'and so it came about that his administration proved to be the natural sequel of that of his most distinguished predecessor in the art of Empire-making, the Marquess of Wellesley, and equally involved an era of conquest and reconstruction.' The affairs of Nepal will receive our attention first.

Nepal : The Country and Its People

Nepal is a little mountainous state embedded in the bosom of the Himalayas On the north it is bounded by some of its loftiest elevations and on the south by the first and the lowest range. Skirting round it, there is a magnificent forest of gigantic trees, some ten miles in depth 'No breath of wind reaches the interior, which is littered with rank and decayed vegetation; no animals inhabit it and no sound of a bird is heard in its recesses." South of this forest, there lies an open plain called the *Tarai*, five hundred miles in length and twenty in breadth, the grazing ground of cattle brought hither by migratory herdsmen Not much is known about the earliest inhabitants of the Nepal valley It is presumed that they were Newars, a race of Mongolian descent who were Buddhists and who occupied a much restricted valley In the days of Asoka, his rule was recognised there; and in the fourth century A D., Samudragupta exacted some sort of obedience from the Nepalese. The occurrence of the Harshan era in their records indicates the subjugation of their country for some time by Emperor Harsha. After the latter's death, in the general confusion that followed, Tibet would appear to have held sway over the land. The history of modern Nepal commences from the fourteenth century when bands of adventurous Rajputs penetrated into the valley, defeated the original rulers and established independent principalities for

themselves. The Newars, who claim a South Indian descent, peopled the valley of Nepal and developed a peculiar style of architecture and great proficiency in arts and crafts. There were increasing dissentions among the chiefs of the land and three principalities flourished at Kathmandu, Bhatgaon and Patan, all in the valley. Internecine war resulted in political power passing into the hands of three families. The chief of one of them, the mountain tribe of Gurkha*, Prithivi Narayan, defeated other Rajas and ultimately founded a dynasty of his own (1767)†. A grandson of the founder, having proved a tyrant, was murdered in open Darbar in 1805. An infant son of the murdered king was next elevated to the throne with a council of regency to carry on the administration

Early Military Activities

The new dynasty possessed a wonderful army, trained and disciplined on the European model; and it thirsted for fresh conquests. It had the temerity to proceed up to Lhassa and levy tribute from the Dalai Lama, an insult avenged, however, by China, the suzerain power. The Gurkha army next attacked territories on the east and west of the Nepal Valley, with the result that the Kalee River on the west and the little state of Sikkhim on the east became Nepal's new boundaries. A free-lance Gurkha soldier, the renowned Amar Singh, even entered the Punjab and invested the fortress of Kangra. This enterprise, however, proved a failure and he had to retire in 1813 to his own borders.

* It has been sometimes thought that the invaders came from the west, through the Kumaun hills; but the better opinion seems that which traces them to Gorakhpur and this accounts for the eye of desire, which they continued to cast in that direction. The name in both cases is connected with Gorakh Nath. These people intermarried with the Mongolian women, and as they made their first capital at a place called Gurkha—on the western side of the country—they got to be known as Ghurkhali or Gurkha, by which name they are still called.—H. G. Keene : *History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 12-14. See also Brook Northey: *The Land of the Gurkhas*, Ch. V ; and P. Landon: *Nepal* 2 (Vols.) (1928).

† Marshman : *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 286.

Causes of the Nepalese War

For an account of the causes of the war and the campaigns connected with it, we have to rely entirely upon the British writers on the subject. Almost all of them maintain that the Nepalese were the aggressors and provoked a struggle with the English In imitation of the English conquests and annexations in India, the Gurkhas also were slowly adding on to their territory large slices of land in the plains. This process was necessarily slow; and, according to one authority, more than 200 British villages had been absorbed by the Gurkhas during the twenty-five years preceding this war * We are not told whether the Indian Government protested against this usurpation. If they did not do so, it meant that the English tacitly acquiesced in the Nepalese proceedings The fact is that the frontier between Nepal and the territory under British influence had been ill-defined. All available evidence indicates that the English rather connived at the alleged aggressions of the Nepalese Government on the lands of the border zamindars.† In the time of Lord Minto, the Gurkhas laid claim to certain lands in the districts of Saran and Gorakhpur. The English maintained that the lands in dispute belonged to a few zamindars who paid tax to the Indian Government and as such were under

* Marshman *History of India*, Vol. II. p. 287.

† Thus writes Henry T. Prinsep in his *History of the Political and Military Transactions during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings* —"The Goorkhas . . as each Raja in the hills successively fell before them, exterminated the family and becoming heir to all its possessions, took up likewise the old Raja's claims and contests with his neighbours. This brought them into contact with our zamindars, who were, of course, unable to maintain themselves against such an enemy, and generally, therefore, had to resign the object in dispute, for unless when the encroachment was gross and easy of proof, it was vain to hope to interest the British Government in their favour That Government was, in the first place, no loser by the usurpation, for the public revenue was fully secured by the perpetual settlement, and by the increased value of the entire estate against any loss from a partial aggression. Moreover, it was, on principle, distrustful of the pretensions of its own subjects, which were generally exaggerated, while it regarded the Goorkha nation as a well-disposed neighbour, whom it was desirable to conciliate hence an injured Raja of the plains would seldom succeed in procuring any powerful support to his cause, unless, as above observed, the case was very flagrant, when the *Goorkhas would, on remonstrance, make reparation.*"— *Vide* also B. D Basu *Rise of the British Power in India*, Vol. IV. pp. 116-123.

their special protection. The whole matter therefore was one for arbitration. As a matter of fact, when Lord Hastings reached India, he found a mixed commission consisting of Major Bradshaw and other Nepalese commissioners enquiring into the allegations of the British zamindars. The reason for the failure of this conference to adjudicate differences by peaceful arbitration is thus given by Mill and it deserves quotation. "The abrupt departure of the Commissioners is referred by Mr Prinsep to the receipt, by the Raja of Nepal, of the letter of the Governor-General declaring his resolution to occupy the disputed lands by force, if not given up within a specified period. According to the document last quoted, it arose from personal dissatisfaction with the British Commissioner. 'They had an interview with the Major, who made use of improper language towards them; in consequence of which they remained silent; and, seeing no business brought forward, they came away'" If the facts are as noted in the above extract from Nepal papers, it is difficult to maintain that the Gurkhas were responsible for the war.† Lord Hastings could have exercised a little more patience and permitted the Commission to proceed with its work, instead of categorically demanding the surrender of the districts in dispute within twenty-five days The Gurkha cabinet was no less impatient and, convinced of their own prowess in war and elated by their past successes, rashly appealed to the sword as the final arbiter in the settlement of their disputes. Bhim Sen Thapa was the prime minister of the Nepalese

The Parties impatient

* Mill and Wilson: *History of British India*, Vol. VIII, p. 12, foot-note.

† Basu in his *Rise of the Christian Power in India*, Vol. IV, says in regard to this, "The English were watching for nearly half a century for an opportunity to wipe out the disgrace of ignominious retreat before the Goorkhas. The Marquess of Hastings thought that the favourable opportunity for striking the blow at the Goorkhas had come." The English retreat, referred to above, took place in 1767 and the commander of the expedition was Major Kinloch. Basu's conclusions are not easily convincing. Is it likely that the Governor-General who, after a few days of his taking the reins of Government, declared that there were 'seven different quarrels' impending, would have chosen this opportunity to provoke a struggle with the Nepalese of whose valour he must have heard?

Kingdom for over thirty years, extended his conquests on all sides; but the Sikhs checked his westward advance at Kangra; the Chinese could not be overrun on the north-east; and the country east of Sikkhim was not worth the conquest. Only the south remained as the field for Gurkha expansion.

Financial Embarrassment of the Indian Government

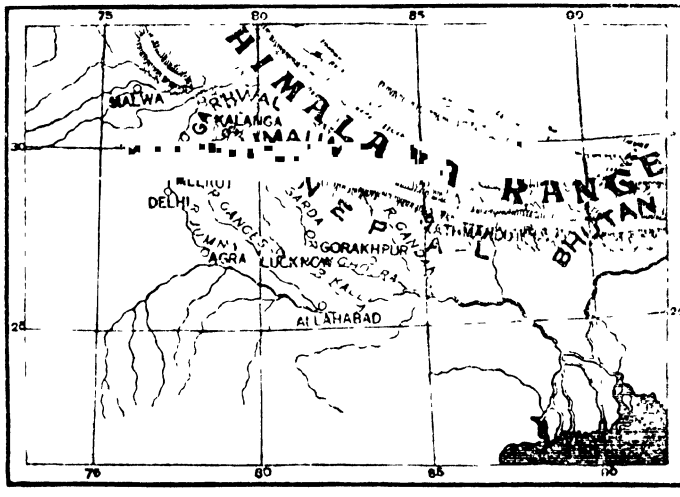
When Lord Hastings, taking courage in both his hands, declared war against Nepal, the Indian treasury was empty The Directors, at the same time, were persistent that bullion of the usual quantity should be despatched home. It was out of the question to raise a loan for the war in the open market as the credit of the Government was low. The resourceful Governor-General now turned to the Nawab Vizier of Oudh for help. The life of this potentate was rendered miserable by the irritating ukases of the British Resident in Oudh, Major Baillie. In a desire to do justice to the Nawab, Hastings ordered the Major to withdraw most of his unreasonable orders; and 'out of gratitude,' the Nawab paid a crore of rupees to the Governor-General Quite unfortunately, the Calcutta Council, without reference to Lord Hastings, utilised a large portion of this amount to clear off old debts, so that the latter was forced to borrow from the same source, another crore It is with money thus raised that Hastings made military preparations against Nepal*

Plan of Campaign (1814)

The war against Nepal was declared on the 1st November, 1814, and, on the British side, elaborate preparations were made. The army of invasion numbered more than thirty thousand men with sixty heavy seige-guns. With great difficulty the Gurkhas were able to muster 12,000 men. The chief objective of the English was to attack and capture the enemy's impregnable positions in the hills; at the same time to

Referring to this, says Basu: "...the people of Nepal did not forget that their country would not have been invaded, and a great portion of it sequestered, had not Oude helped the British Government with money. Vengeance sleeps long, but it never dies. It was therefore, that the Nepalese came to the help of the English in the Indian Mutiny of 1857 and carried fire and sword through Oude and plundered it to their hearts' content and killed thousands of its inhabitants in cold blood."

distract the attention of the Gurkha forces, Lord Hastings determined to attack them from four different points. One force was to operate on the Sutlej side; a second was to attack the capital, Kathmandu, from the eastern frontier; and two others were to penetrate into Nepal from intermediate positions. The magnitude of the task may be inferred from the fact that a distance of 700 miles separated the forces operating from the



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE
THE NEPAL WAR (1814–16)

eastern and western extremes. The Gurkhas, on their part, left a strong garrison under Amar Singh, a brave soldier and the father of Bhim Sen, to protect their Sutlej fortresses, while another division was to safeguard their districts between the Jumna and the Kalee Rivers The rest of the force kept guard over the capital.

General Gillespie moves (1814)

Major-General Gillespie was the first to take the field at the head of 3,500 men. Seizing the Keree pass, he proceeded to Dehra Not far off, situated in a nook of the hills, was the little fortress of Kulunga, which Col. Mawbey, second in command, wanted to capture. Hither had taken shelter, on the sight of the advancing British force, Balabhadra Singh, nephew of

the Gurkha commander, Amar Singh. He had with him only 300 followers and there were many women and children besides.

Siege of Kulunga

Here, in this fortress of Kulunga—a small open square surrounded by stone boulders—Balabhadra exhibited such gallantry that thrilled his opponents who attacked him in overwhelming numbers. We have no space to chronicle in detail this exploit, by the side of which the immortal stand made by Leonidas and his Greek heroes in the battle of Thermopylae pales into insignificance! In vain did General Gillespie attempt to dislodge the Gurkhas In vain, with sword in hand, the gallant general implored his pusillanimous soldiers to wipe out the audacious Gurkha crowd within the square. In an attempt to scale the walls, Gillespie was shot through the heart and died. The assault, however, continued and not till the number of the besieged was reduced to seventy and the pangs of hunger and thirst compelled them to stop fighting, did the Gurkhas open the iron gates. But not to surrender or beg for mercy!! "Suddenly the iron gates were flung open and out came the immortal seventy with drawn swords in their hands, guns on their arms, the *kukri* or *bhujali* hanging from their belts, and the *chakra* or wheel, resplendent on their head-dress, led by their chief Balabhadra—brave, erect, cheerful and in his measured military gait, and, before the astounded British force had time to reflect, they had cut right through the line, drank to their hearts' content from the springs of Nalapani, and in no time disappeared without any one of them being hurt!"

Failure of British Generals

General Martindell who succeeded Gillespie in command did not fare better. He set out to besiege Jytuk, a strongly fortified position in the hills, but failed miserably before it. Similar disaster befell the forces under General Wood who allowed himself to be checkmated by a small force of 1,200 Gurkhas. His shameful withdrawal from his forward position encouraged the enemy to pillage and plunder British villages without let or hindrance. General

Morley, ordered to proceed to the capital and invest it, stampeded out of sheer cowardice, notwithstanding the fact that Lord Hastings sent large reinforcements to him.

Effect of these Reverses

The unparalleled cowardice and incompetency of the British generals engaged in this war had a most disastrous effect upon public opinion in India. The Sindia, the Peishwa, the Pindaris under Amir Khan, and even Ranjit Singh patched up peace among themselves and were ready to concert measures with a view to break up the British empire in India Getting really alarmed, Lord Hastings speedily augmented the Company's forces and ordered all the Madras troops to proceed to Nepal. Good luck attended this measure. Fortunately for Hastings, the alliance entered into by the Sikhs, Sindia and the Pindaris could not be maintained for a long time owing to mutual distrust and troubles in their various frontiers. There also appeared on the British side a general who was destined to wipe out the shame of the recent military disasters. He was David Ochterlony.

Exploits of Ochterlony

Ordered to penetrate the Nepalese frontier from the Sutlej and commanding the westernmost division, Col. Ochterlony came in contact with Amar Singh, the ablest of the Gurkha generals. Adopting the tactics of the enemy, the English general efficiently protected isolated detachments by erecting stockades. On the 1st of November he laid siege to the fort of Nalagur and took it. Taragur and Ramgur, fully defended by the Gurkhas, were next taken. In April 1815, Ochterlony stormed the fortress of Malaon, one of the bravest of English deeds in this war.

Hastings plans the Conquest of Almora

In the meanwhile Lord Hastings matured plans for the reduction of the province of Almora. Two enterprising commanders, Col. Gardner and Col. Nicolls, were despatched for the purpose with forces hastily levied. The effect of this fresh movement was to cut off Amar Singh from all communication with the capital. The brave

Gurkha general struggled hard, but gave himself up in the end, 'unwilling to sacrifice in a forlorn conflict the lives of the brave men who had generously adhered to him to the last.' The conquest of Almora and the capture of Malaon constitute the first phase of the Nepalese War. The Gurkhas who formed the remnants of Amar Singh's forces enlisted in the British army, "being the first Gurkha soldiers to serve under the British flag." In the war, the Gurkhas fought with commendable gallantry, "while they further showed their confidence in their cpponents sense of fair play and sportsmanship by sending, whenever possible, their wounded into English camp hospitals for treatment" Thus "Johnny Gurk began the career which was to bring him fame in such distant lands."

The Struggle renewed (1816)

The Council of Regency at Kathmandu, when once they realised that their mountain fortresses were of no avail against the British battering trains, were inclined to sue for peace The terms demanded by Lord Hastings were that the Nepalese Darbar must renounce all claims to jurisdiction over Rajas and zamindars west of the Kalee River, that Sikkhim must be restored to the English, that the belt of land known as the *Tarai* must be handed over to the Indian Government and that a British Resident should be received at the Gurkha capital Distasteful as these terms were, particularly the clause surrendering the *Tarai*, the Gurkha Commissioners were instructed to sign the treaty at Sagauli. But events took an unexpected turn Amar Singh, the Gurkha patriot and general, just then returned to the capital, having been dislodged from his fort at Malaon He advised the Council to carry on the struggle and dispute every inch of mountain territory and 'if driven from it, to retire to the borders of China' His advice was acted upon and the Nepalese Government forthwith repudiated the treaty.

Final Defeat of the Gurkhas

Lord Hastings who had anticipated some such contingency, immediately gathered a force of 20,000 men and ordered Sir David Ochterlony to proceed to the capital and invest it. He advanced through a narrow ravine, a secret path leading to the capital and worsted the Gurkhas at Makwanpur.

within a striking distance of Kathmandu. Nothing remained now for the brave mountaineers except to sue for peace on the terms previously stated by Lord Hastings. The Gurkha envoys met the British general within a march or two from the capital. According to the treaty of Sagauli which "has been maintained to the very letter to this very day" the *Tarai* was to be ceded to the British, the western part of it to be given over to Oudh, and the eastern to be retained by them A British representative was to be received at Kathmandu; but he was merely to report events in Nepal so far as they concerned Indian interests. A large part of the *Tarai* was restored to Nepal soon after the peace, as Lord Hastings was very anxious to establish very friendly relations with the Nepalese. The war closed on the 5th March, 1816.

Preparation for another War

The treaty of Sagauli had not been concluded too soon. The early failures of the British commanders in the Gurkha War had encouraged the Pathans and the Pindaris to fresh acts of plunder: and the Maratha chiefs bestirred themselves everywhere Lord Hastings knew that any attempt to break up the robber bands would lead the British Government to take the offensive against Holkar and Sindia whose allies the Pindaris undoubtedly were. It was this fear of a general Maratha combination against the English that deterred the Board of Control from sanctioning the various proposals of the Governor-General, calculated not merely to suppress brigandage but to purge the armies of the native states of the poison that was eating into the very vitals of society So great was the unwillingness of the Court of Directors to embroil the Indian Government in a general war with the Marathas, the secret allies of the Pindaris, and so firm was their faith in the policy of peace at any price, that at one stage they seriously suggested to Hastings the Machiavellian policy of fomenting rivalry among the gangs, 'which should end in their mutual extirpation by a species of civil war.' Rejecting this advice with scorn, Hastings wrote:—"The Company had forgotten the brutal and atrocious qualities of these wretches, and I am confident that nothing would have been more repugnant to the feelings of the Honourable Company

than the notion that the Government should be soiled by a procedure which was to bear the colour of a confidential intercourse with any of these gangs." But the Board remained adamant. Hastings therefore adopted the only course possible under the circumstance. He befriended the Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur and effectively detached him from the Maratha Confederacy. 'This gave some 300 miles of British frontier freedom from raids.' In the meanwhile the Pindaris themselves solved the problem for the Marquess of Hastings. In the course of one of their raids, they committed such acts of wanton cruelty on the inhabitants and carried such enormous booty that even the Court of Directors were compelled to give their support—albeit qualified—to the war proposals of Hastings. This was enough for the veteran of the American War

The Pindaris

According to Sir John Malcolm, the Pindaris were so called because they frequented the shops where an intoxicated drink named Pinda was sold.* Although English writers have depicted them as cruel monsters, all available evidence points to the fact that, in the early stages of their career at any rate, they formed a sort of unpaid militia, accompanying princes in their campaigns and helping them to plunder and harass their enemies. Often enough, they obtained jaghirs and lands for their services Although the rank and file of the Pindari army consisted of men drawn from various nationalities, the refuse, generally, of the Maratha forces, the leaders were mostly of Afghan origin These Pindaris were first heard of in the history of the Deccan as we read above till they joined in large numbers the army of Sivaji. The Maratha princes of Central India such as Sindia and Holkar, were not without their Pindari regiments. Thus Wasil Muhammad and Karim Khan, two notorious Pindari leaders, were engaged at one time or another in the service of Sindia. There was, however, much uncertainty as to their definite relationship with the Maratha chiefs.

* See his *Report on Central India*, pp. 433-436 (Second edition).

In the days of Sir George Barlow, the Pindaris, of the Pathan variety, with a large and mobile force of fifteen thousand horse and ten thousand foot and equipped with powerful artillery, levied blackmail from every town and province in the Gangetic valley and threatened Mirzapore Turning off to Gujarat, they plundered, unchecked, the west coast By the time military preparations were made to check them, they directed their attention to the opposite coast In 1815, they entered the Nizam's dominions and carried fire and sword there. They were, however, attacked by Major Fraser who was then in command of the Nizam's infantry. In the following year they plundered the Northern Sarkars and carried off booty worth more than a million sterling. It was this depradation of the Pindaris that broke the patience of both the Calcutta Council and the Court of Directors who were compelled to give a free hand to the Governor-General to conduct the war as best as he could.*

Their Plundering Raids

Lord Hastings planned the campaign on a very large scale. He knew that the Pindari War would merge into a war against the Marathas. He called out the armies of the three Presidencies and collected a force of 116,000 infantry and cavalry. This he divided into two major sections, a northern section to operate from the North-West Provinces which he himself commanded and a southern one, the Deccan army under Sir Thomas Hislop, to move inwards and encircle the robber bands The 'two main movements must be distinguished, the converging of forces upon the Pindari bands in Central India and the defeat or neutralisation of Sindia, Holkar, the Bhonsla and the Peishwa' It will be convenient, at this stage, to study the state of affairs in the various Maratha states and

Plan of Campaign

* Sir John Malcolm thus writes of the Pindaris: "It is a remarkable fact and one of the few creditable to the late community of the Pindaris, that among the numerous prisoners of all ages and sexes whom they took, though they employed them as servants, gave them to their chiefs and accepted ransoms for them from their relations, they never sold them into bondage, nor carried on, like the Brinjarries, a traffic in slaves."

how Lord Hastings either put the princes down or compelled them to enter into the system of subsidiary alliances, as a preliminary to the rounding up of the Pindari gangs.

Affairs of Poona

Baji Rao, destined to be the last of the Peishwas, was now the nominal head of the Maratha Confederacy. Full of avarice and cunning, he had not the ability of his predecessors But for the presence of the subsidiary force at Poona, he would have been easily ousted from his place by the vast body of Southern Jaghirdars whom he had offended. About the year 1813, there rose to prominence in the Peishwa's court, one Trimbakji,* an inveterate foe of the British He was urging his master to shake off the British alliance and once again reassert the ancient power of the Peishwas over the Maratha Empire. Every one of his covert acts was intended to wound the susceptibilities of the English or provoke them to open hostility. Thus when Gangadhar Sastri, the Brahmin minister of the Gaekwar of Baroda, went on a visit to the Poona court to settle some disputed claims, under the guarantee of British protection, the vicious Trimbakji had him basely murdered (1815) ' Mountstuart Elphinstone, the British Resident at Poona, who was hostile to Trimbakji and his political influence, on hearing of this foul deed, hastened to Poona from the caves of Ellora, which he was then engaged in exploring, and conducted an enquiry, in the course of which the guilt of the Peishwa's favourite was only too plainly established The Resident then demanded the arrest of the murderer; and, with great reluctance, Baji Rao yielded to him. Trimbakji was lodged in the prison at Tannah, in the island of Salsette, from which, however, he made good his escape "by a mixture of daring and cunning which delighted his own people and went towards removing the odium which had attached to his criminal actions," being exaggerated into an exploit worthy of Sivaji himself. After this incident, Baji Rao continued to maintain outwardly an attitude of cordiality with the English, while he

* A new view is that Trimbakji could not have been anything more than a mere abettor in the crime, and the Resident at Baroda and the Bombay Government suspected the court of the Gaekwar itself. (See P. G. Gupta : *Baji Rao II and the East India Company (1796-1818)*—1939.)

was secretly corresponding with Sindia, Holkar and the Pindaris. The ever-watchful eye of Elphinstone had also detected the guiding hand of Trimbakji in the mysterious movements of forces all round Poona. Urged by the Governor-General and dictated by the exigencies of the situation, the Resident sprung upon the Peishwa a new treaty which he was forced to sign within 24 hours on pain of being declared an open enemy of the English. This treaty, which impartial historians have deemed to be too severe and exacting in its terms, imposed the following conditions on the Peishwa: Baji Rao was to relinquish his title as the supreme head of the Maratha Empire; in lieu of maintaining a subsidiary force, he was to surrender certain territories and renounce all manner of claims to Saugor and Bundelkhand. He was further "to dismiss the agents of the foreign princes from his court and to abstain from all further communication with them, referring all matters in dispute to the Company's Government." The treaty was very harsh towards the Peishwa. Even Mr. Canning, the President of the Board of Control, thought the terms of this subsidiary treaty very severe.*

The Court of Holkar

Let us now turn to the affairs of the Holkar. Jaswant Rao Holkar died in 1811. One of his favourites of the harem, Tulsi Bai, now acted as regent for an adopted son. Resolute in purpose, possessing great charm and a high degree of intelligence, she was yet loose in morals and had disgusted the people. She also allowed the pay of the soldiers to fall into huge arrears with the result that the lawless soldiery sacked villages and cannonaded towns The whole state was in a distracted condition. In the end she was forced to fly from it with the infant Holkar in her custody.

* Lord Hastings' own vindication of his proceedings is contained in the following statement of his —"I exacted cessions from him as the penalty of his base and profligate attempt to excite a general conspiracy against us. These terms were in themselves severe. When, however, they are measured by the magnitude of the injury aimed at us, they will not appear as harsh, nor will the necessity of them be doubted, when it is considered that our experience has shown the impossibility of relying on his most solemn professions. We had no choice, consistently with our security, but to cripple him, if we left him on the throne." See Marshman's *History of India*, Vol. II, Ch. XXVII, p. 323.

Treaty with Sindia

It was becoming more and more evident to Lord Hastings that Sindia was in secret communication with Baji Rao who was about to raise the standard of revolt against the English. The Resident at Indore was therefore asked to inform Sindia that, as he continued to harbour Pindaris in his state, the British Government, contrary to the treaty of 1805 entered into with him, would contract alliances with the chiefs of Malwa and Rajputana for the better security of the Company's territories and that, unless he gave his whole-hearted support in the matter of the extermination of the Pindari gangs, the Governor-General would be compelled to take more stringent measures against him He was further ordered to place at the disposal of the English the strong fortresses of Hindia and Asirgarh Sindia wavered and evaded a direct reply. Lord Hastings, by a swift movement of forces, appeared in front of Gwalior before the Maratha chief had time to make his own arrangements Thus baffled, he signed the treaty demanded of him on 5th November, 1817

Treaty with the Chiefs of Central India (1817-18)

After this treaty, Hastings announced to the chiefs of Malwa and Central India that he was ready to enter into alliances with them This offer was welcomed by many and "the Residency at Delhi was speedily crowded with the agents of nineteen princes of Central India." These treaties guaranteed British protection to the states provided they acknowledged the supremacy of the Company in all matters The first to welcome the new treaty was Zalim Singh who signed it on behalf of the Afghan principality of Kotah. The Nawab of Bhopal, the Raja of Bundi and the Rajas of Jodhpur and Jaipur were among the other chiefs who embraced the Governor-General's offer. The credit for successfully negotiating the treaties within a short period of four months belongs to Sir Charles Metcalfe.

On the day that Lord Hastings had concluded the subsidiary treaty with Sindia, Peishwa Baji Rao broke into open revolt. His example was followed a few days later by the Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur and the Maratha party at Indore announced its intention to make common cause with the other chiefs on the 16th December 1817. These events proved that Lord Hastings was right in representing to the home authorities that the Pindaris could never be extirpated so long as the rebellious Maratha chieftains were allowed freedom to create a condition of anarchy in Central India

The sudden Uprising of the Peishwa

Ever since the last treaty with the Company, Baji Rao had been making secret preparations to bring about a restoration of the old Maratha Empire. Towards that end he had been sending emissaries to all the Maratha courts and spending lavishly his hoarded wealth in levying fresh troops and repairing old fortifications and equipping the Maratha fleet The English were beguiled into the belief that all these fresh military efforts were intended to supplement the English plan to round off the Pindaris All on a sudden, however, the Peishwa's forces attacked the Residency and burnt it down Fortunately Elphinstone, who had known of the gathering storm and kept serene throughout the crisis, had removed his camp to Kirki, four miles distant from Poona. Against overwhelming odds, Colonel Burr and General Smith won a brilliant victory at this place. Baji Rao, who was watching the fight from the top of a neighbouring hillock, fled from the field in terror. On 17th November 1817, General Smith took possession of the city of Poona. The Peishwa was next defeated at Yerrawada (famous as the site of the jail in which Mahatma Gandhi was put several times). After Kirki, the Peishwa became a fugitive, having "shot his last bolt." 'Thus ingloriously fell the power of Peishwa, one hundred years after it had been established through the concession obtained from the Emperor of Delhi in 1717 by his great-grand-father, Balajee Vishwanath'

The Battle of Kirki (November 1817)

Appa Saheb, the regent of Nagpur, was by no means satisfied with his lot in life. On the 1st February 1817, he caused the imbecile Bhonsle Raja to be murdered and himself ascended the *gadi*. After this event, he began to plot against the English and openly espoused the cause of Baji Rao, who was then at war with the Company. On the 24th November, he put on a dress of honour sent to him by Baji Rao and assumed the title of *Senapathi* or the commander-in-chief of the Maratha Empire. Mr. Jenkins, the Resident, protested in vain against these proceedings of Appa Saheb. It was clear to him that Appa Saheb was acting in concert with the Pindaris and the Peishwa.

The Nagpur Revolt

On the night of 26th November, Appa Saheb launched his attack on the Residency. He had with him an army of 18,000 men, including 4,000 Arabs; while the forces at the Residency were considerably weakened by disease. The latter took up their position on a ridge running north and south, known as Sitabaldi, 'consisting of two eminences connected by a narrow neck.' In the early stages of the attack, it looked as if the Marathas would dislodge the English from their position, so fierce was the vigorous frontal rush of the Arabs. But the fortunes of the day were changed by the intrepedity and gallantry of Captain Fitzgerald who rushed upon the enemy with incredible swiftness and fury. This charge and the confusion it wrought in the Maratha camp, added to the disorganisation in the Arab ranks and infused fresh courage into the minds of the defenders of Sitabaldi, who rushed out of the ridge and chased the enemy for miles round. It was a splendid victory for the English. Appa Saheb was again defeated near Nagpur which quietly surrendered.

Battle of Sitabaldi Hills

The terms dictated to Appa Saheb in the hour of victory by Mr. Jenkins, the Resident, were not considered excessive.

Fate of Appa Saheb

He was promised his kingdom, provided he surrendered his army and guns and acknowledged the Company as his overlord. Utterly helpless, the Bhonsle accepted the terms, but immediately began again his career of intrigue with the enemies of the Company, including the Peishwa, now being hotly pursued by the English forces His guilt having been established beyond doubt, Lord Hastings ordered him to be kept in honourable captivity in the fort at Allahabad. Large tracts of the kingdom of Nagpur, known as the Saugor and Narbada Territories, were annexed to the Company while Appa Saheb's heir was recognised as the ruler of the now much restricted state.

There remained still the Holkar to be dealt with. We have seen that the Regent Tulsi Bai had to fly from the state,

Operations against Holkar

unable to face the growing feeling against her She now sought the protection of the English and even entered into a secret treaty with Lord Hastings. But the real political factor that counted in the state of Holkar was the council of military chiefs They were by no means enamoured of a British alliance; and when they heard that the Peishwa had risen in arms, they marched off their forces, the finest in India then, towards the Deccan, in the hope of joining other Maratha armies. The British army was under the joint command of Sir Thomas Hislop and Sir John Malcolm. The latter was a better diplomat than soldier; and he attempted negotiations with the military chiefs who, however, turned a deaf ear to him. Besides, when they came to know that Tulsi Bai and her advisers were inclined towards the British alliance, they beheaded their beautiful queen and imprisoned her friends.

War, under the circumstances, was therefore certain. Sir Thomas Hislop moved up to Mahidpur, while the forces of the young Holkar took up a position on the opposite side of the river Sipra. In the battle that ensued Holkar's fine artillery inflicted havoc on the British ranks. The youthful Holkar and his sister, Bima Bai, a young widow of twenty, took an active part in the battle, riding on horseback with sword in hand and encouraging the soldiers. But the Holkar's infantry stood aloof out of sheer cowardice; and the battle was won by Sir John Malcolm. The Treaty of Mandesor brought this war to a close. Holkar was deprived of more than a third of his territory and reduced to a position of complete dependence on the Company. He gave up his possessions to the south of the Narmada, gave up his claims over the rulers of Rajputana and recognised the independence of Amir Khan.

Battle of Mahidpur (December 1817)

It now remains to complete the story of the Pindari struggle. With the Peishwa scotched and British armies converging towards the frontiers of the other Maratha chiefs to render them impotent, it was, by no means, a difficult thing to disperse the Pindari and Pathan hordes. Encompassed by the British forces on all sides, these enemies of order and stable administration fled in different directions. Finding it difficult to get the help of Sindia, they went westwards. Abandoning their tent and equipment, Karim Khan and Wasil Muhammad, the two Pindari chiefs, after various wanderings, were induced to settle down to a quiet life. The former was given a small estate in the district of Gorakhpur. Wasil was imprisoned at Ghazipur; but he felt so depressed in his captivity that he took poison and died. The most dangerous of the Pindari leaders was, of course, Chitu. Pursued by Sir John Malcolm and hunted out of his familiar haunts in Malwa, he plunged in despair into a jungle infested with wild beasts. "After a diligent search, his horse was discovered grazing, saddled

The Pindaris rounded up (1817-1818)

and bridled, and not far off the mangled remains of this renowned free-booter, who had recently ridden forth at the head of 20,000 men."

Result of the Campaigns

Mr. Marshman thus pithily summarises the result of the campaigns that brought the Pindari and Maratha wars to a successful conclusion:—"The power of Sindia was paralysed; the power of Holkar irretrievably broken; the Pathan armies of Ameer Khan and Gaffoor Khan had ceased to exist; the Raja of Nagpore was a captive in the English Camp; the Peishwa was a fugitive and the Pindarees who had inspired terror in the minds of Mr. Canning and the Directors had disappeared. The campaign finally extinguished the Maratha empire, on which Lord Wellesley had struck the first blow. It broke up every military organisation within the Sutlege, with the exception of that of Sindia. It subdued not only the native armies, but the native mind, and taught the princes and people of India to regard the supreme command in India as indisputably transferred to a foreign power. It placed the Company on the Mughal throne with a more absolute authority than Akbar or Aurangzebe had ever enjoyed."*

Closing Scenes: The Surrender of the Peishwa

After the battle of Kirki, Baji Rao took to flight. Proceeding southwards, he took into his custody the Raja of Satara, the lineal descendant of the great Sivaji. He evaded action with General Smith who was tracking him everywhere. At Koregaon (Jan. 1, 1818) he came face to face with a gallant little band of the Company's forces and here was fought a battle, which "was one of the most arduous and brilliant in the history of British India." The battle has been held to be an 'Indian Thermopylae.' The Peishwa's army directed by the brave commander, Bapu Kokla, and the evil genius, Trimbakji, fought frantically inflicting heavy damages on the little garrison that still held on. But when Baji Rao heard of the approach of General

* *History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 345-346.

Smith whom he dreaded, the Maratha army numbering 25,000 dispersed under his order and he himself fled to the Carnatic. His progress in the south was arrested by Sir Thomas Munro who also captured the fortresses of Badami, Belgaum and Sholapur. As fate would have it, General Smith soon encountered the remnants of Baji Rao's forces at Ashti (Feb. 20, 1818). In the engagement that followed, Bapu Gokla died. His death and the consequent disorder that it created in the Maratha army—not to speak of the terror it infused among the followers and secret sympathisers of Baji Rao—so unnerved him, that he implored Sir John Malcolm, in a letter, to grant him mercy. Touched by his appeal, the gallant officer offered him not only pardon, but bestowed upon him a handsome pension of eight lakhs of rupees, besides ample provision for his followers. Baji Rao finally settled down at Bithur, near Cawnpore. He lived long enough to enjoy a total pension amount of two crores and fifty lakhs of rupees. We shall hear of his adopted son, Nana Saheb, in connection with the Indian Mutiny.*

Raja of Satara

Another graceful act of Lord Hastings was to yield to public opinion among the Marathas and place on the throne of Sivaji, the Raja of Satara, who was recovered from the custody of Baji Rao in the battle of Ashti. Its existence as an independent native state guaranteed by the company was, however, a source of embarrassment to the Bombay Government; and Lord Dalhousie deemed it wise to apply his doctrine of lapse to this state and annex it to the Bombay Presidency.

In 1817, the Rajputana states sought British protection in quick succession. 1819 saw the establishment of control over Cutch. The chiefs of the Southern Mahratta country, were regulated in their status, as well as the pirate chiefs of the west coast. The Company's power thus reached the

* Lord Hastings did not like the liberal terms granted to the ex-Peishwa. He also objected to the amount of the stipend and the stipulation in favour of the Peishwa's adherents. He eventually agreed to the terms sanctioned by Sir John Malcolm, out of regard for the latter, but Sir Thomas Munro approved of the generosity. See Mill's *History of India*, Vol. VIII, p. 257 for details.

mouths of the Indus. The Governor-General encouraged the foundation of Singapore in 1819 by Sir Stamford Raffles, much to the vexation of the Dutch.

Internal Reforms: Encouragement of Education

Lord Hastings distinguished himself not only in the domain of military organisation which led to the dissolution of the Maratha Confederacy and the subjugation of the most intractable foes the British had yet met with in India, but also in the field of internal reforms. He laboured hard, much against the opposition of his own countrymen, for the promotion of the moral, intellectual and material welfare of the Indians. The India House and the European residents in India steadily opposed the policy of educating the Indians. Lord Hastings repudiated that policy and boldly declared that "it would be treason against British sentiment to imagine that it ever could be the principle of this government to perpetuate ignorance in order to secure paltry and dishonest advantages over the blindness of the multitude." He therefore gave a powerful impetus to the cause of education. In the opening of schools for the Indian children, his wife took an active part. He gave liberal grants when the missionaries, Mr. May and Dr. Carey, opened vernacular schools in the neighbourhood. He also became the patron of the first English college established in Calcutta for the cultivation of the English language and European science. It was in his time that the first vernacular newspaper was published.* Lord Hastings boldly removed the censorship of the press imposed on it by the Marquess of Wellesley; and although he subsequently yielded to the pressure of his colleagues in council and imposed restrictions on editors, he never cared to interfere with the free expression of opinion.

* It was styled "Sumachar Durpun" and published by the Serampore Missionaries.

In the previous chapter mention was made of the land revenue settlement of Munro.* Influenced by this champion of the ryotwari system, the Court of Directors ordered the establishment of the system throughout the Presidency. In carrying out the order, Lord Hastings remedied some of the evils of the system. In particular, he was anxious to abolish the practice of putting into gaol the defaulting ryot. Agreeably to the wishes of the Court of Directors, he ordered that the rent to be assessed must be moderate. But the pious intention of the authorities that, thereby, they would give a stimulus to the agricultural industries, proved to be an empty dream as the litigation introduced by the Supreme Government 'picked the suitors to the bone' and there was little capital left to be applied for the improvement of the soil.

Land Revenue Reforms: In Madras

Lord Hastings was also called upon to deal with certain evils arising from the land revenue collection in the provinces newly acquired from Sindia and others. The establishment of direct British administration in these areas led to the appointment of a host of Bengali officials who alone had mastered the intricacies of the new land revenue code.

In the North-West Provinces

In a similar manner, the Bengali officials who crowded into the offices of the newly established administration in Orissa exacted heavy assessments and brought much of the land to the hammer. This led to a rising headed by the impoverished Raja of Khurda. Lord Hastings felt it his duty to suppress the rebellion, but at the same time, took vigorous and speedy measures to reduce the assessment and brought contentment and peace to the people.

Rising in Orissa

Two blemishes attach to the career of Lord Hastings as Governor-General. He refused to abolish *sati* and even ordered in 1813 that a police officer must be present at a widow-burning. This was interpreted as giving official sanction to the custom and tended to increase the number of *satis*. Again, in another matter, the Governor-General did a

The Affair of Palmer & Co.

