VII. LAND SETTLEMENT

A. NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES

Reference has been made above to the various experiments made by the British rulers about the assessment and collection of land-revenue leading to the Permanent Settlement in Bengal. It has also been shown how the early enthusiasm, which looked upon this measure as the panacea for all evils, rapidly cooled down and the authorities were loth to extend its operation to new areas. A striking instance of the change of policy is furnished by the “Ceded” and “Conquered Territories” which later constituted the N.W. Provinces. The Government of Bengal, of which it formed a part, promised in 1803 and 1805 to introduce Permanent Settlement in these territories, subject to the sanction of the home authorities. The Court of Directors refused to give the necessary sanction, as a Board of Commissioners, appointed in 1807, opposed the immediate conclusion of a Permanent Settlement.

The system of periodical settlements for short terms continued, with deplorable consequences. The State-revenue amounted to the entire net assets of land after deducting a small allowance for the cost of collection. There was no proper enquiry, and the assessment was generally fixed at the highest bid of a revenue farmer without considering the rights of actual cultivators. In the first ten years of the British rule over these territories the revenue had gone up by as much as 19 per cent. over the highest amount ever collected by the Nawab of Avadh. Such a heavy assessment, the severity of the method of collection, and the immediate sale of the land in default of payment of rent filled the cup of misery of the poor cultivators.

The Board of Commissioners, appointed in 1807, did not finish its labours till 1819 when the Secretary, Holt Mackenzie, formulated its recommendations in his famous minute, dated 1 July, 1819. It formed the basis of the Regulation VII of 1822, according to which the settlement was to be made largely with the village Zamindars (peasant proprietors) who were organized in village communities and generally cultivated their own lands. In lieu of their rights, the other classes like the landlords or Talukdars, who had rights in the land, were generally granted compensation from the Government treasury which was collected from the village Zamindars. The basis for the settlement was the ‘net produce’, which meant that portion of the gross produce of land which remained after deducting the expenses of cultivation, including the profits of stock and wages of labour i.e. expenditure on labour and capital by the cultivators. The
Regulation recommended a cadastral survey of the land, and the settlement officers were required to compute very carefully the actual produce of each bigha of land and the cost of its cultivation. The gross income of the cultivator was fixed on the basis of the average price for several preceding years, and the revenue was assessed after deducting the expenses of cultivation. The result was delay and over-assessment, for the demand of the State amounted to 83 per cent. of the gross rental of estates. The revenue officials looked upon the detailed process of settlement as too irksome. The British manufacturers were also opposed to it, for as the assessment of revenue was made according to crops, there was no inducement to the production of cotton, sugar, indigo and such other raw materials required by the British industry.

These considerations as well as the excessive assessments induced Lord Bentinck to introduce a new mode of settlement by the Regulation IX of 1833. The great task of carrying out the settlement operation on the line of this Regulation was entrusted to Robert Merttins Bird. Its main features may be summed up as follows:

1. The basis of assessment was changed from 'net produce' to 'rental assets'. Instead of calculating the actual produce and its value, the settlement officers had to ascertain the rents payable on lands of particular qualities and thus fix the land-tax for a fiscal area. Two-thirds of the total rental thus determined was fixed as the land-revenue and one-third to be left to the proprietors, whether Zamindars or putteedars. The land-tax for the whole area was then apportioned among the villages contained within the area.

2. The assessment was fixed unalterably for 30 years.

3. The rights of all persons who held a heritable land and transferable property in the soil were recognized and recorded. Thus all the village Zamindars who had survived the vagaries and irregularities of the different types of assessment in the past were recognized as cultivating proprietors of their lands, and the rights of each of them were defined and kept in permanent records.

4. Settlements were made with the village Zamindars, including those who had hitherto been paying revenue through the Talukdars. These Talukdars were granted an allowance equal to 18 per cent. of the total revenue collected by the Government, and this amount was to be paid from the treasury. It was, however, laid down in 1844, that the 18 per cent. was to be paid only to the original grantee during his life, his successors being paid only 10 per cent. which was fixed as the regular allowance.