* *Vide* pp. 219-220.

mistake. In 1814, one William Palmer established a banking house at Hyderabad (Deccan) and in collusion with the Hindu minister of the Nizam, Chandu Lal, made large advances to the Nizam's government. The firm of Palmer was later on joined by Sir William Rumbold, a near relative of the Governor-General. The usurious dealings of Palmer & Co. with the Nizam were so repulsive in character that Mr. Metcalfe, the Resident, had to protest against the activities of the firm and proposed a plan to liquidate the liabilities of the Nizam in another way. Not merely was the Nizam fleeced, but all political power in the state passed into the hands of this firm of money-lenders, of which the relation of the Governor-General was a partner. This scandalous state of affairs reached the ears of the Court of Directors who peremptorily issued orders revoking the license granted to the firm by the Indian Government. The strictures passed by the Court and the insinuation contained in their despatches on the subject of Palmer & Co., led to the resignation of Lord Hastings who embarked for Europe on the 1st January, 1823.*

Estimate of his Work in India

"The administration of the Marquess of Hastings," says Mill, "may be regarded as the completion of the great scheme of which Clive had laid the foundations, and Warren Hastings and the Marquess of Wellesley had reared the superstructure. The crowning pinnacle was the work of Lord Hastings and by him was the supremacy of the British Empire in India proper finally established. Of the soundness of the work no better proof can be afforded than the fact that there has been no international warfare since his administration. Rajput, Mahratta and Muhammadan have remained at peace with each other under the shade of the British power. The wars in which the latter has been engaged have carried that power beyond the boundaries of Hindustan, but no interruption of internal tranquillity from the Himalayas to the sea has been suffered or attempted."

* The Nizam's contingent was extravagantly paid and British officers eagerly sought service therein. "The joyous catchword was: 'Nizzy pays for all.' Palmer and Co. arranged to pay the Nizam's Government £ 20,000 a month in return for assignments annually, of £ 300,000 on his revenues—*i.e.*, with interest at 25 %. The whole affair was a repetition of the scandalous 'Nawab of Arcot's Debts.'"

Section II. Lord Amherst and the Burmese War

When the Court of Directors received the letter of resignation of Lord Hastings as Governor-General, they did not find it difficult to choose his successor. Mr. George Canning, the distinguished statesman and orator, who had acted as President of the Board of Control from 1816 to 1820, was now appointed Governor-General. It was not without hesitation that Canning accepted the office. He had hoped that the House of Commons was a better place for him. Fortune favoured him. While he was about to embark for India, Lord Castlereagh died and Canning found a leading place for himself in the new ministerial arrangements. The vacant Governor-Generalship was now offered to Lord Amherst, a non-party man, who had accomplished a difficult mission to Pekin. As he took some time to reach India, Mr. John Adam, the senior Member of the Calcutta Council, acted as Governor-General.

George Canning appointed Hastings' Successor

Mr. Adam was well-known for his exemplary integrity, firmness and consistency. From his place in the Calcutta Council, he had dissented strongly from the views and policies of Lord Hastings, especially in regard to the affair of Palmer & Co. and the freedom of the press. It is, therefore, no wonder that, when he had the opportunity, he put into practice what he preached in the council chamber. Although, by his measures, he provoked considerable opposition in India, the Court of Directors held him in high esteem as was evident from the resolution they unanimously passed when they heard of his demise on board the steamer 'Albion' on his way to England.

The Administration of Mr. Adam

Acting under instructions from the Court of Directors, Mr. Adam took immediate steps "to put an end to transactions which he considered as unjust to the Nizam and discreditable to the British character." He granted to the Nizam, out of the accumulated tribute due to him for the British occupation of Northern Sarkars, an amount

The Nizam's Debt

equal to that which he owed to the Palmer Company. At the same time he passed orders preventing the Company from lending any more sums to the Nizam's government.*

Application of the Press Law

Mr. Adam was always opposed to the freedom of the press in India. He entertained the belief that such liberty was incompatible with the then social and political condition of the country. Lord Hastings, as we have seen, thought differently. So when his opportunity came, Mr. Adam unflinchingly put in operation the press laws which were defunct in the days of his predecessor. The most notable case was that of Mr. Buckingham, who, aided by a knot of brilliant young Europeans in public service, was ably conducting a newspaper called the *Calcutta Journal*. Its trenchant articles boldly criticising measures of government were naturally resented by the blundering officials. Mr. Adam did not spare Mr. Buckingham this time. His license was cancelled and he was deported to England. The editor's subsequent appeal to the India Office did not improve his position.†

Lord Amherst, Governor-General (1823-28)

Lord Amherst was the nephew of the first Lord Amherst, one of Pitt's "young men burning with enthusiasm and not afraid of responsibility" who also acted as the Governor-General of British North America. After his death, his title descended to the subject of our present study. A good linguist, he was engaged early in his career in

* Referring to this incident writes the great historian of the period, Dr. Marshman :—"Fifty years before, Lord Clive had obtained the Northern Sirkars as a gift from the Emperor of Delhi, but had agreed to pay the Nizam, in consideration of their having formed a part of his province, a *peshkash* or annual acknowledgment of seven lacs of rupees This payment was arranged when the Company was an insignificant power: to the astonishment of the native princes, it was religiously continued after the Company had become supreme in India. It was now capitalised, and a crore of rupees was remitted from Calcutta, soon after Lord Hastings quitted India."

† *Vide*, V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India* for a succinct account of the History of the Indian Press, page 646 ff. His strictures on the Indian Press are rather severe. The first English papers in India were started in Calcutta about 1780. At first the papers were scurrilously personal. Later they improved, but were vigorously censored. Lord Hastings tolerated the freedom that the newspaper indulged in; but several great officials, like Sir Thomas Munro, did not approve of this freedom.

the diplomatic service. He also undertook an important mission to Canton on behalf of the East India Company. The record that he has carefully preserved of his transactions throws an intresting light on the court at Canton. He reached India on the 1st August 1823 and assumed charge to his office as Governor-General.

Scarcely had the new Governor-General time to survey the political situation in India when he was called upon by the urgency of the circumstances to deal effectively with the Burmese who were making inroads into British territory without let or hindrance. As in the case of Nepal, so with Burma, the English had to fight with a semi-barbarous power, inflated with an overweening confidence in its own strength and ignorant of the superior resources of the British Indian Empire. The kingdom of Burma lies to the east of Bengal; and between it and the British territory there dwelt a number of semi-civilised tribes owing allegiance to whomsoever happened to subdue them for the time being. In the absence of definite natural barriers between the two countries, a clash of arms was inevitable. "In this situation," truly observes Sir Alfred Lyall, "it has always been the policy of the English in India, as of other civilised Empires in contact with barbarism, to maintain the zone of tribal lands as a barrier or quick-set hedge against intruders upon their frontier by taking the little border states, or headships under their protection. The first Burmese War began, like several of our Indian wars, over a violation of this protectorate."

The Burmese War

The real founder of Burman greatness was Alaungpaya, the Hunter. Cast in the mould of Hyder Ali or Ranjit Singh, he rose from a very obscure position. He wrested the rich province of Pegu from the Talaings, who governed it and succeeded, in 1753, in establishing a dynasty at Ava. Under the vigorous rule of his successors, Burma rapidly expanded. It grew to be so powerful as to repel four successive invasions from China. In 1766, the Burmese waged a war against the king of Siam who was forced to cede to the invaders the province of Tenasserim. In 1784, they

Early History of Burmese Expansion

annexed the kingdom of Arakan, once very powerful and independent and which adjoined the Company's territories. A number of Arakanese migrated to the Bengal delta and the Burmese haughtily demanded their return; and thus this annexation led to endless border troubles between the two states. In the days of Sir John Shore, a few Arakan chiefs, unable to bear the oppression of their feudal suzerain, took refuge in the British district of Chittagong. The pacific Governor-General, as an act of courtesy, returned the refugees to the Arakan authorities and also sent, to the court at Ava, Colonel Symes to explain matters. But fugitives from Arakan continued to pour into the British borders; and when the Burmese demand for their return met with a stern refusal, the Ava court concluded that the Calcutta authorities were deliberately engineering an invasion of Arakan. A second British commission to Ava under the same Colonel Symes and a third one under Lieutenant Canning, did not, in any way, mitigate the strained relationship between the English and the Burmese. On the other hand, the Burmese king sent a letter to Lord Hastings, demanding the surrender of Chittagong, Dacca and Murshidabad and Kassimbazar. "They do not belong to India," he said, "they are ours; if you continue to retain them, we will come and destroy your country."*

Further Burmese Conquests

After 1814, the Burmese turned their attention towards the north-western provinces. Taking advantage of feuds in the royal family of Assam, which, in the past, had maintained its independence even against Aurangzib, the Burmese had established their supremacy there in 1815; and in 1822, Maha Bandula, the Burmese commander, reduced it to subjection.* Manipur, the little hill principality which once planted its victorious standard upon the walls of Ava, but now torn to pieces by dissensions in its ruling family, also easily fell a victim to the Burman arms. By a similar process, the

* This claim is perhaps based on the fact that "some of the kings of Arakan had, at remote periods, exercised temporary dominion over portions of Bengal, and the monarch of Ava, having succeeded to their sovereignty, considered himself entitled to the whole of the territories which had acknowledged their sway."—See Mill's *History of British India*, Vol. IX. p. 16.

Burmese effected an entrance into Cachar on the north-eastern corner of Bengal; but the Government of India prevented its absorption by taking it under their protection. "The dynasty of Alaungpaya had thus, in the course of seventy years, succeeded in establishing its authority over territories eight hundred miles in length, stretching from the confines of Bengal to those of China. The uniform success of every enterprise had filled the Burmese with an overweening conceit of their strength and the evident indisposition of the Company's Government to go to war, combined with repeated embassies to Ava, and a profound ignorance of the resources of British power, inspired them with an irrepressible desire to try conclusions with the English in the field."†

Immediate Cause of the War

At the southern extremity of the English district of Chittagong, there is the island of Shahpuri. This barren islet was the immediate cause of a long and protracted war. The Arakan governor's claim that this sand-heap belonged to the King of Ava, was disputed by the Governor-General who proposed to appoint a joint commission to investigate the question of the ownership of the island. Evidently the Burmese authorities were so convinced of their ownership of the island, that they drove off the British guard stationed there and planted the Burmese flag on the sands. Lord Amherst retaliated by sending a small force which took possession of the island. Further correspondence on the subject resulted in an open declaration of war on the 24th Feb., 1824.

The English Plan of Campaign

The English had little knowledge of the geography of the land they were preparing to attack, nor could they arrive at a proper estimate of the resources in men and money which they required for the purpose. For their strategy and other essential topographical details, they depended upon the advice of Captain Canning who had once

* The whole story of the conquest of Assam is narrated in Buchanan—Hamilton's *Account of Assam.*

† Marshman's *History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 384-5. There was indeed a panic that the Burmans had taken Chittagong and were pushing up to Calcutta.

visited the court at Ava. His plan was to occupy Rangoon and then proceed up the Irrawaddy to Ava, if need be. From Port Cornwallis, in the Andaman Isles, a force of 11,000 men, consisting mostly of Madrasis, set sail to Rangoon under the command of Sir Archibald Campbell.

In the meanwhile, Maha Bandula, the intrepid Burmese general, had poured his forces into Arakan and attacked the British frontier outpost at Ramoo in the Chittagong district. The small British force at this station was annihilated and panic seized the people of East Bengal and the British eastern frontier seemed to be in danger, while the Burmese general carried a set of golden fetters with which to take the Governor-General a prisoner to Ava. It was, however, lucky for the English that Bandula was recalled and ordered to proceed to Rangoon to meet the situation created there by the arrival of the English forces.

English Defeat at Ramoo

The British fleet with the troops reached Rangoon on the 11th May 1824. The Burmese Government never believed that the English would attack Burma from that quarter. Quite unprepared for action on an extensive scale, they thought it prudent to evacuate the city for miles round. The Company's forces were able to capture the city without any great effort. "By this unexpected stroke of policy the whole plan of campaign was defeated." For it was immediately realised by Sir Archibald Campbell that the plan of attacking Ava by sea was not easily feasible, that, at any rate, the time for it had been ill-chosen. "The exposure of so large a body of troops to the tropical rains in incommodious and imperfectly covered boats, through a navigation of five hundred miles, with both banks of the river in the possession of the enemy, could only have ended in the disorganisation and destruction of the forces, even if such a mode of attempting an offensive movement had been possible."* In the result, the British forces had to remain idle at Rangoon for a period of six months, till the rainy season was over.

Capture of Rangoon

* Wilson's *History of India*, Vol. III, Chap. I, p. 35.

Tenasserim taken

In August 1824, when conditions were more favourable for military action, the British force, now decimated by illness, attacked the Tenasserim provinces, stretching for nearly 400 miles down the coast, and occupied the chief towns where they obtained large stores of ammunition and the much-needed meat.

Bandula's Offensive

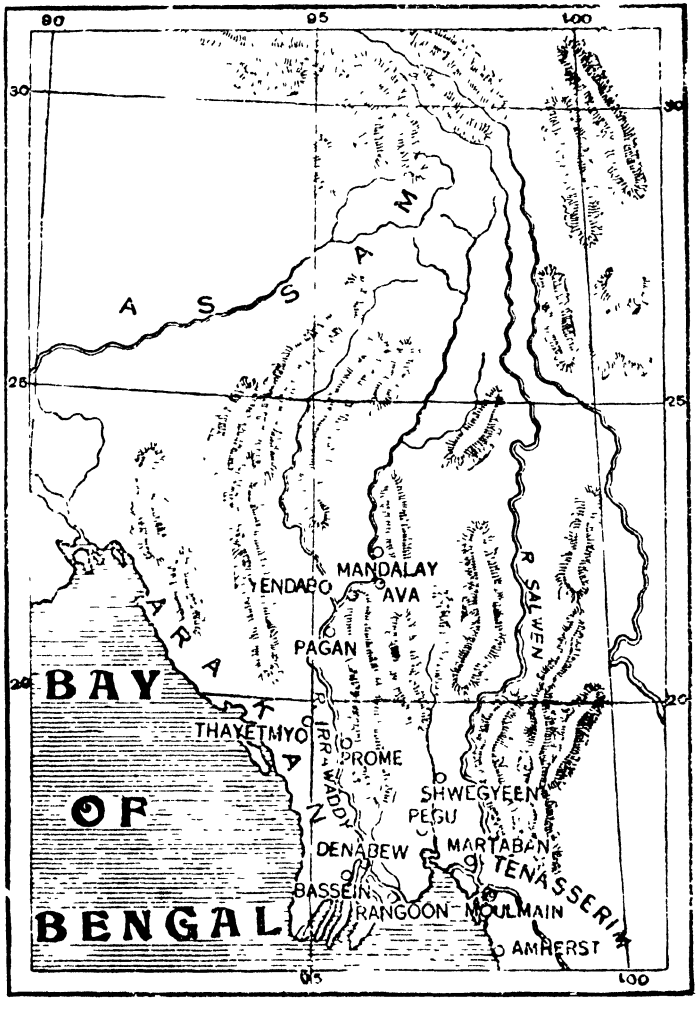
In the meanwhile Maha Bandula, ordered to drive the English out of Rangoon, came with a large army of 60,000 men and with astonishing rapidity erected stockades all round the British encampment and even pushed up his camp near the Great Pagoda* where was quartered an entire British regiment. Campbell found it extremely difficult in his first attack, delivered on the 5th December 1824 to dislodge Bandula from his stupendous stockades, but the latter sustained a total defeat on the 15th December and retired to Donabeu forty miles up the river.

North-Western and Eastern Theatres of War

The theatre of war was not confined only to Rangoon. The interest in the struggle was now shifted to the Assam and Arakan regions. Early in 1825, Colonel Richards invaded Assam and, finding no resistance, occupied the capital, Rungpur. Lord Amherst, ignoring the advice of experienced commanders, decided to attack Ava from two other directions. An army was despatched, through Cachar and Manipur, to advance directly on the Burmese capital and a second one was to cross Arakan and, reaching the Irrawaddy valley, was to proceed northwards towards the same objective. The advisers of the Governor-General little realised the difficulties of the march through the hilly regions covered with marshes. The transport difficulties were really insuperable. Added to these came a constant

* Rev. Hough who gave a translation of the inscription on the Great Bell found in the Pagoda in the pages of the *Asiatic Researches*, (Vol. XVI, p. 270) says :—" Underneath this mass are said to be deposited relics of the four last Buddhas, the staff of Krakuchhanda, the water-pot of Gunagunas, the bathing robe of Kasyapa and eight hairs from the head of Gautama or Sakyasinha." It is needless to add that the Golden Pagoda is a Buddhist shrine of great sanctity and splendour.

succession of blunders. And the reaction of a few reverses suffered by the British was exaggerated in India. It is enough to say that both these operations proved miserable and costly failures. Hope seemed to gleam only from the Rangoon quarter.



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE
THE BURMESE WARS (1824-26 & 1852)

After wasting nearly nine months at Rangoon, Sir Archibald Campbell at last persuaded himself to move upwards. Dividing his forces into three divisions, he ordered one to attack Bassein in the south, an entirely purposeless procedure; the other moved up the Irrawaddy in the flotilla of boats specially constructed; the third division commanded by himself, took the land route, desolated and laid waste by the enemy. Bassein, defended by a handful of cowardly Burmese readily yielded. The second division, proceeding by water, reached abreast of Donabeu Here Maha Bandula was strongly entrenched.

Sir Archibald moves (February 1825)

Brigadier Cotton who commanded the English forces, found it impossible to storm the stockades and sent urgent messages to the commander-in-chief proceeding by land, to hasten to his rescue. Sir Campbell's response was splendid; and it was his timely arrival that turned the scales of war in favour of the Company. One chance shell burst before Maha Bandula himself who was killed. Maha Bandula was "a genuinely remarkable man" "though with barbarous methods of instilling courage into his men." This decided the issue of the battle; for "with him expired all the courage and spirit of his troops." From Donabeu the force proceeded to Prome which fell without a blow.

Battle of Donabeu (28th February 1825)

It was becoming more and more evident that both the parties were tired of this war. Overtures for peace were therefore made by the British commander which were, however, considered as signs of cowardice by the King of Ava. The terms of peace dictated were also considered severe. While the negotiations were being conducted, the Burmese King mustered a big army of forty thousand men before Prome. The Burmese, although they exhibited a tenacity, rare among the native powers, in organising resistance, yet did not steadily pursue their objectives in the battle-field itself. Thus, at the first sign of the English rally after the latter's defeat, they lost courage and fled. Once again negotiations were set on foot for a final peace. Disgusted with the

Dilatory Tactics of the Burmese

dilatory tactics of the Ava court, Sir Archibald Campbell pounced upon the fort of Malown and took it. He then ordered a march up the Irrawaddy and the British forces reached Pagan. Abandoning their national mode of warfare, the Burmese fought here a pitched battle in which they were routed. It was then that the King of Ava seriously thought of peace. His envoys met the advancing British army at Yandabo and signed the treaty.

The Treaty of Yandabo (24th Feb, 1826)

According to this treaty, the King of Ava agreed to cede to the English the provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim. He further renounced all claim to Assam and the principalities of Cachar and Jaintia. He also expressed his willingness to recognise the independence of Manipur, and to receive a British Resident at Ava. The indemnity of a crore of rupees which the English demanded was to be paid in four instalments.* The English also desired to conclude a commercial treaty with him which was done.†

Value of the new Acquisition

In regard to the importance of the new acquisitions in Burma, thus observes Mill:—"In Assam and in Cachar, agricultural cultivation has spread extensively; and new articles of culture, especially of the Tea Plant, are likely to become important accessions to the resources of the former. The Tenasserim provinces present a valuable line of sea-coast, contributing to the British command

* According to the Burmese official version:—"White strangers of the west fastened a quarrel upon the Lord of the Golden Palace. They landed at Rangoon, took that place and Prome and were permitted to advance as far as Yandabo; for the king from motives of piety and regard to life, made no preparations whatever to oppose them . . . . their resources were exhausted, and they were in great distress. They then petitioned the king who, in his clemency and generosity, sent them large sums of money to pay their expenses back, and ordered them out of the country."

† Of this treaty, Mr. Bayfield observes: "the court never considered it as a treaty, but as a royal license; and that it left to the king the right of prohibiting the free exportation of the precious metals, as well as levying royal and all customary duties on the British vessels and trade." See Mill and Wilson: *History of British India*, p. 107, footnote.

of the Bay of Bengal, and offering a channel to commercial enterprise, as the means of communication with Siam and the Shan tribes, as far as the western confines of China; they are also rich in vegetable and mineral products. Of these conquests, however, Arakan has made the most decided advance. Favourably circumstanced, both as to climate and soil, for the growth of rice, it has become the granary of the countries on either shore of the bay; and hundreds of vessels now annually sail from its harbours, which, at the time of the conquest, rarely sent even a fishing boat to sea. In an economical point of view, therefore, these territories have already exceeded expectation, and are in a state of progress to still greater improvement; while they have a real political value in constituting a difficult and well-defined frontier, presenting a ready access to Ava and Siam, and promising at some future period convenient intercourse by land with the opulent empire of China."

The Barrackpur Mutiny

One of the saddest episodes connected with the Burmese war was the Mutiny of the sepoys at Barrackpur. The Bengal Army, consisting of caste Hindus, was ordered to proceed to Burma through the trackless deserts of Arakan. One of the regiments, when warned for distant service, petitioned that they required an increase of pay and that they could not pay their own expenses for the transport of their baggage, as they were obliged to do by an order of the commanding officer. A number of them also refused to enter a ship, as that would be against caste rules. They had also real grievances, like financial loss, and as usual, "the genuine grievance was made the occasion for raising the cry of religion in danger." Every impartial writer on this subject had considered the grievances of the sepoy-memorialists as genuine and deserved consideration at the hands of the authorities. "The Bengal sepoys are, after all, but a mercenary militia," says Marshman, "bound to serve their foreign rulers *within the limits of their own country.*" The unwillingness of the sepoys to march through unknown regions with inadequate pay and without good means of transport, was magnified into a 'Mutiny'

and the Commander-in-Chief mowed them down with machine-guns and those who escaped the slaughter were chased and sabred by European soldiers!*

Bharatpur Affairs

One of the military acts in the time of Lord Amherst which reflected great glory on the British arms was the capture of the famous fortress of Bharatpur before which Lord Lake failed in 1805. The Jat ruler of Bharatpur, when he saw that his end was approaching, petitioned to the English that, on his death, his young son should be recognised as heir. Lord Amherst consented and the investiture was duly performed. It became soon apparent that there was another claimant to the throne in the person of Durjan Sal, a cousin of the child Raja. Ambitious and impetuous, Durjan bribed the Jat soldiery, put to death the child's guardian and proclaimed himself the ruler. Sir David Ochterlony who was Commissioner at Delhi and Political Agent for Malwa and Rajputana, resolved to strike at once before Durjan had time to collect a force and strengthen the fortifications He therefore mobilised a big army, to vindicate, by force, the authority of the British Government. Amherst, however, ordered Ochterlony to countermand the military preparations and not to adopt any measure likely to cause another war in Hindustan. This somewhat harsh revocation of his measures profoundly affected the feeling of Ochterlony, the hero of many wars; and, in a moment of extreme dejection, he resigned his office and retired to Meerut where he died soon afterwards.†

* Mill and Wilson thus write in regard to the misrepresentation about 'the Mutiny' by the President of the Board of Control: "It appeared, upon the evidence, before the Court of Inquiry, appointed to investigate the causes of the Mutiny that, of the many musquets which were left on the field, scarcely one was loaded, although the men had each forty rounds of ammunition; yet it was deliberately asserted in the House of Commons by the President of the Board of Control, if his speech is accurately reported, that, when the Royals were advancing, the mutineers fired upon them. The same authority has been made to say that there was no ground of complaint as to any want of proper accommodation."

† The Government made ample amends for this slight by extolling in a General Order, the great diplomatic and military qualities possessed by Sir David Ochterlony.

Militant Activities of Durjan Sal

Emboldened by the strictures passed on Sir David Ochterlony by the Indian Government, Durjan Sal decided to hold Bharatpur against the English. He called to his aid Rajputs, Jats, Marathas, Afghans and such others who had lost their profession of plundering and looting, owing to the settled condition of the country. He thus gathered a force of 25,000 men and put the fort in a state of excellent defence. Lord Amherst was frightened and consulted Sir Charles Metcalfe. The latter maintained that the English were bound in honour to maintain the legal succession of the child Raja of Bharatpur.

Capture of Bharatpur

Accepting the view of Sir Charles Metcalfe, Lord Amherst appointed Lord Combermere to be in charge of operations. Bharatpur was rightly considered 'an insuperable check to British power and the last bulwark of national independence.' The Commander-in-Chief attempted his best to effect a breach by heavily bombarding the fort. This was of no avail. At the suggestion of one, Colonel Forbes, it was resolved to create a breach by mining. A tremendous breach was obtained by blasting and the British troops rushed in. They suffered a loss of 600 men, while the enemy lost more than 8,000. Bharatpur was taken and the disgrace of Lord Lake was wiped out. But this fresh glory to the British arms was dimmed by the scandalous looting of the fort by the English troops. Even Sir Charles Metcalfe had to protest against this spoliation. "Our plundering here," he wrote to the Government, "has been very disgraceful and has tarnished our well-earned honours. Until I can get rid of the prize agents, I cannot establish the sovereignty of the young Rajah, whom we came professedly to protect but have been plundering to the last *lotah*, since he fell into our hands." There is no doubt that the capture of Bharatpur is, as Marshman says, a salient point in the history of British progress in India. Besides enormously increasing their prestige in the eyes of the governed, it enabled the Government to get loans on easy terms from the indigenous

bankers who received the news of the fall of Bharatpur earlier than the Governor-General himself.*

Retirement of Lord Amherst

On the conclusion of the Burmese war Lord Amherst received a higher rank in the peerage as Earl Amherst of Arakan—a promotion which, in the opinion of many, he did not deserve.† In the domain of finance, his administration had been most calamitous and resulted in a considerable increase of the public debt.‡ Lord Amherst quitted India in February, 1828; and pending the arrival of his successor, Lord William Bentinck, the senior Member of the Calcutta Council, Mr. Bayley, acted as Governor-General.

"The capture of the town and fort by the skill of British engineers, diffused a salutary feeling of awe throughout India, and combined with the simultaneous submission of the Burmese, dissolved the hopes of the disaffected, and strengthened the power of Government."—Marshman in his *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 410.

† See for example *The Oxford History of India* by V. A. Smith.—Writes he, "Lord Amherst was not intellectually fit for his high office, and ought not to have been appointed. Parliament with its accustomed generosity, pardoned his errors and awarded him cordial thanks for the final success of the operations against Burma and Bhurtpore." p. 653.

‡ Thus writes John Malcolm Ludlow in his *British India*, Vol. II, p. 65:—"The time for openly plundering native princes was gone with Warren Hastings. One observes, however, at this time, the extreme prevalence of the practice of obtaining loans from them. At the end of 1825, the King of Oude lends £1,000,000 sterling: £500,000 for two years the next year. The Baiza Baee, after Sindhia's decease, lent £800,000. In the general loans which were contracted we find smaller chiefs contributing their quota. The Raja of Nagpur £50.000, the Raja of Benares £20.000; even the unfortunate Bajee Rao, the Ex-Peshwa, refunding a very considerable sum for the purpose out of the savings from his pension." On two occasions, in 1825 and 1826 the King of Oudh provided a million and a half sterling "thereby soothing the anxieties of the contumacious, but impecunious John Company." The wars of those days did not pay their way at all, while the military authorities were rapacious in their extortions of prize-money and other gains.

CHAPTER XII

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

SECTION I. FINANCIAL REFORMS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Early Career of Bentinck

"The Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck," writes Sir Alfred Lyall, "has the distinctive characteristic of representing in Anglo-Indian history a period of brief and rare tranquillity; it was an era of liberal and civilizing administration, of quiet material progress, and of some important moral and educational reforms." The second son of the third Duke of Portland, Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck could trace his lineage to one of the noblest families in the Netherlands that came to England in the train of William of Orange. Quite early in his life, Bentinck entered the army and had seen service in various parts of Europe during the Napoleanic conflagration. It was his exceptional military experience that gained for him at the young age of twenty-nine, the Governorship of Madras. His administration of the Presidency was not very much to the satisfaction of the Home authorities. He was accused of having miserably bungled in regard to the Vellore Mutiny and, as we have already noted,* summarily recalled from service. Bentinck's rule was also marred by a bitter quarrel with the Supreme Court recently established at Madras and by a growing discontent evinced by the British officers of the Army. It is, however, incorrect to consider Bentinck's administration of Madras to be a failure. It was at Madras that he put forward a liberal policy for the better government of India. In dealing with the land question, Bentinck supported the policy of Sir Thomas Munro who was keen in introducing the Ryotwari System in the Madras Presidency. After his recall from Madras, Bentinck was again employed in the army. He took part in the Peninsular War and was, later on, employed in Sicily where he displayed to great advantage the administrative talents he

* See page 245.

undoubtedly possessed. When Canning became the Prime Minister, he nominated Bentinck to succeed Lord Amherst as Governor-General of India; and thus was effaced 'the stigma which had been unjustly cast on his character by his abrupt and harsh removal from Madras in 1806.' Lord William Bentinck reached Calcutta in July 1828.

Early Measures: Economic Reform

The huge drain caused by the Burmese war and the increased public debt of India compelled the Court of Directors to adopt very stringent measures of economy. Soon after his arrival, he appointed two committees to investigate the increase of expenditure in the civil and military establishments. In regard to the latter, a great reduction in the army strength had already been effected; and the committees further proposed a reduction of allowances. The civil servants of the Company would appear to have enjoyed fabulous salaries. Thus the remuneration of an opium agent amounted to 75,000 rupees a year! Lord William Bentinck cut down the allowances and abolished a few posts. All these reductions amounted to a cut of only six per cent. And still left the service the best paid one in the world. Bentinck abolished the Provinical Court of Appeal and Circuit; he increased the number of "uncovenanted" servants, admitted Indians to that grade of service and transferred to them a number of important administrative and judicial duties hitherto reserved for the 'covenanted' service.

The Half-Batta Agitation

At the beginning of the Company's rule, officers of the army were accustomed to get in addition to their pay a certain amount called *batta*. While in active service in the field within the limits of the Company's territory, they got their pay and the additional *batta*. If serving beyond the frontiers, the *batta* was doubled, but reduced to one-half if stationed in the cantonments. This double privilege was early withdrawn and at the same time officers were required to provide their own quarters. As a compensation, however, a later army order granted whole *batta* whether the forces were in the field or in cantonments. The Home authorities, with a view to economy, reverted to the old plan of half *batta* while the

officers stayed at their original stations. Lord Hastings and Lord Amherst protested against such a measure as that would hit hard the junior officers of the army. But the India House was insistent and curtailed the *batta* allowance at all stations within four hundred miles of Calcutta. Lord William Bentinck also sympathised with the affected officers; but he had no option in the matter. His rigorous execution of the order caused great resentment in the army circles and the Governor-General was subjected to gross personal insults from the officers.

Financial Expedients

Lord William Bentinck's administration was called upon not only to curtail expenditure but increase the resources of revenue in every possible way. Opium has always remained a very elastic source of wealth. Warren Hastings and Sir John Shore had completed a scheme of making it a Government monopoly. Following the line of action already taken by them, Bentinck still further increased the income from this head. He effectively checked competition in opium trade and established a system of licences for conveying this drug from Central India to the port of Bombay. This ensured a progressive revenue to the state without in any way interfering with the rights of anybody. An order of Bayley, the acting Governor-General, for investigating freehold titles, carried out scrupulously by Bentinck resulted in a permanent increase of £300,000 a year to the state treasury. Similarly, he created a Board of Revenue at Allahabad to deal with land settlements in the newly conquered provinces, known now as the "United Provinces" with Robert Mertins Bird as its head. Profiting by a commerical crisis in Calcutta, he reduced the rate of interest on Government loans. The effect of all his economies combined was to convert a deficit into a surplus, and to provide a handsome margin for the home charges of the Government. The deficit annually in Amherst's time was about three millions sterlings; the total deficit at the close of Amherst's rule was nearly twenty millions sterling. Bentinck had turned it into an annual surplus of two millions.*

* Keene's *History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 126 ff.

Although Bentinck's Governor-Generalship was free from those wars which characterised the rule of both his predecessor and successor in office, a few minor expeditions were rendered necessary owing to economic unrest prevailing on the borders of the British provinces. The most important of them was the uprising of the Kols, the Santals and other tribes occupying the hills and jungles of south-west Bengal. These forest tribes had somehow fallen into the hands of a few Rajput zamindars who brought the more enlightened Bengalis and Biharis and settled them in lands previously occupied by the mountain tribes. The Government in their turn introduced into these tracts the cumbrous regulations of the Bengal Presidency. The net result was the uprising by the Kols which had to be put down. The military operations that followed were of a ruthless kind. Thousands of poor Santals were cut down. "Lord William Bentinck was induced, in compassion to the people, to relieve them from the incubus of a code altogether unsuited to the simplicity of their habits, and he formed the districts into a Non-Regulation Province, and placed it under the control of a Commissioner."

Insurrections

The calm rule of Bentinck is important for the great social and administrative reforms he introduced. Yet, in so far as his dealings with the Indian states went, it is impossible to find any steady and consistent policy. The Court of Directors, in the honest though mistaken belief that 'Lord Hastings at last, in 1817, brought to a completion that system of policy which the great genius and foresight of Lord Wellesley had originally planned' had insisted that Lord William Bentinck was to follow Barlow's policy of strict non-intervention in regard to Indian states. The Governor-General, warned by his Madras experience and anxious to follow scrupulously instructions from London, readily pursued the policy dictated to him in his earlier years of administration. But even he soon found that subsidiary treaties and alliances, while giving the Indian princes absolute protection from without, granted them also the right to oppress their subjects and commit other

Foreign Policy of Bentinck

Marshman: *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 10.

untold atrocities. Sir Charles Metcalfe, one of the ablest of Civilian administrators, gave his opinion that the English having become the paramount power in India, they must assume responsibility as guardians of general law, tranquillity and right.* Lord William Bentinck, while pretending to be of another order of mind, followed exactly the opposite course. Thus, in his time, he annexed Cachar, suppressed the native dynasty in Coorg, took over the administration of Mysore, and concluded treaties with Ranjit Singh and the Amirs of Sind which, as Sir Alfred Lyall rightly points out, 'were in point of fact the preliminary steps that led us, a few years later, out upon the wide and perilous field of Afghan politics.'† Let us briefly enquire into some of these transactions. In suppressing the *thugs*, Bentinck obtained the help of the Nizam, the Sindia and the Nawab Vizier; and the Indian rulers were on the whole helpful to him, except in the matter of the regulation of the opium trade.

It will be seen that, in the Treaty of Yandabo, the Burmese had renounced all manner of right over the hilly principality of Cachar. The Raja, who was restored to the throne by the English after the Burmese war, was murdered in 1832 and he left no heir to succeed him. The Governor-General promptly annexed the state to the Company.‡

Cachar annexed (1832)

"The conquest and annexation of Coorg," writes Marshman, "was the deliberate act of the most pacific of Governors-General." Few parts of India are more picturesque than the hill province of Coorg which lies between Mysore and the sea. It gallantly defended itself against the Mysore rulers; and its

Annexation of Coorg

* See Kaye's *Metcalfe Papers*, p. 112.

† Sir Alfred Lyall's *Expansion of British Dominions in India*, p. 304.

‡ The great historian, Mill, thus gives the reasons for annexing the State :—" As there was no acknowledged successor to Govind Chandra, and great inconvenience had been suffered on the Sylhet frontier from the imbecile management of the neighbouring districts, by native rule—as the measure also was acceptable to the people, by whom it had been repeatedly solicited—it was determined to annex Cachar permanently to the territories of the Company."—Mill's *History of India*, Vol. III, p. 226. The whole affair was but a prelude to annexation of states on a vaster scale by the application of the Doctrine of Lapse.

Raja was warmly commended by Marquess Wellesley who also presented him with a sword. When the English were at war with Tipu, they entered into a solemn compact with the Raja of Coorg, guaranteeing his independence. This Raja died in 1809 and he was succeeded by his brother who, in turn, was followed by his son, Vira Raja (1820). According to English writers, this Vira Raja was haughty and cruel. Like Clovis, the Merovingian, he killed all his kith and kin for fear they might claim the throne. His sister flying for her life sought the protection of the British Resident in Mysore to whom she narrated the story of the Raja's atrocities. Attempts to bring the Raja to reason proved futile; and the Governor-General was forced to take strong military action against the tyrant. The Coorg soldiers fought bravely in the war that followed, but the Raja surrendered after some strenuous fighting to General Fraser who issued a proclamation annexing Coorg to British territory The British Government was held to have no other object in view than to "secure to the inhabitants of Coorg the blessings of a just and equitable Government;" and the annexation was "in accordance with the unanimous wish of the people." To-day, Coorg is one of the most valuable possessions of the English. There has been a remarkable progress of the material, if not the moral, prosperity of the country owing to the application of European capital to coffee-planting. The climate also is eminently suitable for Europeans to permanently settle in the land.

Mysore Affairs

It will be remembered that, after the war with Tipu, Marquess Wellesley placed on the Mysore throne a descendant of the old Hindu dynasty. The truncated Mysore of which the boy-king was to be the future ruler, was considered, by the articles of the treaty entered into with him, as a personal, and not an hereditary, fief. It was also clearly stipulated in the treaty that, should the Raja fall into arrears regarding the subsidiary amount of seven lakhs of pagodas a year, or the administration of the country prove to be oppressive to the people, the Governor-General possessed the right "to restore to the Company the most extensive and indisputable powers of interposition in the internal affairs of Mysore, as well as an

unlimited right of assuming the direct management of the country." Under the able Dewanship of Purniah, the state of Mysore prospered during the minority of the Mysore Raja and there was a surplus of two crores of rupees in the treasury.

Maladministration under the Raja

But the Raja came of age in 1811. Purniah retired. By his capacity and character, no less than by his tendency to act up to the advice of flatterers with little administrative experience, he was utterly unfitted to rule. One of his first acts was to dismiss the able Purniah and squander away the crores which the Brahmin minister had so carefully husbanded. Protests and admonitions by Sir Thomas Munro, the Madras Governor, had no effect. Taking advantage of the ever-widening cleavage between the Raja and the Company's officers, the people of Nagar also rose in rebellion against the Mysore administration. Lord William Bentinck found it necessary to despatch a large force to put it down; and when it was done, he informed the Raja that in the interests of the people, he was constrained to take upon himself the task of administering the country. The Raja was pensioned off, getting as mentioned in the treaty 'a lakh of star pagodas and a fifth of the net revenues.' There was, no doubt, a lurking feeling in the mind of Lord William Bentinck that he had been rather too severe and that the circumstances of the case did not warrant such drastic action. For the Commission that was appointed to enquire into the causes of the rebellion, had to record that the tales of oppression by the Raja were unduly exaggerated. Bentinck, possibly remorseful, wrote to the Court of Directors suggesting the restoration of Mysore to the Raja 'after taking over in perpetuity a portion of the country sufficient for the payment of the subsidy.' After he perused the Report of the Commission, he saw the injustice of having taken over the kingdom from the Raja and consequently made immediate proposals to the Directors to set things right and to declare that "the assumption was quite a temporary measure and intended for the time being."* But the latter body refused

* *The Mysore Gazetteer*: (New ed.)—Vol. II, Part IV, pp. 2874-2876.

to modify the original plan already put into operation. It was not till 1881 that justice was rendered to the Mysore Raja.