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5. A detailed land survey was undertaken and a complete record of each cultivated field was made. So, assessment was made even of the lands which village communities had hitherto managed to conceal. Its effect was that the village communities had no reserves left to fall back upon in time of emergency, and all their resources were thus exhausted.

6. A large scale resumption of rent-free tenures was made. The total revenue yielded by such lands in the N.W.P. (excluding Delhi and Saugor Division) for the period 1835 to 1848 amounted to Rs. 1,22,56,221. The harsh measures adopted by over-zealous subordinate officers to resume rent-free tenures were adversely commented upon by T. C. Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor, as follows:—

"The Settlement Officer swept up without inquiring every patch of unregistered rent-free land, even those under ten Bighas (three acres) exempted by a subsequent order, which did not come out before five-sixths of the tenures had been resumed. In one district, that of Farakkaabad, the obligations of a treaty and the direct orders of Government were but lightly dealt with; and in all, a total disregard was evinced for the acts even of such men as Warren Hastings and Lord Lake".

Still more emphatic was the Lieutenant-Governor's condemnation of the manner in which the rights of hereditary landlords had been interfered with. The following is one of the instances cited.

"The Raja of Mynpuri, whose predecessor had received the highest acknowledgments from the British Government for his unshaken loyalty, when the district was overrun by Holkar's army in the year 1804, was, without a reference to Government, under the construction put on the right of a Talukdar, deprived entirely, he and his successors in perpetuity, of all power of interference in 116 of the 158 villages included in his Taluka, which had descended to him in regular succession before the introduction of the British rule".

Another observation of the Lieutenant-Governor is worth quoting. He characterized the mode of assessment to be "of a decidedly levelling character, and calculated so to flatten the whole surface of society as eventually to leave little of distinguishable eminence between the ruling power and the cultivators of the soil. It is a fearful experiment, that of trying to govern without the aid of any intermediate agency of indigenous growth; yet it is, what it appears to me, that our measures, now in progress, have a direct tendency
to bring about”.68 “At the same time it should be remembered that
Bird’s declared intention to make the assessment perpetual, where
the lands were fully cultivated and assessed, has been disregarded
by later administrators; and his desire to eventually follow the same
practice in other districts, as they came more fully under cultiva-
tion, has not been fulfilled. On the contrary, the levelling character
of the measures, deplored by T. C. Robertson in 1842, are more
noticeable after the lapse of sixty years. The village Patwari, paid
by the Government, is the master of the situation in North India
to day”.69

James Thomason, who succeeded Robertson as Lieutenant-Gov-
ernor in 1843, removed some of the evils pointed out by his prede-
cessor. In 1849 he completed the work of Merttins Bird and closed
the great settlement. Special importance attaches to the “Directions
for Settlement officers” which he issued in 1844. It is justly looked
upon as “the first complete Land Settlement Code” compiled in
India, and some of the principles enunciated by Thomason were
later embodied in the Tenancy Acts of the different provinces of
India. Merttins Bird’s assessments were revised after he had left
India and reduced by the exemption of many rent-free tenures.
In this modified form the Settlement was approved by the Court
of Directors in 1851.

The two most serious defects of this settlement were, first, that
the fixing of the land-tax for an entire fiscal area like a pargana
was more or less guess work; secondly, the land-tax amounting to
two-thirds of the net produce was excessive and proved to be a
crushing burden to the landlords and cultivators. This painful truth
soon became evident to the Government itself, and new rules were
issued in 1855, reducing the land-tax to 50 per cent. instead of 66 per
cent. They formed part of the new rules which were issued in con-
nection with the re-settlement of the Shaharanpur District and are
therefore generally known as the “Shaharanpur Rules”. The 50 per
cent. basis was gradually adopted in land-settlements in other parts
of India.

The settlement in N.W.P. came to be known as Mahalwari
Settlement, as the basis of assessment was the produce of a Mahal
or estate. All the proprietors of a Mahal were, severally and jointly,
responsible in their persons and property for the sum assessed by
the Government on the Mahal. If the number of proprietors were
numerous, a few were selected as representatives of the whole and
made responsible for the management of the Mahal and payment
of the revenue.
B. BOMBAY

The British came into the possession of the major part of the Bombay Presidency after the Third Maratha War in 1818, as a result of the annexation of the Peshwa's dominions. The most characteristic feature of the administration of the Maratha country at the time was the system of village communities, which formed so many miniature States, "almost sufficient to protect their members if all other Governments are withdrawn". The other important feature of the Maratha rule was "the cultivation of the land by peasant proprietors, called Mirasdars or hereditary owners of their fields". A large portion of the Ryots were the proprietors of their estates, subject to the payment of a fixed land tax to Government; their property was hereditary and saleable; and they were never dispossessed while they paid their tax.

The new British administrators swept away both these institutions. They adopted the Ryotwari Settlement, already introduced in Madras with disastrous consequences. The main features of this settlement were: (1) assessment upon every separate cultivator; (2) the measurement of fields and an estimate of the yield; and (3) the fixing of Government demand at 55 per cent. of the produce. As could be expected on the analogy of what happened in other provinces, the measurement was faulty, the estimates of produce were wrong, and the revenue was excessive. The Bombay Administration Report of 1872-3 describes the result as follows:—"Every effort, lawful and unlawful, was made to get the utmost out of the wretched peasantry, who were subjected to torture, in some instances cruel and revolt beyond all description, if they would not or could not yield what was demanded. Numbers abandoned their homes and fled into the neighbouring Native States. Large tracts of land were thrown out of cultivation, and in some districts no more than a third of the cultivable area remained in occupation."

A new system was introduced in 1835, associated with the names of Goldsmid and Wingate, and based on a complete survey of lands. "The plan adopted by Goldsmid and Wingate was very simple. They classed all soils into nine different classes according to their quality; they fixed the assessment of a district after inquiries into its circumstances and previous history; and they distributed the district demand among the villages and fields contained in the district. The owner of each field was then called upon to cultivate his holding on payment of the Land Tax fixed for his field". "The assessment was fixed by the Superintendent of Survey without any reference to the cultivator; and when those rates were introduced, the holder of each field was summoned to the Collector and informed of
the rate at which his land would be assessed in future; and if he chose to retain it on those terms, he did; if he did not choose, he threw it up". So the Ryotwari Settlement was continued in Bombay. "The rules of the Settlement were finally gathered up in 1847 in what is known as the Joint Report, signed by H. E. Goldsmid, Captain Wingate, and Captain Davidson. This Joint Report of 1847 was the basis of the Bombay Settlement, as Thomason's Directions to Settlement Officers, published in 1844, was the basis of the Settlement in Northern India".

This Settlement was undoubtedly a great improvement upon the existing one, and future settlements were made on this basis for recurring periods of thirty years. But its defects were similar in character to those of N. W. P. The assessment was a guess-work, and likely to vary with each settlement according to the mood of the new settlement officers. The cultivators lost their right to hereditary tenure of lands at fixed rates and had no inducements to effect any permanent improvement as there was no security against arbitrary enhancement of the State demand. By making arrangement with individual cultivator and ignoring the village communities the British Government gave a death-blow to these indigenous self-governing institutions.

Even the Sadar Board of Revenue and the Government of India, painfully aware of the ruin brought upon Madras by the Ryotwari Settlement, doubted the propriety of the new system. The Bombay Government defended their action by citing the example of N.W.P. It was, however, ignored that there was an essential difference between the two. "In Northern India the assessment was made for an entire estate or village, and the owners of the estate or the village collectively could protest with some effect if the guess-work assessment was wrong. In Bombay, every field was separately assessed, and the humble cultivator of a field had little chance of redress if the Settlement Officer made a wrong guess". Nevertheless, the protest of the Sadar Board of Revenue in 1838 was no more successful than that of the Madras Board of Revenue in 1818. It is interesting to note that some highly placed British officials fully recognized the baneful effects of the Ryotwari system in Bombay and had the courage to state in public that by sweeping aside Village Communities and intermediate landlords the cultivators were reduced to a race of paupers.