Barring the instances cited above, in all other cases Bentinck followed a non-intervention policy; he carried the principles of that policy to such extremes that his neutrality was to a great extent responsible for anarchy and bloodshed in various parts of India. Thus, in Bhopal, the vagaries of Sikandar Begum, a high-spirited but erratic woman, who would not hand over the administration to her adopted son even though he came of age, led to a civil war involving loss of life. The nobles of Jodhpur who had legitimate grievances against their half-insane overlord, were compelled, by the non-interference of Bentinck, to take the law into their own hands. It was only at a later stage when they had assembled an army of 7,000 men and resolved to depose their ruler, that Bentinck interfered and restored peace in that quarter. In Jaipur, the mischievous activities of a Jain banker, Jotaram, kept the state in perpetual commotion, ultimately resulting in the death of Blake, Assistant to the British Resident in Rajputana, who himself escaped death only narrowly; and a council of regency was set up.

Results of the Non-Intervention Policy

Oudh like many other native states was in a state of administrative chaos. Its king, puerile and effeminate, brought up in zenana had little administrative wisdom. Scenes of violence and oppression were of every day occurrence. When the Governor-General threatened him that the country would be taken over by the British Government if he did not introduce reforms, he reappointed his able minister, Hakim Mehdi, one of the ablest administrators. It was not long that the latter was allowed to remain in office. His retrenchment measures offended the king's favourites and his questioning of the profligate expenditure of the zenana cost him his appointment. The Court of Directors on hearing of the miserable condition of Oudh ordered Bentinck to assume the government of the country but he preferred to wait for some time longer in the hope that further admonitions would lead to a better administration of the country.

Condition of Oudh

The Sindia died in March 1827, leaving no heir to succeed him. His wife, Byza Bai, the daughter of the infamous Sirjee Rao Ghatkay, the most accomplished villain of his age, adopted a son, Jankoji, a near relation of her deceased husband. But she neglected his education and training, with the selfish view of making herself supreme in the state. When the adopted prince reached his majority, he appealed to Bentinck to restore power to him. The Governor-General, still under the charm of non-intervention, did not take up the question seriously. In the result, a civil war was threatened in the state between the adherents of the two parties. Ultimately Byza Bai was persuaded to give up the struggle and retire to her jaghir in the Deccan on payment of a large annuity. There were also troubles in Baroda and in Udaipur, while the Nizam's administration was marked by chaos of a very intensive kind.

State of Gwalior

To the rule of Lord William Bentinck belongs the initiation of a policy intended to thwart the designs of Russia which was suspected to be preparing for an invasion of India across the north-west frontier. Russia was to become from now "the major bugbear of the country." It is enough to say at present that, on the eve of his departure, Lord William Bentinck concluded defensive commerical alliances with the independent rulers whose territories lay on both the banks of the Indus, *viz.*, the Amirs of Sind, the Khan of Bhawalpore and Ranjit Singh.*

Anti-Russian Policy

* The following observations of Kaye, in regard to these treaties, are of interest to the student in view of what occurred later on: "The survey of the Indus and the commercial agency at Caubul were the *prolegomena*, so to speak, of the great epic of the Afghan war: and Metcalfe, in his correspondence both with Lord William Bentinck and Lord Auckland, argued and protested, with equal sagacity and earnestness, against measures which could hardly fail to entangle us in such a manner with the trans-Indian States as eventually to evolve a great and calamitous war. He left India at a most unfortunate conjuncture. His services were never so much needed as at the time of his departure." Kaye's *Life and Correspondence of Lord Metcalfe.*

Section II. Moral and Material Progress

"The Government of Lord William Bentinck," truly observes Marshman, "stands forth in high relief in the history of British India as the era of progression. It derives its lustre from his enlightened views of domestic policy, his vigorous administrative reforms, his intrepid philanthropy and his spirited efforts to promote the material interests of the Empire."* In the field of civil administration, he entirely remodelled the Judicature and lessened the three great evils of delay, expense and uncertainty, by abolishing old tribunals and creating new ones to which men of character and ability were appointed as judges. He created a separate Sadar or Chief Court for the North-West Provinces, thus obviating the necessity of people having to go to distant Calcutta. He also erected a separate Board of Revenue at Allahabad for the Provinces. He bestowed upon the litigants the inestimable boon of permitting them to use their own vernacular instead of Persian which was till now the court language.

Reforms in Administration

Bentinck rendered his name famous in another direction. He was the first Governor-General to employ educated Indians in the higher offices in the Company's service. Under the Mughal rule, Hindus were employed to posts of great trust and responsibility; yet the administration did not suffer on that account. But Lord Cornwallis thought differently. He rigorously excluded them from every post except the lowest and the worst paid. Lord William Bentinck was so deeply convinced of the unwisdom of the policy laid down by Cornwallis that he was determined "to throw open the doors of distinction to the natives and grant them a full participation in all the honours and emoluments of the state." In 1831 he issued a set of Regulations empowering the appointment of Indians in the Judicial Service with a maximum salary of Rs. 750 per mensem. The need for economy also helped this attempt at Indianisation of the judicial department. This example was nobly followed by his successors.

Employment of Indians

* Marshman: *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 44.

Abolition of *Sati*

The credit of abolishing *Sati* by means of state legislation belongs again to Lord William Bentinck. Some previous Governors-General were equally anxious to put an end to this inhuman practice; but it was left to Bentinck to pass a Regulation (14th December 1829), declaring "the practice of *Sati* illegal and punishable by the criminal courts as culpable homicide." It is unnecessary to enter into the history of *Sati* with which every Hindu is familiar.* It was customary in ancient times for pious and virtuous wives to mount the funeral pyres of their husbands and thus willingly immolate themselves. Nowhere in the Hindu Shastras has it been stated that this practice was obligatory on every woman that was widowed. However, in certain parts of India, especially in Bengal, it had become a common feature.† Soon after Bentinck reached India, he circulated a confidential letter among a few of the Company's officers requiring their opinion in regard to the effect that the abolition of *Sati* would produce in the mind of the people. The great Orientalist, Dr. Horace Wilson, was for non-interference on the ground that legislation on the subject would be doing violence to the conscientious belief of the Hindus and that it would constitute an infringement of the pledge the Company had given not to interfere with the religious practices of the people. Others, like Sir William Macnaghten, urged the abolition of the practice. However, in spite of great differences of opinion, Lord William Bentinck, taking courage in both his hands, made it penal to practise *Sati* by Regulation XVII of December 1829. A few rich and orthodox Bengalis protested against such interference by the state and they even preferred an appeal to the Privy Council. Their memorial, influentially signed, was, however, rightly rejected by this tribunal.

* See V. A. Smith: *Oxford History of India*, p. 665 for a succinct account of *Sati*.

† Mill has taken the trouble to furnish the reader with statistics. Out of 463 cases of *Sati* in 1828-29, 309 belonged to the city of Calcutta. See Mill and Wilson, Book III, Chap. VI, page 189. See also K. K. Datta: *Education and Social Amelioration of Women in Pre-Mutiny India* (1936), Ch. III.

Yet another boon conferred upon the people, especially those of Central India, by the Governor-General was the suppression of the Thugs.* They were a gang of murderous robbers with their haunts in Central India. They were members of a secret organisation with many ramifications. Accompanying unsuspected innocent travellers, but always outnumbering them, they suddenly threw round their neck an unfolded turban and, after strangling them, robbed them. Many of the Thugs were Muhammadans in extraction, although low-caste Hindus were admitted into their society and "having admitted Hindu castes into the confederacy, they had borrowed from their associates many of the superstitious notions of degenerate Hinduism, and the special veneration of Devi, Durga or Bhavani, the bride of Siva ".† Such was the wretched state of the country that many chiefs, zamindars, officers and even members of the constabulary connived at their murders and shared in their nefarious profits. Lord William Bentinck, with characteristic courage, resolved to put the Thugs down and, with that end in view, created a new department in 1829 and placed it under Sir William Sleeman to whose account of the Thugs we are much indebted. The operations conducted by this humane officer were so successful that in the course of six years, from 1830 to 1835, more than 2,000 of these murderers were arrested, brought to trial and executed or sent to long terms of imprisonment. In 1837 Sleeman was also entrusted with the suppression of dacoity which, however, proved a more difficult task and was driven to the borders of the British dominions. Although it cannot be said that the crime was extirpated, the

Suppression of the Thugs

* "The term Thug properly denotes 'a cheat.' In some parts of India, these people are known by the more appropriate designation of Phansi-gar, the bearer of a noose, 'Phansi' with which they strangle."—Wilson.

† Mill and Wilson: *History of India*, Vol. IX, p. 209.

roads of Central India were made more secure for travellers and traders. *

English, the Medium of Education

The question had to be decided in the time of Lord William Bentinck whether English or the vernacular should be the medium of instruction. It is necessary to sketch briefly the history of educational progress under the rule of the East India Company. A Resolution of 1813 in the British House of Parliament stated that a lakh of rupees should be set apart for "the revival and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories, out of any surplus which might remain of the rents, revenues and profits of our territorial acquisitions." The authorities in India interpreted this resolution to mean that the funds, when available, should be used, agreeably to the tendencies of the age, for the promotion of Oriental learning. In Lord Minto's time a few Hindu colleges were opened and supported by the Government. Mr. Adam, who acted as Governor-General for a brief period, appointed a Committee of Public Instruction to suggest proper measures for the diffusion of knowledge among the Indians. This Committee was in favour of improving the then existing institutions, the Hindu College at Benares and the Muhammadan College at Calcutta, and also suggested the opening of a new Hindu College at the latter place. When the whole matter went up to London, Mr. James Mill, the renowned historian, drafted a note to the despatch, in the course of which he said: "the great end of Government should be, not to teach Hindoo or Mahomedan learning, but useful learning." Hindu leaders like Raja Rammohun Roy were eager to spread western education through which they hoped to eradicate existing social evils and also enable Indians to take their part in Government service. The Parliamentary grant, nevertheless, was continued to be applied, under the

* For detailed knowledge of the ways of the Thugs, the student is referred to Vol. XIII of *Asiatic Researches* which contains an article entitled 'the Phansigars' by Dr. Sherwood; to Colonel Sleeman's *Rameesiana*; to Medows Taylor's famous quasi-historical novel, "The Confessions of a Thug", (1839) and to "Thug on 4 Million Murders" by J. L. Sleeman, a grandson of Sir William Sleeman, who wrote from records.

influence of Dr. Horace Wilson, to the promotion of studies, "of which the mode, the medium, and the scope were altogether Oriental in their character and designed to conciliate old prejudices and perpetuate old ideas."* But about 1830, a few rich and influential residents of Calcutta drew the attention of the Board of Education to the necessity of imparting European science through the medium of English language. Opinion on this question was sharply divided. Eminent Orientalists like Dr. Wilson expressed themselves unequivocally against making English the medium of instruction, while Sir Charles Trevelyan and Lord Macaulay, now Law Member of the Supreme Council, denounced the continued promotion of Orientalism, wrote his famous Minute in February 1835. The Government of Lord William Bentinck voted (March 1835) for the latter view and, by a resolution, resolved to apply funds for the promotion of English Education alone † Thus the Orientalists were defeated and the Anglicists won the day. The whole dispute had been closely connected with the *Sati* controversy. Bentinck was guided wholly by practical considerations and had no animus against the vernacular languages nor against Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. The momentum, thus imparted to the cause of English education, gathered strength as time went on, with what result we see now. Bentinck, as a crowning act of his administration, opened a Medical College in Calcutta in 1835, which, in spite of predictions to the contrary, was soon crowded by Indian students who were as keen and efficient in handling the scalpel as any European students.

A small English educated class was fostered, which was expected to bring western ideas to the people. Macaulay emphasised this *filtration* theory which, however, largely failed to have any effect. From this time there began to grow a

* Marshman : *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 65.

† But Lord Macaulay's letter to his father in which he wrote : " It is my firm belief that, if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence," had created an alarm in the minds of people that the underlying purpose of the Government was to convert Indians to Christianity. This feeling grew into a conviction when the Rev. Dr. Duff opened, at Calcutta, an English College where the learning of the Bible became compulsory.

process of excessive concentration on modernised higher education.*

The Charter Renewed (1833)

The Charter, granted to the Company in 1813, having expired by efflux of time in 1833, it became necessary to consider the question of its renewal by Parliament. Discussion in that august body centered on two points, the China trade monopoly and the continuance of the Government of India by the Company. In regard to the former, there was a loud outcry against the monopoly of the China trade carried on by the East India Company and the merchants and traders in Great Britain were insistent that the monopoly should go. In face of public opinion so strongly expressed, Parliament found it impossible to reaffirm the monopoly any longer. As a sequel, the Company was forced to dispose of its magnificent merchant-fleet. "The Company was thus finally divested of its commercial character, and the last remaining monopoly of the reign of Queen Elizabeth was extinguished after a duration of nearly two centuries and a half."†

Altered Character of the Indian Government

In regard to the other question of retaining the Government of India in the hands of the Company, Parliament and the Crown were not in a position to immediately take upon themselves the task of directly administering the country. They, therefore, readily agreed to the Company continuing to govern India, but introduced several changes both in the form and the spirit of the administration. In the first place, the title, "Governor-General of Bengal in Council" was changed into "Governor-General of India in Council"; and the latter was empowered to legislate for the whole Empire. On the advice of Lord Macaulay, instead of the old-time Regulations, Acts

* See A. Mayhew: *Education of India*; and C. E. Trevelyan: *On the Education of the People of India* (1838).

† The Charter Act of 1833 was "the outcome of much inquiry and consideration." "It was produced at a time when Whig and Liberal principles were politically victorious, when Macaulay was Secretary to the Board of Control, and James Mill, the desciple of Bentham and admirer of his views on legislation and codification was examiner of the India Correspondence"—P. 131 of A. B. Keith's *A Constitutional History of India (1600—1935)*—(1936).

were passed. The subordinate Presidencies including the new one that was constituted out of the "North-West Provinces" were not to pass laws. A fourth Member, designated the Law Member, was added to the Governor-General's Council and the office was first given to Lord Macaulay, the illustrious essayist and historian who initiated the compilation of the Penal Code and the Codes of Criminal and Civil Procedure. These alterations profoundly altered the legislative system of the Indian Government, which was directed to consolidate its legislation and standardise its judicial systems and procedure. The new Charter enacted that 'no native of India, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty, should be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour.' Europeans were, at the same time, permitted to hold and purchase lands in India. In short this great Act "laid down the principle that the Indian Empire did not exist for the sake of Britain, but for the welfare of the Indian peoples. It urged that, to the largest possible extent, Indians should be employed in Indian administrative work Above all, it proclaimed, as 'an indisputable principle,' the remarkable and noble doctrine "that the interests of the native subjects are to be consulted in preference to those of Europeans, whenever the two come in competition. Is there any parallel in history to this declaration of a ruling race in regard to its recently conquered subjects? Yet that declaration was perfectly sincere. It represented the new spirit of British rule."* But there also began to develop in the minds of the British rulers from about this time a new outlook and idea that they were "reconstructing a decomposed society" and they became averse to delegating any real power to Indians and began to isolate themselves, socially and spiritually. Their attitude was quite different from that of men like Munro and Elphinstone who would have liked the British to do little more than keep the peace. This new cleavage between the rulers and the ruled became marked from about 1850.†

* Ramsay Muir: *The Making of British India*, p. 282.

† See Thompson and Garratt: *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* (1934), p. 880.

Remarks on Lord William Bentinck's Administration

Every historian of note has praised the administration of Lord William Bentinck. The following eulogy inscribed on the pedestal of a statue erected to commemorate his memory, although slightly overdrawn, nevertheless represents what the cultured type of Indians and Europeans, his contemporaries in Calcutta, thought of the great qualities of head and heart which the distinguished Governor-General possessed. The inscription is from the classic pen of Lord Macaulay:

> "This statue is erected to William Cavendish Bentinck, who during seven years ruled India with eminent prudence, integrity and benevolence: who, placed at the head of a great Empire, never laid aside the simplicity and moderation of a private citizen: who infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of British freedom, who never forgot that the end of Government is the welfare of the governed, who abolished cruel rites, who effaced humiliating distinctions; who allowed liberty to the expression of public opinion, whose constant study it was to elevate the moral and intellectual character of the government committed to his charge—this monument was erected by men who, differing from each other in race, in manners, language and in religion, cherish, with equal veneration and gratitude, the memory of his wise, upright and paternal administration."

Lord William Bentinck returned to England in March 1835 with a broken health. In 1837 he was elected member of Parliament and died at Paris in 1839 at the age of 65.

CHAPTER XIII

AUCKLAND AND ELLENBOROUGH— THE AFGHAN BLUNDER

SECTION I. LORD AUCKLAND'S ADMINISTRATION

Owing to failing health Lord William Bentinck returned to England earlier than was expected; and Sir Charles Metcalfe, a distinguished civil servant and Governor of the newly created "North-West Provinces," was selected by the Court of Directors to act as Governor-General. The story is told of Metcalfe that, while yet a student in the College at Fort William—he came to India while he was a lad of fifteen—he avowed to one of his professors that his ambition was to become the Governor-General of India. Beginning his political career under Lord Wellesley, Metcalfe was promoted from one responsible post to another. He had taken a prominent part in the political movements of every Indian Court from Hyderabad to Lahore. As Dr. Marshman truly observes: "with the exception of Warren Hastings, no member of the Indian Civil Service had ever been more eminently qualified for this imperial trust, by his natural genius for administration, his sound judgment and large views, as well as by his long and universal experience." The great measure of his brief reign of twelve months was the Liberation of the Press, a measure that brought the wrath of the Court of Directors on him and, in consequence, abruptly cut short his Indian career. His confirmation as Governor-General had, indeed, been long canvassed; but the Directors upheld the objection to officials being appointed to that supreme office. Another measure of Metcalfe's Indian rule was the abolition of the inland transit duties which had been hampering trade seriously.

Sir C. Metcalfe Governor General (1835)

The law governing the press at this time was confusing, although the main principles of it are easily discernible. In its application, it differed from place to place and from province to province. There was no restriction imposed on the press in the Madras Presidency, while, in Bengal, it was fettered.

The New Press Act

Mention has already been made of the censorship of the press in the days of Mr. Adam. In his time journals were suppressed and recalcitrant editors deported. But the law was not enforced by Lord William Bentinck; and so the press remained practically free. Sir Charles Metcalfe, always an ardent advocate of the liberty of the press, now that he had a chance, repealed all the restrictions previously imposed on it. In his own words, the new Act—passed in September 1835—"evinced to the world that the Government of the Company desired no concealment, that it was happy to have the most minute particulars of its Indian administration scrutinized and displayed to the gaze of the Universe, that it sought information and instruction wherever they could be found, and did not wish to rule India as a conquered, ignorant and enslaved, but as a cherished, enlightened and free country." These words and the Act itself were not to the liking of the Court of Directors who expressed their displeasure against the acting Governor-General in many ways. In the first place, he was not confirmed in his office as Governor-General, a prospect which he had certainly expected. Secondly, when he was reverted to his place at Agra he found that, by a Parliamentary Act, the Governorship of the Province was reduced to a subordinate Lieutenant-Governorship. Still Metcalfe accepted the post in the hope that he would be promoted to a higher appointment. That chance came when the Governorship of Madras fell vacant. Although recommended strongly by Lord William Bentinck, the Court of Directors deliberately ignored his claims. In disgust the latter tendered his resignation to Lord Auckland and sailed home after twenty-six years "of uninterrupted service in the higest appointments in which no man ever bore a higher character for high-mindedness, usefulness and ability."*

* But the British Cabinet rewarded him suitably for all his Indian labours. In 1839 he was made Governor of Jamaica and in 1842 was appointed as Governor-General of Canada and at the same time was raised to the Peerage. He died in 1846. See J. Kaye—*Life of Lord Metcalfe*; (2 Vols: 1854); and *Correspondence of Lord Metcalfe* (1855).

Lord Auckland, the new Governor-General, took his seat on the 20th March 1836. He had served in Lord Grey's Cabinet as the President of the Board of Trade and, later on, as the First Lord of Admiralty under Lord Melbourne. He left England with high hopes and the best of intentions and assured the Directors that "he looked with exultation to the new prospects before him, as affording him an opportunity of doing good to his fellow creatures, of promoting education and knowledge, and of extending the blessings of good government and happiness to millions in India." Doubtless an able officer, Lord Auckland was wanting in that essential quality of a statesman, confidence in his own judgment. It was his diffidence in his own powers that led him and the country into disaster He was languid and unaware of anything that passed beneath the surface. At the beginning of his career, everything in India betokened peace; his early reforms also encouraged people in their hope that the new Governor-General would follow in the wake of Bentinck; and yet, within a short time, led by his own evil genius and mistaken notions of foreign policy, he dragged the honour of his country in the dirt and exposed our own 'to the most grievous military disaster and the most shameful humiliation she had ever suffered.'

Lord Auckland (1836-42)

One of the earliest measures of Auckland was to pass what the Calcutta Europeans chose to call a 'Black Act.' This was a measure introduced by Lord Macaulay to do away with the anomaly by which, while the *Sadr Adalat*, the High Court of the Company, formed the higest appellate court for the Indians, the Europeans claimed the right of appeal only to the Supreme Court. As Macaulay truly said: "If the *Sadr Adalat* is fit to administer justice to the great body of the people, why should we exempt a mere handful of settlers from its jurisdiction? If we take pains to show that we distrust our highest courts, how can we expect that the natives of the country will place confidence in them?"* The European residents of Calcutta abused Macaulay for this act which was however passed into

The 'Black Act'

* Trotter's "The Earl of Auckland" in the *Rulers of India* Series, p. 18.

law, thanks to the support given to Lord Auckland by the Melbourne Ministry.

Promotion of Education

Following in the footsteps of Bentinck and guided by Lord Macaulay, Auckland furthered the cause of English education by providing a number of scholarships in Government schools. He established medical colleges in Madras and Bombay on the model of the Calcutta institution. At the same time, he did not forget the importance of vernacular teaching. He utilised a large portion of the available fund for grants to primary schools, where the vernaculars of the country formed the medium of instruction.

The Famine of 1837-38

There began a drought in 1836, which produced a very severe famine over the whole of the Doab, from Allahabad to Delhi. The Governor-General personally visited portions of the affected area and at once started relief measures, besides himself spending a large sum from his private purse. It is stated that at least 800,000 persons died of hunger or disease. Humane by nature, Lord Auckland ordered an inquiry into the causes of famine, with a view to adopt, as a regular policy of the Government, preventive measures. This reform initiated by him bore fruit later on.

The Company and Religious Festivals

It was customary for the Company's sepoys to parade the streets on occasions of religious festivals, whether Hindu or Muhammadan, and present offerings to gods and fire a salute. This concession to Indian religious sentiment was not liked by the missionaries; and, possibly led by them, the Calcutta Council urged upon Auckland to do away with the practice. Agreeably to this wish, Lord Auckland in 1840, "severed the old connection between the Government and the popular creeds of India." Government gave up the practice by which the army officers attended Hindu and Muslim religious festivals. He also abolished the pilgrim tax, which yielded to the Government a revenue of £30,000 a year.

Relation with the Native States: Oudh

Nasir-ud-din, the worthless king of Oudh, died in July 1837, poisoned, it is believed, by his adoptive mother, the Padshah Begam. The latter raised to the throne one of her own favourites. On the other hand, Colonel John Low, the British Resident, hastened to the palace and, after a short sharp struggle, succeeded in placing on the throne, Muhammad Ali, an uncle of the deceased ruler. This king was forced to sign a new treaty with the English, wherein he promised to support a huge force to be organised and disciplined by British officers, at an annual cost of £160,000 and also to permit the English to manage those districts where misrule and anarchy might prevail. Even the British Resident, Colonel Low, denounced this treaty; but Auckland forced it on the Nawab Vizier. The Court of Directors repudiated it however and ordered Auckland to communicate to the king of Oudh their views Suppressing the truth, Lord Auckland merely informed the court of Oudh that it was released from the burden of paying for the new auxiliary force. It was not till the days of Lord Dalhousie that the mistake of Auckland was discovered.*

Satara

The Raja of Satara, the lineal descendant of Sivaji, enthroned in 1819 in his small state, chafed under the political restrictions imposed upon him by treaty. Influenced by his courtiers and other discontented nobles, he conceived the scheme of restoring the old Maratha Empire. With this end in view, he opened correspondence with the Portuguese Government at Goa, and with the fugitive Appa Sahib, the ex-Raja of Berar, and even tampered with the loyalty of one of the Bombay regiments. Lord Auckland was, therefore, forced to dethrone the Raja and place his brother, Shahji, on the throne, but only after giving the former several opportunities to rectify his conduct. The deposed Raja was sent to Benares as a state-prisoner.

* See Irvin's *Garden of India*. Mr. P. E. Roberts calls this "an inexcusable piece of carelessness."

Hari Rao Holkar of Indore, having neglected the administration of his state, Lord Auckland warned him of the risk attendant on the situation. Unlike many other princes, he knew when to bow to the majesty of the British power; he forthwith appointed a capable minister, full of reforming zeal; the administration was reformed and the assessments were based on improved methods. Lord Auckland was the first to congratulate him on the happy results that followed the warning.

Indore

Quite different was the result of British interference in the affairs of the Nawab of Kurnool. The half-crazy ruler of this little principality presumed to plot against the English. Madras troops marched to Kurnool, destroyed its fortifications, and seized ammunition stores hidden away in the zenana. The entire state was confiscated, although liberal pensions were provided for the Nawab's family.

Kurnool

The only event of great importance to the student of Indian history in the days of Auckland was the tragic war with Afghanistan. It is a wild mountainous region in the north-west of India, beyond the Punjab Afghanistan proper consists of three different regions, of Herat, Kabul and Khandahar. Access to the country from India is 'by the passes made through the mountain walls by the rivers which flow to all points of the compass from the central water-shed.' Its past history is a tale of anarchy, intrigue and sudden dynastic revolutions. Since the days of Ghazni and Ghor, Afghanistan had no national king. It was in 1747, that Ahmad Shah Durrani, the commander of Nadir Shah, gathered together the warring clans and formed them into a nation. The Sadozai line, to which Ahmad Shah belonged, was prolific in children and they 'fought, to the death, with one another on each succession.'* The usual fratricidal war followed the death of Ahmad Shah. After nearly half a century of confusion, Dost Muhammad, head of the powerful Barakzai clan, established himself firmly on the

Afghan Politics

* *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 499

throne at Kabul. Shah Shuja of the Sadozai line was a fugitive under British protection and was living at Ludhiana, on the Punjab frontier (1826). In 1833, he made an attempt, with the help of Ranjit Singh, the Punjab ruler, to regain his throne, but was defeated in the enterprise by Dost Muhammad and again had to retire to Ludhiana. The only outcome of the transaction, as has already been narrated, was the occupation of Peshawar by the Sikh monarch. But Dost Muhammad who looked on Peshawar as his very soul, would not keep quiet. He now declared a religious war against the Sikhs. Ranjit Singh, quailing before the advancing horde of infuriated Muhammadans who joined the standard of the Prophet from every quarter of the Muslim world, despatched to Afghanistan one Harlan, an American adventurer, to cast seeds of dissension among the Afghan chiefs. In the words of this American, "I divided the brothers against the Dost, excited the jealousy of his growing power and induced one of them to withdraw himself suddenly from the encampment with 10,000 of his soldiers"* This unexpected desertion threw the Afghan army into such confusion that Dost Muhammad withdrew to Kabul with a heavy heart.

Further Efforts of Dost Muhammad

Nothing daunted by his failure, Dost Muhammad appealed to Lord Auckland, in a letter, to help him to settle the differences with Ranjit Singh. In reply, the Governor-General said he would send an ambassador to his court to discuss a commercial treaty; but in regard to his political relationship with Ranjit Singh, he said that it was not the practice of the British Government to interfere in the affairs of other independent states. "The truthfulness of this declaration," says Dr. Marshman, "was singularly exemplified two years later by the expedition which Lord Auckland sent to Kabul, in conjunction with Ranjit Singh, to dethrone Dost Muhammad."

* See the Biographical Introduction to *Central Asia, Personal Narrative of General Josiah Harlan (1823—41)* ed. by F. E. Ross (1939).

Despairing of any help from the British Government, Dost Muhammad turned to Persia. But even before he got a reply from the Shah, he sent a large army through the Khyber against the Sikhs. At Jamrud a battle was fought in which the forces of the Amir came out victorious But the Afghans were unable to gain their object, *viz.*, the reoccupation of Peshawar. It was at this time that Lord Auckland sent his envoy, Captain Burnes, to the court of Kabul.*

Battle of Jamrud (April 1837)

Since the days of Peter the Great, the founder of Russian greatness, Russia had advanced her frontiers both in the east and in the west. In the reign of Peter, the eastern boundary of Russia advanced from Orenburg on the Ural river to the borders of China. By 1830 the Russians occupied southwards all the lands up to the Jaxartes. "The same irresistible impulse which has carried the English standard, in the course of a century from the Bay of Bengal, over subverted thrones, through fifteen hundred miles of territory, up to Peshawar, has brought the Russians down from Orenburg to the Jaxartes and the Oder."† Russia had also acquired considerable ascendancy at the Persian court and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, had wrested from Persia the province of Georgia. A Persian attempt to recover it ended in a military disaster (1826). The English who were bound by the treaty of Teheran (1814) to help Persia, retracted their promise at the last hour and merely paid a large amount of money on condition that the inconvenient article in the treaty relating to the British help with men and money in case Persia was attacked by an European power, should be abrogated. Having lost their rich northern province, the Persians sought to indemnify themselves by conquering Khorasan in 1832. Not satisfied with this, they proceeded to invest Herat, the gate-way to Afghanistan (1837). In all these military movements, the Persians were encouraged

Russophobia

* Burnes was sent up the Indus in 1831 to ascertain its commercial possibilities He visited the Court of Ranjit Singh and made an overland journey to England. He had reported that Shah Shuja lacked "both energy to recover his throne and tact to keep it"; and that Dost Muhammad was a far superior man. Later, special missions were sent to Sind (1835) and to Kabul (1837).

† Marshman: *History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 118-119.

and secretly assisted by the Russian minister, Count Simonich, although the Czar of Russia publicly protested that the Persians were in no way aided by Russian officials. The rapid march of Russia across Central Asia and its political ascendancy at the Persian court created panic in the mind of English ministers who were led to declare that "the welfare of our eastern possessions require that we shall have, on our western frontier, an ally interested in resisting aggression, in the place of chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power." This declaration was followed by a letter to Lord Auckland requiring him to take decisive measures in Afghanistan. "That unhappy despatch, the product of Lord Palmerston's fantastic fears," observes V A Smith, "was the foundation of Lord Auckland's discreditable proceedings. It also bound the British Ministry to support him in the exercise of his discretion and to see him through the consequences of his acts."*

Burnes at Kabul (1837)

Burnes at Kabul quickly perceived that Dost Muhammad was ready to throw himself into the arms of Persia He further learnt that the Persian envoy had already arrived at Khandahar with a view to open negotiations with the Amir. The latter, in all earnestness, said that if the English were to help him to get Peshawar from Ranjit Singh, he would cast off Russian and Persian friendship He was even prepared to hold it as a fief of the Punjab and transmit the customary presents to Ranjit, should he consent to its restoration. In a letter to Auckland announcing to him the arrival of a Russian envoy, Burnes begged the Governor-General to lend a favourable ear to the representations of Dost Muhammad, as he was convinced of the sincerity of the Amir. To this Lord Auckland sent a haughty reply to Dost Muhammad, requiring him not to have anything to do with foreign powers, but submit himself to the decision of Ranjit Singh in regard to Peshawar. Offended with the supercilious tone of Auckland, Dost Muhammad turned away in disgust from the British alliance and concluded a treaty with the Russian envoy who promised everything that the Dost required.

* V. A. Smith: *Oxford History of India*, p. 677.

'Then Lord Auckland took the fatal plunge.' He was now determined to depose Dost Muhammad and place, on the Kabul throne, Shah Shuja, the discredited British pensionary. Mr. Macnaghten, his Secretary, was despatched to Lahore and thence to Shah Shuja to acquaint them of the Governor-General's resolve and to get their signatures for a new treaty which, in fact, was the renewal of the old one between Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja, with the addition that the British Government should become a party to it, helping Shah Shuja with men and money. This treaty created no obligation on the part of the British to send a force beyond the Indus. A British army was to be posted at Shikarpur on the Indus; and Shah Shuja was to enter Afghanistan with the support of the Sikhs. Very cleverly the old Ranjit Singh managed to reverse the method of operation. It was the English army that accompanied Shah Shuja; and the Sikhs merely held the passes for them. Yet Auckland soon changed his mind and ordered the British army to move towards Kabul.

The Tripartite Treaty (June 1838)

It has sometimes been thought that Lord Auckland was alone responsible for this disastrous step. His view was certainly shared by the Whig Ministry at home. The illustrious Elphinstone, when he heard of the British plans regarding Afghanistan, freely gave out that it was hopeless to sustain Shah Shuja on the throne for a long time; Lord William Bentinck condemned the scheme as an act of incredible folly; while Lord Wellesley considered it as an act of infatuation. Even the British Commander-in-Chief would appear to have declared himself against the project. Before actually moving the forces, Lord Auckland issued a proclamation setting forth the reasons for the projected Afghan expedition. Its immediate object was declared to be the relief of Herat, now besieged by the Persians. How untruthful the statement was may be gathered from the fact that although the Persians, alarmed by a British expedition to Karrack in the Persian Gulf, had raised the seige of Herat and withdrawn to their own country, Lord Auckland still persisted in his resolve of sending a British force to Kabul. There were also other

The Treaty: How received

misstatements in his proclamation. Dr. Marshman characterised it as 'one of the most remarkable state-papers in the records of British India, whether considered with reference to its glaring misstatements, the sophistry of its arguments or the audacity of its assertions.'

The Campaign

Elaborate were the arrangements made by the Governor-General for a concentrated attack on Kabul. The Bombay Army was ordered to march on Sind; while four others, designated the Indus Army and gathered from various parts of Hindustan, were ordered to converge upon Firozpur. But difficulties began even at this initial stage. Ranjit Singh, ever suspicious of English intentions, politely refused to permit the British force to march through his territories. It became therefore necessary to take a circuitous route to Khandahar and Kabul through the Bolan Pass The Bombay force was under the command of Sir John Keane; while Sir Willoughby Cotton took the lead of the other force Mr. Macnaghten, now styled Envoy and Minister at the court of Shah Shuja, was put in political charge of the enterprise, with Captain Burnes as his lieutenant

The March through Sind

It was necessary for the British forces to pass through Sind in order to reach the Bolan Pass In the treaty concluded with the Amirs in 1832, it was stipulated that the British should, on no account transport, through the region and along the Indus military stores or provisions intended for war. In flagrant violation of this treaty, and under the pretext that military stores would be conveyed through their territory only during "the present exigency" two English armies, one from Karachi under Keane and another from northern Sind, were marching through the country; and the astonished Amirs were informed that 'the article of the treaty which prohibits the using of the Indus for the conveyance of military stores, must necessarily be suspended during the course of these operations, and that, at this important crisis, not only those who have shown a disposition to favour our adversaries, but those who display an unwillingness to help us, in the just and necessary undertaking in which we are engaged, must

be displaced, and give way to others on whose friendship and co-operation we may be able to implicitly rely.' Nay more! The Amirs were further asked to pay arrears of tribute owing to His Majesty Shah Shuja amounting to 25 lakhs of rupees; but when they showed two releases signed and sealed by Shah Shuja himself, absolving them from the payment of any sums, the confounded Macnaghten changed his demand to one of maintaining a subsidiary force. The Amirs parleyed for a time; but eventually, they yielded, being overawed by the presence of a large column that threatened the destruction of their capital, Hyderabad.*

To Khandahar

The march to Kabul was not a military promenade as the secretaries of Lord Auckland assured him that it would be It took six days for the troops to pass through the Bolan Pass; and after indescribable suffering and enormous losses they emerged out of it into the valley of Shawl. On the 6th April 1839, the forces, exhausted and suffering from want of provisions, reached Quetta The Khan of Kelat was made an unwilling ally and forced to recognise Shah Shuja. Sir John Keane now assumed the command of the whole expedition. Khandahar was ultimately reached on the 25th April. Here Shah Shuja was installed by the English army as the Amir of Afghanistan. A premonitory symptom of the coming disaster was, however, noticed by a few military officers. Not more than a hundred people attended the installation ceremony, in spite of a lavish distribution of gold.

Ghazni stormed

Between Khandahar and Kabul, ninety miles from the latter, lay the great fortress of Ghazni, the pride of Afghanistan, and defended by Hyder Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad. Rendered strong both by nature and art, it was found impossible to effect a breach in its walls without the battering train which Keane had left behind at Khandahar. But British gold

* The Amirs were assured that "neither the ready-power to crush and annihilate them, nor the will to call it into action, were wanting, if it appeared requisite, however remotely, for the safety of the Anglo-Indian Empire or frontice". Macnaghten confessed to the harsh treatment to which the Amirs were subjected and to their being justifiably alarmed and incensed by the conduct of the British.

accomplished what heavy siege guns might not. A nephew of Dost Muhammad was heavily bribed and, deserting basely his own camp, he revealed the secrets of the defence. At a spot pointed by him, the gates were mined and a breach was effected. Next day the English flag was planted on the ramparts of Ghazni. The bloodshed was awful; and even prisoners were butchered. When the news reached London, the Ministry showered honours on Lord Auckland, Sir John Keane and other officers.

Ghazni opened up the road to Kabul. In great consternation, Dost Muhammad who could not rely upon his men, quitted Kabul and fled, only to be pursued by Captain Outram. Shah Shuja was then taken, with all military pomp, through the city of Kabul and enthroned, though his entry was "more like a funeral procession."

Kabul occupied (August 1839)

It became soon clear that Shah Shuja was not wanted by the Afghans and that he was one of the most unpopular of men. If the signs had been read correctly, the British should have immediately withdrawn from Afghanistan, in accordance with their original plan, leaving the Shah to settle his quarrels with his chiefs as best as he could. But Lord Auckland, again misled by Macnaghten, was resolved that the rule of Shah Shuja should be supported by the British army for some time to come. Forces were therefore despatched to various Afghan centres such as Kabul, Jalalabad, Ghazni and Khandahar, with a view to serve as permanent garrisons. The Afghans now realised that the English had come to stay. In April 1840, began the first of the series of outbreaks. Earlier, in November 1839, the Bombay force stormed on its way back Kelat in spite of the Khan's previous submission and was busy putting down insurrections in Sind. Inside Afghanistan, the hardy tribes of the Ghilzais, inhabiting the mountainous country between Khandahar and Kabul, revolted; but they were reduced to temporary submission by the southern forces under the command of General Nott. A son of the Khan of Kelat succeeded in regaining his throne. Baluchi insurgents also defeated

The Gathering of Clouds

the English in the course of an engagement. The honour of the British army was, for the time, saved by Nott who recaptured Kelat. At the capital itself, another drama was being enacted. Dost Muhammad, unable to sustain himself in his wild flight for personal freedom, suddenly rode into Kabul and surrendered to Macnaghten who sent him as a state prisoner to Calcutta (Sept. 1840). Ranjit Singh having died in June 1839, his ministers turned definitely hostile to the English and even intrigued against the latter with the tribes who commanded the Khyber Pass. Thus, the situation was becoming more and more perilous to the English forces in Afghanistan. Even the excuse of counteracting Russian designs on India disappeared, when the Russians finally withdrew from Transoxiana. But Macnaghten was so infatuated with his Afghan expedition that he persisted in it. In the midst of all these perils, he was even planning an expedition to distant Herat and its subjection

Two Fatal Mistakes

When Sir John Keane resigned his command of the Afghan exepedition, Lord Auckland appointed, in his place, General Elphinstone, old and utterly incompetent to deal with the situation. General Nott was the proper man for the post. Another blunder committed by Macnaghten was the relinquishing of Bala Hissar, the palace-citadel of Kabul which was given over to the Shah for his seraglio and the cantoning of troops in the open plains, 'in the immediate neighbourhood of a populous, fanatic and disaffected city' "All through 1841 the storm gathered. Khelat had been recovered from the puppet Khan, Duranis, Ghilzais and other formidable tribes were rising in revolt. Macnaghten..... ..rejoicing that everything was quiet. ... "

The Rebellion

In the beginning of November, 1841, Sir William Macnaghten was preparing to leave Afghanistan to join his new post as the Governor of Bombay, when the expected happened. Although he had been warned by several English officers that a conspiracy of Afghan chiefs was in active progress to drive the English out of the land, he heeded not the warnings and flattered himself that everything was quiet.