C. MADRAS

The early history of the land-revenue system in Madras has been described in the preceding volume. Even so late as 1818 the Madras
Board of Revenue pleaded in favour of recognizing the Village Communities and making land revenue settlements with them. But the existence of self-governing bodies was incompatible with the absolute form of British Government. Sir Thomas Munro was the Governor of Madras from 1820 to 1827, and during his regime the Ryotwari Settlement was introduced everywhere in Madras save in those areas where Permanent Settlement had already been introduced. The special feature of this settlement was that the Government demand on each plot of land was permanently fixed and each cultivator could take or reject the field offered, if he thought the rent excessive. Munro reduced the assessment from one-half of the estimated produce of the fields to one-third and remedied many other evils of the system. But one-third of the produce represented in many cases the entire economic rent and as such even the new system proved to be highly oppressive. Two other factors aggravated the evils of the system. In the first place, the cultivators had to pay a fixed sum of money irrespective of the actual yield or current prices. Secondly, the land-revenue was not collected through local bodies of villagers as in the North-West Provinces, but low-paid agents were employed for the purpose who made good for the deficiency in their salary by unjust extortions from the helpless tenants enforced by cruel and oppressive methods.

So long as Sir Thomas Munro was at the helm of affairs, his benevolence and constant supervision kept the evils within limit. His death in 1827 removed this healthy check and “for thirty years the Province of Madras became a scene of oppression and agricultural distress unparalleled even in India in that age”. The following extracts from the reports of Collectors of various Districts would convey some idea of the actual situation.

“Bellary District—The Collector reported in 1845: “The universal complaint and request of the Ryots is to be allowed to reduce their farms, a convincing proof that cultivation is not profitable. Ryots, formerly substantial, and capable of laying out their capital on the lands, and liquidating their Sircar (State) demand, reserving their produce until they could get a favourable price, are now sunk in debt bearing heavy interest, entirely subject to their creditors; and were it not for the aid of the Collector through his revenue subordinates, one-half, or at least one-third, of the highly assessed lands would ere this have been thrown up....With regard to food and raiment, the majority of them are poorly clad and ill-fed, and it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that poverty is the cause”.

“Rajamundry, afterwards called Godavari District, appeared, from the report of Sir Henry Montgomery in 1844, to have been on the verge of ruin. There were famines in 1830 and 1831; the seasons were unfavourable in 1835, 1836 and 1837, and calamitous in 1838, 1839 and 1840. The population, which was 695,016 in 1830 had decreased to 533,836 in 1840.”

“Gantur and Masulipatam.—The famine of 1833, known as the Gantur famine, was the severest on record in these parts. Captain Walter Campbell, who was an
eye–witnes", stated: "The description in The Siege of Corinth of dogs gnawing human skulls is mild as compared with the scene of horror we are daily forced to witness in our morning and evening rides. It is dreadful to see what revolting food human beings may be driven to partake of. Dead dogs and horses are greedily devoured by these starving wretches; and the other day, an unfortunate donkey having strayed from the fort, they fell upon him like a pack of wolves, tore him limb from limb, and devoured him on the spot". In the Guntur portion of the Krishna district from one-third to half of the whole population perished. An epidemic broke out in the following year, and "a man in perfect health was hardly to be seen anywhere".99

All this is corroborated by the report on the general condition of the Madras ryot, drawn up in 1853 by Bourdillon, one of the best-known Madras officials of his day.

"A very small proportion of the cultivators who were favourably assessed or held revenue-free lands, or possessed other exceptional advantages, were well to do, and, with an income of 30 to 40 shillings a month, were accounted to be very well off. An income of £3 to £5 a month was very rare even among these classes."