On the evening of the 1st November, Sir Alexander Burnes, who was to succeed Macnaghten as Envoy, paid a visit to the latter and congratulated him 'on leaving the country in a state of profound tranquillity.' The blow fell the very next day. The Afghan insurgents, surrounded his house, killed Burnes and burnt the whole structure with all records. The incompetent Elphinstone who was camping close by, instead of taking immediate measures to put down the rebellion, delayed and wasted valuable time in useless negotiations with the Shah, regarding the admission of the troops into the Bala Hissar. The credit of attacking the rebels immediately belonged to the Shah who sent Colonel Campbell to the spot and quelled the outbreak. He was, however, driven out by the inhabitants. Most foolishly, Elphinstone allowed his small stock of provisions to be looted by the Afghans and the English soldiery was seized by a panicky terror.

The scales were beginning to fall from the eyelids of Macnaghten. Perceiving, at last, the gravity of the situation, he sent urgent messages to Generals Sale and Nott to come to the rescue of Kabul. Sale at that time was at Gandamak, with provisions and ammunition exhausted and with a large number of wounded to look after. He took the advice of other military officers accompanying his troops and preferred to fall back on Jalalabad thus maintaining communication with India rather than obeying the General's orders. General Nott at Khandahar was not in a better situation. Apart from the certain peril of leaving Khandahar without an adequate force to garrison it, the winter had commenced; and he found it impossible to send the required reinforcements to Kabul.

No Rescue to the English at Kabul

In the meanwhile, the British officers at Kabul were committing blunder after blunder, besides quarrelling among themselves. Shah Shuja begged General Elphinstone in vain to occupy the Bala Hissar, as the only course left to secure the safety of the army. Starvation and want of supplies and the impossibility of obtaining reinforcements compelled Macnaghten to submit to

Confusion and Surrender (11th Dec., 1841)

the terms dictated to him by the insurgent chiefs. He agreed to withdraw the British forces from the various Afghan centres and evacuate the country altogether. Dost Muhammad was to be set at liberty and Shah Shuja was to be given the option to retire with the English to India or to stay in Afghanistan with a pension. Four British officers were to be delivered up as hostages for faithfully carrying out these stipulations. "The Army of Occupation was to become the Army of Evacuation."

But neither the Afghan chiefs nor Sir William Macnaghten cared to observe scrupulously the terms of the treaty.

Sir William Assassinated (23rd Dec., 1841)

The Afghan clans began to plunder the British stores, while the English troops looked helplessly on. Instead of immediately withdrawing to Jalalabad, Macnaghten allowed himself to be drawn 'into the filthy meshes of Afghan intrigue.' It is on record that the Envoy instructed his *Munshi*, Mohun Lall, to open negotiations with certain tribes. At this juncture, Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad, suggested to Macnaghten the advisability of a joint attack against the rebel chiefs with a view to place Shah Shuja on the throne again. This was a mere ruse intended for the destruction of the Envoy. Akbar Khan also invited Macnaghten for a private interview to discuss the details of the scheme. In spite of the best endeavours of the officers who knew the whole affair to be a plot and dissuaded him from attending, Macnaghten went forth to meet Akbar Khan, only to be riddled with bullets shot from a pistol given by him on the previous day.

After the death of Macnaghten, Major Pottinger, a brave and energetic officer, assumed the political leadership of affairs in Afghanistan. He urged immediate and vigorous action and resolved to reject the treaty recently made with the chiefs. But the council of war was against fighting. This was galling to Pottinger, especially as news was received that reinforcements were arriving. At last the English consented to pay whatever amount that was demanded of them, all treasure, surplus muskets, guns, ammunition

The Retreat

and stores. "Afghan insolence soared, British depression deepened." The retreat began on the 6th January, 1842. The army was still 4,000 strong; besides there were 12,000 camp followers. It was a terrible winter and the snow lay ankle-deep on the ground. The fanatical Ghilzais plundered the rear and killed and butchered those who opposed them. Every now and then, Akbar Khan appeared before the retreating force, demanding fresh hostages for Sale's evacuation of Jalalabad. When the force was marching down the terrific gorge of Khurd Kabul, the Ghilzais who were manning the heights, mowed them down with their rifles. Thousands perished in this way. At one stage in the course of the march, the wives of the officers and their children had to be sent to Akbar's camp. To cut the miserable story short only one individual, a Dr. Brydon, reached Jalalabad, surviving the horrors of the retreat through the Jagadalak Pass and Gandamak, wounded and exhausted, to tell the tale of the Afghan disaster, out of a body of over 15,000 men!

Lord Auckland was dazed when the news of the disaster reached him; but he steeled himself to issue a proclamation. Then he soon relapsed into inactivity and was not for taking any vigorous action. He was urged by some to strengthen the force at Jalalabad and order a simultaneous march on Kabul from Khandahar. An attempt to pass through Khyber was frustrated by the hostility of the Sikh fanatics. General Pollock, one of the finest and most zealous officers, was prepared to advance to Jalalabad to reinforce the British troops; but the Commander-in-Chief who had been consistently opposing indeed the Afghan expedition, discountenanced the scheme. In the meanwhile, Lord Auckland handed over charge to his successor, Lord Ellenborough.

Resignation of Lord Auckland (1842)

SECTION II

THE GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF LORD ELLENBOROUGH (1842-44)

Lord Ellenborough who succeeded Lord Auckland, landed in Madras on the 21st February, 1842. Proceeding thence to North India, he took charge of his office at Calcutta on the 28th. He immediately announced his views in a state paper on the Afghan situation and the policy which he hoped to pursue. It was no longer the intention of the Government, he declared, to support the Tripartite Treaty and hold Afghanistan permanently; but only those measures would be adopted which would re-establish British military reputation by 'some signal and decisive blow' on the enemy. With this end in view, he ordered General Pollock to march to Jalalabad to strengthen General Sale who had been bravely defending himself there against odds.

Lord Ellenborough (1842-44)

General Pollock's advance to Jalalabad through the Khyber Pass was, by no means, an easy one. The Sikh troops on whom he relied for support, and who had not at all done their share of the Tripartite Treaty mutinied and refused to enter the Khyber.* But the masterly arrangements and resolute bearing of the General overcame all difficulties, including the treachery of the Afridis who commanded every crag fringing the Pass and he at length reached Jalalabad on the 15th April, only to find that General Sale had already worsted the besiegers with his brave band of soldiers.

Pollock and Sale at Jalalabad

Since the British evacuation of Kabul, General Nott at Khandahar was having an uneasy time of it. The whole of western Afghanistan rose up against the English and even the son of Shah Shuja joined the insurgents. The Durrani chiefs under Mirza Ahmad, 'the ablest man in western Afghanistan,' closely besieged Nott at

General Nott at Khandahar

* General Avitabile, the Commander of the Sikh forces, said "the very sight of the Khaibar gave the Sikhs colic '—Keene, Vol. II, p. 161 foot-note.

Khandahar, from which position the gallant general extricated himself by sheer valour.

Fall of Ghazni (September 1842)

In the meanwhile Colonel Palmer who was garrisoning Ghazni, shamefully surrendered it to the Afghans; and another cowardly General, England by name, allowed himself to be defeated by and surrendered to a thousand Afghans at Hakalzai. These temporary failures quite unnerved Lord Ellenborough who gave immediate orders for the recovery of the brave officers and tender women and children held in captivity or, "if no effort had been made towards the accomplishment of this object, they were to be abandoned to their fate."

Reluctance of the Generals to obey the Orders

This fresh order of Ellenborough fell upon the brave Generals, Nott, Rawlinson and Pollock, 'like a thunderclap' The latter argued that withdrawal from Jalalabad was impossible, owing to lack of transport and that, as soon as this defect was remedied, he would retire —a dexterous suggestion intended to procure delay. Similar was the reasoning of Nott and Rawlinson who were bent upon vindicating English honour and liberating the English prisoners in the custody of Akbar Khan.

Ellenborough changes his Plan

Happily for these two generals, the Governor-General, yielding to the pressure of public opinion in India, changed his view and instructed the generals to retire by way of Ghazni and Kabul—a suggestion being implied in it that, if they were sufficiently bold, they should retrieve the lost military glory by planting the English flag once again on the Bala Hissar. But the communication was equivocal and Ellenborough exhibited a tendency to shrink from the responsibility with which the enterprise was clogged.

The Fate of Shah Shuja

The homage paid by the Afghan chiefs to Shah Shuja after the British evacuation of Kabul, was an empty one. Shah Shuja also played fast and loose with the Afghans. One day, 5th April 1842, he was persuaded by Zaman Shah to come down from the citadel and lead the Afghan forces against General Sale. Shah Shuja, on the

strength of a solemn assurance that no harm would befall him, left the citadel and reached the open road; but he was basely murdered by the son of Zaman Shah and his body was thrown into a ditch. Then followed a civil war in the country, out of which Akbar Khan emerged successful. The latter set upon the Kabul throne a puppet king, Futteh Jang, a son of the murdered Shah.

The Retribution

On the 20th of August, General Pollock, with abundant supplies of cattle and provisions, began his march towards Kabul. At Jagdalak, the scene of the previous butchery, he encountered the Ghilzais who, in the shameful retreat of the English forces, had slaughtered his countrymen. These he worsted. Another successful engagement took place at Tezin, the redoubtable Akbar Khan fighting in person. This time also, the Afghans were routed and fled in different directions, leaving the road open to Kabul, where Pollock once again planted the British flag on the Bala Hissar. General Nott, advancing from Khandahar, reached Ghazni and sacked it. Lord Ellenborough had instructed General Nott 'to bring away from the tomb of Mahmood, his club which hangs over it, and the gates of his tomb which are the gates of the temple of Somanath which will be the just trophies of your successful march.' This order he faithfully carried out.* A day after Pollock's arrival at Kabul, General Nott joined him to his great joy. The combined forces now secured the liberation of the European prisoners. Afghanistan was re-conquered and the object of the second expedition was realised. There were those who urged that the British should continue to stay in the country for at least a year; but Lord Ellenborough deemed it unwise, especially in view of the unrest among the Sikhs of the Punjab. Before retiring to Peshawar, the English generals thought it necessary to leave some permanent mark of retribution on the capital. The site chosen for destruction was the great bazaar, 'the noblest building of its kind in Central Asia.'

* "The gates were a modern forgery; and their theatrical procession through the Punjab formed a vain-glorious sequel to Lord Ellenborough's diffidence, while the fate of our armies hung in the balance."—*Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 502

It was blown up with gun-powder. The whole city was set on fire and the vengeance wreaked on it in other ways 'had no parallel in our Indian history.' The entire force then returned to Ferozepore, where Lord Ellenborough met them with great pomp and ceremony. Reference must be made to the bombastic proclamation of the Governor-General to the Princes and Chiefs of India on this occasion: "Our victorious army," he boasted, "bears the gates of Somanath, in triumph, from Afghanistan and the despoiled tomb of Mahmud looks on the ruins of Ghazni. The insult of 800 years is avenged."* The final act in this drama was the release of Dost Muhammad who was eventually restored to his throne at Kabul. Thus, what is known as the Afghan Blunder, cost the English 15 millions sterling and 20,000 valuable lives! The Governor-General staged a great military show at Ferozepore, partly as a warning to the Sikhs that "their turn would come next, if they were not careful."

Affairs of Sind

One of the most unhappy results of Lord Ellenborough's eagerness to re-establish the military supremacy of the English was his war of unprovoked aggression against Sind. For years together, the British in India had been casting longing eyes on the river Indus. When Captain Burnes sailed up the Indus on his way to Lahore, one of the Seids remarked "Sind is now gone since the English have seen the river." The Sikh ruler, Ranjit Singh, equally desired to possess Sind and even proposed a partition of the land to Lord William Bentinck. In the years 1832 and 1834, the Amirs of Sind had entered into treaties with the English, permitting the latter the use of the rivers for the sole purpose of trade and commerce. In 1838, the Amirs were so far grateful to the English for not countenancing the schemes of Ranjit Singh, that they accepted a British Resident at their capital, Hyderbad. When the Afghan War broke out, the English in utter violation of treaties solemnly entered into, insisted upon the Amirs permitting the free passage of their army and military stores through their land. When the weak

* These bombastic proclamations were first believed to be a hoax, but proved to be genuine.

Amirs hesitated to grant the request, Lord Auckland obtained by pressure their consent for the maintenance of a subsidiary force. Since then Sind became the basis of all military operations against Afghanistan. During the war, the Amirs remained loyal enough to the Company, supplying them with transport, provisions and fuel for their ships. Even after the disasters that befell the English forces, the Amirs continued their supplies. But the English had, by this time, understood the value of the great Sind roads that lead to the passes and they were therefore anxious to secure the country. "The conquest of Sind followed in the wake of the Afghan War and was morally and politically its sequel;" and it was "the tail of the Afghan storm." The English had seized Shikarpur, on the northern border of Sind, and Karachi in the extreme south and its only part.

The Causus Belli

After the Afghan War, in the hour of victory, gained mainly with the help of the Amirs, Lord Ellenborough preferred vague charges of disloyalty against one or two of them.* These charges were never thoroughly inquired into and the alleged guilt of the Amirs had not been established. The fact was Lord Ellenborough appointed a very impulsive, eccentric and combative officer to be at the head of the political and military affairs of Sind. He was Sir Charles Napier who was a veteran of Wellington's school and went with the fullest powers of peace and war. Without evidence or examination and without furnishing a single opportunity to the Amirs to explain their conduct, he wrote to the Governor-General that their guilt had been established. The latter, in his turn, desired Napier to enforce a new treaty on the Amirs, involving the cession of a large tract of Sind. The Amirs vigorously protested their innocence, but were prepared to accept any treaty forced upon them. The impetuous Napier gave them neither time nor quarter. Even before they signed the treaty, he proceeded with a strong and efficient force towards Imamgarh, a famous desert fortress, and razed it to the ground, no

* Although the Amirs were independent of each other, it suited the purpose of the Governor-General to treat them as one body with identical political interests and obeying a common government.

opposition being offered. He then proceeded to annex the portions of Sind mentioned in the treaty and even issued a proclamation that no one living in the specified areas should pay tax to the Amirs.

The War: Battles of Miani and Daba (1843)

Major Outram, 'the Bayard of India,' for long the Resident in Sind, was personally liked by the Amirs and they warned him to leave Hyderabad before their troops should get out of hand; but the General preferred to continue at his post. On the morning of 15th February, the infuriated Baluchis attacked the Residency and Outram had to take shelter in a steamer. Open war was now declared and Sir Charles Napier who was eagerly waiting for that, met a large army of the Baluchis at Miani. The battle that ensued was very hotly contested. The Baluchis fought doggedly, though, in the end, they had to retire. A month later, on March 22nd, the Amir of Mirpur gathered together the scattered bands of Baluchis and attacked the English at Daba, a village in the neighbourhood of Hyderabad. The English victory in this battle was as complete as in the case of Miani. These British successes broke the back of the Baluchi rebellion and Lord Ellenborough, by a proclamation, annexed the whole of Sind to the British dominions.

Remarks on the War

"The conquest of Sind admits," says a historian, "of no vindication. It is a blot on our national escutcheon." Sir Charles Napier himself wrote: "We have no right to seize Sind, yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful and humane piece of rascality it will be."* That the British

* On this Dr. Marshman remarks: "The rascality is more apparent than the advantage, except to the captors, to whom it brought a rich draught of prize money, of which seven lacs fell to the share of the General-in-Chief." Major Outram, who protested against the invasion of Sind was the only one who refused to share in the loot. Elphinstone's contemptuous comment on the war was: "coming after Afghanistan, it put one in mind of a bully who had been kicked in the streets and went home to beat his wife in revenge". Napier's sardonic fun—Peccavi—I have Sind, has been well known.

administration of the country was better and brought greater happiness to the people is no justification for one of the most unrighteous wars ever undertaken by the English. Napier entered on the pacification of the provena by brutal punishments; he abolished slavery and widow burning and established freedom of religious worship.

The Gwalior Outbreak (1842-43)

In the direction of Gwalior, Lord Ellenborough displayed a commendable zeal; and his action in connection with that state would appear to have won the approbation of his official contemporaries, both in England and India. It will be remembered that Daulat Rao Sindia died in 1827. His widow adopted, in the same year, Jankoji Sindia who also died young, on the 7th February, 1843, without heirs. One of his wives, Tara Bai, a young girl of thirteen years of age, adopted a boy eight years old, without consulting either the Gwalior chiefs or the Governor-General. In view of the age of both the widowed Rani and her adopted son, it became necessary to appoint a Regent. There were two candidates for this dignified office—one Mama Sahib, an uncle of the late Raja, and the other a nominee of the Queen and other court ladies, Dada Kasji. Lord Ellenborough preferred the former and he was duly installed in office. From that moment the life of the Regent was rendered miserable by court-intrigue, directed from the zenana. Eventually he was dismissed from office by the Queen. Although Mama Sahib, the regent, exhibited gross incompetency in the management of affairs, Lord Ellenborough interpreted the action of the Rani as an insult to himself and instructed the British Resident to withdraw from the place—a sure sign, to the people of Gwalior, of impending military action. What really alarmed the Governor-General was not the dismissal of the Regent but the dangerous condition of the Gwalior army. Drawn from the neighbouring martial races of Rajputana and Oudh and consuming more than two-thirds of the State's revenue, the Gwalior force was too numerous for the necessities of the state. The situation became more

dangerous, when this force of 40,000 men refused to be paid up and disbanded. This situation, taken along with the turbulence of the Sikh army in the neighbouring state of the Punjab, exculpates Ellenborough from blame for the prompt action he took in destroying the military power of the distratced state. But a *causus belli* had to be found. Curiously enough, the Indian Government pointed to an old treaty of 1804 whereby the Sindia bound himself to maintain a subsidiary force.* As a precautionary measure, Ellenborough despatched two armies across the Chambal, though not necessarily for immediate fighting. But the haughty Gwalior soldiery precipitated an engagement, giving little opportunity for the Darbar to negotiate a peace. Sir Hugh Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, defeated the state forces at Maharajpur after a very severe engagement in which both sides lost heavily (29th December 1843). On the same day General Grey, directed to advance on the Capital, defeated another section of the Gwalior army at Paniar. Although British victory was complete and the territory of the Sindia was at the feet of Ellenborough, the latter behaved with great moderation. The army was reduced and a council of regency was appointed which was to act in concert with the British Resident in all administrative matters. Gwalior fort was entrusted to a British contingent; and the Sindia's army was diminished in number. The wisdom of breaking up the insubordinate force at Gwalior was seen when, two years later, the Khalsa army invaded British territories and shook the British dominion to its foundations.

Recall of Lord Ellenborough

A section of English politicians hated the policy of Ellenborough, while the India House was offended by the supercilious tone he assumed in his despatches and 'a contumelious disdain of their authority.' His Sind policy was universally condemned by all. His pompous proclamations were viewed with derision and he was

* In regard to this, a recent writer points out: "The British who had held themselves so lightly bound by treaty obligations in the business of Sind, suddenly developed an extreme punctiliousness even in regard to obsolete conventions."—Robert's *Historical Geography*, Part I, p. 331.

accused of subordinating the interests of the civil to those of military service. All this brought about his recall (15th June 1844). His brief tenure of office was so full of war and politics that he had little leisure to think of administrative reforms. However, the practical abolition of slavery and the suppression of state lotteries belong to his period. He was free from partiality and aimed conscientiously at promoting the well-being of the people.*

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* Colchester (ed.): *The Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough*, pp. 64-95.

CHAPTER XIV

HARDINGE AND DALHOUSIE

SECTION I. HARDINGE AND THE FIRST SIKH WAR

Sir Henry Hardinge, who succeeded Ellenborough as the Governor-General, was a kinsman of the latter. He was essentially a soldier and had fought heroically for his country in the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns, under the Duke of Wellington. He was, for some time, Secretary of War in the Tory Ministry and was later on appointed as Secretary for Ireland. He was deliberately chosen for his warlike qualities, as the Government knew that a war with the Sikhs was inevitable. One of his earliest acts was to restrict all appointments to high office only to those who had received a liberal education. The chief event of his administration was the First Sikh War.

Sir Henry (Lord) Hardinge (1844-48)

"There is, perhaps, no more notable and picturesque figure," says Griffin, "among the chiefs who rose to power on the ruins of the Mughal Empire than Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of the short-lived Sikh kingdom of Lahore."* The Sikh commonwealth was divided into a number of brotherhoods called *misls*, of which twelve were considered to be foremost in rank which held among themselves the greater portion of the Punjab and Sirhind and constituted a kind of 'theocratic confederate feudalism.' Ranjit Singh's father, Maha Singh, was a leader of one of the minor *misls*, and when he died in 1792, Ranjit Singh carried on his work of subduing his neighbours and annexing their territories. In 1798, when Zeman Shah entered the Punjab, the cunning Ranjit Singh helped him in his military expedition and obtained as a reward from the Shah, the royal grant of the Governorship of Lahore. Eventually, Ranjit Singh made Lahore his capital; and in 1801 he assumed the title of Maharaja. His kingdom was a military monarchy which had completely suppressed discords and risen on the ruins of the previous feudalism. "The Sikhs had now reached

The Sikhs under Ranjit Singh

* Sir Lepel Griffin in his *Ranjit Singh*, "Rulers of India Series".

nationhood under an able king, fully equipped with confidence and energy, who transforming the Khalsa into a territorial power decided once and for all whether the Sikh or the Afghan was to rule the Punjab."* In 1802, Ranjit Singh took Amritsar; and in the next two years, he became involved with the Gurkhas. In 1803, Zeman Shah was blinded and deposed and a revolution lifted up the incompetent Shah Shuja on the throne The Sikh ruler was not slow to take advantage of the growing weakness of the Durrani Empire. Marching westwards with an army, he received the homage of the petty chiefs of Jhang and Sahiwal, while the Muhammadan ruler of Multan wisely bought him off. Between 1803 and 1806, his victorious career grew unchecked and his conquests extended to the banks of the Sutlej. He was so powerful that he was invited to be the sole arbiter in all disputes among the Sikh states of Sirhind. Invariably every settlement of their disputes resulted in his acquisition of fresh tracts. The chiefs of Sirhind grew alarmed and appealed to the British for protection (1808). Obtaining no positive assurance from them, the Sirhind chiefs determined to make their own terms with Ranjit Singh. Later on, the fear of a Napoleanic invasion of India led to the necessity of the English entering into a defensive alliance with the Afghans and the Sikhs. As we have already seen, Metcalfe was despatched to the court of Lahore, and in the interview Ranjit Singh claimed the province of Sirhind and jurisdiction over all the Sikhs. The English demurred and were not quite prepared to accede to his request; and when they learnt that Napoleon had abandoned his Indian project, they began to insist that the chiefs of Sirhind were under their special protection and that Ranjit Singh should confine his activities to the right bank of the Sutlej. In 1809, Sir David Ochterlony went further and issued a proclamation that no aggression of Ranjit Singh in the Cis-Sutlej region would be tolerated. This was accompanied by a military demonstration and secured the desired end. Prudence was a virtue which Ranjit Singh practised to the full and he knew when to yield. On the 25th April 1809, he signed the treaty already alluded to, promising to confine

* General Sir John J. H. Gordon: *The Sikhs*, p. 87.

his ambition for the future to the north and west of the river Sutlej. This treaty marks the definite estabilshment of Anglo-Sikh friendship. It is, however, too much to say that the highest proof of Ranjit Singh's statesmanship was his steadfast attachment to the British alliance. He attached too much of value to it and yielded to British pressure on several occasions. It was so, because he knew that he had "made his kingdom too powerful to be let alone;" and the British well knew that he would be only too likely to aim at creating a balance of power. According to one view he did not boldly face the inevitable war with the British power and only conciliated an aggressive power that was jealous of his strength.*

Increase of territory and the acquisition of the sinews of war became the ruling passion of Ranjit Singh and he had to keep his army constantly engaged, lest it should turn upon himself. Struck with the discipline and efficiency of the English troops, he began to train his army in a similar fashion. Having established his authority over the other Sikh chieftains, he turned his attention to the eastern outposts of Afghanistan. While the Vizier of Kabul was busy attacking Kashmir, Ranjit Singh advanced to Attock and took it. Multan, in 1818, and Kashmir, in 1819, followed suit. Between 1819 and 1821, he took the plain country between the Indus and the hills called the Derajat. About this time there arrived in the Punjab two French officers, Allard and Ventura, who had served under Napoleon, in search of employment. Ranjit Singh was shrewd enough to perceive that, with European training, his army might become one of the most efficient in India. So he promptly took them into his service and entrusted the training of his army to these and two others, Court and Avitabile, who joined later. The new Sikh army trained by Europeans, soon realised the hopes that were formed of them. It won for its master the district of Peshawar, whose Afghan governor had to pay tribute to Ranjit Singh. How he welcomed the mission of Captain Burnes, renewed the treaty of friendship and alliance with Lord William Bentinck when the latter interviewed him and with

* He was the Massinissa of British India (See N. K. Sinha, Ch. IV, *Ranjit Singh* (1938).

what anxiety he signed the Tripartite Treaty at the commencement of the Afghan war, are all familiar to the student. He died on the 27th June 1839, before the capture of Ghazni and the English *debacle* in the Afghan capital. Ranjit Singh found the Punjab a waning confederacy and a prey to the factions of the chiefs; but he consolidated it into a kingdom. "His rule was founded on the feelings of a people, but it involved the joint action of the necessary principles of military order and territorial extension." But when a limit had been set to Sikh dominion and his own commanding genius was no more, the vital spirit of his race began to consume itself in domestic contentions.*

The Sikh State after Ranjit Singh's Death

Six years of anarchy and bloodshed followed the death of Ranjit Singh. Ministers and Rajas were murdered in rapid succession. Ranjit was immediately succeeded by his imbecile son, Kharak Singh, all real power passing, however, in the hands of Nao Nihal Singh, the son of Kharak. Then took place a series of palace-revolutions attended with murder. Nao Nihal Singh was murdered while he was returning after performing the last rites at the funeral pyre of his father (5th November, 1840). Two months after this deed, Sher Singh, a good-natured voluptuary, obtained the throne with the help of the army and the chief minister, Dhian Singh. He was friendly to the English and helped them considerably in the re-occupation of Kabul. After the disaster of the English at Kabul, the Sikh sardars were all for war with the British power, but were kept in restraint by Maharaja Sher Singh. He was assassinated by Ajit Singh on September 15, 1845. Hira Singh, Sher Singh's son, avenged the death of his father; and with the aid of the soldiery, he proclaimed Dilip Singh, the son of Ranjit Singh by the Rani Jindan, as Maharaja, with himself as the minister. Dilip Singh was then only five years of age and his mother, therefore, became the regent. She was an intriguing and licentious woman whom Lord Hardinge called "the Messalina of the North." It was not long that Hira Singh remained in office; he, together with his tutor Pandit

* Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs*, edited by Garrett, p. 222.

Julla, was done to death by the army whose power he wanted to curtail. After Hira Singh, the regent Rani managed the affairs of state, with the help of her brother, Jawahir Singh, and another noble, Lall Singh, supposed to be her paramour. In the meanwhile, the army was becoming more and more insubordinate and clamorous for gratuities, and the trio thought that their own safety lay in finding some employment for it. The soldiers were, therefore, instigated, first, to attack Gulab Singh, the Raja of Jammu, whom the Sikhs hated and next Multan. In both the places they exacted a large amount of money. Puffed up with success, the Khalsa army committed one more murder. It hated Jawahir, and executed him as a traitor. The sorrowful Rani became terrified of the army now, elevated Lall Singh to the position occupied by her murdered brother, while Tej Singh was made the commander-in-chief (November 1845).

Causes for the First Sikh War

Seeing that the Punjab after Ranjit's death had become a prey to political convulsions, both Auckland and Ellenborough had increased the military strength all along the Sutlej frontier and concentrated forces at Ferozepore. Hardinge followed the same line of policy and being convinced that the Khalsa army had overpowered the state and was thirsting to attack Delhi and Benares, likewise was busy moving and massing forces at strategic points. There were also menacing movements of troops on the Sind-Punjab frontier by Sir Charles Napier. The prowess of the Sikh soldiery was also underrated; and the Sikh army was called a 'rabble' in official despatches. All these roused the suspicions of the Sikhs and taking advantage of the war-fever that raged among them, Lall Singh and Tej Singh launched the well-trained battalions against the British territories.*

* Thus Cunningham in his *History of the Sikhs*, p. 285 :—These men considered that their only chance of retaining power was to have the army removed, by inducing it to engage in a contest which they believed would end in its dispersion, and pave the way for their recognition as ministers, more surely than if they did their duty by the people and earnestly deprecated a war which must destroy the independence of the Punjab.

Although the Lahore Darbar declared war on the 17th November 1845, the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej on the 13th December 1845. Within three days, the entire force numbering 60,000 soldiers and 40,000 armed followers crossed the river without mishap and lay encamped near Ferozepore. The Sikhs had the advantage of national enthusiasm and each soldier considered the war as his own. Yet they were afraid of coming to close grip with the power that they dreaded most. It is strange that the English did not dispute the passage of the river, although there were sufficient forces at Ferozepore. Stranger still was the inactivity of the Sikh Generals, Lall Singh and Tej Singh, who could easily have dislodged the English forces at Ferozepore. As it was, the Sikhs did not care to offer battle to them and moved their position ten miles farther.

The Sikhs cross the Sutlej (December 1845)

Almost the first thing the Governor-General did when he heard that the Sikhs had crossed the Sutlej was to issue a proclamation annexing all the Cis-Sutlej districts to the British dominions and then hastened British forces from Ambala and Ludhiana for the defence of Ferozepore. The first battle was fought at Mudki, a small village near Ferozepore. Lall Singh's soldiers fought and manoeuvred with such rapidity and precision that it excited the wonder and admiration of Sir Hugh Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief. On the other hand, everything was in chaos in the British lines and if the sepoys had been left to themselves, their defeat would have been certain. However, in the end, the Sikhs were defeated after a heavy loss to the English. It is noteworthy that after the battle Sir Henry Hardinge placed himself as second-in-command under Gough.

Battle of Mudki (December 18, 1845)

If the English had now pursued the enemy, they would have had another easy victory with certain results. But Hardinge urged delay till the Ferozepore forces joined him. On the 21st December the junction was effected between these two British divisions. It was late in the day when the battle commenced. Darkness and the obstinacy of the contest once

again threw the English in confusion. It was 'a night of horrors,' as Gough put it. Still the British fought doggedly and won a partial success. The carnage was terrible and the Sikh guns mowed down the English troops. Next morning, the English made a rush on the enemy and obtained complete victory. The victors had to pay a heavy penalty for this. They lost a seventh of their number and were so exhausted that the Sikhs retired in safety to recoup and return for another attack *

Battle of Pherozshahr (21st & 22nd December, 1845)

The defeated Sikhs came to know that the English would not be offering a battle again, till reinforcements arrived from Delhi. One of their divisions made a dash to Ludhiana to intercept them. Sir Harry Smith went against them but met with a reverse at Buddewal but soon recovered his reputation by decisively defeating them at Aliwal. Here again, 'the ground was more thickly strewn with the bodies of victorious horsemen than of the beaten infantry.' The English thus achieved their purpose of driving the Sikhs across the Sutlej.

Battle of Aliwal (January 28, 1846)

To the east of Ferozepore there lay the village of Sobraon on the banks of the Sutlej. Here the Sikhs were strongly entrenched and had constructed a bridge of boats for safe retreat in case of defeat. Gough moved his forces thither in the dawn of the 10th February 1846; and a three hours' heavy bombardment of the Sikhs produced little effect, while the enemy's fire was terrific in its effect on the English lines. After a stubborn fight the British were successful at all points. Tej Singh was the first to cross the bridge of boats and fly for safety. Either by design or accident, one of the boats in the middle of the bridge sank and the poor and

The Battle of Sobraon (10th February, 1846)

* It has been suggested by some that if Lall Singh and Tej Singh had been more sincere in their designs against the English, the latter's force could have been easily annihilated. The Governor-General said that he had never known another such dreadful night and exclaimed :— "Another such victory and we are undone.!"

helpless mass of Sikh soldiers who could not cross the scarcely fordable river were mowed down by heavy cannonading—a butchery which stands in strange contrast to the sublime bearing of the Sikh soldier who, assailed this way, neither offered to submit, nor sought quarter. "They everywhere showed a front to the victors, and stalked slowly and sullenly away, while many rushed singly forth to meet assured death by contending with a multitude."*

The Advance to Lahore and the Treaty

Sobraon broke the back of the Khalsa army. On the night of victory, the English crossed the Sutlej and, two days later, captured the fort of Kasur (12th February). On the 20th February, the British army reached Lahore; and from the citadel of the Sikh capital, the Governor-General dictated terms to the vanquished. Although by the issue of the war, the Punjab was at the disposal of the Indian Government, Hardinge entertained no idea of annexing the country. Without actually suppressing its political existence, he wanted to punish the Sikhs for their past career and prevent future aggression on their part. He declared all Sikh territories to the left of the Sutlej including the Jalandhar Doab (that is, the land between that river and the Bias) to be forfeited. The Sikhs were condemned to pay an indemnity of a crore and a half of rupees or cede Kashmir together with half a crore. They preferred the latter course; and when Golab Singh, the Raja of Jammu, who had remained neutral to see which way victory would turn and who had earned a bad reputation being heartily hated by the Khalsa offered to pay the crore, the English gave him Kashmir in full sovereignty. "By this stroke of policy, Sir Henry Hardinge obtained funds to cover the expenses of the war, and planted on the northern division of the Punjab an independent Rajput chief between whom and the Sikhs there was a feeling of irreconcilable discord." The cession of Kashmir to Golab Singh was felt even at the time to be unjust and was followed by the rebellion of its Muslim

* See Cunningham, p. 315.—Sham Singh, the bravest of the Sikh sardars, tried to stimulate the soldiers to greater bravery and sought his death nobly when all was lost and his wife immolated herself as a 'sati.'

people which had to be put down by a British force and which was actually helped by a body of Sikh troops. Other clauses in the treaty were that the Lahore Darbar should limit its army to one of twenty thousand infantry and 12,000 cavalry and that they should receive a British Resident at Lahore.

Honours to the Victors

Even the British Parliament was provoked to unprecedented enthusiasm in regard to the Punjab victories; and in addition to the passing of a vote of thanks to Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir Hugh Gough, both of them were elevated to the Peerage.

The New Government in the Punjab

Lord Hardinge selected Major Henry Lawrence for the office of the Resident at Lahore, while Lall Singh was permitted to continue as the minister. The latter, however, was found to have instigated one Imam-ud-din to march against Golab Singh of Kashmir. Venal and corrupt, oppressive and utterly callous to the needs of the people and chiefs, this 'Orloff of the North,'—as Lall Singh was called—was deprived of his office by the Resident and compelled to retire to the British territories on a decent pension. The Punjab chiefs, in constant dread of the revival of Khalsa supremacy, requested the British Resident that the British army should continue to be stationed at Lahore for some time longer. Yielding to their wishes, Lord Hardinge entered into a new treaty, whereby the British Resident should administer the Punjab for eight years more with a Council of Regency composed of eight of the leading chiefs. Henry Lawrence was assisted by his brother, John Lawrence, and by a body of officials and soldiers who had been deemed to be the best that British India has ever produced and included men like Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson and Abbott. Their chief aim was, in the words of Lawrence, to "settle the country, make the people happy and take care that there are no rows". They quieted a turbulent people and organised into order an anarchical administration.

Retirement of Hardinge

Although busy throughout his Indian career with the Punjab affairs, Hardinge found time to look into some important matters pertaining to the civil administration of the country. Thus, he put an end to the practice of human sacrifice among the wild tribe of the Khonds in the Orissa Agency; he prohibited *Sati* and female infanticide in the Native States by peaceful persuasion of the rulers. He abolished transit duties between Native States in Central India and freed the Sutlej and the Indus from all imposts. He cut down the strength of the Indian army, but massed a large body of troops between Meerut and the Sutlej, because he anticipated a second war with the yet unsubdued Sikhs. He also took an interest in the preservation of the ancient monuments of India. He embarked for England early in 1848. "The Indian career of Lord Hardinge," says his son and biographer, "had now closed. His measures had been characterised by moderation and vigour, and he had bequeathed to his successors an excess of income over expenditure and the probabilities of a continuance of peace."*

Section II. The Wars of Dalhousie

Lord Dalhousie, Governor-General (1848-1856)

Lord Dalhousie, who succeeded Hardinge, landed in Calcutta in January 1848, and was the youngest ruler of India then since Robert Clive. He was for several years a member of the House of Commons and, as President of the Board of Trade in Peel's Cabinet, had exhibited talent and industry and an aptitude for business which alone recommended him for the high office of Governor-General. Although when he took up the reins of office he was a perfect stranger to the institutions of Government, the intricate policies governing the relationship between the Supreme Government and the Indian States and the very character of the people whom he was sent to govern, he mastered every detail of these in an astonishingly short

* See *Hardinge*, in the Rulers of India Series, by Hardinge, the son of the Governor-General, who was also his Private Secretary, p. 177.

period. His eight years of administration were filled with transactions of the most momentous character. His regime, as Ramsay Muir truly observes, 'is not only the last important stage, it is also the culmination of the marvellous history of the East India Company.' He waged two great wars which ended in the annexation, to the Indian Empire, of the Punjab and Lower Burma. Besides, he brought under British Supremacy a large number of states previously ruled by independent princes. In the little time left between conquests and annexations, the Governor-General was feverishly active in westernizing Indian society—an activity that was partly responsible for the Great Indian Mutiny. Indeed, his eight years' rule "left more conspicuous results than that of any Governor-General since Wellesley." Let us study his wars first.

Before sailing from India, Lord Hardinge assured Dalhousie that 'it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come' but 'as a matter of fact, those seven years were, from the very outset, years of war and of strain which at any moment might develop into war.'*

The Second Sikh War (1848-49) Its Causes

It will be recalled that, according to the revised Treaty of Lahore, a Council of Regency was formed with the British Resident at its head, to carry on the administration of the Punjab till Dilip Singh came of age. Now it so happened that Mulraj, the governor of Multan, who was exercising semi-independent powers, was called upon by the Resident to render an account of his stewardship. He delayed and vacillated and finally preferred to resign his governorship rather than submit himself to the indignity of being found fault with for misappropriation of public money. In accordance with his desire, two British officers, Vans Agnew and Anderson, were sent to Multan to take possession of the fort. One day when returning from the fort, these two Englishmen were stabbed; and when in the confusion they took shelter in a neighbouring mosque, they were fired upon and brutally murdered. After this foul deed, Mulraj who had first fled, declared an open

* Sir William Hunter: *Marquess of Dalhousie* in the "Rulers of India" Series, p. 68.

rebellion, took possession of the fort and proclaimed a religious war against the English.

British Inactivity

While still bleeding, Vans Agnew managed to scribble a note to the Resident, Sir Frederic Currie—for Sir Henry Lawrence was in England on leave—and another 'to General Courtland in Bannu or wherever else he may be.' The Resident, quite new to his office and bound by red-tape, forwarded Agnew's note to Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, who did not think it advisable to move the British divisions in the hot weather; and therefore the honour of responding immediately to the call for aid fell to one Edwardes, a revenue officer, who, on seeing the contents of the note by Agnew, gathered a small force and rushed towards Multan. Summoning to his aid the loyal levies of the Muhammadan state of Bahawalpur, Edwardes won two pitched battles against Mulraj and practically shut him up in Multan (June 1848).*

Lord Gough reviews his Policy

In the meanwhile, the rebellion raised by Mulraj was spreading like wild fire throughout the Punjab It was with great difficulty that the Resident could hold himself at Lahore. Herbert Edwardes was frantic in his appeal for help. The Rani, the Queen-Mother, was corresponding with Mulraj and, in all other respects, was fanning the flame. It was, therefore, found necessary to send her to Benares. Sir F. Currie, the Resident, realising the gravity of the situation, on his own responsibility despatched a force under General Whish. In the meanwhile, a Sikh subsidiary force despatched to join Edwardes, under Sher Singh, joined the enemy. The Sikh chiefs even entered into an alliance with Dost Muhammad, the Amir of Afghanistan, promising, in return for military aid, to give back Peshawar. The consternation in the English

* Edwardes won fame by this achievement. He armed "the Mussalmans of the frontier against the Sikhs and the Mussalmans of Multan, as we afterwards armed the Sikhs against the Hindus, and Mussalmans of Delhi in the crisis of the Mutiny. He wrote, strongly criticising the delay in taking measures to suppress the insurrection, that "insurrections cannot be postponed like tea-parties with a note, nor enemies to be bound over to keep the peace until it is quite convenient to you to fight"—*Memorials of Major-General Sir Herbert Edwardes*—(2 vols.)

camp was great. Lord Dalhousie who had hitherto depended upon the superior local knoweldge of the Commander-in-Chief, grew impatient. "If our enemies want war," he said at a meeting, "war they shall have and with a vengeance." Not till this incident, did Lord Gough move his grand army to the task (Nov. 1848).

Blunders of Gough

"His tardiness to start was equalled by his rashness in the field." Crossing the Ravi on the 16th Nov., seven months after the murder of the British officers at Multan, he came in touch with the enemy at Ramnagar in the Chenab. Here Sher Singh was strongly entrenched and Gough chose to attack him with an inadequate force and without the guns which were on their way. The result was that the British had to retire after a heavy loss. This idle and bootless skirmish was soon followed by another action near the village of Sadullapur (Dec. 3) where again the bad military strategy of Lord Gough led to serious losses on the English side. Sher Singh, however, had removed, at his own leisure and unscathed, all his cannon and army to a better and safer position.

Battle of Chilianwala (January 1849)

After Sadullapur, Sher Singh retired and took up a position of great strength on the banks of the Jhelum and was strengthening it. On the other hand, the British forces, yielding to the opinion of Dalhousie, remained inactive for six weeks. At last Lord Gough turned towards the Sikh position at Chilianwala. While reconnoitring the grounds, a few shots from the Sikh encampment fell before him. Incensed at what Gough considered to be the audacity of the Sikhs, he gave orders for immediate action. This was a foolish thing to do in view of the fact that the Sikhs had between them and the English forces a thick jungle, while the British cavalry had little room to manoeuvre. Excellently protected by the jungle, the Sikhs poured such a terrific fire on the English that the latter reeled over and over again The situation for Gough became more perilous as daylight was rapidly vanishing. The Sikhs indeed fought like demons. While in the end they retired in good order to another position three miles distant,

they had inflicted such damage on the British forces that the latter lost temporarily their military reputation. According to one account the British losses in killed and wounded amounted to 2,357 men! "Such was the battle of Chilianwala, the most sanguinary and the nearest approximation to a defeat, of any of the great conflicts of the British power in India." The news of this battle was received with great dismay in England.* The Duke of Wellington freely criticised the tactics of Gough and the Court of Directors and the Ministry now requested Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sind, to proceed to India and supersede Lord Hugh Gough, now growing old. But before the former arrived, the latter had retrieved his reputation in a brilliant victory at Gujarat. Before explaining how he did so, let us turn our attention to the siege of Multan.

Multan stormed

It will be remembered that Sir F. Currie, the Resident, had despatched General Whish to the rescue of Edwardes who, with a comparatively small force, was attempting to storm Multan. The forces from the Residency found the task difficult and were awaiting the arrival of fresh troops from Bombay. This meant three months of inaction; and when, at last the Bombay division arrived, the assault began. For three days there was fierce cannonading from the English batteries which produced little effect on the stout walls of Multan. But a shell, striking the enemy's magazine, blew it up. On the 2nd January 1849 breaches were effected and Multan was stormed; but the brave Mulraj would not surrender. Withdrawing himself into the citadel, he put up stout resistance for a fortnight. The army, thus liberated, joined the main force at Chilianwala.

After the battle of Chilianwala, the Sikh forces, without rousing the suspicions of the English, moved up to Gujarat on the Chenab, east of their former encampment. It had been

* Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, reported that the impression made on the public mind by news of the battle of Chilianwala, was " stranger than that caused by the Kabul massacre."

Battle of Gujarat (22nd Feb., 1849)

suggested that they did so because they found it difficult to obtain adequate provisions at Chillianwala or the movement might have been dictated by the hope they woud be able to capture Lahore. It is needless to enter into the disposition of the combating forces at Gujarat. It is enough to state that Lord Gough, acting on the cue furnished by Major Lawrence, brother of Sir Henry Lawrence, now a prisioner on parole in the hands of the Sikhs, determined to trust to his artillery as his main basis of attack. The battle began in the morning of 22nd February. The British began such a terrific cannonading as the Indian army had never witnessed before. Sher Singh's army rapidly became a wreck. He was deprived of his entire camp, his standards and fifty-three pieces of cannon. "Among the noblest achievements of our Indian Generals," says an English historian, with legitimate pride, "the battle of Gujarat stands out in bold relief, not only in reference to the magnitude of the forces engaged and the confidence with which previous events had inspired the enemy, but, also, to the importance of its result, the utter extinction of the formidable power and spirit of Ranjit Singh's great armament, terrific in the death throes of its expiring wrath." The battle of Gujarat—'the battle of the guns' as it is called—decided the fate of the Punjab and quenched the hopes of the Khalsa. There was no chance of the Sikh army rallying again; and on March 12, the entire Khalsa army surrendered their arms. The words, 'Aj Ranjit Singh mar gya' (to-day Ranjit Singh is dead), exclaimed by an old veteran, were symbolical of the total disappearance of the Sikh army.

End of the Kingdom of the Punjab

In the hour of victory, Lord Dalhousie issued a proclamation annexing the whole of the Punjab to the British dominions. The young Maharaja, Dilip Singh, was assigned a pension of five lakhs of rupees. He preferred to live in Norfolk in England after embracing Christianity. The jaghirs of the Sikh sardars who rebelled were confiscated; while Mulraj, the Sikh national hero, who brought about the war by his murderous attack on Agnew and Anderson, was consigned to prison where he shortly died.

The New Government

The new Government of the Punjab was entrusted to a Board of three Commissioners with Sir Henry Lawrence as the head. There was *Thagi* prevalent in the land, besides gang robbery. The people had to be disarmed; and roads had to be built; and revenue had to be settled. Sir Henry Lawrence was an unselfish and humane ruler sympathetic to the old aristocracy. John Lawrence, his brother, another member, was a person of stupendous energy; and "the two together did work greater than either could have done alone". There was, however, growing friction between the two masterful brothers; and Sir Henry found the interference of the Governor-General increasingly troublesome and unendurable. Under his wise and sympathetic administration, the Punjab prospered immensely. To prevent further insurrection, the people were disarmed and a vigorous system of police was introduced. The Board of Administration also put an end to the system of domestic slavery, openly practised under the old government. At a great gathering of Sikh chiefs and *sardars* at Amritsar, Sir Henry Lawrence argued calmly against the nefarious practice of infanticide and, by his sweet eloquence, prevailed upon his audience not to countenance it in their respective areas. As in the case of British India before the Punjab annexation, the Thags in the new province were similarly hunted down and their gangs dispersed. Under instructions from Dalhousie, the whole country was covered with a network of military roads while vast sums were expended on irrigation works, the most important of them being the Canal of the Bari Doab.* Three years later the Board was abolished, and Sir Henry's brother, John Lawrence, was appointed the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.

* This magnificent undertaking, which, with its branches, extended to the length of 465 miles, was equal, if not superior, to the noblest canals in Europe, and formed the worthiest monument of British supremacy in the Punjab."—Dr. Marshman, Vol. III, p. 359.

The Second Burmese War (1852): Causes

The second war which Lord Dalhousie waged in his time was the Burmese War. It arose out of the determination of the Governor-General to compel the Burmese king to respect and carry out treaty obligations. According to the Treaty of Yandabu, the Burmese king undertook to receive a British Resident at Ava. He violated the spirit of this undertaking by heaping insults on successive Residents who were compelled to retire from the country. Again, although the Ava court promised, in a separate commercial treaty with the English, to offer security and protection for the English merchants, they were systematically oppressed and subjected to heavy fines on frivolous complaints. In two specified cases, the charges against European merchants could not be proved; and yet they were fined and tortured. The English merchants of Rangoon, therefore, submitted a memorial to the Indian Government in the course of which they said that "now affairs have arrived at such a crisis that, unless protected, your memorialists will be obliged to leave the country, and, doing so, must sacrifice their property." After very deep consideration, Dalhousie resolved to send Commodore Lambert to Rangoon to investigate into the circumstances of the alleged oppression of the merchants and to demand adequate pecuniary compensation if the charges were substantiated.* Lambert reached Rangoon on the 26th Nov., interrogated a few Europeans regarding their grievances and being satisfied that they were right, preferred to send the Council's letter direct to the king of Ava, as he had reasons to believe that the governor of Rangoon treated him and his mission with lofty contempt. The king's reply came promptly enough. The offending governor was removed and another took his place. The

* Some writers hold that the English deliberately provoked the Burmese to a quarrel. The selection of a Commodore for the purpose of seeking redress was considered to be significant. John Lawrence wrote to Dalhousie to ask, " Why did you send a Commodore to Burma, if you wanted peace ?". Even the Governor-General admitted later on: " these Commodores are too combustible for negotiations." *Vide, The Life of Marquis of Dalhousie* by Sir William Lee-Warner, Vol. I, pp. 417-18. The fact is we are entirely dependent on official accounts and state papers for an account of the Burmese Wars. The real facts connected with these wars will, it is feared, never be known.

latter, according to Lambert, was more insulting than the former and refused to receive a deputation to discuss matters. Considering this as a sufficient cause for drastic action, Commodore Lambert took possession of a ship belonging to the King and declared a blockade of the port of Rangoon. It was then the Burmese fired at the "Fox" from behind their stockades. These proceedings and further correspondence between Dalhousie and the Burmese king in which the former demanded compensation of ten lakhs of rupees for wrongs suffered, led to a declaration of war.

Capture of Rangoon

In ordering forces from distant Presidencies, Dalhousie avoided the blunders of Lord Amherst. Two expeditions had to be sent, one from Madras and the other from Calcutta. The infantry attached to the latter place refused to cross the sea; and Dalhousie with great promptitude ordered a Sikh regiment to be substituted. The Madras Governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, delayed matters, causing no little inconvenience. Steam ships had to come from Bombay. Dalhousie overcame these obstacles by passing stern orders and further made excellent arrangements in Burma itself for the proper provisioning of the soldiers. With such a thorough organisation of the commissariat and transport, it was no wonder that victory was easily gained. The initial operations of the Bengal division which arrived earlier included in the capture of Moulmein. When the Madras army joined the military base, the objective of the entire force was to storm the great Shive Dagon Pagoda of Rangoon which was used by the Burmese as their citadel. This was, however, captured after a stout resistance (April 14). Long before the Pagoda fell, the people had deserted the city of Rangoon; but when they ascertained that the city had fallen, they hastened back and even volunteered to help the English in constructing wooden houses for the quartering of soldiers. This strange and unpatriotic action of the people was due to their sufferings at the hands of the Burmese governor. The Burmese general surrendered to the British rather than go to his king.

After providing for the safety of Rangoon, the English army took Bassein, the western port of Burma. In the meanwhile

CHAPTER XV

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD CANNING

Lord Canning (1856)

Lord Canning, the son of the famous statesman, George Canning, was appointed to succeed Lord Dalhousie as Governor-General. He had held, in his own country, various high offices. Biographers of Canning have expressed the view that the new Governor-General possessed the judicial, rather than the administrative, temperament. A stickler for orderly procedure, Lord Canning possessed many admirable qualities; but he was lacking in foresight, quickness in thought and decision in action. It was this fatal defect in his character that showed itself during the Great Indian Mutiny. Indeed he himself would appear to have perceived some premonitary symptoms of the great political cataclysm. At a banquet given in his honour in England, he said: "We must not forget that India is a country in which anything might happen, however quiet things might seem;" and again: "I cannot forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, no larger than a man's hand, but which, growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst and overwhelm us with ruin!" Taking the overland route to India, he landed at Bombay on January 26th, 1856. Sailing again to Madras, he spent a few days with Lord Harris, the Governor of Madras, and on the last day of February 1856, he took his seat in Council at Calcutta.

State of India in 1856

When Lord Canning assumed his high office, everything in India betokened outward calm. Burma had been cowed into abject submission and Nepal had never given cause for complaint that the treaty she had entered into with the English in 1816 had been violated either in form or in spirit. The newly created Raja of Kashmir had proclaimed, in unmistakable terms, his loyalty to the British Raj which had extricated him from the clutches of the Sikhs. The Amir of Afghanistan had concluded in 1855 a treaty promising to treat British friends and foes as his own; and the

frontier tribesmen remained quiet and only watched the progress of events. While, however, the frontiers of India were rendered safe against hostile attacks, the internal condition of the Indian Empire was by no means satisfactory. Deep below the surface of Indian society, there was the smouldering fire of discontent. Oudh which was annexed by Dalhousie was full of explosive material. The disbandment of the deposed King's huge army caused distress to thousands of families, while the Oudh Talukdars, accustomed to plunder the peasants according to their sweet will and pleasure, now found themselves, after the establishment of British administration, in a very uncomfortable position. The tenants, for whose uplift the British officers worked, could not realise the importance of the economic reforms introduced in Oudh and, growing supicious of the new dispensation, once again drifted into the arms of the Talukdars. In the result, when the Mutiny broke out, both the landlord and the tenant joined hands as against the English.* At Delhi, the historical capital of the Mughals, there still lived Bahadur Shah, a 'faded image of the Great Mughal,' and the focus of intrigues against British power. Lord Canning, following the decision of his predecessor, had refused to recognise his son by a favourite queen as heir to the title of King; and the young prince was 'growing up as a bitter hater' of the English. Vague rumours about a Persian invasion of India had encouraged the Delhi populace to hope that the destruction of the British Raj would soon be an accomplished fact. Exciting rumours were afloat in the streets of the Mughal capital that 'the hundred years' rule by the aliens of the west was about to close.'

War with Persia

The first serious question with which Lord Canning was called upon to deal, rose from the aggressive designs of Persia. The Shah of Persia had always desired to recover Herat; and although in 1853 he had signed a treaty promising not to interfere in the affairs of that city, he now sent an army against its governor, Essa Khan. He certainly expected help from the Russians who were then at war with the English. On 25th October 1856, Essa surrendered and the place fell into the hands

* But in most of the instances, where villagers helped the mutineers, "nowhere was there anything approaching a jacquerie."

of the Persians. Thus Lord Canning was compelled to send an expedition to Persia. Before doing so, he concluded an alliance with Dost Muhammad, based on the view that Herat belonged to Afghanistan. The expedition itself was a simple affair. Outram and Havelock were selected as the leaders of the small army. They effected a landing on the coast of Persia, easily took Bushire, and then put to flight a Persian force at Kushab. In the meanwhile, the Crimean War came to a close; and despairing of getting any help from Russia, the Shah wisely decided to withdraw from Herat and signed a new treaty with the English agreeing to recognise the independence of Herat and to abstain from interference in Afghanistan. When the expedition returned to India, it found the country in a state of wild commotion.

The Great Indian Mutiny

Widely different views are held by European writers regarding the nature and the causes of the Indian Mutiny. A few have thought that it was a carefully organized conspiracy to overthrow the British in India. Sir James Outram, for a long time Resident in Oudh, thought that 'it was the result of a Muhammadan conspiracy making capital of Hindu grievances.' Sir John Lawrence, one of the highest authorities on the subject, unhesitatingly said that the Mutiny had its origin in the army itself as there was a marked deterioration in discipline following the Afghan war. Dr. Marshman finds irrefragable evidence to support this view. He says: "Neither the old resumptions, nor the spread of the English, nor the attempt to teach the females, nor the diffusion of knowledge, nor the railway, nor the telegraph, nor all other causes which have been conjectured, put together, were sufficient to account for the savage mutiny of a hundred thousand sepoys; while the delirious alarm created by the story of the greased cartridges is fully adequate to the effect." Following a recent authority on the subject, we may briefly describe the causes under the headings, political, social, religious and military.

The merciless application of the Doctrine of Lapse by Lord Dalhousie remains, notwithstanding asseverations to the contrary, the main cause of the Mutiny.

Political Causes: I. The State of Oudh

The way in which Oudh was annexed and the subsequent treatment of the land-owners by the new administration, were all hateful to the people. The peasantry whose interests Dalhousie evidently espoused could not appreciate the reforms introduced and threw in their lot with the landed aristocracy. The annexation of Oudh and the consequent unemployment caused to thousands of people who found a living under the native rule, created profound discontent among a martial people.

II. The Pension of the Nana Saheb

The refusal of his father's pension to Nana Saheb, the adopted son of Baji Rao, the ex-Peishwa, merely fanned the flame of political discontent. Stung to the quick, the Nana used his hoarded wealth in sending emissaries to different parts of North India and fomenting rebellion everywhere.

III. Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi

The suppression of the Jhansi Raj had the effect of infuriating the Rani of that state, Lakshmi Bai. After the annexation, Dalhousie gave her a paltry allowance of six thousand a year. This niggardliness, coupled with the offensive proposal that she should pay off the debts which her husband had left, so embittered her feelings, that, when the time came, she wreaked terrible vengeance upon the power that had wronged her in many ways and rose to the full stature of a martial heroine.

Social Causes

British rule of annexed areas was no doubt just, but by no means amiable. The guiding political principle of Lord Dalhousie was "everything for the people and nothing by the people." Consequently a host of native officers, intelligent and influential, had been needlessly thrown out of employment and they were by no means disposed to praise the virtues of an alien government that had also roused the ill-will of the small

landed proprietors by ruthlessly confiscating their estates. Five years before the Mutiny, an Inam Commission at Bombay found it necessary to confiscate 20,000 estates; its decisions added greatly to the sum of agrarian discontent. Besides Rajas and petty chiefs who were brooding over supposed grievances, there were large bodies of Indians who still regarded the Great Mughal as their lawful sovereign.

Religious Causes

It has been often stated by writers that the various civilising measures of Dalhousie although supported by the educated Indians, gave, nevertheless, deep offence to the orthodox millions of India who venerated ancient customs. It is said, for example, that the Indians viewed with great suspicion the introduction of the railway and the telegraph. Such a hatred of these quick means of communication was perhaps born of the fact that the earlier telegraph lines merely connected various military cantonments. The prohibition of *Sati* and infanticide, instead of being opposed, was tolerated; but when laws were passed permitting remarriage for widows and validating the inheritance of property by a convert to the Christian faith, the suspicions of the orthodox Hindus and Brahmins who formed a large part of the 'native' army in those days, were naturally roused; and the Government was suspected of promoting the process of conversion; and the word passed from mouth to mouth that Lord Canning had been commissioned to convert India to Christianity. Social legislation is always bad in a country like India filled with people with varying customs and manners and particularly so at a time when state after state had been annexed to British India.

* Such dispossessed men and their followers included most of the capable rebel leaders. The most important of them were Ahmadullah, "the Moulvi of Faizabad," the adviser of the deposed King of Oudh; Rao Sahib, a nephew of Nana Sahib, and Tantia Topi and Azimullah Khan who were his retainers; Kunwar Singh, an aged Rajput warrior whose estates had been confiscated by the Board of Revenue, and Firaz Shah, a kinsman and dependent of the Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah.

More formidable than the insulted Talukdar or the dispossessed landlord, were the Indian sepoys who were now brooding over their separate grievances.

Military Causes

In the early days of the Company's existence, the Madras Army had been the most important; but after 1800 the Army of Bengal occupied the foremost place in the plans and military operations of the Company. The latter was recruited mainly from the martial races of Oudh and Rajputana. When Lord Canning took up the reins of government, he found that the Bengal Army consisting of orthodox Hindus, and largely recruited from Oudh and the North-West Provinces, was unwilling to cross the seas for general duty. He therefore passed an Act, known as the General Service Enlistment Act, decreeing that no recruit should, for the future, be accepted who would not undertake to march whithersoever his services might be required. This order, although affecting only future recruits, caused alarm in the minds of the rank and file of the Bengal Army. This Act was followed by other army measures which still further embittered the feelings of the sepoys. Thus, sepoys refusing to cross the seas or declared unfit for foreign service, should not be allowed to retire on invalid pension. All sepoys should henceforth pay the regular postage for their letters.* They also believed that the Government was attempting to raise a big Sikh army to supersede them. Government now planned the building up of a new sepoy army drawn from the Sikhs, the Punjabi Muslims, Gurkhas and "races not formerly available" Thus affected in mind, the sepoys were ready to swallow any lie circulated against the Government by clever agitators. Thus, an extremely ill-judged missionary manifesto, that the railways and steamships were to be the indirect instruments for accomplishing their spiritual union under one faith, was regarded as a plain invitation by the Government to join the Christian religion. There was no end to ugly rumours. The agitator even raked up an old Hindu prophecy. It said that in the year 1857, exactly a hundred years after the victory of Plassey, the Company's Raj was to be destroyed. On the top of all this

* Previous to this order they were permitted to send them under the frank of their commandant. See *History of the Indian Mutiny* by T. R. Holmes, p. 77.

came the affair of the greased cartridges. The Bengal Army was thus, at the end of 1856, "sullen, insubordinate and on the verge of rebellion." The number of British troops was small; and there was "hardly one British soldier to twenty-five sepoys.' There was no British regiment stationed in Oudh in spite of its highly excited condition now at Delhi, where the Mughal Emperor had a large and unruly following.

The Greased Cartridge Affair

One day in January 1857, a low-caste lascar attached to the magazine at Dum Dum, near Calcutta, asked a Brahmin sepoy to give him a cup of water to drink. The sepoy naturally refused, pointing out that his vessel would be polluted by his touch. The lascar promptly replied that very soon he would lose his caste as the new cartridges to be introduced by the government were greased with the fat of cows or swine. To the Hindu the cow is sacred and the Muhammadan considers swine as unclean. The Brahmin sepoy rushed off to tell his comrades. The whole Bengal Army was now seized with panic. Officers attempted to allay their fears and stoutly repudiated, in good faith, the suggestion that fat of any kind was used in greasing the cartridges, but in vain.

Warnings and Portents

Discipline in the Bengal Army had sunk very low and it arose from a conviction that it really constituted the main prop of British rule in India. Unfortunately, notwithstanding previous warnings by competent authorities, the strength of the European force in India was allowed to be reduced greatly; and now when the Mutiny burst, there were but 45,000 soldiers as against five times the number of sepoys. The first disturbing incident took place at Barrackpur where the sepoys broke loose and burnt the cantonment buildings. A sepoy* at this place attacked his English officer, shot his horse and later on struggled with him on the ground,

* The Mangal Pandi whose exploit gave the mutineers the nickname of Pandis.

and the troops on parade merely looked on (May 6. 1857) Farther up the Gangetic valley, unpleasant and disquieting incidents were taking place. The authorities flattered themselves that this commotion due to the greased cartridges would soon die down. But they were mistaken. In the meanwhile the English officers were noticing a mysterious phenomenon. *Chupatties* (flat cakes) began to pass from village to village, 'like the fiery cross that summoned the clansmen of Roderick to battle.'*

The Mutiny

It is not possible in this little book to trace in full the history of the great rebellion. Only the leading events can be mentioned. The impending storm burst on a calm Sunday evening on May 10, 1857, at Meerut, the largest military station in North India. The sepoys refused to touch the 'greased cartridges' and after shooting dead their officers and burning their houses, hastened off to Delhi which was easily captured by them, as there was not a single British regiment quartered in the city. The few British officers who were guarding the huge magazine, finding resistance hopeless, blew it up. The mutineers in the meanwhile burst into the old Mughal palace and proclaimed the eighty-year-old Bahadur Shah, the old King of Delhi, to be the Emperor of India. For the time being, this aged representative of the dynasty of Akbar and Aurangzeb became the rallying point for all the malcontents. The Commander-in-Chief was in Simla; the available British troops were not mobilised, and the communications between the principal military posts were so difficult; and railway lines, recently begun, had not gone from Calcutta beyond Raniganj and from Bombay beyond Thana. But telegraph lines had been laid between the chief towns. Judged on a wide perspective, all the region from the Narmada to the Sutlej was practically open to the spread of the rebellion.

* "The meaning of the portent has never been positively discovered; but it is certain that many of the natives regarded it as a warning that Government was plotting the overthrow of their religion." T. R. Holmes, p. 90.

The momentum thus given by the Meerut sepoys, soon gathered strength. All over Oudh, Rohilkhand, and parts of Rajputana the spirit of revolt flared up. At Lucknow, Benares, and Cawnpore, the soldiers murdered their officers with their wives and then headed off towards Delhi. The Rani of Jhansi took the lead in Bundelkhand and massacred all the Europeans found there. It was indeed fortunate for the British that, at this critical juncture, Dost Muhammad and the Sikhs of the Punjab remained loyal. Had they joined the mutineers, worse would have happened to the British cause in India. It was equally lucky that the Madras and Bombay armies did not take any part in the rebellion. The moving spirits of the revolt were Nana Sahib, the ex-Peishwa's adopted son, and Lakshmi Bai, the Rani of Jhansi. The chief interest of the Mutiny centred round three cities, Cawnpore, Lucknow and Delhi. But there was no organised leadership over a large portion of the mutiny area, nor any well-ordered plan of combination among the leaders.

The Rebellion spreads like Wildfire

The sepoys at Cawnpore mutinied on June 6th, 1857. Nana Sahib, who must have incited them, easily put himself as their leader. The European inhabitants of the station were mostly women and children; and they took shelter in a building which they hastily put into defence. But the odds were against them. In the end they implored Nana Sahib to give them a safe conduct to Allahabad. The wily Maratha promised it; later on while they embarked in boats on the Ganges, he ordered a murderous fire to be opened on them. Few escaped. This savage butchery of innocent women and children by the wicked Nana and his lieutenant, Tantia Topi, brought on them nothing but infamy. The avenging British force took nearly a month to proceed to Cawnpore. This massacre was not done by the rebel sepoys who refused to have anything to do with it. It was done in a moment of panic by the retinue of the Nana. It had the sequel of barbarous and savage punishments inflicted on the British side and helped to create a public opinion among the English both in India and in England to give "a welcome and almost

At Cawnpore

religious sanction to any act of savagery that the Government troops might perpetrate."

At Lucknow also the sepoys mutinied although they loved Sir Henry Lawrence, the Resident. Anticipating trouble, Sir Henry had carefully fortified the Residency and collected the entire European community within its precincts. In the cantonment of Murriaon, he had quartered those sepoy regiments whose loyalty he suspected. On the 30th of May, the latter mutinied but were attacked and dispersed in different directions. For nearly a month there were no signs of further trouble, when on the 29th June, the mutineers advanced towards Lucknow. In the engagement that followed—the battle of Chinhat—Lawrence failed to seize a thick wood, and thus was forced to retire into the Residency. From this time onwards the English put up a brave defence against odds. The mad mutineers now invested the Residency and in the course of the assault, a shell burst in Sir Henry's room, mortally wounding him. Before his death Sir Henry Lawrence requested General Inglis to take the command. For nearly three months the brave band within the Residency carried on the struggle till they were relieved by Outram and Havelock. The latter was at first in charge of the relieving force. Hastily gathering a force, Havelock started from Allahabad towards Cawnpore. About half way at Fatehpur, he routed a force of the mutinous sepoys (12th July). But they came on again gathering fresh strength. On the 15th of July, Havelock gave battle to them at two places. In both these engagements the rebellious sepoys were defeated and forced to retreat to Cawnpore. With considerably reduced forces, Havelock pushed his way to Cawnpore, only to find that he was too late to avert the butchery of the Nana. He then attempted to proceed to Lucknow, but had to fall back on Cawnpore as his line of communication with Calcutta was threatened by the sepoy regiments at Dinapore. At this moment, Sir James Outram who returned from the Persian campaign, was appointed to the supreme command; but he magnanimously declined to deprive Havelock of the honour of relieving Lucknow. Both Outram and Havelock now advanced

At Lucknow

towards Lucknow with a considerably augmented army. Winning a battle on the way—the Battle of Mangalwar—the combined forces reached Alambagh where they defeated the enemy who was strongly entrenched. The entire column now marched towards Lucknow and after a good deal of street-fighting entered the Residency to the great joy of the besieged (September 1857). After this first relief of Lucknow the rebels did not show the same vigour. Notwithstanding this, the position of the Lucknow defenders was still dangerous. The mutineers were as skilful as the English troops in the use of arms and they continued to surround the Residency for two months In the meanwhile, Sir Colin Campbell was appointed to be the Commander-in-Chief; and it was his skill and daring that finally effected the deliverance of the garrison (November 16, 1857). In the course of three weeks, after many stiff fights with the sepoys, Sir Colin became the master of the city.

At Delhi

After the silly proclamation of Bahadur Shah as the Mughal Emperor of India, the main objective of the British forces was to recapture the city of Delhi. Thither converged also the Indian troops that mutinied. Although the British command was in the hands of Sir Archdale Wilson, General Nicholson, sent from the Punjab by Sir John Lawrence, was the leader in the great assault on the city now bravely undertaken. The assault began just after the arrival of a heavy siege-train. The Kashmir Gate was promptly blown in and four British columns entered the city, which fell after a week's desperate street fighting. Almost the first thing the English did was to take as prisoners Bahadur Shah and his two sons. One cruel act marred this otherwise splendid military feat of the English; "the princes were pistolled by Hodson, a brilliant cavalry leader, who had persuaded himself that they were guilty of the murder of Englishmen and women, and that an attempt to rescue them would be made by the mob before he could take them to a place of safe custody." The recapture of Delhi and the imprisonment of Bahadur Shah broke the back of the Mutiny. The work of dispersing other mutinous gangs was very easy. The fall of Delhi in September and the second relief of Lucknow

in November really broke the back of the rebellion. The British operations became more orderly; and in the course of the next nine months the isolated rebel leaders were systematically hunted down.

After the capture of Delhi, operations had to be continued on a large enough scale in Oudh where the Mutiny was a popular revolt. The Prime Minister and the *de facto* ruler of Nepal, Jang Bahadur, declaring himself to be on the side of the British, sent a large body of Gurkhas, with whose help Sir Colin Campbell reduced every fort that resisted. The operations were over in January 1859.

Reduction of Oudh

As has already been stated, the Rani of Jhansi whose territory was annexed by Lord Dalhousie was the chief inspirer of the revolt in Central India and Bundelkhand. Tantia Topi, the general of Nana Sahib, now joined the forces of the Rani. The latter, dressed in male attire, fought bravely for her cause. Sir Hugh Rose was in command of the Bombay forces and in conjunction with a Madras army under Whitlock fought his way into Central India, took Jhansi and dislodged the Rani and Tantia Topi from the fort of Gwalior which they managed to capture from Sindhia. In the end Rani Lakshmi Bai died in battle, bravely fighting to the last. Sir Hugh Rose had to recognise that she was 'the best and bravest' of the rebel leaders. Order was finally restored in the course of the year 1859.

Central India and Bundelkhand

Tantia Topi was hunted down by Sir Hugh Rose and in April 1859 he was captured and sent to the gallows. Nana Sahib, his infamous master, was hunted down from place to place till at last he was driven into the inhospitable jungles of the Tarai, fringing Nepal. It is believed that he perished there. Bahadur Shah, the aged Mughal Emperor, was sent first to Calcutta as a state prisoner and later on kept in inglorious confinement at Rangoon where he died in 1862 at the ripe old age of eighty-seven. "Thus ended an episode, lamentable in its origin, distinguished by great courage,

Fate of the Rebel Leaders

but by few other virtues during its course and ending in a manner which left the seeds of much future trouble. On the British side the valour and endurance of soldiers and civilians were marred by crude racial passions, and by gross ingratitude to many Indians who assisted them. Indians must also recognise certain failings in the conduct of those who took arms against the Government; the indecision which kept large numbers inactive when they might have been most effective, the selfishness and lack of national pride which prevented their leaders working together or sacrificing their own personal ambitions." (p. 458 of Thompson and Garratt: *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India.*)

Causes for the English Success

We may now summarise the causes that brought the English efforts to a successful end. First and foremost was the undoubted loyalty of the Sikhs; secondly, the fidelity of Dost Muhammad who remained true to the treaty he entered into with the English; thirdly, the complete aloofness of the Madras forces which evinced no manner of interest in the Mutiny and the similar indifference of the Bombay army; fourthly, the great services of Sir Dinkar Rao of Gwalior and Sir Salar Jang of Hyderabad who actively helped the English in the course of the two years' struggle; fifthly, 'the exceptional characters of the men who were called upon to grapple with the Mutiny at the outset—the Lawrences, Outram, Havelock, Nicholson, Neill and Edwardes;' and lastly, the want of unity of purpose among the rebel leaders whose interests were different, Nana Sahib desiring to re-establish the Maratha supremacy, the Muhammadans making one last, though feeble, effort to restore the old Mughal Empire and Rani Lakshmi Bai fighting for her own local interests.

The End of the Company

The news of the Mutiny and the misery it caused to many homes in England created a revulsion of feeling against the East India Company; and influential politicians set about to move the Parliament to end the Company's rule in India. The Court of Directors, although it had no real control in the administration of India, protested against

the proposed scheme and pointed out that "in Indian affairs the Government of the Crown had long possessed the deciding voice, and was thus, in the fullest sense, accountable for all that has been done and for all that has been forborne or omitted to be done." In a further note the Directors of the Company made a pointed reference to the effect that the direct administration of the Crown brought about the loss of the United States of America. These dignified protests in which the Directors had the eminent assistance of John Stuart Mill, who was holding a high office in their service, were of no avail and a Conservative Cabinet successfully piloted a new Act for the better government of India in the Parliament (August 1858).

The New Act

According to the new Act, the old President of the Board of Control was displaced by a Secretary of State for India assisted by a Council of fifteen, responsible to the Parliament. It introduced no new changes. All existing acts and laws were to continue in force. The Act of 1858 "is a change of form rather than substance. Nevertheless it ends an epoch, the epoch of the making of the Indian Empire, and opens a new one, the epoch of the modern development of that Empire, and of its entry into that great comradeship of nations which is called the British Empire."

The Queen's Proclamation (Nov. 1, 1858)

The new Government was announced by Lord Canning, the first Governor-General under the Act, at a great Durbar held on November 1, 1858, at Allahabad. The Princes and peoples of India listened on the same day and occasion to the great Proclamation of Queen Victoria read by Lord Canning. This great document, rightly called the Magna Charta of India, promised a just and righteous government to the people; to maintain 'the rights, dignity and honour' of the native princes and to grant full religious toleration in the land;' "And it is our further will," so announced the great Queen, "that so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of

which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge." It will be remembered that, among the causes of the unrest in India, not the least important was the application of what is familiarly known as the Doctrine of Lapse. Lord Dalhousie, who was merely the executant in this matter, had incurred the wrath of every ruling chief of Hindu race. Now that the Company was gone, Lord Canning found it necessary to reassure the Indian Princes that no longer the old principle of refusing adoption would be resorted to. He therefore opened a new chapter in the history of British relations with the Indian Rulers by issuing to them Sanads of adoption and succession, thus ensuring the continuance of Indian rule. "Henceforth, therefore, friendly advice and timely interference must be exercised to correct gross abuses of power, to maintain peaceful successions and to place the continuance of native rule upon the only sure foundations of peace and order, law and justice."* In a series of post-Mutiny Durbars held at Cawnpore, Agra, Ambala and Jubbalpore, the Viceroy announced to the assembled Chiefs and Princes that the Crown 'had no desire to continue the annexing policy of the Company at the expense of those who were entitled to share in the government of their portions of territory.'

There began a new epoch in the administration and a new spirit began to pervade it after the Mutiny. The three main changes were: (1) The Crown directly assumed the Government of India; (2) the Indian army was completely reorganised; and (3) a new and liberal attitude was adopted towards the Indian Princes. Besides the English administrators completely broke away from their old traditions and developed certain conventional habits of thought in which racial discrimination came to occupy a part. The Government was very cautious in interfering with religions and caste questions and became anxious to concentrate its activity upon material improvements.

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* Sir William Lee-Warner in the *Cambridge Modern History*. The Nineteenth Century, Chap. XXVI.

CHAPTER XVI

INDIA UNDER THE CROWN

SECTION I. FROM CANNING TO RIPON

Lord Canning, who was privileged to read the Proclamation of the great and good Queen Victoria, became the first Viceroy under the new Act of 1858. It became his duty to pacify the country or otherwise carry out the merciful intentions of the Queen after the Mutiny. He undertook a tour throughout Northern India and announced to the many Princes and Chiefs that attended his Durbars that it was not the intention of the Indian Government to apply any longer the Doctrine of Lapse and that adopted heirs would be recognised by the Government. The Viceroy said that "he had seen a few patches of Native Government prove breakwaters to the storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave." And since 1860 there have been no annexations at all.

Lord Canning—the First Viceroy (1858—1862)

The most pressing problem to be faced by the Viceroy was in the realm of finance. The Mutiny cost the Indian Exchequer more than fifty crores and the danger of heavy deficit budgets had to be surmounted. The Home Government now sent to reorganise Indian finances, James Wilson, Vice-President of the Board of Trade and a distinguished economist. Unfortunately he held office only for eight months; but his successor, Samuel Laing, carried out the policy chalked out by Wilson before his death. Wilson proposed three fresh taxes, an income-tax, a licence duty on trades and professions and an excise duty on inland tobacco. It was found practicable to adopt only the first tax, *i.e*, the income-tax. By this and other drastic economies the Government were able to tide over the financial difficulty.

Finance

Under Canning a great impetus was given to the tea and coffee industry as it was found that the Himalayan slopes in Assam and the Nilgiri Hills were suitable for the growth of tea and coffee plantations respectively. Special rules called Waste Land Rules were framed, granting to Europeans and others tracts of land to the limit of 3000 acres for the cultivation of tea and coffee on payment of a fixed sum. The strength of the army, both British and Indian, was greatly reduced and in the light of the Mutiny experience, a radical change was effected in the re-organisation of the military. The number and proportion of European troops were increased, while the Indian sepoys were recruited from a wider range of peoples and came to contain a strong element of Sikhs and Gurkhas. The artillery was kept entirely in the hands of the Europeans. In spite of the Mutiny, Canning found the time and courage to establish in 1857 the Universities of Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. These institutions "served as a bridge between East and West which could not have been provided in any other way." Consistent with the transfer of power from the Company to the Crown, the old Supreme and Sadar Courts were abolished and a High Court of Judicature was established in the capital of each Presidency. Peasants in Bengal, Agra and the Central Provinces were grateful to Lord Canning for the passing of the Bengal Rent Act (1859) which gave a right of occupancy to all cultivators who had possessed certain fields for more than twelve years, and forbade their rents being raised except on definite grounds specified in the Act itself. Ryots in the permanently settled districts who had held their lands since 1793, were exempted from any increase in their rental for ever. It will be remembered that Lord Macaulay in 1837 drafted a Penal Code. It was, after revision by Sir Barnes Peacock, introduced into law in 1862.