The large majority of the cultivators, however, were always in poverty and generally in debt. "A Ryot of this class of course lives from hand to mouth; he rarely sees money except that obtained from the Chetty (money-lender) to pay his kist (installment of Government revenue); the exchanges in the out-villages are very few, and they are usually conducted by barter. His ploughing cattle are wretched animals not worth more than 3½ to 6 rupees each (7 to 12 shillings), and those perhaps not his own, because not paid for. His rude and feeble plough costs, when new, no more than 2 or 3 shillings; and all the rest of his few agricultural implements are equally primitive and inefficient. His dwelling is a hut of mud walls and thatched roofs, far ruder, smaller, and more dilapidated than those of the better classes of Ryots above spoken; and still more destitute, if possible, of anything that can be called furniture. His food and that of his family is partly their porridge made of the meal of grain boiled in water, and partly boiled rice with a little condiment; and generally the only vessels for cooking and eating from are of the coarsest earthware, much inferior in grain to a good tile or brick in England, and unglaized. Brass vessels, though not wholly unknown among this class, are rare".100

The evils were not accidental, but inherent in the Ryotwari system itself. This was exposed by George Campbell who later became Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and then member of Parliament. He wrote the following account of the Madras system in 1852:

"Only imagine one Collector dealing with 150,000 tenants, not one of whom has a lease; but each pays according as he cultivates and gets a crop, and with reference to the number of his cattle, sheep, and children; and each of whom gets a reduction if he can make out a sufficiently good case. What a cry of agricultural distress and large families there would be in England or any other country under such a system! Would any farmer ever admit that his farm had yielded anything, that his cattle had produced, or that his wife had not produced? If the Collector were one of the prophets and remained in the district to the age of Methuselah, he would not be fit for the duty; and as he is but an ordinary man and foreigner and continually changed, it would be strange if the native subordinates could not do as they liked, and, having power, did not abuse it. Accordingly, it is generally
agreed that the abuses of the whole system, and specially that of remissions, is something frightful; chicaneary and intrigue of all kinds are unbounded; while the reliance of the Madras Collector on informers by no means mends the matter".101

The evils of the system were rendered far worse by the use of torture, "almost universal in the Province for the prompt realisation of the assessed revenue from the miserable cultivators".102 The question being raised in course of a discussion in the British House of Commons, the Government of India was forced to appoint a Commission of Enquiry consisting of three Englishmen.

"They found, that the practice of torture for the realisation of the Government revenue existed in the Province; and they also found that injured parties could not obtain any redress".103 "The kinds of torture which were most common were: keeping a man in the sun; preventing his going to meals or other calls of nature; confinement; preventing his cattle from going to pasture; quartering a peon on him; the use of Kitee Anumdal, i.e. tying a man down in a bent position; squeezing the crossed fingers; pinches, slaps, blows with fist or whip, running up and down; twisting the ears, making a man sit with brickbats behind his knees; putting a low caste man on his back; striking two defaulters' heads, or tying them by the back hair; placing in the stocks; tying by the hair to a donkey's or a buffalo's tail; placing a necklace of bones or other degrading or disgusting materials round the necks; and occasionally, though rarely, more severe discipline".104

 "One thing which came out very clearly during this inquiry was that where the land was severely assessed, the cases of torture were frequent. And Bourdillon, the Collector of North Arcot, recorded his opinion that torture for the purposes of revenue "might have ceased entirely by this time, but for the exorbitant demand on the land, and some particular incidents of the revenue system in these Provinces".106

'The Sadar Board of Revenue made a strong protest to the Government of India against the over-assessment and attendant evils of the Madras Ryotwari System. In a letter dated 20 March, 1838, they pointed out the fraud and oppression practised by every low-paid officer of the State, and deprecated the harassing and inquisitorial searches made into the means of every cultivator. But neither the censure of the Sadar E-ard nor the melancholy reports continually received from District Collectors induced the Madras Government to reform its wretched land administration'.106 While the Madras Government continued it, without any attempt at effecting reforms such as were made in Bombay and N.W.P., the Madras officials took every opportunity to extend the system. Such opportunities came when permanently settled estates were sold for non-payment of revenue. It has even been alleged by a British official that such sales were not often deliberately brought about by the Collector. He writes: "Meet a Ryotwari Collector in his own house, at his hospitable board, he will admit that the sale of a great Zemindari which he had just achieved was brought about by dexterous management; that the owner had been purposely permitted to
get into the meshes of the Collector's net beyond his power of extrication; that the sale could easily have been obviated, nay, perhaps was uncalled for". Some specific instances cited by this writer may be mentioned here.

"In Tinnevelly District, the proprietor of the ancient Chocumpati estate came to the Collector to arrange a settlement of the arrear due from his estate; but he was seized as a disaffected and dangerous character; was kept in confinement as a political offender without any specific charges being preferred against him; and his estate was confiscated. In Nellore District the Mahomedan Jaigirdar of Udai-giri was similarly confined for life for alleged treason without a trial; and his estate was also confiscated. In Guntur District the great Vassy-Reddy possessions, yielding a revenue of £60,000 a year, were sold for £500 for arrears which had accrued during the management of the estate by Government Officers as trustees. In Masallapam District the Nedavadole estates, worth £3000 a year, were sold for £1200. In Vizagapatam District the ancient Zemindari of Golconda, worth £1000 a year, was sold for £10. And as these and other estates were sold one by one, the Ryotwari system was introduced in the lands".107

In course of the Parliamentary inquiry into the affairs of India in 1852 and 1853, preceding the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1853, the evils of the Madras system were fully exposed by several witnesses. This forced the Madras Government to take steps to remedy the evils. Their plan was based upon "an accurate survey and careful settlement of the land revenue". The elaborate order which they issued on this subject in 1855 makes very interesting reading. It was admitted that "at present, cultivation is undoubtedly repressed by the heavy burdens on the land direct and indirect", with the result that there was "a vast extent of unoccupied land, with a peaceful and industrious population scantily fed and scantily employed to the extent of being led to cross the sea in search of employment, though peculiarly averse to leaving home...".108 Nothing can be a greater indictment upon the system to which the Government of Madras clung with tenacity for more than half a century, and then awoke, like Rip Van Winkle, to discern its evils causing wide-spread misery,—a fact which was patent to everybody all the while.

D. THE PANJĀB

Reference has been made above to the policy of John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjāb. In pursuance of it he issued direction that while the assessment should be low, the middlemen should be eschewed, for "they are the curse of the country everywhere".

Though the latter part of this instruction was carried to the letter, the first part was not. The assessment was by no means low. Henry Lawrence, while ruling the Panjāb as Resident, had substi-
tuted the British system of collecting land revenue in money for the old system of payment in kind. This aggravated the evils of the over-assessment during the British rule.

"In 1847-48 the Land Revenue of the Punjab was £ 820,000. Within three years after British annexation it went up to £ 1,060,000. The fall in prices added to the distress of the cultivators, now required to pay their revenue in money. The complaint during the year 1851 on the part of the agriculturists was loud and general." "There has been a very general demand among the agriculturists for a return to grain payments, to a division or appraiseiment of the crops every season. The Board have resisted this call, but have directed the suspension of revenue wherever it appeared desirable". 109

As the demand of one-third the gross produce payable in money proved oppressive to the cultivators, it was reduced to one-fourth and then to one-sixth of the gross produce. The wisdom of this policy was proved by the fact that though the demand of land revenue diminished, the actual collections did not show any decrease.

E. IRRIGATION

The system of irrigation is closely connected with land revenue. Early in the nineteenth century, when the British had got possession of considerable parts of Upper India, they turned their attention to the repair of the canals which had been constructed by the Muslim rulers but neglected during the political chaos and confusion of the eighteenth century. But not much was done till 1823, when Col. John Colvin was appointed General Superintendent of Irrigation at Delhi and completed the restoration of the West Jamuna Canal which had been begun by Lt. Blaine. The canal was about 445 miles long, and during the famine of 1837 its water saved crops of the estimated value of a million and a half sterling.