Other Reforms

Canning retired in 1862 and returned to England, with his health considerably shattered and an aching heart, for Lady Canning had died a few months earlier at Calcutta. He did not long enjoy his well-earned rest in his native country. He died three months after he returned home and was buried in the Westminister Abbey. "His fame stands

Retirement and Death of Canning

now far above detraction. In purely intellectual qualities few other rulers of British India have surpassed him. He made a few mistakes. In the supreme crisis of India's fate he showed some diffidence and hesitation but by level-headed coolness, by unremitting toil and by a splendid tenacity, he won his way through to victory." He had stood forth "calm in the strength of his righteous purpose, stately in the pride of place and patrician training, amid a roaring sea of hostile criticism, lashed into ever wilder rage by the gusts of an armed rebellion."[1]

Lord Elgin

Canning's successor was Lord Elgin; but he died within a year of his taking office, November 1863; and he lies buried at the Himalayan station of Dharmsala.

Lord Lawrence (1864—69)

The Governor-Generalship was offered after Elgin to Sir John (later Lord) Lawrence. He was the saviour of the Punjab in the days of the Mutiny. In 1860 he was offered the Governorship of Bombay and he had declined. Owing to unrest among the tribes in the north-west frontier, the authorities at home selected as Viceroy one who had an intimate knowledge of men and things in that area, and "whose qualifications spoke trumpet-tongued for themselves"

War with Bhutan

Bhutan is a wild forest-clad mountainous region on the southern slopes of the Himalayas The English came in touch with the Bhutanese after their annexation of Assam (1829). The Bhutanese 'lived in a constant state of revolution and internecine strife' and took to plundering raids on the side of Assam and Bengal. In 1864 they not only insulted a British envoy but compelled him under duress to accept a humiliating peace. The Indian Government promptly repudiated the treaty and prepared for war. In the course of the operations, the Indian troops occupied all the western Duars (passes) and withheld the usual allowances paid to them. But the Bhutanese formed no mean soldiery and they drove from Dewangiri a British garrison. Renewed operations by the English led to their final victory and peace was made with Bhutan. According to the

[1] L. J. Trotter—*India under Victoria*, (1886) Vol. II, p. 144.

terms, the Bhutanese agreed to surrender 18 Duars in return for an annual subsidy. Since this war Bhutan has given no manner of trouble to the English. The territory ceded by the Bhutanese, 180 miles long and 30 miles broad, is now dotted with fine tea gardens.

The Punjab and Oudh Tenancy Acts of 1868

Lord Lawrence did for the Punjab and Oudh what Canning undertook successfully to do for the tenantry in Bengal and Agra. The Punjab Act gave occupancy rights to all tenants who had held their land for a certain number of years; and it became "the bulwark and charter of a contented peasantry." The Talukdars of Oudh who had their estates given back to them after the Mutiny were not treating their ryots in a proper way. The Governor-General therefore passed the Tenancy Act of 1868, which "enacted that about one-fifth of the total number of ryots should be granted occupancy rights in the soil at fair rents, that cultivators whose rents were raised should be compensated for unexhausted improvements, and that the rent itself should only be increased after application to a court of law and equity."

The Famine Policy of Lawrence

Two very severe famines visited parts of India in the time of Lawrence. The first was in 1866; and it devastated the whole of Orissa. "Shut up between pathless jungles and an impracticable sea," as the Famine Commission Report said, "the inhabitants (of Orissa) were in the position of passengers in a ship without provisions." Still some remedial measures could have been adopted if the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal of which Orissa then formed a part had taken note of the premonitory symptom and duly reported them to the Viceroy. As it was, two million souls perished in this famine. Floods succeeded the drought; and "that which the drought spared the floods drowned." The second famine occurred in 1868-69; and it affected Bundelkhand and Rajputana. This time the Viceroy took prompt measures to afford relief to the famine-stricken people. From this time it became a recognised principle "that the officers of the Government were bound to take every available means to prevent deaths by starvation."

All through his term of office, Lawrence had to contend with many financial difficulties, not the least of which were those connected with a commercial crisis.

The Cotton Boom

Owing to the American Civil War, all export of American cotton to Europe ceased and consequently the entire demand for cotton had to be supplied from India. The price of Indian cotton went up with an amazing rapidity and enormous fortunes were made by cotton dealers. There was a great increase in the cultivation of cotton in Berar, Nagpur and the Southern Maratha country. The value of land rose; and Government contrived to increase its assessments. An era of inflation and wreckless speculation was ushered in. But with the close of the American Civil War, the inevitable reaction set in. No longer was there any great demand for the inferior Indian cotton. "Commercial houses and banks fell together like packs of cards." Even the Bank of Bombay, which was under the supervision of the Government, suspended payment. This commercial cyclone, however, cleared the atmosphere and Sir John Lawrence was ultimately able to steer clear of all financial difficulties.

Dost Muhammad, the ruler of Afghanistan, died in 1863. His death was the signal for a fratricidal war among his numerous sons who aspired for the throne. The ablest of them was Sher Ali who emerged successful in the contest. He held the throne for three years; but, later on, he was driven out of Kabul by his half-brother Afzal. But in April 1868, Sher Ali, helped by his son, Yakub Khan, once again regained his position. All through these days of internal trouble, Lawrence never interfered with the Afghan affairs, but merely acknowledged as the Amir whoever happened to be in possession of the capital. Thus, when Sher Ali finally came out triumphant, he greeted him as the Amir of Afghanistan. Lawrence had always been opposed to any extension of power and boundary beyond the natural limits of India. During the Mutiny he was even prepared to evacuate Peshawar; and his views were accepted by the Liberal party in Britain. This

The Afghan Policy of Lawrence

policy of 'Masterly Inactivity' had been criticised by some who said 'that British approval of an Afghan chieftain's claims swings automatically with the gale of superior force like the vane of a weather-cock and that no ruler of Afghanistan could set much store by a recognition which was transferred so lightly from one rival to another.'

The Forward Policy

Since the British annexation of the Punjab, the problem of frontier defence had become a subject of acute and even acrimonious discussion among the British statesmen. Between the British and Afghan borders, there lay a zone of territory, a sort of no-man's-land, occupied by fierce and turbulent Pathan tribes, who owed nominal allegiance to the Amir, but were practically independent of him. Their not infrequent raids over the British frontier had been a source of anxiety to the Indian Government which, in 1863 and again in 1868, had to undertake costly expeditions to chastise these plundering Pathans. The anxiety of the British Government in regard to the north-western frontier increased still further, owing to the rapid march of Russia towards the northern Afghan frontier. In 1864 it reached the borders of Khokand, Bokhara and Khiva. Two years later the Russians reduced Bokhara which became tributary to them. In 1867 they organized the military province of Turkestan. In the course of the next four years they annexed Samarkand and Khiva. Thus it looked as if, at no distant date, Russia would invade India through a friendly Afghanistan. It was at this time that there arose two schools of opinion offering their own solution to the problem of frontier defence. Extreme moderate opinion suggested British retirement to the line of the Indus—a view not taken serious notice of. The opposite school advocated what is known as the 'Forward Policy' which consisted in the complete subjugation of the neutral zone, the setting up of a scientific frontier coterminous with the Afghan border-line and even, if circumstances be favourable, the partition of Afghanistan. Thus in 1854 a treaty was made with the Khan of Khelat; in 1856, the occupation of Quetta was

recommended; and now in 1866, the proposal was again brought forward. In 1867, Sandeman tried to control the Mani and Bugti tribes. But Lawrence did not encourage any action of the Forward School. In regard to Russian designs, the forward school represented by Sir Henry Rawlinson, member of the Secretary of State's Council, suggested the British occupation of Quetta so as to command the Bolan Pass and the payment of an annual subsidy to the Amir, with a view to secure his friendship and alliance. Lord Lawrence turned a deaf ear to these proposals and persevered in a policy of strict non-intervention in Afghan affairs. His views were thus set forth in a famous resolution which bears quotation:—

"Should a foreign power, such as Russia, ever seriously think of invading India from without, or what is more probable, of stirring up the elements of disaffection or anarchy within it, our true policy, our strongest security, would then, we conceive, be found to lie in previous abstinence from entanglements at either Kabul, Khandahar or any similar out-post; in full reliance on a compact, highly equipped and disciplined army, stationed within our own territories or on our own border; in the contentment, if not in the attachment, of the masses; in the sense of the security of title and possession with which our whole policy is gradually imbuing the minds of the principal chiefs and the native aristocracy; in the construction of material works within British India which enhance the comfort of the people, while they add to our political and military strength; in husbanding our finances and consolidating and multiplying our resources; in quiet preparation for all contingencies which no Indian statesman should disregard; and in a trust in the rectitude and honesty of our intentions, coupled with the avoidance of all sources of complaint which either invite foreign aggression or stir up restless spirits to domestic revolt."* Subsequent events proved that Lord Lawrence was right. A reversal of his policy by Lord Lytton proved disastrous as we

* See *Lord Lawrence* by Sir Charles Aitchison, p. 194, and *Essays on the External Policy of India* by J. W. S. Wyllie.

shall see. His "inactivity, whether masterly or not, was reasoned and deliberate." His policy was carefully followed by two of his successors in office and by five Secretaries of State. Lawrence retired in 1869.

Lord Mayo (1869-72)

He was succeeded by Earl Mayo who had held the Chief Secretaryship for Ireland three times and was appointed by Disraeli to the high office of Governor-General. A few followers of Gladstone, who became the Prime Minister soon after his appointment, doubted Mayo's ability to discharge his duties, but his three years' rule proved them to be wrong.

Mayo and the Amir

The outstanding event in the realm of foreign affairs was the meeting between the Amir of Afghanistan and Earl Mayo at Ambala in March 1869. Sher Ali, the Amir, was anxious for a closer understanding with the English and wanted a definite treaty, a fixed annual subsidy and the recognition, as his heir, of his younger son, Abdulla Jan, in preference to his elder, Yakub Khan, with whom he had quarrelled. The position of the Governor-General was exceedingly delicate. While, on the one hand, he was required by the home authorities not to enter into any such negotiations with him, he was requested to maintain his friendship. That Lord Mayo succeeded in both was due to his great diplomatic skill and personal charm. What the Viceroy actually promised was a definite assurance in writing 'of moral support to be followed by gift of money, arms and ammunition whenever the British Government deemed it desirable.' Sher Ali was on the whole pleased with the interview. Not satisfied with this gesture of friendship with the Amir, Lord Mayo busied himself in sending a mission to St. Petersburg to acquaint the Russian Government of the real attitude of the Indian Government towards Afghanistan. As a result, Russia agreed to respect the integrity of Afghanistan south of the Oxus. This understanding 'was a most important step forward in Central Asian politics, and, had it not been for later European complications, a difficult and dangerous question might have been finally settled.'

The administration of the country was becoming very costly and the feverish haste with which many public works were undertaken left a huge deficit; and it became the unpleasant duty of Lord Mayo to restore financial equilibrium. Drastic were the measures he took. He increased the salt duty in some provinces and raised the income-tax in all. Lord Mayo created a new Agricultural Department and founded a college at Ajmere called after him—the Mayo College—for the education of the sons of chiefs and nobles of Rajputana. In spite of strict economy, he found money to extend rapidly the means of communication, such as roads, canals and railways It was in the time of Lord Mayo that the first general census of India was taken. The Statistical Survey organized by him served a very useful purpose in the hands of his successors.

Internal Reforms

Amongst the most notable of Mayo's financial reforms was the new system of Provincial Finance, known generally as the Provincial Contact. In India all taxes were collected in the name of the Central Government through the agency of Provincial Governments and all provincial expenditure required the sanction of the Governor-General in Council. Every year each Local Government presented its estimate of expenditure during the next twelve months and obtained from the central exchequer such sums as could be spared for provincial needs. This system led to considerable provincial extravagance; and the more it asked, the more it got. According to Sir Richard Strachey, "the distribution of public income degenerated into something like a scramble in which the most violent had the advantage." Moreover as each Local Government had to return to the Imperial treasury, at the end of every year, any money saved from any head of expenditure, it little cared to save. "Thus extreme centralisation discouraged thrift and stereotyped administrative defects, for the Provincial Governments naturally put their demands as high as possible and spent all the money they could prevail upon the Supreme Government to allow them." To remedy these evils, Lord Mayo introduced a new system of provincial finance. Each Local Government obtained a fixed

Provincial Finance

yearly consolidated grant to defray the cost of its principal services, excluding the army. This grant was for a period of five years and was not liable to be reduced except during a period of severe financial stress. The amount thus given was at the absolute disposal of the Provincial Government which was not obliged, as heretofore, to return any of its savings to the Imperial treasury. The distribution of the amount among the various heads of public services was also left to the discretion of the Local Governments. This well-jointed system led to great improvements in the financial system, Provincial and Imperial. The deficit of Lawrence's rule was speedily converted into a surplus while the Provincial Governments felt the need for economy which they had altogether lacked under the old system.*

Murder of Mayo

In 1872, while on a visit to the Convict Settlement, Andaman Islands, a Pathan fanatic assassinated Lord Mayo at Port Blair. Sir John Strachey, first, and Lord Napier, Governor of Madras, next, acted as Viceroy for a short time each till the arrival of a permanent successor to Mayo. He was Lord Northbrook.

Lord Northbrook (1872—76)

A man of high character, Lord Northbrook introduced several financial reforms which enhanced the material prosperity of India. Thanks to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, there was increased trade between England and India. Although a free-trader himself, Northbrook was no *doctrinaire* and he had the interest of India at heart. Thus, when the Conservative Government of Disraeli wanted him to abolish even the low five per cent. duty on Manchester cotton goods, he refused to do so. He stoutly maintained that the interests of India ought not to be sacrificed to those of Lancashire. One of the Viceroy's objects was 'to take off taxes and stop unneccessary legislation.' The income-tax he particularly hated; and he removed it. But he allowed the tax on salt to remain as it was.

* Mayo "found serious deficits and left substantial surplus. He found estimates habitually untrustworthy, he left them thoroughly worthy of confidence. He found accounts in arrears and statistics incomplete, he left them punctual and full."

Parts of Bengal and the whole of Bihar were under the grip of a famine in 1873-74. Northbrook took vigorous, though very costly, measures to relieve the distress by purchasing large quantities of rice from Burma.

Famine Relief

Malhar Rao, the Gaekwar of Baroda, was misgoverning the state for a long time. He was also accused of an attempt to poison the British Resident. A commission of inquiry consisting of seven members including the Maharajahs of Gwalior and Jaipur was constituted; but the verdict of the body was not unanimous and no action was, therefore, taken on the findings of the commission. Lord Northbrook was advised by the Secretary of State for India to depose the Gaekwar and place on the throne a child prince of the Ruling house with Sir Madhava Rao, an experienced administrator, as chief minister. This was done

The Trial of the Gaekwar

The Russians, in the Viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook, were rapidly converging towards the northern frontier of Afghanistan; the Central Asian Khanates, weak as they were, disintegrated into anarchy and impelled by the same law that added so many states in India to the East India Company, the Russians annexed these states. Both Britain and Sher Ali viewed these annexations with alarm. The envoy of Sher Ali interviewed Northbrook and informed him of the fears of the Amir in regard to the Russian activities and solicited a definite treaty of alliance with the British. But the Viceroy, instructed by the home authorities, could only repeat the assurances of Lord Mayo, his predecessor. The Amir was disappointed, although he accepted a welcome present of 5,000 rifles.

Afghan Affairs

According to the testimony of Sir Richard Temple, Lord Northbrook possessed "an admirable mastery of finance, economic facts and statistics such as I have never seen surpassed in India, not even by such economists and financiers as Wilson or Laing." Although a free-trader himself, he was no *doctrinaire*; and, except in one instance, he was not prepared

Financial Reforms

to surrender the interests of India to those of the party in power in England. His free-trade policy was clearly indicated in his lowering of the import duty from 7½ to 5 per cent. and in the abolition of export duties on all, except a few, commodities. He, however, refused to carry out a suggestion of the Conservative Government who desired the Viceroy to abolish even the five per cent. duty on imported Manchester goods by maintaining that such a duty was necessary for revenue purposes and "that it was politically unwise to give any plausible ground for the insinuation that the interests of Lancashire were to over-ride those of India." Yet, strangely enough, Northbrook chose, as a measure of relief to the tax-payer, to abolish the income-tax instead of reducing the salt-tax! Viewed impartially, Northbrook's financial operations had only one view—the reduction, as much as possible, of taxes—thereby creating contentment among the masses. "The natives," he once wrote, "will be passively loyal to us—a civil loyalty we cannot expect —if we govern them justly and do not increase their taxes."*

Visit of the Prince of Wales

In the cold weather season of 1875, the Prince of Wales—later King Edward VII—visited India and the outburst of loyalty on the part of Indians—Princes and peasants—on the occasion was remarkable. In the course of a letter addressed to Lord Northbrook on the conclusion of the tour, the Prince wrote: "It is my earnest hope that the many millions of the Queen's Indian subjects may daily become more convinced of the advantages of British rule, and that they may realise more fully that the Sovereign and the Government of England have the interests and well-being of India very sincerely at heart."

Resignation of Northbrook

In March 1874 there was a change of Ministry in England and the Marquis of Salisbury became the Secretary of State. He suspected the Amir to be more favourably inclined towards the Russians and desired the Viceroy to bring pressure on Sher Ali to accept a British Resident at Kabul. He was advised by Sir Bartle Frere, who

* See Mallet's *Northbrook*, pp. 67-80.

was then a member of the India Council, and had been a champion of the 'forward school.' Northbrook would not accept such a proposition and he resigned

Lord Lytton (1876—80)

The new Viceroy, Lord Lytton, was a man of great ability, a distinguished politician, a man of letters, and "a convinced believer in the forward school." He was selected by the Marquis of Salisbury to inaugurate a new Afghan policy. His first task, however, had been to proclaim, at a *durbar* of great magnificence, the assumption of the title of the *Empress of India* by Queen Victoria. He had next to deal with a terrible famine that cast its grim shadow over the whole of South India. In spite of the efforts of Lytton's Government the loss of life was colossal. Nearly 5¼ millions of souls perished of starvation and the usual diseases following a famine of this scale. In addition to private donations from Great Britain and the Colonies amounting to eighty-four lakhs of rupees, the Indian Government alone spent more than eight and a half crores of rupees in combating this most terrible famine.

The Afghan Policy of Lytton: Causes of the Second Afghan War

The outstanding event in the time of Lord Lytton was, of course, the Second Afghan War. It is necessary to examine in detail the course of events that led to this struggle which proved as disastrous as the earlier one, waged forty years before. Several writers on this subject have assumed too readily that it was Sher Ali's supposed intrigues with the Russians that brought about this war. But an impartial study of the papers connected with the Afghan War will go to prove that the Afghan Amir was more sinned against than sinning. It should be remembered that Lord Lytton came to India with a determination to permanently advance British political interests in Afghanistan and to effect the virtual subordination of Afghanistan to India. Soon after his assumption of office, he wrote to Sher Ali, the Amir, requesting him to receive a 'complimentary' mission to announce to him that the Queen had become the Empress of India. Knowing, as no

one knew better, that such missions would not be to the taste of the Afghans, he politely declined the Viceroy's request, at the same time pointing out that he should not be held responsible if the fanatical tribes molested the mission on its way through the passes. This very honest, though blunt, reply was very much misunderstood by Lord Lytton who imagined that the Amir was full of contempt for the English. Three distinguished members of the Viceroy's Council held the opinion that, in view of the fact that the real object of the so-called 'complimentary' mission was to compel the Amir to consent to the establishment of British embassies at Kabul and Herat, the Amir's reply, born of fears of all sorts, was a natural one, and he was fully within his rights in taking up such an attitude. Yet, it suited the purpose of Lytton to feel offended and carry on, by no means, a judicious correspondence with the Amir, through the British Muhammadan Agent at Kabul whom Lytton met at Simla. Determined to carry his point through, a conference was arranged at Peshawar between Sir Lewis Pelly, a brilliant frontier officer, and the minister of Sher Ali. The latter pointed out, with great force and reason, that the bazaars at Kabul were full of rumours that the British and the Russians were about to partition the Afghan territory, and that, under the circumstance, no ruler of Afghanistan who cared for his life, would entertain the idea of receiving a foreign Resident at the capital. The conference was a failure; but still the Viceroy persisted. His brilliant despatches to Kabul were not understood at all.

British Occupation of Quetta and Gilgit

Even before establishing the guilt of Amir Sher Ali, Lord Lytton was making slow preparations for war which he considered inevitable in view of the unsatisfactory replies from Kabul to British representations. Thus, at the end of 1875, the English entered into a treaty with the Khan of Kalat who permitted the English to occupy Quetta, 'a strategical position of great natural strength, with a climate peculiarly suited to Europeans' and commanding the Bolan Pass. Later on, by means of a secret arrangement with the Maharaja of Kashmir, he established a British out-post at

Gilgit. No wonder that Sher Ali concluded that these measures were but a prelude to the British advance on Kabul. The Amir moved some troops to Khandahar, but it was "only a reply to the (British) garrisoning of Quetta." For an actual declaration of war, Lytton was on the look out for a *caucus belli*: and that was soon furnished by the undoubted intrigues of the Russians.

Sher Ali and the Russians

In April 1876, Russia declared war against the Turks, as the latter were ill-treating their Christian subjects in Serbia and Montenegro. Crossing the Danubian frontier, the Russians devastated Turkish territory destroying many of their frontier fortresses. They were about to advance towards Constantinople and capture it, when the English, realising the danger to their interests if the Turkish capital were to fall in the hands of the Russians, promptly sent their Mediterranean squadron to the Dardanelles and saved the city for the Turks.* When, again, the victorious Russians imposed on the Turks the Treaty of San Stefano, the English criticised it and got it modified in the Treaty of Berlin (1878). Thus, during the years 1875-78, the relations between England and Russia "were in a progressive state of tension." These facts should be carefully noted in order to understand the aggressive nature of Russian intrigues with Sher Ali. It is equally noteworthy that, in all the diplomatic correspondence with Sher Ali, the name of the Russian Government as such scarcely appeared and it looked as if the initiative was taken by the Russian Governor-General of Turkistan.

On the very day that the European diplomats met at Berlin on June 13, 1878, to formulate a new peace, Kaufmann, the Russian Governor-General of Turkistan, despatched to Kabul, an envoy in the person of Stolietoff, whose object was to cause as much trouble as possible as he anticipated a war with England. Sher Ali, when he heard of it, protested, but the ambassador having entered Kabul could not be withdrawn. Moreover the Russian threat that, should the Amir refuse to

* Very truly Bismarck said that the Suez Canal was the neck of the British Empire.

listen to the envoy, his nephew, Abdur Rahman, now a refugee at Russian Tashkend, might be set up as a rival, was enough to induce Sher Ali to open negotiations with the Russian envoy: "and so a prince who had been alienated from the English by their own errors was, at a moment when help was impossible, brought into a conflict with them by the errors of the Russians."

The Chamberlain Mission

Lord Lytton was naturally aghast when he heard of Stolietoff's arrival at Kabul and immediately claimed a similar privilege for the English and despatched a letter to Sher Ali repeating his former demands. Quite unfortunately, the Amir was then in mourning owing to the demise of his favourite son and considerably delayed replying to the Viceroy's letter. Irritated beyond bounds, the Viceroy now sent Sir Neville Chamberlain with a small escort through the Khyber Pass.* An advance guard of this mission under Major Cavagnari was stopped at Ali Masjid. Sher Ali whose favourite son had just died, did not reply to the British mission's request; and an Afghan officer stopped the advance guard of the mission at Ali Masjid, saying that he must await orders from Kabul. This gave Lytton the opportunity he had been looking out for.

Lytton's Drastic Measures

Lord Lytton lost no time in sending an exaggerated account of the "repulse" of the mission to the home authorities. The Cabinet, after a heated discussion, accorded permission to the Viceroy to send an ultimatum to the Amir, demanding an apology and his consent for permanently establishing a British mission in Afghanistan. But public

* Contemporary authorities agree that this was one of the many blunders of Lord Lytton. The Commission, according to them, should not have been sent at all in such haste; even if it was necessary, it should have been accompanied by a large force; the selection of the Khyber route was also a mistake. It should also be noted that when it was known that the Treaty of Berlin was signed, the Russian envoy retired from Kabul and thus an excellent opportunity was afforded for Lytton to withdraw from the untenable position he had created for himself. 'The right course for the Viceroy was to assume that Sher Ali, as indeed he did, welcomed the Russians' withdrawal and to attempt to win him back to friendship.'

opinion was against this course. Beaconsfield and Salisbury wanted to avoid a war 'in so sensitive a region as Central Asia.' The former freely criticised the policy of Lytton. Gladstone, from his place in Parliament, warned the Cabinet of the folly of a second Afghan blunder. But the Viceroy was irresistible. He promptly wrote to Sher Ali demanding an apology; but no answer came from the Amir and war was declared.

The Course of the War

On the declaration of war, three British armies were sent through the passes, *viz.*, the Khyber, the Bolan and the Peiwar in the Kurram valley. General (later Lord) Roberts was in command of the Kurram valley force. There was little opposition to these forces and they reached Kabul. But Sher Ali had fled from the country. This unhappy ruler had in vain implored the Russian General Kaufmann for military assistance against the impending British advance, but had received the reply that he should make peace with the English! He then withdrew to the Russian territory and died at Mazar-i-Sheriff (Feb. 1879). "His lonely death in bitterness and exile," writes an impartial historian, "is not an incident upon which either Russia, who had led him on by false and delusive hopes, or England, who had at first repelled and then coerced him, can look back with any feelings of satisfaction."

The Treaty of Gandamak

The British Government, now that Sher Ali left the country, acknowledged Yakub Khan, the son of Sher Ali, as the Amir. With him they entered into a treaty—the Treaty of Gandamak (May 1879)—according to which the new Amir agreed to receive a British Resident at Kabul with agents at Herat and other places and to conduct his foreign policy under British guidance. He ceded the districts of Pishin and Sibi. The latter in turn promised to support him with men and money 'at their discretion,' pay him an annual subsidy of six lakhs of rupees and withdraw their troops, except from Khandahar.

The treaty of Gandamak was considered by the English politicians as a triumph of the first magnitude, a triumph of British arms and diplomacy. But it proved to be a short-lived one, for, exactly one month after the signing of the treaty, Cavagnari, the British Resident at Kabul, was murdered along with his escort and the Residency burnt. It was a terrible blow to Lord Lytton.

Murder of Cavagnari

Once again the British forces were set in motion. General Roberts once again took possession of Kabul marching through the Kurram valley and defeating on the way an Afghan force (at Charasiab, Sep. 1879). Next year (1880) Roberts had to proceed to Khandahar to relieve the city besieged by a son of Sher Ali, Ayub Khan. From the military point of view the British efforts had been a success.

Renewed Action

The difficulty of Lord Lytton, after the victory, was to find out a successor to Yakub, who, on account of his incompetency and possible complicity in the murder of Cavagnari, was sent as a state prisoner to Calcutta. At one time he thought of making Khandahar an independent state under a chief who would unquestionably and unreservedly place himself in the hands of the British. Fighting continued round Kabul; and though Roberts punished the turbulent Afghans very severely, his communications with India were, for a time, cut off Once he was forced to retire from Kabul till he was relieved from Khandahar. The Government of Lytton became weary of the heavy losses suffered and the small progress made and demoralised by the break-down of the military accounts department. All this ruined Lytton's grandiose schemes. But all on a sudden, there appeared on the scene Abdur Rahman, 'the most able man whom the Barukzai family had produced since Dost Ali.' He was the nephew of Sher Ali and the son of a previous Amir, Afzal Khan, who ruled Afghanistan for about a year. Since 1870, Abdur Rahman was living an exile in the Russian territory. During his eleven years' stay with the Russians, he had ample opportunities of

Abdur Rahman Khan

studying the methods and political ambitions of the Russians and had rightly come to the conclusion that the fate of Afghanistan was unextricably bound with Great Britain. His chief political aim was, therefore, to gain the esteem and love of the English without rousing the suspicions of his fanatical subjects. That he succeeded in realising this constitutes "one of the most remarkable political feats in modern Asiatic history." When he emerged from his exile, he gathered a small force and put himself in touch with the English. In the meanwhile the Beaconsfield Government had fallen and Lord Lytton had been replaced by Lord Ripon as Viceroy. It was left to the latter to recognise Abdur Rahman as Amir.

Remarks on the Afghan War

Many have condemned the Second Afghan War. It was held that it was a war of aggression—a war that failed of its purpose. It had drained the resources of the Indian Government, apart from the huge loss of life. It had accomplished nothing towards establishing a permanent relationship between India and Afghanistan. That it secured Afghan alliance for sometime is but a poor consolation. It must, however, be noted that Lord Lytton, of all politicians and diplomats, had a policy; and that was to cut up Afghanistan into several parts, each owning allegiance to England. But for the success of this policy, as a recent Muhammadan historian has pointed out, "it needed the guidance of a dictator and not the control of a Parliament where the fluctuating verdicts of the hustings left no opening for continuity of policy or time for the decision of great matters by knowledge, iron determination and clear prescience."*

Internal Administration

We have already seen how efficiently Lytton tackled the problem of famine relief. The value of his administration in this respect lies, not in the actual measures adopted by him, but in the general principles laid down to combat similar evils. After the famine he appointed a Commission, under the presidency of Sir Richard Strachey, to inquire into the whole subject of Indian famines and to suggest measures

* See Lady Betty Balfour's *Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, (1899)—Ch. IX for a justification.

to be taken for their prevention and relief. This Commission, besides formulating general principles for the proper treatment of famines, also suggested particular measures of a preventive or protective character. According to the commissioners, employment must be found for the able-bodied on relief works, at a wage just sufficient to maintain health, while the impotent poor alone should continue, during the period of famine, to receive doles. "The great object," wrote the commissioners in their report, "of saving life and giving protection from extreme suffering may not only be as well secured, but in fact will be far better secured, if proper care be taken to prevent the abuse and demoralisation which all experience shows to be the consequence of ill-directed and excessive distribution of charitable relief."* It was in this spirit, as Sir John Strachey truly observes, that the Provincial Famine Code was framed and the modern policy of famine relief administration was determined.

Minor Reforms and Measures

As a free-trader, Lytton abolished the import duty on many commodities, including that on the coarser kinds of cloth imported from Lancashire. With the help of Sir J. Strachey, who was a confirmed free-trader and wished to make India 'a great free port and open to the commerce of the world, now Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council, the Viceroy put down the abuses in salt trade and equalised as far as possible the duty on salt manufactured in the various British Provinces. He cut down the tariff on many imports and abolished the duty on sugar. He removed that "absurd anachronism, the inland customs line, a ditch and cactus hedge, which stretched from Attock to the Mahanadi, a distance of 2,500 miles." In the realm of provincial finance, Lytton's Government witnessed an extension and development of the system introduced by Lord Mayo. The Viceroy discovered that the war estimates prepared by the military were utterly worthless and attempted reforms in the Military Accountant-General's Office. He formed the Statutory Civil Service which secured to Indians one-sixth of the number of higher posts in the Government service reserved for men of British birth. He also passed in 1878, quite

* See the very interesting chapter on Famine Relief in Sir John Strachey's *India*, pp. 223-240.

unfortunately and in the teeth of public opinion, a Vernacular Press Act, restraining the freedom of the vernacular press and asking editors of vernacular papers to submit their proofs to an officer of the Government Much as we may criticise Lytton's Government for its many faults of commission and omission, we cannot withhold our appreciation for his many schemes of reform, not understood in his time but actually carried out by Lord Curzon. Thus, he had the wisdom to advocate even in his time, the introduction of a gold standard into the monetary system of India He proposed to create a North-West Frontier Province to be controlled directly by the Government of India, a reform carried out later on by Lord Curzon. The enrolment of an Indian Peerage and the formation of an Indian Privy Council of Ruling Chiefs were among his many suggestions which were scoffed at then, but adopted in later days with, of course proper modifications. "Taken all in all," says a recent Muhammadan authority, "Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty will bear close scrutiny, and the examination leaves the impression that he has as yet received but scanty justice."*

Section II. From Ripon to Curzon

Lord Ripon who succeeded Lord Lytton was one of the most popular Viceroys that ever adorned the Viceregal throne. His regime was an era of constitutional reform. He was a true Liberal and a firm believer in self-government for India. He greatly sympathised with the political aspirations of the educated Indians of his day and made an honest attempt to liberalize the Indian Government, in spite of opposition by the European residents in India, both official and non-official.

Lord Ripon (1880-84)

To start with, his attention was drawn to the affairs in Afghanistan. Indeed, he began his administration by a frank and unequivocal recognition of Abdur Rahman as the Amir of Afghanistan. The new Amir was capable enough to maintain his position without frequently seeking English military

Afghan Affairs

* See *British India* by an Indian Muhammadan, p. 348.

help. Thus, when Ayub Khan once again advanced from Herat and even succeeded in temporarily occupying Khandahar, he advanced against him and routed his forces. Abdur Rahman contrived to occupy his throne in peace till his death in 1901. Abdur Rahman was, like Dost Muhammad, an astute politician who carefully preserved the integrity of his country and preferred British to Russian friendship. He remained, in spite of some disturbing factors, a steady ally of the English throughout his reign But there was no settlement of the local frontier problem. The British retained Pishin and pushed forward some other posts; but the trans-Indus districts remained disturbed and grew even worse towards the close of the century.

The Rendition of Mysore

In March 1881, Lord Ripon handed over the administration of Mysore to the young Maharaja who was the adopted son of Krishnaraja Wodeyar. He was very carefully trained and administered the State wisely and well till his demise in 1894.

Tariff and Revenue

Financially, Ripon's tenure of office was a very prosperous one. As a staunch Liberal, he was a firm believer in the free trade policy and did away with many import duties. He also reduced the salt tax. He attempted to carry out a reform in the land revenue collection; but his proposal not to increase any further the assessment already made in districts was vetoed by the Secretary of State for India.

Local Boards and Municipalities

The most famous of Lord Ripon's reforms was the constitution of Taluk Boards, District Boards and more Municipalities. Members of these boards were to be partly elected by rate-payers and partly nominated by the Government. These boards were also given the power to collect certain taxes and spend the money for stipulated objects under the general supervision and control of the Collector of the District. Thus Lord Ripon 'extended the principle of local self-government from the towns to the country.' The larger cities had municipalities since shortly before the Mutiny; and now the number of municipalities was greatly increased; and the elective system was extended. Ripon's policy was to "substitute

outside control for inside interference." District Boards had come into being in 1865; and had acquired control over roads. Now Ripon extended the system by introducing taluk or tahsil boards.

Another popular measure of the Viceroy was the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act of Lord Lytton. The removal, from the statute book, of this Act enabled the editors of vernacular papers to enjoy the same right to criticize public affairs as did editors of English papers, Indian or European.

Freedom of the Press

Under the able guidance of Sir W. W. Hunter, Lord Ripon laid down regulations 'for the increase and improvement of Primary and Secondary Schools.' He improved the lot of the labourers working in factories by means of factory laws which insisted on the protection of dangerous machinery and limited the working hours of children. Factory inspectors were also appointed to enforce these laws.

Other Reforms

Lord Ripon incurred the wrath of Europeans in India by proposing to enact a law which would place Indian Judges on the same level with European Judges in the matter of trying Europeans. In other words he wanted to abolish 'judicial disqualifications based on race distinctions.' Agreeably to the declared wishes of the Viceroy, C. P. Ilbert prefaced a Bill "to remove from the code, at once and completely, every judicial disqualification which is based merely on race distinctions." This Bill, known as the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill, proposed to take away from the British community in India an indefeasible right to special jurisdiction "and to trial by judges, or where necessary by juries, composed exclusively of men of their own race." Little did Ripon realise that the contemplated measure would raise such a storm as it did. The non-official British population denounced the measure in angry terms. Their cause was listened to with sympathy in England and even statesmen like Gladstone considered the measure as unnecessary, irritating and disturbing. In India, Ripon was

The Ilbert Bill Controversy

subject to insult and social boycott. In the end the Viceroy had to change the essential principles of the Bill. The altered text of the Bill was submitted to the Legislative Council in January, 1884. According to this, Europeans appearing as accused before Judges (Indian or European) could claim to be tried by a jury, half of whom were to be men of their own race. "No educated Indian has ever forgotten the lesson of the Ilbert Bill.....It is significant that the two years which followed this agitation saw the foundation of the Indian National Congress and the European Association."*

Resignation of Lord Ripon

Lord Ripon resigned in December 1884 No Viceroy, except perhaps Lord Irwin, is held in greater esteem by the Indian public than Lord Ripon. Here is a tribute to his administration from the pen of his successor, Lord Dufferin:—

"No Viceroy has laboured so conscientiously or so uninterruptedly for the good of the millions entrusted to his care; and I have been immensely struck by the ability, the moderation and the good sense of his semi-official correspondence with Lord Kimberley. I have already announced my intention of fostering, to the utmost of my power, the beneficent projects he instituted for the good of the people; and I shall be quite content if I can leave the country under the same honourable conditions which attended his departure

Lord Dufferin (1884-88)

Lord Ripon, who was created a Marquis, was succeeded by Lord Dufferin at the end of 1884. He had served the British Government in various capacities. He was for several years Under-Secretary of State for India and had acted as Governor-General of Canada (1872-78). As Ambassador at St. Petersburg he had opportunities to study carefully Russian policy in Central Asia. A diplomat of great skill, his services were valuable to India, especially at a time when the bogey of a Russian invasion of India still haunted the imagination of British and Anglo-Indian politicians alike.

* P. 498—Garratt and Thompson—*Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India.*

† Quoted from his letter to Lord Halifax.

The north-western frontier of India once again became the scene of political attraction in the time of Lord Dufferin.

Foreign Policy

Russia was rapidly advancing towards the north and north-western frontier of Afghanistan, exactly in the same way as the English were led to advance towards the Bolan and Khyber Passes in the nineteenth century. The Russian occupation, in 1884, of Merv, 150 miles from the Afghan frontier, once again excited the fears of the English. A boundary commission consisting of Afghan, Russian and British representatives was busy demarcating the northern boundary of Afghanistan when an untoward incident happened. A rough and hot-tempered Russian General claimed the village and district of Panjdeh as belonging to Russia and forcibly ejected the Afghan troops already quartered there. Believing that under the circumstance war was inevitable, both the European powers mobilised their forces with feverish haste. A terrible war was avoided by the coolness and imperturbability of Abdur Rahman who was prepared to evacuate Panjdeh in exchange for another place—Zulfikar. Poor Abdur Rahman! He knew that his country was between two mill-stones and "it had already been ground to powder."* The line of demarcation was finally settled in July 1887 after a long delay. Amir Abdur Rahman learnt a good lesson from this incident. The boundary commission did its work thoroughly and "Russia ceased to be an important factor in Indian affairs."

The Third Burmese War (1885)

For some time past, King Thebaw of independent Burma had been encouraging the settlement of the French in his country and the British accused him of promoting there French financial interests to the exclusion of the British. On the plea that he fined heavily a British trading company, Dufferin made exhorbitant demands on the king quite inconsistent with the sovereign position of independent Burma. On King Thebaw's refusal to comply with the Viceroy's

* In his *Autobiography* he wrote thus: "My country is like a poor goat on whom the lion and the bear have both fixed their eyes; and, without the protection and help of the Almighty Deliverer, the victim cannot escape very long."

demands, troops, kept in readiness, were ordered to advance up the Irrawaddy and on January 1, 1886, a proclamation announced to an astonished world the annexation of Upper Burma. What about King Thebaw? He was sent a prisoner first to Rangoon; and later on he was safely lodged in the fortress of Ratnagiri, in Bombay, where he died on 16th December 1916. Referring to this incident, Robertson says: "The ethics of the relations between powerful empires and weak eastern nations are admittedly difficult to disentangle, but it is to be feared that the abstract rights of semi-civilised countries receive scant recognition when great colonizing powers converge upon them."