The East Jamuna canal was then taken up and completed with some additions, the total length being 155 miles. The restoration of the Ganges canal, about nine hundred miles long, though begun before 1858, was not completed till some time after it. The Company's Government also excavated the Bari Doab Canal, about 450 miles long, in the Panjāb.

Not much was done to restore and preserve the numerous reservoir tanks, constructed for irrigation by the old Hindu rulers and chiefs of South India, whose remains lie scattered over the whole region. But big irrigation projects were undertaken in 1836 to utilize the water of the Coleroon (branch of the Kaveri) by improv-
ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

ing the ancient anicuts built by the Hindu rulers about two thousand years ago. In addition to the Upper and Lower Coleroon anicuts, subsidiary works were undertaken for conveying irrigation over the district of Tanjore and portions of Trichinopoly and South Arcot. The following figures give an idea of the immensity of the undertaking and its result.

Total area irrigated ..................... 716,000 acres.
Total expenditure ................................ £ 180,000.
Increase of land revenue ...................... £ 44,000 per annum.

The credit for this great work must go to Sir Arthur Cotton, who first conceived the idea and carried it against much opposition. He next took up the Godavari Works which has made him famous. Unfortunately, the Company's Government and the Crown Administration that succeeded it gave him only a grudging support. Referring to this his biographer observes:

"It has taken thirty-two years to obtain £ 700,000 for them—£ 20,000 a year for works which from the very first had been almost prodigious success... The only dispute is whether they yield 27, 28, or 40 per cent; and now after thirty-two years only 700,000 acres out of one million are irrigated... During this time there was not the least question about £ 500,000 for sixty miles of railway to Nagpur, which it was acknowledged would not pay 4 per cent".110

The next great work was the anicut across the Krishna river commenced in 1853. These irrigation works considerably extended the area and improved the prospect of cultivation, but unfortunately, the people did not derive much benefit out of it. For the land revenue was raised as much as possible, "leaving the unfortunate cultivators as permanently poor as they were before". As noted above, the Coleroon Works yielded a return of 24 per cent., and while constructing the Godavari and the Krishna Works the Company estimated an increase of land revenue, respectively, by 100 and 30 per cent. on the outlay. These figures show that the British policy was ungenerous in the extreme and inspired by the idea of profit rather than the material interests of the cultivators.

F. INAM

An important question connected with the settlement of lands was the British policy of the resumption of Inams. These were rent-free tenures of land, sometimes even of entire villages, granted in perpetuity by the Hindu and Muslim rulers in the past, either to an individual as a reward for public service or distinguished talents, or for the maintenance of religious or charitable institutions and pious learned Brahmins or Muslim saints. The grant usually took the
form of an assignment of the land revenue due to the State, and was liable to abuses by manipulation of records, particularly when the Government supervision was lax, as, for example, during the political chaos and confusion of the eighteenth century. From the very beginning of their rule the British were very keen on resuming the unauthorized assignments. This caused considerable difficulty even to the genuine holders of Inams, for the family held the grants for centuries but could not produce the original deeds of grant. The rule for resumption of grants was gradually tightened against the holders.

By the rules of 1793, the Collectors had to proceed by instituting regular suits in court as plaintiffs, against any person holding rent-free land without a valid tenure. The Regulation VIII of 1811 authorized Collectors in Ceded and Conquered Provinces, with the sanction of the Revenue Board, to resume and assess such lands, leaving parties aggrieved to contest the resumption by a suit in a court. Whatever might be the legal justification of the resumptions carried out on a large scale, the denial of prescriptive rights not only caused grave resentment to the parties directly concerned but also upset a social and economic order of long standing. This was fully realized by the Government. A resolution of the Government of India, dated August, 1822, referred to the wide-spread disturbance of tranquillity and good order of the country, and then “frankly admitted that the evil consisted not so much in the change itself as in the rapidity with which it was introduced; the sudden demand of a full revenue in place of a light assessment was calculated to drive the uprooted elements to acts of violence, who, under a more gradual course of measure, would be converted into industrious and peaceful cultivators”.