Birth of the Indian National Congress

In the year of the Burmese War (1885), a retired member of the Indian Civil Service and an ardent admirer of Indian culture, Allan Petawian Hume, conceived the idea of founding an All-India organisation with the objects of creating national unity and strengthening the bonds of love between England and India 'by securing the modification of such of the conditions as may be unjust or injurious to the latter country.' Christened as the Indian National Congress, this organisation held its first session at Bombay in December 1885. The Congress retained for many years its close connection with sympathetic Englishmen like Wedderburn, Yule and Cotton and preserved a moderate tone. Its subsequent history is too well known to be detailed here.

Queen Victoria's Jubilee

The Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's accession was celebrated in 1887 with great pomp and sincere loyalty in every town and village. Lord Dufferin retired in December 1888.

Lord Lansdowne (1888-94)

The period of Lansdowne's Viceroyalty is marked by activity on all the frontier lines of the Indian Empire. Over Sikkhim, the Lushais, (north-east of Chittagong) the Chuis and the Shan States beyond the Irrawaddy, the Viceroy extended British influence and thus rendered the north-eastern frontier secure.

The problem of similarly extending the British sphere of influence in the north-west frontier was more difficult.

The North-Western Frontier

Between the Indian frontier and the Afghan line, there lay a belt of tribal territory, a sort of no-man's land, occupied by wild mountainous tribes, who loved the Amir more than they did the English, but who certainly liked, above all things, perfect non-interference. Lansdowne preferred to follow a somewhat aggressive policy in these regions. 'A strategic railway was completed up to the Bolan Pass and a general activity was evident along the frontier line from Quetta to Kashmir.' A general forward policy was adopted all along the frontier from 1888 onwards; and its first fruits were seen in the despatch of envoys to Gilgit in 1889 and to Chitral in 1893. Sandeman extended British control over the Zhob valley and the Khurram valley was next occupied.

Acting on vague charges, the Viceroy also took over the administration of Kashmir from Maharaja Pratap Singh in

Interference in Kashmir

1889 and vested it in a council presided over by the British Resident. Charles Bradlaugh, that indefatigable fighter for the cause of freedom, had to sound a note of warning against the renewed application of the Doctrine of Lapse.*

The same fear of Russian invasion led Lord Lansdowne to send a British officer to Gilgit, a frontier province of Kashmir;†

Gilgit and Chitral

and in 1893 an English envoy arrived at Chitral where there was a disputed succession. All these activities excited the suspicions of the Amir who feared that the English meant another Afghan War.

* The administration was handed over to the Maharaja in 1905.

† "The real importance of Gilgit is that it gives direct communication with Chitral, a small state with an area rather larger than that of Wales and a population of about 80,000 hardy mountaineers, which commands the easiest and least elevated passes across the Hindu-Kush."

Lord Lansdowne was anxious, like the Amir, to avoid any war; he was merely strengthening the frontiers against a possible Russian invasion. So he wanted to explain matters to Abdur Rahman by sending a mission under Lord Roberts. The selection of Roberts was unfortunate, as the Amir dreaded his presence in Afghanistan. For two years the Amir cleverly evaded giving a definite reply to the Viceroy about the proposed mission. But when Lord Roberts retired, he proclaimed his intention to receive Sir Mortimer Durand. The mission was a perfect success. All misunderstandings between the British and the Amir were cleared and an agreement was arrived at. The English raised the annual subsidy given to the Amir from twelve to eighteen lakhs of rupees.

The Durand Mission

The small hill-state of Manipur on the borders of Assam was the scene of a palace revolution. The old Raja was deposed and an usurper installed on the throne. The Chief Commissioner of Assam sent to enquire into the affairs was treacherously murdered and his escort was forced to retire. The Indian Government suitably avenged the murder of British officers, and order was quickly restored in the state. It was given to a young Raja during whose minority the administration was looked after by a British Political Agent.

The Manipur Rebellion

At the time when Lord Ripon retired from India, a few leaders of Indian public opinion resolved to organise a National Congress; and its first sittings took place in Bombay in 1885. Dufferin found it difficult to ignore the resolutions of the Congress, which represented the cream of the Indian intelligentsia and voiced forth the opinion of the masses and classes alike and which respectfully pleaded for a larger representation of Indians and Indian interests in the affairs of the Empire. Although British statesmen pretended to ignore the Congress and refused to recognise its right to the title 'National,' they thought it prudent to introduce a stronger non-official element in the Legislative Councils. The result was the passing of Lord Cross's Act in

Lord Cross's Act (1892)

Parliament. It enlarged the Imperial as well as the Provincial Legislative Councils by the addition of non-official Indians, representing various interests. These were to be selected by a process of indirect election by certain public bodies. "It left the question of the election or the nomination of such members to be worked out by the Local Governments in India, in accordance with the needs and conditions of the several Provinces."

Social Reform

Since the days of Lord William Bentinck, the Indian Government has been showing a growing inclination to introduce such social legislation as might be approved by enlightened public opinion, irrespective of what the orthodox Hindus might think about it. Of such a nature was the Age of Consent Act passed in the time of Lansdowne. This Act "raised the limit within which protection was given to young girls from ten to twelve years." The Viceroy also amended the existing factory laws so as to still further reduce the hours of work for women and children. New tenancy acts defined and extended the rights of cultivators in Bengal, Oudh and the Punjab, while Government attempted to deal with agricultural indebtedness by the issue of takkavi loans at low rates of interest. Indian currency began to suffer seriously from the fall in the price of silver in the international market.

Lord Elgin (1894-99)

Lord Lansdowne's successor was Lord Elgin, the son of a former Viceroy. A sound and cautious administrator, it was unfortunate for him that he had to deal with such difficult problems as border warfare, plague, famine and pestilence. To start with, the state of Indian finance demanded drastic measures. The closing of the Indian Mint, in 1893, having failed to achieve its object, Elgin found it necessary in order to obtain adequate revenue, to impose a duty of five per cent. on all imported commodities, with the exception of cotton goods. Free-traders in England objected to this and started an agitation to which the Indian Government yielded so far as to reduce the duties. An important military reform in the time of Elgin was the abolition of the three-army system, of one in each

Presidency under a Commander-in-Chief. Henceforth, there was to be only one Commander-in-Chief for the whole Indian Army and the Presidency forces were placed under Lieutenant-Generals.

The Opium Commission

In 1895, the Parliamentary commission appointed to inquire into the extent of opium consumption in India submitted its report. The Commissioners held that a moderate use of opium would not seriously impair the health of the people, that the opium trade with China should not be interfered with, as that would lead to increased consumption by the Chinese of their own inferior drug and that the Indian Exchequer could not afford to lose its opium revenue. The anti-opium agitation, however, continued; and at last the Government found it necessary to enter into an agreement with the Chinese Government by which "a gradual decrease of the export trade on a progressive scale was guaranteed to begin from January 1908."

Frontier Wars

Let us briefly consider the frontier wars of Elgin, who pursued, like Lansdowne, the forward policy. We have already alluded to British activities in the regions of Gilgit and Chitral. On the 1st January 1895, the Mehtar of Chitral was murdered by his brother who seized the throne. Various other claimants also began to disturb the country. Sir George Robertson, on hearing of the revolution, proceeded from Gilgit to Chitral where he was besieged by one, Sher Afzul, who had a large following. Two expeditions were now sent to the help of the besieged British Agent. One of them under Sir Robert Low marched through the Malkand Pass, while Captain Kelly from Gilgit performed a daring military feat of crossing the Shandur Pass (12,000 feet) in deep snow. He eventually relieved Chitral on the 20th April. This new activity of the British coupled with the growing alarm on some aspects of the forward policy pursued by the Indian Government, created unrest among the border tribes throughout the length and breadth of the Indian frontier. The Chitral question became a political issue in England and helped to unite the various Pathan tribes. The

mad *mullahs* were everywhere preaching a crusade against the Christian power. In June 1897, the British Political Agent and his escort were murdered by the tribes in the Tochi Valley; and in a short time the whole of the Swatis, a hitherto friendly tribe, were up in arms against the English. Sir Bindon Blood was despatched to the Swat Valley with a large force of 8,000 men. He relieved the fort of Chakdara and defeated the tribal forces. Scarcely was this trouble put down when a more serious rising took place in the region of the Khyber where the Afridis and Orakzais blocked the pass and defied the Indian Government. An army of 60,000 men including the Imperial Service Contingents provided by the Feudatory Princes, was soon on its march towards the troubled frontier under the Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Lockhart. Fiercest fighting took place on the Samana Ridge and in the Tirah Valley. Reaching the heart of the Afridi country, the Gordon Highlanders stormed the heights of Dargai which produced such profound effect that the Orakzais submitted. The Afridis continued the struggle for some time longer and eventually accepted peace. These military operations, says a writer, 'were the severest test to which the British army in India had been subjected since the Mutiny, not even excepting the Afghan War of 1878.'* The fighting was over by 1899 when Lord Curzon arrived in India.

Famine and Plague

A terrible famine, due to the failure of the monsoon in 1895 and 1896, devastated the whole country causing nearly three-quarters of a million deaths in the British territories alone. The famine relief measures were inadequate in several areas. To add to this scourge, the bubonic plague appeared in Bombay. The researches of scholars like V. A. Smith have proved the existence of this deadly virus in India in past ages ; but it never wrought devastation on such a large scale as it did now.

* Robert's *Historical Geography of India*, Vol. II, p. 513.

Section III. From Curzon to Lord Reading

"A hundred times in India have I said to myself, Oh! that to every Englishman in this country, as he ends his work, might be truthfully applied the phrase: 'Thou hast loved righteouness and hated iniquity!' No man has, I believe, ever served India faithfully of whom that could not be said. All other triumphs are tinsel and sham. Perhaps there are few of us who make anything but a poor approximation to that ideal. But let it be our ideal all the same. To fight for the right, to abhor the imperfect, the unjust or the mean, to swerve neither to the right hand nor to the left, to care nothing for flattery or applause or odium or abuse—it is so easy to have any of them in India—never to let your enthusiasm be soured or your courage grow dim, but to remember that the Almighty has placed your hand on the greatest of His ploughs, in whose furrow the nations of the future are germinating and taking shape, to drive the blade a little forward in your time, and to feel that, somewhere among these millions, you have left a little justice or happiness or propriety, a sense of manliness or more dignity, a spring of patriotism, a dawn of intellectual enlightenment or a stirring of duty, where it did not before exist—that is enough, that is the Englishman's justification in India. It is enough for his watchword while he is here, for his epitaph when he is gone. I have worked for no other aim. Let India be my judge."

These are the parting words of one of the ablest Viceroys India has ever seen—Lord Curzon. A great orator, a distinguished diplomat, a stern disciplinarian, no Viceroy either before or after him worked so hard for the improvement of the Indian administration as Lord Curzon of Kedleston. He had a profound knowledge of foreign affairs and of Central Asian politics, having travelled several times to Siam, Afghanistan and Persia. His overhauling of the administrative machinery and his tendency to overrule the considered views of the civil servants, the incessant changes he brought about, his indifference to, and contempt of, public opinion when he was convinced he was in the right—all these created much

Lord Curzon (1899-1905)

unrest in the country. In spite of this, Lord Curzon's rule must be deemed the most fruitful in its consequences. In this little book it is not possible to review at length all the measures undertaken by the untiring Viceroy. Only the more important of them can be mentioned.

His Frontier Policy

Although a warm advocate of the forward policy, Lord Curzon, while in office, found it necessary to change his attitude in regard to the north-west frontier. He ordered a withdrawal of British forces from the Khyber Pass, the Kurram Valley, Waziristan and other tribal regions. "Their place was taken by tribal levies trained and commanded by British officers." The result was seen in the ten years of peace that followed this measure. Strategic railways were built to the entrance to the Khyber Pass; and there was a return to the "close-border" system of earlier days.

The North-West Frontier Province

In order to watch the activities of the border tribes better and to strengthen the defences of the north-west frontier in general, Lord Curzon, in modification of a previous suggestion of Lord Lytton, freed the border districts beyond the Indus from the administrative control of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and placed them in charge of a Chief Commissioner directly responsible to the Government of India. This new province was named the North-West Frontier Province and to avoid confusion, the old North-West Provinces were re-named the 'United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.' The utility of this measure was not apparent then. But it is generally approved now.

Amir Habibullah

The able and sagacious Abdur Rahman died in September 1901. Although he had his own grievances against the English, he kept in check the fanatical tribes infesting India's frontier. He was succeeded peacefully—a tribute to the genius and power of Rahman—by his son, Habibullah. Lord Curzon desired the new ruler to renew the treaty which existed between his father and the Government of India. But Habibullah argued "that the agreement was one between the two

countries and that a renewal was unnecessary." Growing suspicious, he even refused the annual British subsidy. Later on, in November 1904, Lord Ampthill, who acted for Lord Curzon for a few months when the latter went to England, sent a mission to Kabul under Sir Louis Dane. All misunderstandings were cleared and the Amir drew his subsidies with arrears. One interesting outcome of this transaction was that the British recognised the title of 'His Majesty' which Habibullah claimed for himself. As Anglo-Russian relations were then in a strained condition, the Amir was able to demand high terms.

The Persian Gulf

Lord Curzon's next measure was to strengthen and extend British influence in the region of the Persian Gulf. For some time past the land-locked Persian Gulf was patrolled and policed by Great Britain. This position of British supremacy in Persian waters was objected to by France in 1892. Since then France, Russia, Germany and Turkey were attempting to gain a foot-hold in Persia and Arabia. So, when in 1898, the Sultan of Oman granted a coaling station to the French at Bunder Jisseh, Lord Curzon replied by sending a squadron to the Persian Gulf. The overawed Sultan revoked the concession. Later on, Curzon extended British influence in Southern Persia by establishing Consulates at various ports and opening trade centres in the interior. He lost no time in proclaiming to the world by his action that 'the naval power of Great Britain extended, even to their torrid, remote and secluded waters, its protecting and overshadowing arm.'

The Expedition to Tibet (1904)

One of the saddest of blunders committed by Curzon was the sending of a mission to Tibet in 1904. That country had successfully maintained its isolation for centuries together. Subject to the control of the Ambans, Chinese Viceroys, the administration of the country was in the hands of the spiritual head of the people, the Dalai Lama, assisted by an executive council. Since the days of Warren Hastings, attempts have been made by the English to establish trading marts in Tibet. All such efforts proved futile. In the

time of Curzon a certain Dorjieff, a Buddhist monk, went to the capital of Russia avowedly to collect subscriptions for the maintenance of Buddhist monasteries in Tibet and the Russian government used him to keep on friendly terms with Tibet. Lord Curzon read in this an attempt on the part of the Dalai Lama to enter into a secret treaty with Russia, although it was known that an invasion of India through Tibet was well nigh impossible. This masterful Viceroy persuaded the Home Government to send an expedition to Tibet under Colonel Younghusband on a military mission. On the approach of the British columns near Lhassa, the capital of Tibet, the Dalai Lama fled and the enterprising Colonel negotiated a treaty with the Regent which was later on modified by the Home Government. Nothing came out of the treaty. "We have not extended our trade as we had hoped and we have raised up for ourselves a new and disturbing situation on the north-east frontier of India." According to the terms of the Anglo-Russian Convention concluded in 1907, neither power was to send any representative to Lhassa, nor seek any convention with Tibet nor negotiate with its government except through China.

Reforms

The financial reforms of Lord Curzon are too abstract in their nature to be detailed in this book. It is enough to note that since 1899, Indian budgets began to disclose surpluses. The English £ sterling was allowed to circulate in India at the value of Rs. 15 and it became the recognised ideal of the Government to introduce ultimately a gold currency in our country. The improved financial situation enabled the Viceroy to undertake famine relief on an extended scale in the years 1899, 1900 and 1902. Many departments of Government were remodelled and made efficient through drastic changes. Lord Curzon improved the condition of the Indian peasantry (1) by passing the Punjab Land Alienation Act which made it impossible for the money-lender to evict the peasant from the mortgaged land; (2) by passing the Land Revenue Resolution of 1902 which mitigated the hardship of heavy assessments; (3) by

the founding of Co-operative Credit Societies which lent capital to the cultivators at a low interest; and (4) by the organisation of an Imperial Agricultural Department intended to encourage the people to apply scientific methods in agriculture. He also created a Department of Commerce and Industry; and it was placed in charge of a Civilian who was given a seat in the Executive Council of the Viceroy. He also passed the Co-operative Societies Act of 1904 and recognised the possibilities of the cooperative movements, particularly among the villagers. He overhauled the Police department, increased its strength and created the Criminal Intelligence Department. His burning desire to purify the educational system resulted in the appointment of a Commission and in the remodelling of the Universities, more or less into the shape in which we see them now. The Department of Indian Archaeology and Epigraphy owes its origin to Lord Curzon, himself a research scholar of great merit and acumen. His Ancient Monuments Act has preserved for us the priceless treasures of Indian art and architecture, once the glory of the land, but allowed to crumble, till Lord Curzon preserved them from decay.

Death of Queen Victoria the Good

In 1901, Queen Victoria died in her eighty-second year. Her death was deeply mourned by the people and Princes of India. She was succeeded by her eldest son, King Edward VII, known as Edward, the Peace-maker. On New Year's Day, 1903, Lord Curzon proclaimed, at a Durbar of extravagant splendour, King Edward VII as the Emperor of India.

Acting Viceroyalty of Ampthill

Lord Curzon went to England in April 1904; and his period of office was extended for a further term—rather an unusual procedure, due no doubt to the reforming zeal of the Viceroy who found his task unfinished. Till his return to India in December of the same year, Lord Ampthill, Governor of Madras, acted as Viceroy. It fell to his lot to announce another measure of Lord Curzon—the Partition of Bengal.

Lord Curzon found that the administration of Bengal was becoming more and more onerous and this burden was too much for the Lieutenant-Governor to bear. Moreover he found that in practice the interests of those districts lying east of the Ganges did not command that amount of attention at the hands of the officials which they were entitled to. For these and other stated reasons, he determined to bring about the partition of Bengal into East and West. It was unfortunate that he allowed this most unpopular measure to be announced by his innocent successor. The partition was a blunder. It injured the feelings of one of the most emotional people in the world. There was fierce agitation in the country. The Bengal politicians managed to win the sympathies of the whole of India on their side. It may be said that out of the travails of Bengal, Indian nationalism was born. Lord Curzon may or may not be right in his arguments in favour of the partition; but no man in his position should have created an enemy of the whole Bengali race, the Muhammadans of East Bengal excepted. "The Partition struck both at the dignity of the Bengali nation and at the nationhood of the Indian Motherland, in whose honour the old invocation to the Goddess Kali, *Bande Mataram* or 'Hail to the Mother' acquired a new significance and came to be used as the political war-cry of Indian Nationalism."

The Partition of Bengal

Lord Curzon returned to India in December 1904, but resigned his office in August 1905. The cause of his resignation was that he could not carry the Home Government with him in regard to the management of the Army Department. The Military Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council was always the constitutional adviser of the Viceroy on all army matters. He was no doubt a soldier but did not, should not, hold command during his term of office. He had the right to comment or offer criticisms on the proposals of the Commander-in-Chief. The latter post was now held by Lord Kitchener, and he pointed out the inappropriateness of a subordinate or junior military officer criticising his proposals and suggested that the

Curzon *vs.* Kitchener

entire Army Department should be under the direct and immediate control of the Commander-in-Chief who should also be the Army Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council. Public opinion in this controversy was on the side of Lord Curzon; but the Cabinet at home supported the attitude of Lord Kitchener. In the result, Lord Curzon resigned his office.

Lord Minto (1905-1910)

Lord Minto succeeded Lord Curzon. He was not a stranger to India. He had fought under Lord Roberts in Afghanistan and had served as Governor-General of Canada from 1898 to 1904. Appointed by a Unionist Government, Lord Minto had to serve a Liberal and Radical Secretary of State, Lord Morley of Blackburn. Throughout his career he maintained good relationship with the Cabinet and generally allowed their superior wills to prevail and had little regard for political shibboleths.

'Settled Facts'

Although Lord Morley in his public utterances passed severe strictures on the Partition of Bengal and the admission of the Commander-in-Chief as an ordinary Member of the Viceroy's Council, he refused to re-open these questions. They were 'settled facts,' he said. However, when Sir Bampfylde Fuller, Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam, threatened to punish some schools on the ground that they admitted boys who took part in political agitation, the Secretary of State promptly checked him; and when he offered to resign, he lost no time in accepting his resignation.

Frontier Policy

In regard to Tibet, Lord Minto's Government, acting under the guidance of Morley, skilfully withdrew from the Chumbi Valley and thus disentangled itself 'from a position full of danger' and a new convention was entered into with China which guaranteed that Tibet would be kept free from any foreign interference. A similar convention—The Anglo-Russian Convention (1907) already referred to above—with regard to Afghanistan removed all fears of Russian aggrandisement in that quarter. Russia and Great Britain came to a definite understanding regarding Persia also. Both the powers agreed

'to respect the integrity and political independence of Persia'; but this new treaty also 'demarcated a Russian sphere of influence in Northern Persia and a British sphere of influence in the South-Eastern provinces.'

The smouldering flame of discontent blazed out into open sedition and political fury throughout the time of Lord Minto.

Unrest

Anarchical crime and political murder were the order of the day in some parts of the country. European observers attribute many causes for this somewhat rude and crude awakening of the people. The victory of Japan over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, the advent to political power in England of the Liberal Party known to sympathise with Indian aspirations, the growing influence in the country of the Indian National Congress, and the autocratic rule of Lord Curzon were supposed to be at the bottom of the terrorist activities of Young India. Be the causes what they may, the attempt of the Government to smother sedition by the passing of the Seditious Meetings Act, an Explosives Act and a Criminal Law Amendment Act merely drove sedition underground. The arrest and deportation without trial of Lala Lajapat Rai, one of the popular leaders of Young India, under an old and almost defunct Regulation of 1818, worsened the situation.

Fortunately for Lord Morley and the Viceroy, there was a split in the Indian National Congress at its sittings at Surat.

The Moderate Party

Leaders like Gokhale, Sir S. Sinha (afterwards Lord Sinha) and V. Krishnaswami Aiyar were inclined to condemn the views of the extremist section of the Congress and practically seceded from it. Lord Morley adopted the policy of rallying them to his side. With the Moderate leaders as his chief supporters, the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Viceroy, announced a new scheme of reforms known as the Minto-Morley Reforms. The value of these reforms was discounted to an appreciable extent by "growing racial animosity, accentuated by political outrages and the estrangement of the Moderates."

Constitutional Advance (1909)

The Minto-Morley Reforms increased the numerical strength of the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils, secured a non-official majority in the Provincial Legislatures and extended the functions of the Councils in many ways. The Executive Councils were enlarged and an Indian was appointed to each of the Provincial Executive Councils. Sir S. Sinha was appointed Law Member in the Viceroy's Council. The right of interpellation was given to the members of these Councils and the principle of election was introduced side by side with nominations. These political concessions, however, proved to be of no great value as they were hedged round by many rules and regulations. "The Government had thus organised for itself a perpetual opposition, with no function except to criticise, no chance of ever taking office, and no real responsibility to the rather vague electorates which they were supposed to represent." However, the discussions that took place in these Councils stimulated political life in India and prepared the way for larger and more liberal reforms.

Lord Hardinge (1910-16)

The chief events in the Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge, who succeeded Lord Minto, were the struggle of the Indians against the Union Government in South Africa, the Great Coronation Durbar at the close of 1911 and India's splendid response in connection with the Great War.

The Coronation Durbar

On Dec. 12, 1911, a great Durbar was held at Delhi which was attended by Their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary. On this solemn occasion His Majesty announced the decision of His Government to reunite East Bengal with the old province, thus restoring the old Bengal Presidency with a Governor-in-Council to administer it. At the same time His Majesty announced the immediate transfer of the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi. The latter city as the capital has many advantages; but public opinion, especially European commercial opinion, was against the measure. However, the flutter and the sensation caused by it died down soon.

The building of New Delhi has already cost the Indian Exchequer more than twelve crores.

Indians in South Africa

Indentured Indian labour had been largely helpful in the plantations of Ceylon and Malaya, in Fiji Mauritius, British Guiana, Natal and East Africa. Besides the labourers there was a small sprinkling of traders found themselves ill-treated, as the Colonials did not welcome Indians except as semi-servile workers. Although Indians were, to a great extent, responsible for the development of some of the colonies in South Africa, they were not wanted by the South Afriian Whites. In 1913, their Government passed a law prohibiting Indians "from trading, farmng or holding real property in the Orange Free State" Mahatma Gandhi, then as now, the champion of just rights and depressed classes, wanted to test the validity of the law and claiming, as citizens of the British Empire, the right to go from one Province to another, led a determined band of 2500 Indians—'coolies' they were called by the Whites—into Transvaal from Natal. Military resistance to the march did not damp the spirit of either the leader or his followers. Lord Hardinge did the noblest thing under the circumstances. Happening to be at Madras at that time, he unequivocally condemned the attitude of the Union Government and demanded in the name of India the formation of a committee of inquiry Whether the British public fell in with the Viceroy's view or not, the South African Government thought it prudent to constitute such a committee The recommendations of this Commission were 'embodied in the Indian Relief Act of 1914 and by the guarantee known as the 'Smuts-Gandhi Agreement.' These gave, it is supposed, general satisfaction to Mr M. K. Gandhi, the leader of the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa.

The Great War

In August 1914, the Great War broke out. India's response was splendid. Not only did the Indian Government with the loyal consent of the people despatch an expeditionary force but made a voluntary contribution of 100 millions sterling towards the expenses of the war. It is not the purpose of this book to

describe in detail India's part in the war. Indian troops fought for their king and empire on the battle-fields of Flanders, France, Macedonia, Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia. They numbered nearly a million and according to one computation 36,696 Indians died in the various theatres of war. The neat little war monuments scattered throughout the length and breadth of India testify to the abiding loyalty of Indians for their king and country.

Indian Troops in the War

Indian troops fought with heroic endurance in the fields of France, in Egypt, at Aden, on the Suez Canal, in Gallipolli in Turkey, in East Africa, in West Africa and in Mesopotamia. "They were the first of the overseas troops to man with untried qualities the sodden trenches of Flanders. They furnished the first bulwark of British East Africa. They flung back the first Turkish attack on the Suez Canal." The predominant element in the composition of the Mesopotamian expedition was Indian. The number of combatants and non-combatants sent by India to the various theatres of operation in the four years of war was over a million and a quarter. Indian Muhammadan troops fought against the Turks, though the war had never been popular among the Muslims.

India's Supply of Munitions and Food-stuffs

India also took a prominent part in providing munitions and materials for their manufacture. To organise the requisite supplies for the Indian troops in Mesopotamia, Egypt and elsewhere, the Indian Government set up a Munitions Board in 1917 which developed activities, both of production and manufacture, like the yield of the Burma wolframmines, of mica and shellac, of gunny bags, of leather for boots and accoutrements, etc. The supply of foodstuffs and raw material made by India was equally noteworthy; and Indian shipments amounted to more than three million tons of wheat to the British and their allies and a proportionate quantity of maize, barley, gram and other grains. Indian cotton mills supplied cotton goods required for the British armies; and Indian workshops supplied steel-rails,

engines and vehicles for Mesopotamia, East Africa and Palestine, and also vessels required for the river flotillas in the Tigris and the Euphrates; India also supplied a very large quantity of timber for railway, ship-building and other war purposes. Besides contributing large sums for charity and raising war loans, India gave to Britain a free gift of £100 millions sterling.

The Services of the States and Princes

Many Indian Princes made large contributions of troops and money for the war and themselves served personally in the war-theatres of France and Flanders. The Imperial Service Troops maintained by twenty-seven States were unreservedly placed at the disposal of Britain; and many Princes supplied, besides, cavalry, infantry, sappers, transport and camel-corps. Several combined together to provide a hospital ship, called the *Loyalty*; and the record of the war services of the Princes was magnificent and striking. The British recognition of their services was warm and generous. The Maharajah of Bikanir was invited to the Peace Conference as one of the representatives of India. The war has greatly strengthened the bonds of loyalty and affection knitting together the Princes and the Imperial throne.

Lord Chelmsford (1916-21)

When Lord Chelmsford, the successor of Lord Hardinge, arrived in India, he found the country by no means in good spirits. The war and the political principles for which Great Britain and her allies were fighting Germany, evoked an unprecedented enthusiasm and yearning for political liberty in the Indian mind. Indian Nationalists were emboldened by the Irish rebellion; the Muslims were drawn towards sympathy for the Caliph and the Turks; and the extremist elements gathered strength under the leadership of Lokamanya Tilak while the Indian National Congress veered round definitely to the extremist side after 1916. Keen observers in England urged the Government to take cognisance of the situation and placate Indian feelings in a suitable manner. Agreeably to this opinion and as a recognition of India's splendid services in the war, His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner

and Sir (afterwards Lord) S. Sinha were appointed as India's representatives in the Imperial War Cabinet in London.

Mr. Montagu and the Declaration of 1917

In 1917, Mr. Montagu succeeded Mr. Austen Chamberlain as Secretary of State for India. Unlike the ordinary run of Cabinet Ministers, Mr. Montgu had a clear vision about the future of India and soon after he assumed office, he made an epoch-making pronouncement in regard to further constitutional reforms for India. His announcement ran thus:—

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire..

"I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance ...."

The Reception of the Declaration

Under normal political conditions, the above message, followed by the actual Reforms Act, would have delighted the hearts of Indians; but, as it was, it fell like a damp squib. Failure of the monsoons and the consequent high prices, coupled with a vague sense of fear about their future, made the peasantry sullen and discontented; the *intelligentsia* in the country believed, wrongly one should conclude, that under the plea of war-time measures, the Government of India were attempting to strangle all political agitation in the land by the Defence of India Act and the 'Rowlatt Bills.' The latter, particularly, were obnoxious to the people and under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, a Passive Resistance Movement was organised. The agitation that now raged in the country was unprecedented. Every day it received additional momentum. The Muhammadan community in India also joined the movement, partly because they realised that their fate was closely bound up with that of the Hindus and partly also of the fear

that the Turkish Peace then in contemplation endangered their religion and the intergrity of the holy places of their faith. At every stage in the agitation, Mahatma Gandhi implored the people not to do any act of violence. Government's attempts to enforce law and order resulted in frequent clashes between the mob and the police helped by the military in the Punjab and Gujarat. The climax of this Passive Resistance Movement was reached when General Dyer mowed down, with a machine-gun, a large body of people assembled in meeting at Jalianwala Bagh in Amritsar. It was in such an atmosphere that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were introduced in the country. They were preceded by a tour of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy through the country to ascertain the opinions of the people for themselves and by the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report which envisaged the peculiar scheme of partial responsible government to be introduced in the Provinces known as Dyarchy (1918). The report was not greatly welcomed in India. It appealed, in some aspects, only to the older generation of politicians known variously as Liberals and Moderates Space forbids a detailed account of the reforms; only the main features can be pointed out.

Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

The Act of 1919 brought about a complete change in the organisation of the Indian Legislature. The Council of State was to contain not more than sixty members, but not more than twenty of them should be officials. The strength of the Legislative Assembly was increased to 144 members of whom 103 were to be elected. Although the President of the first Assembly was nominated, all subsequent Presidents have been elected by the members of that body. The term of each Council of State was full five years and that of the Assembly three. In the Provinces the Legislatures were expanded; but a dual system of government, known as 'Dyarchy,' was introduced. According to it certain important subjects such as Revenue and Law and Order were to be administered by members of the Governor's Executive Council. These were 'Reserved Subjects.' Subjects like Education, Public Health, Registration, Excise, Religious Endowments, etc., were dealt with by Ministers nominated by the

Governor from among the elected members of the Legislative Council; these were 'Transferred Subjects.' No important change was proposed for the central executive; under certain stated circumstances, both the Governor-General and the Governor possessed the power of vetoing the decisions of the Central Legislature and Legislative Councils respectively. Meetings of the Provincial Legislative Council were presided over by an elected President or, in his absence, by a Deputy President. An important innovation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms was that the salary of the Secretary of State for India and the cost of maintaining the India Office were borne by the English Exchequer.

The Third Afghan War

Throughout the period of the war, Amir Habibullah had kept Afghanistan out of it, although he showed no active sympathy for the cause of the allies. For reasons not known to us clearly, he was assassinated on February 20th, 1919. After a short sharp struggle, one of his sons, Amanullah, came to the throne. He had to face tremendous odds in his own country. The war fever was high among the tribes. He thought that his best safety lay in uniting all the disturbing elements in the country and leading them against India which he was informed was in the throes of a great revolution. War soon followed. The British forces moved up the Khyber and captured Dakka. The English bombed Kabul and Jalalabad from air—perhaps the first time aeroplanes were used in the East for bombing cities teeming with son-combatants. The Afghans were defeated and sued for peace which was eventually signed at Rawalpindi in August 1919. Aeroplanes, high explosives and wireless gave the Indian army a decisive advantage over the enemy. Government put an end to the system of subsidies and abandoned its claim to control the foreign policy of the Afghan State. Lord Chelmsford returned to England in 1921, leaving a discontented India seething with violence and a spirit of unrest, happily controlled by Indian leaders.

Section IV. Indian Politics since 1919

The New Councils Opened

The new Councils under the Reform Act of 1919 were opened admidst much official enthusiasm in the time of Lord Chelmsford and under the shadow of the Non-Co-operation Movement, by H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught. In the course of his speech, the noble Duke said:—

"Gentlemen, I have finished my part in to-day's official proceedings. May I claim your patience and forbearance while I say a few words of a personal nature! Since I landed, I have felt around me bitterness and estrangement between those who have been and should be friends. The shadow of Amritsar has lengthened over the face of fair India. I know how deep is the concern felt by His Majesty the King-Emperor at the terrible chapter of events in the Punjab. No one can deplore those events more intensely than I do myself. I have reached a time of life when I most desire to heal wounds and to re-unite those who have been disunited..... As an old friend of India, I appeal to you all, British and Indians, to bury, along with the dead past, the mistakes and misunderstandings of the past; to forgive where you ought to forgive and to join hands and to work together to realise the hopes that rise from to-day."

Lord Reading (1921-26)

Lord Reading, the Liberal Viceroy who succeeded Lord Chelmsford, reaped, to the full, the fruits of agitation which began in the time of his predecessor. The revelations of the Hunter Commission Report on the recent happenings in the Punjab and elsewhere fanned the flame of political unrest in the country. They culminated in the first year of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty in mob violence at Malegaon and Dharwar. In August 1921 there was a serious Moplah outbreak in Malabar. The rebellion of these sturdy Muhammadans of the west coast of India was mainly due to economic causes and it assumed formidable proportions before it was put down.

Visit of the Prince of Wales

The most noteworthy event, apart from politics, in the time of Lord Reading, was the visit to India of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. He landed on the shores of Bombay on November 17, 1921 and was received with all due pomp and honour by a distinguished gathering. After conveying to the people of India a gracious message from His Majesty the King-Emperor, H. R. H. the Prince of Wales thus spoke about the purpose of his mission:—

"I need not tell you that I have been looking forward to my visit and have been eagerly awaiting the opportunities of seeing India and making friends there. I want to appreciate at first hand all that India is, and has done and can do. I want to grasp your difficulties and to understand your aspirations. I want you to know me and I want to know you."

Side by side with loyal demonstrations, ugly riots also took place in all the big cities visited by the Prince of Wales. In Bombay the mob had to be fired at and more than fifty people lost their lives. The Prince's tour programme was, however, gone through according to plan.

Non-Co-operation

The movement organized by Mahatma Gandhi known as Non-Co-operation was in full swing throughout the period of Lord Reading's viceroyalty. "He stood for the ideals and the civilization of India as against those of Europe; for the cult of the spinning wheel and the simple economics of the village, as against the factories, the railways and the 'materialism of the West'" He desired to achieve his end by bringing moral pressure to bear on Government. His adherents were to resign Government titles and honorary offices; to withdraw from Government service; to boycott schools, law courts and the legislative bodies. Looming behind all these, was the final measure of Non-Co-operation—refusal to pay Government dues and organized mass disobedience to the laws and orders of administration."* Opinion on this method of obtaining *Swaraj* has continued to differ and will do so. It is enough to say that

* This quotation explaining Mahatmaji's views is from the Simon Commission Report, Vol. I.

such a programme as the one chalked out by Gandhiji was bound to bring about a cleavage in the ranks of the front politicians. As a matter of fact a few forceful Maratha politicians formed themselves into a new political group—'Responsivists' and pledged themselves to a policy of 'Responsive Co-operation,'—'a phrase denoting a critical attitude towards Government, coupled with readiness in certain circumstances to receive a lucrative post from Government.'

Failure of Non-Co operation

The movement was a failure from the beginning. It gained, no doubt, a wide publicity and that was all. The lawyers except a few enthusiasts did continue to plead in the law courts; a vast majority of students thought it prudent to attend schools and colleges and the few that withdrew from these grew desperate about the national education that was promised.

The Government found it necessary to put in operation the Seditious Meetings and Criminal Law Amendment Acts In the result many voluntary organizations and youth leagues were declared illegal and individual volunteers were also arrested for their activities. Although Mahatma Gandhi showed no sympathy towards those who indulged in or encouraged acts of violence, he demanded, among other things, the release of those who were already arrested and put in jail. The Government refusing, he made preparations for mass civil disobedience on a huge scale. In the meanwhile, a tragedy* occurred at Chauri Chaura, in the United Provinces, which so shocked the Mahatma that he immediately ordered a cessation of all activities by the volunteers. It was at this juncture that the Government resolved to arrest Gandhiji. He was arrested on the 10th of March 1922. The trial that followed was one of the shortest on record. Before Mr. Maxwell, the presiding Magistrate, the Mahatma pleaded 'guilty.' He was sentenced to six years' simple imprisonment and lodged in the Yerrowada Jail. After he had remained in jail for two years, he took seriously ill. Gandhiji

* Twenty-one policemen were brutally done to death by a mob.

published, after the tragedy of Chauri Chaura, his Bardoli resolutions which were a confession of the failure of his scheme and annoyed the Congress leaders.

Lord Reading's Government generously released him and remitted the rest of the sentence. After his release, Mahatma Gandhi preferred not to take the lead in Indian political agitation, as he was convinced that his non-violent movement had not been properly understood by the people. Besides, there was a growing feeling among the *intelligentsia* that all was not well with the Non-Co-operation movement. He therefore spent his time and energy in advocating the use of *Khaddar* and in attempting to eliminate from Indian social life the curse of untouchability.

A New Political Programme

Indian leadership during the period of Mahatmaji's retirement fell first to Mr. C R. Das, a great patriot of Bengal, and after his death in 1925 to Pandit Motilal Nehru. These two leaders organized a new political party, called the *Swaraj* Party, within the Congress Its members entered the Legislative Councils in large numbers and offered resistance to those policies and measures of the Indian Government which, in their opinion, impeded the attainment of *Swaraj*. They won a dominant position within the Legislatures and, by their frank and outspoken utterances, attracted the attention of the world to the need of speeding up the political progress of India.

The Akali Movement

India is a peculiar country. Here religion and politics are apt to blend. Every political question is weighed in the scales of the communal balance and often enough the Government finds itself entangled in religious disputes Of the many troubles that Lord Reading's Government had to face, not the least was the Akali movement. The Akalis are a reforming sect of the Sikhs and their object was to bring all the Sikh shrines and religious institutions under the control of the community. In their activities they were guided by a committee, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee. "In the spirit of the Non-Co-operation movement the Committee preferred to secure its

ends without recourse to Government and organized the Akalis into a militia for the purpose." For nearly five years (1920-25), the Akalis carried on a furious agitation in the country. Everywhere there were scenes of disorder; and, in their reforming zeal, the Akali Sikhs took the law into their own hands and thus came in direct conflict with the Government. The agitation was, however, settled in 1925 by the Government of the Punjab passing the *Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrines Bill* which gave the control of the Sikh shrines to a central representative Board of the Sikh community.

The agitation of the Akalis was modelled on the Congress Satyagraha. In 1924 there were serious communal riots in several parts of the country, particularly in Delhi and the United Provinces A unity conference was convened at Delhi which was attended by the representatives of all parties, but it did not yield any result.

SECTION V. LORD IRWIN AND THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

Lord Irwin (1926-31)

No Viceroy, since the time when the Crown assumed the responsibilities for the administration of India, has been held in greater respect by the Princes and people of India than Lord Irwin No representative of the British race in India has won the love and admiration of the toiling millions of India to a larger extent than Lord Irwin By his wise statesmanship and genuine sympathy for the people, no less than by the truly Christian life he led, Lord Irwin made it possible for the Indians to realise that political justice for which they were agitating for decades could at least be obtained from England. Irwin and Gandhi—these are names to charm with to-day!! Indeed, when the popular Viceroy left the shores of India, those who had assembled to bid him good-bye could see *Swaraj* in the offing.

In the very first year of his rule, Lord Irwin was called upon to apply himself seriously to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. A series of dangerous riots between the two communities had

occurred in Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay and other places resulting in the death of hundreds of persons and injuries to several thousands. The Government's duty, under the circumstances, of maintaining law and order, became exceedingly difficult. Joint conferences of leaders of both the communities and agreed solutions to end the strife had no effect on the mob-mind. The causes of the riots themselves would appear to be most trivial. A petty quarrel between a Muhammadan shop-keeper and a Hindu customer or *vice versa* or the playing of music before a mosque was enough to set the communal gun-powder ablaze. "Communal representation in the Legislatures, in the Government services and in local bodies" forms another fruitful source of friction between the two communities. "The bond between Hindu and Muhammadan," truly observe the Simon Commissioners, "in Mr. Gandhi's campaign was a common antagonism to Government. Among the mass of the Muhammadans, that antagonism was founded on apprehensions for the future of their religion. These were set at rest by the Treaty of Lausanne, which gave Turkey better terms of peace than had at one time been anticipated; and the abolition of the Khilafat by Ghazi Kemal Pasha later on known as the Ata Turk (Father of New Turkey) gave the movement its quietus. But Non-Co-operation had opened up new possibilities in the relations between Hindus and Moslems. To many of them it seemed that, if there was a possibility of political control passing before long completely out of the hands of the Parliament, it became important for each community to organize and consolidate its forces in preparation for a new situation that would then arise. Movements were set on foot by both Hindus and Muhammadans for the reconversion of classes which were said to have lapsed to the other faith. Suspicion and bitterness were the inevitable result, and, in the excitement of religious festivals, occasions for dispute were only too easy to find." The communal tension which culminated in the disastrous Cawnpore riot of 1931, increased the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha; and the view was expressed by a prominent Hindu leader that "Hindu-Muslim unity may be the

Hindu-Muslim Out-breaks

result, but will not be the cause of Swaraj." But, outside the Punjab "it was thought at one time and for long that the Congress was there and there should be no Hindu organisation." But at present the question is whether, consistently with the larger national allegiance and with loyalty to the efforts to attain *swaraj*, it is or is not the duty of the Hindus to organise themselves as a community.

The Appeal of Lord Irwin

Lord Irwin's own contribution to the solution of the problem of communal strife was a stirring appeal to the leaders of India to end their quarrels and thus quicken the political progress of the country. In the course of a moving speech at the Chelmsford Club, thus spoke the great Viceroy:—

"In the name of Indian national life, in the name of religion, I appeal to all in each of the two communities who hold position, who represent them in the press, who direct the education of the young, who possess influence, who command the esteem of their co-religionists, who lead them in politics or are honoured by them as divines. Let them begin, each in their own community, to work untiringly towards this end; boldly to repudiate feelings of hatred and intolerance, actively to condemn and suppress acts of violence and aggression, earnestly to strive to exorcise suspicions and misapprehensions and so to create a new atmosphere of trust.

"I appeal in the name of national life, because communal tension is eating into it as a canker. It has suspended its activities. It has ranged its component parts into opposite and hostile camps.

"I appeal in the name of religion, because I can appeal to nothing nobler, and because religion is the language of the soul, and it is a change of soul that India needs to-day."

Although the appeal had some temporary effect, riots in isolated tracts still continued and one of the most striking illustrations of individual acts, born of communal fanaticism was the murder of Swami Shraddhanand by a Muslim fanatic on December 23, 1926.

It is refreshing to turn away from this sordid tale of communal bickerings and riots to a study of the great progress made in Lord Irwin's time in the domain of social legislation. For some decades educated Indians had been feeling that the marriage of boys and girls at a very early age was fraught with dangerous consequences to the society. Resolutions in Social Reform Conferences and platform speeches condemning early marriages did not greatly advance the cause the reformers had in view. There was also a growing feeling in the country that without active state interference several social evils could not be put down The Government was at first unwilling to lend active support to measures affecting the religious and social practices of the people; but later on it persuaded itself to promote the passing of a marriage bill in the Legislative Assembly introduced by Rai Sahib Har Bilas Sarda. This Act, familiarly known as the Sarda Act, came into force in April 1930; it prohibits the marriage of boys under 18 and girls under 14 years of age. Orthodox Hindu opinion was at first strongly against this measure and the agitation to bring about a repeal of this Act has only gradually been losing point.

Social and Economic Progress

The question of the removal of untouchability was first taken up in all seriousness by Mahatma Gandhi, as this huge problem has had a most disastrous effect in weakening the Hindu community. In this connection honourable and grateful mention should be made of the temple entry proclamation made recently by the Maharaja of Travancore. Attempts have been made both by official and non-official agency to improve the status and conditions of work of labour, particularly in urban areas and industrial occupations. In this connection good work was done by the Labour Commission presided over by Mr. Whitley, a former Speaker of the House of Commons.

India is essentially an agricultural country and its population is mainly rural. Only 9·5 per cent. of her 350 millions of people live in towns as compared with 78 per cent. in England. It is therefore futile to expect that, at any epoch in her history, India can hope to become another England with her vast urban population and expanding manufacturing

Linlithgow Commission

industries. Nor is it desirable to seek our economic salvation after the fashion of the western countries. The Government of India and their advisers who realise the true economic ideal of India, have therefore bestowed great thought on the question of Indian agriculture and other related subjects. Agreeably to their wishes, His Majesty the King Emperor appointed, in April 1926, a Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture with the Marquess of Linlithgow, the present Viceroy, as its Chairman. The Commissioners were asked "to examine and report on the present conditions of agriculture and rural economy in British India and to make recommendations for the improvement of agriculture and the promotion of the welfare and prosperity of the rural population." After two years of hard labour, the Royal Commission submitted its report in 1928. One important outcome of its labours was the organization by the Indian Government of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

The period of Lord Irwin's rule was indeed one of serious study of Indian national activities in their various aspects.

Commissions and Reports

Many Committees and Commissions submitted their elaborate and learned reports to the Government and these form a mighty and inexhaustible source of information for a true account of the political and economic progress of India. Just a few months before Lord Irwin's assumption of office, a valuable report was presented by Sir M. Visveswarayya, Chairman of the Economic Enquiry Committee, reviewing at length Indian economic conditions. In January 1926, the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee laid down its report inquiring into the whole scheme of Indian Taxation—Central, Provincial and Local. This report was of great help to the Government of India in framing its budget proposals in subsequent years. Equally momentous was the submission of the Hilton Young Commission which, among other things, desired to stabilize the exchange ratio at 18*d*. to the rupee—a suggestion immediately acted upon by the Government of India and round which a great controversy is even now going on. In the year 1929, at the instance of the Central Indian Legislature, the Government of India ordered an enquiry into the

present condition of banking in India and the Commissioners appointed for the purpose have just issued a valuable tome. The Viceroy did not forget, in the midst of his multifarious duties, to take such steps that he could to promote the welfare of the Indians in South Africa. The Paddison Deputation that visited South Africa during the winter of 1925-26 returned to India in May 1926 and the report of this Committee necessitated a further deputation to South Africa and a fresh and more satisfactory agreement with the Union Government has been arrived at as a result. In April 1927, what is known as the Skeen Committee published its report on the question of improving upon the present supply of Indian candidates for the King's Commissions and the desirability or otherwise of establishing a military college in India. The anxiety of the Indian Princes to more carefully and unambiguously determine their relation with the Government of India led to the appointment, in December 1927, of the Indian States Committee presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler Highly controversial as the findings of this Committee are, its report is nevertheless valuable for the determination of the relation between the Paramount Power and the Indian States in any future scheme of Indian constitutional reform. The Whitley Commission, a Royal Commission on Indian Labour, already referred to, published its report in 1931; and it is a valuable document and its recommendations, if carried out, would lead to increased efficiency of labour and hence of better and larger production in the country. A Reforms Enquiry Committee had been appointed in 1924 to inquire into the working of the Reforms Act of 1919. The working of dyarchy in the provinces came in for much adverse criticism; and the evidence taken showed the bureaucracy frustrated the intentions of the noble framers of the Act. But the greatest of all the Commissions is, of course, the Indian Statutory Commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon. Before we study the history of this Commission and the topics connected with it, we shall advert to two themes of considerable importance to India—the Afghan affairs and the position of Indians in South Africa.

Afghan affairs

Since the Third Afghan War (1930) although Afghanistan maintained good relationship with the Indian Government, it showed considerable desire to afford immense facilities for Bolshevik penetration of the country. The Russo-Afghan treaty of December 1926 and another signed between Germany and Afghanistan clearly indicate the growing tendency on the part of a few European powers to take more than an ordinary interest in her internal and external affairs. At the end of the year 1927, King Amanullah accompanied by his wife and a staff of officials began a long tour to India and Europe. He was warmly welcomed in India where he grew to be popular among all sections of the people. He created a great impression in Europe by the interest he and his entourage evinced in recent scientific progress. He returned to his native land in the summer of 1928 with the determination to westernize his country and do away with tribal laws and tradition. His reforming zeal was, however, very much misunderstood by his countrymen and it cost him his crown. He issued with feverish haste edict after edict altering the entire structure of Afghan society. This was too much for the Mullahs and conservative and ignorant tribesmen to bear. Unfortunately, King Amanullah allowed the pay of the soldiers to fall into arrears. The consequence was that when the reactionary Mullahs raised the standard of rebellion, the troops did not stand by their king. An Afghan adventurer, a water-carrier by profession and Bacha-i-Saqquo by name, headed a civil war and defeated the scanty but loyal forces of King Amanullah in many engagements, thus leaving Amanullah no other option but to fly from his country. From Kabul he went to Bombay and then took ship to Rome where he now resides brooding over his past misfortunes. The usurper, Bacha-i-Saqquo, was not allowed to enjoy the throne for any length of time. General Nadir Khan, a member of the old ruling house and obviously popular with the sections of the Afghan community that really count, gathering an effective force of the Wazirs, seized Kabul, became the victor in a final encounter with Bacha-i-Saqquo and later on promptly executed the latter. Nadir Khan became king with

the title of Nadir Shah. The new king soon effectively co-operated with the Indian Government in preventing border raids and he also took up "Amanullah's programme of reform but in a statesman-like manner which carries the Mullahs along with him.' He has since been followed on the throne by his son. Afghanistan is rapidly becoming modernised. Recently a pact for maintenance of peace was made by her with the neighbouring Muslim states of Iran (reformed Persia,) Iraq and Turkey (Anatolia).

Indians in South Africa

Of the 2,625,590 Indians living overseas more than 1,061,339 live in South Africa alone. By their hard work and efficient, though cheap, labour, they were able to increase by leaps and bounds the economic prosperity of the land of their adoption. The Whites of South Africa, not realising what they owed to Indian labour, humiliated and oppressed them in many ways. The dumb 'coolies' suffered their fate meekly till their cause was taken up by Mahatma Gandhi who led a great *passive resistance* movement in 1913-14. Its outcome, as has already been noted, was a compromise embodied in the Indians Relief Act, 1914, and the guarantee known as the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement. The latter particularly recognised the right of the then resident Indians in the various townships to move about and carry on trade as they liked An Asiatic Enquiry Commission of 1920, however, recommended that Asiatics should not own land in the Transvaal; nor should they acquire and possess land on the uplands of Natal where more than 1,041,336 Indians lived. The Government of India protested against this, but in vain. Anti-Asiatic feeling in South Africa continued to increase. Indians could travel only in carriages reserved for them. Their use of tramways was restricted. They were excluded from the race-courses. They could not enter club rooms. As if these were not sufficient, a bill to segregate Asiatics was successfully passed in the Union Assembly in 1926. Public opinion in India was greatly stirred against these measures and Lord Reading's Government sent a deputation to South Africa under the late Mr. G. F. Paddison, to study and collect first-hand information about the position

of the Indians (November 1925). 'This deputation was followed by a return visit to India of a Parliamentary deputation from the Union Government.' Finally, a Joint Conference of the Indian representatives and the Union Parliamentary deputation was arranged to be held in Cape Town on the 17th December 1926. The agreement arrived at in this Conference which had been heartily subscribed by both the Governments, allayed, to a great extent, the fear that the Whites of South Africa desired to wipe out the Indians by a system of compulsory repatriation. Under the terms of the Cape Town Agreement, the Union Government undertook among other things (*a*) to organize a scheme of assisted emigration to India for those Indians who desired to avail themselves of it; (*b*) not to proceed with the areas reservation, emigration and registration bill. On the other hand, the Government of India promised to look after the assisted emigrants on their arrival in India. One important outcome of the whole transaction was the appointment of an Indian Agent in the Union "in order to secure continuous and effective co-operation between the two Governments" The Indian Government appointed as their first Agent in South Africa, the Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri whose services in this connection were widely appreciated by all the parties concerned, and in particular by General Smuts The Cape Town Agreement is, however, not a perfect document; and already several misapprehensions in regard to its working have developed. And the attempts to alter the franchise in the Cape Colony that have been made have largely worked to the prejudice of Indian settlers. Subsequent Agents of the Indian Government in South Africa have been endeavouring to preserve and enhance the political status and economic privileges of the Indians.

Indians in the Kenya Colony

The position of Indians in Kenya is still worse. The full history of the precarious position of the Indians there can be read in the Hilton Young Commission Report. Already in 1923, the anti-Indian policy in Kenya had become marked. Urged by the Indian Legislature and prompted also by a sense of justice and fair-play, the Indian Government deputed the Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

appointment as Viceroy and Governor-General of India at a time when great constitutional changes are impending is, therefore, welcomed by Indians of all shades of political opinion. Indeed, His Excellency's first utterance in India in which he said he would faithfully adhere to the Irwin-Gandhi Pact and would do all in his power to promote the immediate political welfare of the Indians, created a new atmosphere of trust and confidence in our rulers. As one well acquainted with every detail of our national life and perfectly conversant with our spacious history and traditions, Lord Willingdon, before he laid down his high office, did much to add his own name to the long list of those Englishmen whose disinterested and patriotic services to the Empire had contributed for the increasing happiness of the Indian people.

Lord Willingdon (April, 1931)

When everybody was expecting that, as a result of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact, Mahatma Gandhi, who was elected as the sole representative of the Congress, though a few other leading members of the Congress attended in their individual capacity, would proceed to London, incidents occurred in various parts of India made him change his decision to attend the Round Table Conference. Government officials all over the country, generally known as the bureaucracy, failed to understand the spirit underlying the great Pact. The Congress office was flooded with reports from various parts of the country that in flagrant violation of the Pact, the police were belabouring volunteers although picketing was peaceful and within the bounds of law. Revenue officials were also reported to have applied coercion in collecting rents from ryots in Bardoli. Mahatma Gandhi, after a careful enquiry into these allegations, complained to the Viceroy that Provincial Governments failed much to implement the Pact and requested him to constitute an impartial tribunal to enquire into the charges preferred by the Congress. His Excellency the Viceroy's reply to an urgent telegram of the Congress was by no means encouraging. A deadlock ensued and it looked as if the great object of Lord Irwin would be frustrated by the Congress and the Government remaining in a state of mutual separation.

The Rift in the Lute

Gandhiji Sails

In the meanwhile, telegrams were pouring from all parts of the world begging Mahatma Gandhi to proceed to London and not stay away on account of Bardoli. It is an eloquent testimony to the sincerity and honesty of purpose of the great Indian leader that he announced his readiness to go to London, provided the Government of India guaranteed that, during his absence, the Pact would be strictly adhered to. Lord Willingdon's Government was no less sincere in its desire that the Congress must state its case before the Round Table Conference. Further correspondence and interviews between the Mahatma and the Viceroy resulted in the ending of the *impasse* and Gandhiji sailed at last to London in August 1931.

Gandhiji in England

In England, Mahatma Gandhi rendered a good account of himself. The communal question loomed large in the discussions of the Second Session also; and the efforts made to solve it by mutual consent proved unsuccessful. Its work was more unsatisfactory than that of the first. At the Round Table Conference, he explained the attitude of the Congress in regard to the constitutional schemes discussed there. His speech was listened to with respect, although it might not have carried conviction with many. He interviewed ministers and other leaders of the great political parties. He undertook tours to provincial areas and delivered his message of truth and non-violence in the field of politics. Wherever he went, he was treated as the honoured guest of the British nation. Although Mahatmaji actively participated in the discussions that took place in the various Committees such as the Federal Structure Committee, the Finance Committee and the Minority Representation Committee, it cannot be said that he was satisfied entirely with the prevailing trend of opinion. The Hindu-Muslim problem had been a hard nut to crack and it was feared by some that the ship of the Round Table Conference, so safely steered through by the tact and wisdom of Lord Irwin, Premier Macdonald, Lord Sankey and others, might break on the rock of Muslim demands. But Gandhiji was hopeful that a final solution may yet be found The word 'impossibility' is not to be found in his dictionary.

The New National Government

In the midst of the Round Table Conference discussions, a political event of the first magnitude drew away men's attention from the affairs of India to those of England. Since the war, England along with other countries of the world has been suffering from a general depression in trade. The persistent policy adopted by America and France in conserving large quantities of gold, the sudden fall in the prices of commodities in general, and a great decrease in the export trade of the country, brought about a financial crisis in England. The Labour Cabinet was at its wits' end to bring about a balance in the budget. The situation was so alarming that foreign investors began to withdraw large sums from the Bank of England. This led to the Government abandoning* the gold standard. The crisis was met bravely by Mr. Philip Snowden, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who introduced drastic cuts in the budget, including the reduction in unemployment doles. This offended the Labourites. Another measure approving modified tariffs was revolting to all free-traders. A few Liberals and many Labour members of Parliament, caring more for party principles than the larger interests of the country, opposed the budget. Only one course was left to Mr Ramsay Macdonald, the Premier. He advised His Majesty to dissolve the Parliament. In the fresh elections that took place a vast majority voted for the new budget proposals and thus was formed a National Government consisting of some of the eminent leaders of all political parties and with Mr. Ramsay Macdonald as the Premier Almost the first thing that Sir Samuel Hoare, the new Secretary of State for India, did was to declare authoritatively that the new Government would pursue in regard to India and the Round Table Conference the policy already proclaimed. The Second Round Table Conference had to work under the National Government which was all but Tory in name; and it was followed by the resumption of Civil Disobedience and repression, perhaps more severe than that of 1930. The situation in India had meanwhile been worsened by the beginning of a serious economic depression that particularly hit hard the agriculturists.

*The subject is too technical to be discussed in this book.

The Civil Disobedience movement was worsened by the acute and widespread discontent; and "the Government was relentless; the Congress was unbending." The movement collapsed by 1933; but it was formally suspended only in the following year.

The Representation of the Communities

In August 1932, the Prime Minister of Britain, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, published the Communal Award which was in reality the decision of the British Government. One of its provisions recommended separate electorates for the depressed classes. To this Mahatma Gandhi took such strong exception that he began a fast in the Yerrawada Jail where he was then incarcerated. Thereupon the leaders of the country hurried to the Mahatma and concluded an agreement with the depressed classes by which the quantum of representation given to them was increased greatly. This was the so-called Poona Pact. Later, the Secretary of State, Sir Samuel Hoare, announced the decision of the British Government that the Muslim representation in the Central Legislature should be 33½ per cent. of the total number and also that Sind should be made a separate province, aided by a subvention from the central revenues. The attempts made to bring about an understanding between the two communities by Indian leaders by means of a Unity Conference at Allahabad failed.

The White Paper

The Third Session of the Round Table Conference was held in 1933; but its members were largely different from those of the two previous sessions. The conclusions of this session were very reactionary. In March 1934 the British Government published the White Paper embodying their scheme of a new constitution for India. The proposals were condemned by almost all the Indian leaders; moreover, they had no relationship with many of the recommendations of the Round Table Conference Committees. The White Paper was then submitted for detailed examination to a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament; as a measure of concession to Indian opinion some Indians were associated with the Committee during the examination of witnesses. But they were not, however, allowed any share in the deliberations. One of the chief points that were objected to in the scheme was the

abolition of direct representation for the Central Legislative Assembly (Lower House).

It was on the basis of the report of the Joint Committee that the Bill embodying the Government of India Act, 1935, was passed into law on August 2, 1935. A very useful paragraph in the Report of the Select Committee shows us how one of the effects of British rule in India has been the growth of a demand for responsible Government and for full independence. "By transforming British India into a single Unitary State, it (British rule) has engendered among Indians a sense of political unity. By giving that State a government disinterested enough to play the part of an impartial arbiter and powerful enough to control the disruptive forces generated by religious, racial and linguistic divisions, it has fostered the first beginnings, at least, of a sense of nationality transcending those divisions. By establishing conditions in which the performance of the fundamental functions of government, the enforcement of law and order and the maintenance of an upright administration, has come to be easily accepted as a matter of course, it has set Indians free to turn their minds to other things, and in particular to the broader political and economic interests of their country. Finally, by directing their attention towards the object-lessons of British Constitutional history and by accustoming the Indian student of government to express his political ideas in the English language, it has favoured the growth of a body of opinion inspired by two familiar British conceptions; that good government is not an acceptable substitute for self-government, and that the only form of government worthy of the name is government through Ministers responsible to the elected legislature." (Para 10 of the Report).

The Report of the Joint Select Committee

The Act replaces the unitary system of government by a Federation of autonomous British Indian Provinces and such of the Indian states as may choose to enter the Federal scheme. Already in the Provinces a measure of partial responsibility had been in existence since the introduction of Dyarchy under the Reform Act of 1919. By

The Government of India Act (1935)

the Act of 1935, the Provinces have been "made autonomous constituent units, independent within their own sphere and free of central control deriving their authority directly from the Crown," and not from the Government of India as hitherto They are, therefore, no longer mere administrative areas of the Central Government, but have been endowed by the grant of autonomy with the legal power to federate. There are thus eleven Governors' Provinces, namely, Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, the North-West Frontier Province, and the two newly created Provinces of Orissa and Sind; and six Commissioners' Provinces, namely, Delhi, British Baluchistan, Ajmere-Merwara, Coorg, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the area known as Panth-Piploda—the latter being under the direct control of the Central Government. These form the British Indian Federating units of the proposed Federation of India. The other set of units of the Federation is constituted by the Indian States which have a total population of 80 millions and are about 600 units varying in size from large States like Hyderabad, Kashmir and Mysore to very small ones with only a few square miles of area. The external relations of all these States are entirely under the control of the Paramount Power. In internal administration they enjoy varying degree of sovereignty. In their structure and administration they vary from one another very considerably. Of the larger States numbering 109 which belong to the first class,—the States have been divided into three classes—about 30 have Legislative Councils, while several others have adopted into their system of administration modern features, like the separation of executive from judicial functions, a fixed civil list for rulers, the grant of local institutions, etc. The Paramount Power, *i.e.*, the British Crown, exercises a control over the States that cannot be defined fully and definitely and that has no legal or constitutional basis in strict analysis. The rights and privileges enjoyed by the Indian States by virtue of their

The Federating Units—British Indian Provinces

and the Indian States

treaties and engagements and of the sanads granted to them are subject to the exercise of Paramountcy rights. "The Crown has acquired by usage independently of treaties the right to take what measures it thinks fit for the safety of the British Empire, the interests of India as a whole, or the interests of the States. This is Paramountcy." The Paramount Power has "all the power which enables it to act in the interests of the Empire, in the interests of India as a whole and in the interests of the States."

The States and Paramountcy

The first Round Table Conference of 1930 laid down four principles as the bases of the proposed constitution; and these were an All-India Federation, Responsibility at the Centre; complete Provincial Autonomy and safeguards in the interests of India. The rulers of the States demanded that the rights and duties of the Paramount Power should not be assigned to persons who are not under the direct control of the Crown. Hence the Government of India Act has separated the office of the Governor-General as the head of the Indian Government and that of the Representative of the Crown (Viceroy) who should exercise the rights of Paramountcy. But one and the same man will function both as Crown Representative and as Governor-General. The States should surrender a portion of their sovereign powers to the Federation on their entering it voluntarily; but in other matters of internal administration they were to be independent of the Federal authority. They are to remain subject to the Paramountcy rights of the Crown. Their accession to the Federation thus restricts "their existing (internal) sovereignty within the accepted federal sphere. It excludes Paramountcy from the sphere accepted by them as federal."*

The Governor-General and the Crown Representative

The most important features of the Indian Federation can be deemed to be the following. Whereas (1) in the cases of other Federations, federalising has been a process of the union

* G. N. Joshi: *The New Constitution of India*, (1937) p. 64.

of small units, in India it has been a counter-process of the breaking up of the British Indian States into eleven autonomous Provinces and of bringing in the Indian States by the surrender by the latter of the few of their powers. (2) In the next place, whereas in other Federations, all the constituent units are more or less similar to one another in character and status, in India there would be two different categories of units, namely, the autonomous Provinces and the Princely States; while the citizens of the latter will not be citizens of Indian Federation. (3) The Representatives of the Indian States in both the houses of the Federal Legislature will be the nominees of their respective rulers, whereas their brethren from the Provinces will be elected. (4) The control exercised by the Federation over the Indian States will be different from and much less than that exerted over the Provinces. In the case of the States this control depends upon the terms of the Instruments of Accession, which are separately to be executed by each State and to be accepted by the Crown. Thus, as Mr. Joshi says, 'There is an obvious anomaly—a Federation composed of desperate constituent units in which the powers and authority of the Central Government differ as between one constituent unit and another." Just as the Government of India Act of 1935 was passed by Parliament, the power of amending this Act in future is vested only in that body. The other peculiar features of the Federation Scheme that force themselves on our attention lie in the peculiarities in the structure of the Federal Legislature and their possible consequences. Thus it has been said:—

Chief Features of the proposed Federation

"In other Federations, the Upper Chamber generally secures the equality of status of the federating units by allowing equal representation in it of all units, irrespective of their size and population. The Lower Chamber secures the oneness of the Federal State. Its representatives are elected by the citizens of the federating units as a whole. Thus one Chamber is intended to secure the equality and autonomy of the units, and the other to secure national unity.

Some of its Defects

In the Indian Federation, neither of these principles is observed. There is no equality of representation of the units in the Upper Chamber. Even among the States there is no equality of representation. Again, strangely enough, its election is direct, whereas in other Federations it is indirect. In the Lower Chamber the election instead of being direct is indirect. There is no direct and organic contact between the citizens and the Federation. Moreover, the direct and indirect modes of election are based on communal considerations. Under this system the very object of creating a Federation—the manifestation of nationality and the crystallisation of the essential unity of India—is negatived by the machinery which is intended to secure the representation. In other Federations, dynamic federal forces produced a desire among their citizens towards closer unity among themselves. In the Indian Federation the forces generated by the Federation are likely to strengthen provincialism and lead to the disruption of the national unity which is in the making." (pp. 81-82 of Joshi's *The New Constitution of India.*)

The Princes and their Accession

The Act of 1935 creating the Federation is binding upon British India. The accession of the Indian States to the Federation is provided by the Instrument of Accession which forms "the legal basis of the Federation as regards the States." These Instruments are binding upon the States when once they should have been offered by the States and accepted by the Crown. The Princes fear that the working of a responsible Government at the centre of the Federation may have serious reactions on their methods of Government and their internal sovereignty and they have been hesitating to accept the conditions suggested for the instruments.

Implementing of the Federation

According to the Act of 1935, the Indian Federation is to be constituted by Royal Proclamation which is dependent upon two conditions. (1) An Address to that effect should be presented by each House of Parliament; and (2) Rulers of a sufficient number of States as would be entitled to at least half the seats reserved for the States in

the Upper Chamber and also as would represent at least one half of the total population of the States should have acceded to the Federation.

The other features of the Federation like the working of the Central Executive, the reservation of very important and vital subjects like defence and foreign affairs for the special cognisance of the Governor-General outside the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, the Railway Board and the Reserve Bank of India may not be dealt with in detail in this place. They have all gone to increase the discontent felt by the progressive elements of the people, particularly by the Congress, which has been agitating for a repeal of the Act and declaring itself against any Federation on these terms. Dominion Status is the goal of a large section of the progressive elements of the population and complete Swaraj is the declared aim of the Congress. Unfortunately the Act of 1935 has no preamble like the declaration of August 1917. British opinion as expressed in Parliament at the time of the passing of the Act, has maintained that it is possible for India to move forward to full Responsible Government which may be similar to Dominion Status; and that "it is quite clear that no Bill can confir Dominion Status."

The Goal of India

The introduction of Provincial Autonomy in April 1937 was followed by an overwhelming success for the Congress Party in eight of the eleven Provinces and the Congress ministries that were set up over these administrations were given an unfettered hand in the carrying out of their own programmes of domestic improvement, which included the enforcement of prohibition, the extension of Local Self-Government and other laudable schemes. A new Province of Orissa was duly constituted under the provisions of the Act; while British Burma was separated from British India under the Government of Burma Act. For nearly two and a half years from July 1937, Provincial Autonomy worked without a hitch, till the

Provincial Autonomy introduced (1937-39)

declaration of war with Germany in September 1939 resulted in a deadlock which was caused by the resignation of the Congress Ministries by direction of the Central Congress Executive on account of the Indian Legislature and Indian opinion having been ignored in the war measures undertaken by the Government of India. This treatment was considered invidious and humiliating to the Indian nation, particularly when contrasted with the methods by which the Dominions of the British Commonwealth were allowed complete freedom in their choice to voluntarily participate in the war or refrain from doing so. From October 1939, the Congress Ministries have ceased to function in those Provinces where they had been in power and the administrations have been taken over by the Governors under the section of the Act of 1935, providing for such emergencies. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders of the Congress, while co-operating with the British in their war aims and condemning Germany's aggressions, have adopted this attitude in their zeal for advancement of India's independent individuality. This is the situation in the spring of 1940. Whether it will be followed by the threatened campaign of Civil Disobedience as in former days remains to be seen.

Resignation of the Congress Ministries

Sir C. Y. Chintamani, a noted Indian publicist of great sobriety and skill, thus outlines the hopes that have been entertained for the future of India: "The conclusion that I draw from the events of the last three quarters of a century is that the work that has been done should fill us with hope for the future. The lesson that it conveys is that the sons and daughters of India should bend every particle of their energy to the unselfish service of the Motherland in the faith that India never can die, and howsoever bitter may be the disappointments of to-day her future is bound to be glorious. No one who looks beneath the surface of things will either be unduly sanguine of the near future or be weighed down by pessimism about the ultimate end of our national

The Future of India

effort. Remember that the orator of the Congress spoke not only of 'the brilliant achievements of the past' and 'the dismal failures of the present' but of 'the splendid possibilities of the future.'....."The widest diffusion of education, the development of public spirit by increasing numbers of the educated, statesmanship among leaders and discipline in the rank and file, sacrifice wisely directed, constant effort to draw the communities nearer to one another in mutual trust, the eradication as far as possible of differential treatment based upon distinctions of birth and sex, above all, a living faith in the beneficent purposes of Providence—these are certain to lead India onward and upward until she becomes the land of free men, happy and prosperous, honoured by the nations, and, most important of all, moral and spiritual.....God bless India....."*

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* *Indian Politics since the Mutiny*—1937—(pp. 177-79)

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

(*Continued from page* 249)

A.D.	
1807—13	Governor-Generalship of Lord Minto.
1809	Treaty of Amritsar with Ranjit Singh.
	Embassies to Persia and Afghanistan.
1813	Renewal of the Company's Charter.
1813—23	Governor-Generalship of Lord Moira (Marquess of Hastings).
1814—16	The Nepal War.
1815	Successes of Ochterlony; Occupation of Kumaun.
1816	Treaty of Sagauli.
	The Nawab of Oudh assumes the title of 'King.'
1817	The Pindari War and Nagpur revolt.
1817—18	Fourth Maratha War.
	Defeat and surrender of Baji Rao.
1818	Dispersal of the Pindaris.
1819	Siege of Asirgarh.
1820—27	Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras.
1823—28	Governor-Generalship of Lord Amherst.
	Aggressions of the Burmese.
1824—26	First Burmese War.
1824	Burmese incursions into Kachar.
	British capture of Rangoon.
1825—26	Submission of the court of Ava.
1826	Siege of Bharatpur.
	Treaty of Yandabo.
1827	Death of Sir Thomas Munro.
1828—35	Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck.
1829	Suppression of *Sati*.
1831—33	Sequestration of Mysore
	Annexation of Coorg.
1833	Renewal of the Company's Charter.
1834	English made the medium of instruction.
1835—36	Governor-Generalship of Sir Charles Metcalfe.

A.D.	
1835	Liberation of the Press.
1836—42	Governor-Generalship of Lord Auckland.
1838	Afghan troubles commence.
1839—42	First Afghan War.
1839	Death of Ranjit Singh.
	Shah Shuja enters Kabul.
1841	Murder of Burnes.
1842—44	Governor-Generalship of Lord Ellenborough.
	Destruction of the British Army.
1842	Defence of Jalalabad.
	British withdraw from Afghanistan.
1843	Annexation of Sind; Battle of Miani.
	Battle of Maharajpur and Paniar.
1844—48	Governor-Generalship of Lord Hardinge.
1845—46	First Sikh War.
1845	Battle of Mudki.
1846	Battles of Firuzshahr, Aliwal and Sobraon.
	Treaty of Lahore.
1848—56	Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie.
1848—49	Second Sikh War.
1848	Siege of Multan.
	Battles of Chillianwala and Gujrat.
	Annexation of the Punjab.
1849	Annexation of Satara.
1852	Second Burmese War.
	Annexation of Pegu.
1853	Renewal of the Company's Charter.
	Annexation of Jhansi and Nagpur.
	Assignment of Berar.
1854	Opening of the Ganges Canal.
	Formation of the Department of Public Instruction.
	Commencement of Telegraphs and Railways.
1856	Annexation of Oudh.
1856—62	Governor-Generalship of Lord Canning.
1857	Treaty with Dost Muhammad.
1857	Rising at Meerut; Massacre at Cawnpore.

A.D.	
1857	Rising at Lucknow; Capture of Delhi and Reduction of Oudh.
	English capture Jhansi and Gwalior.
	Foundation of the Madras, Calcutta and Bombay Universities.
1857—58	The Mutiny.
1858	Abolition of the Company's Government.
	Queen Victoria's Proclamation.
1858—62	Viceroyalty of Lord Canning.
1859	Bengal Rent Act—Restoration of order.
1860	Passing of the Penal Code.
1861	Criminal Procedure Code passed.
	High Court established.
1862—63	Viceroyalty of Lord Elgin.
1863	Death of Lord Elgin and of Dost Muhammad.
1864—69	Viceroyalty of Lord Lawrence.
1864	War with Bhutan.
1865—67	The Orissa Famine.
1868	Tenancy Acts of the Punjab and Oudh.
	Sher Ali regains the throne of Afghanistan.
1869—72	Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo.
1869	Ambala Conference with Sher Ali.
	Opening of the Suez Canal.
1872—76	Viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook.
1873—74	Famine in Bengal and Bihar.
1875	Trial and Deposition of the Gaekwar.
1875—76	Visit of the Prince of Wales to India.
	Lord Northbrook resigns.
1876—78	Famine in South India.
1876—80	Viceroyalty of Lord Lytton.
1877	Imperial Assemblage.
1878	Despatch of British Indian troops to Malta.
	The Vernacular Press Act.
1878—80	Second Afghan War.
1879	Flight of Sher Ali; Treaty of Gandamak.
	Abolition of customs hedge.
1880—84	Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon.

A.D.	
1881	Restoration of Mysore to its Ruling House.
	First general census taken.
1882	Local Government Act passed.
	Repeal of the Vernacular Press Act.
1884—88	Viceroyalty of Lord Dufferin.
1885	Amir Abdur Rahman meets the Viceroy at Rawalpindi.
	Panjdeh Incident.
	Inauguration of the Indian National Congress.
1885—86	Third Burmese War.
1885—87	Tenancy Acts for Bengal, Oudh and the Punjab.
1886	Annexation of Upper Burma.
1887	Settlement of the Afghan Boundary Dispute.
	Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.
1888—94	Viceroyalty of Lord Lansdowne.
1889	Interference in Kashmir.
1891	Manipur Massacre.
1892	Lord Cross's Act.
1893	The Durand Mission; Enlargement of Legislative Councils and Extension of their Powers.
1894—99	Viceroyalty of Elgin.
1894—95	Chitral Expedition.
1895—96	Famine and Plague.
1897	The Tirah Campaign.
1899—1905	Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon.
1901	Habibullah becomes Amir.
	Creation of the N. W. Frontier Province.
	Death of Queen Victoria.
1904	Sir Louis Dane's Mission to Kabul.
	Tibetan Expedition.
	Universities Act.
1905	Partition of Bengal: New Government of East Bengal and Assam.
1905—10	Viceroyalty of Lord Minto.
1909	The Minto-Morley Reforms.
1910—16	Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge.

A.D.	
1911—12	The Coronation Durbar.—Visit of Their Imperial Majesties.—Transfer of Capital to Delhi—Reversal of the Bengal Partition.
1914	South African Indian Relief Act.
1914—18	The Great War.
1915	Death of G. K. Gokhale.
1916	Failure of Indian Government to supply the Mesopotamian army.
1916—21	Viceroyalty of Lord Chelmsford.
1917	Visit of the Secretary of State, Mr. Montagu to India.
1919	Martial Law in the Punjab.
	The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.
	The Third Afghan War.
1920	Death of B. G. Tilak.
1921	New Legislatures opened by H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught.
1921—26	Viceroyalty of Lord Reading.
1921	The Moplah Rising.
	Visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to India.
1925	The Paddison Deputation to South Africa.
	Sikh Gurudwaras and Shrines Act.
1926—31	Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin.
1926	The Linlithgow Commission.
	The Hilton Young Commission.
	The Taxation Enquiry Committee.
	The Economic Enquiry Committee.
	The Cape Town Agreement.
1927	The Skeen Committee.
	The Indian Statutory Commission (Announcement of Appointment).
1929	Revolution in Afghanistan.
1930	The Sarda Act passed.
	Mahatma Gandhi's 'Salt March.'
	The Butler Committee Report.
	First Round Table Conference.
	Publication of Simon Commission Report.

A.D.	
1931	The Irwin-Gandhi Pact.
1931—36	Viceroyalty of Lord Willingdon.
1931	Second Round Table Conference.
	Formation of the National Government in Britain.
1932	The Prime Minister's Communal Award.
1933	Third Session of the Round Table Conference.
1934	The Publication of the White Paper—Joint Select Committee.
1935	Government of India Act passed (Aug. 2).
1936	Accession of Lord Linlithgow.
1937	Burma separated from British India—Provinces of Sind and Orissa formed—First elections under Provincial Autonomy—Congress Ministries in eight provinces.
1939	War with Germany—Resignation of Congress Ministries—Breakdown of autonomy in the Congress-controlled Provinces.

APPENDIX B

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CHAPTER XVI

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