But the Government continued vigorously “the policy of resumption, which was still more detailed by Regulation II of 1819 and Regulation III of 1828. The latter provided for the establishment of special commissioners with a view to prosecuting the investigation of the titles of persons claiming rent-free lands. Again, Regulation V of 1831 sought to check the practice of granting Inams in the form of an assignment of the land-revenue of large areas which were retained in perpetuity by ‘devolution and adoption’, and in 1845, an order was passed restricting the tenure of these grants to existing lives”.

An Inam Commission was appointed in Bombay in 1852. Further references to this practice which caused grave discontent, leading to violence and armed resistance on the part of the people, will be made later.
G. GENERAL REVIEW

The different systems of assessment of land revenue described above betray certain general tendencies on the part of the British administrators. The most important of them was to eliminate, as far as possible, intermediate agencies, and to establish direct relation with the cultivators. It had two great advantages from imperialist point of view. In the first place, influential middlemen are potential enemies of a totalitarian State and not so amenable to control as an isolated helpless ryot, who has no means to resist. Secondly, village communities or similar indigenous organizations of local self-government are likely to come into conflict with, and create aversion against, the absolute authority of the local British officials. By discarding all these agencies or at least reducing them to impotence, British imperialism and autocracy could ride roughshod over the people.

Another important characteristic was to raise the assessment as high as practicable, irrespective of its consequences to the people. This need not be attributed to any inherent malevolence on the part of the Government or officials, but was probably due mainly to ignorance and greed, whetted by need for more and more money. But it betrays a supreme indifference and lack of sympathy to the governed, produced by a spirit of racial arrogance and superiority complex.

If, as a British historian has put it, "the measure of Indian prosperity was the condition of the peasantry", no historian can probably describe British India as even moderately prosperous, in any sense of the term. The Ryotwari system reduced the cultivators to a state of wretched misery which differed in degree, but not in kind, in different parts of India. The slightly modified forms of the system in North India also proved highly oppressive till at least the middle of the nineteenth century. The tenants in the permanently settled estates were, no doubt, in a better condition, but it would be nothing short of euphemism to describe their condition as prosperous, in any degree.

The first fifty years of British rule in India witnessed the ruin of her trade and industry, driving an increasingly large proportion of her people to the lands. The next fifty years of British rule brought the cultivators as a class, forming nearly four-fifths of the population, to the brink of ruin and destruction. Ninety per cent. of them never had two square meals a day or decent cloth and house fit for human beings. Thus was laid the foundation of that abject and universal poverty of India, which forms the chief characteristic feature of the first century of British rule in India. It was not
yet redeemed, to any appreciable extent, by those of its blessings which affect the lives of the people in general, namely, peace and security of life and property.

The views of educated and liberal-minded Indians in respect of land-settlement may be gathered from the opinions expressed by Raja Rammohan Roy.

"The Select Committee of the House of Commons, which was appointed in February, 1831, and reappointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter, invited him to appear before it. Rammohun declined this request but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications to the Board of Control." The first of these dealt with Revenue. The Raja appears here as the champion of the rack-rented ryot (peasant). While the Zamindars or land-holders had been greatly benefited by the Permanent Settlement of 1793, while their wealth and the wealth of the community had generally increased, the poor cultivator was no better off. The remedy he asked for was, in the first place, the prohibition of any further rise in rent, and secondly—rents being now so exorbitantly high as to leave the ryot in a state of extreme misery,—a reduction in the revenue demanded from the Zamindar so as to ensure a reduction in the ryot's rent. The decrease in revenue he would meet by increasing taxes upon luxuries or by employing as Collectors low-salaried Indians instead of high-salaried Europeans."112a

The Raja was a strong advocate of the Permanent Settlement and discounted the view that the system had resulted in the loss of revenue to the State, as the following extract will show.

"The amount of assessment fixed on the lands of those provinces at the time of the Permanent Settlement (1793), was as high as had ever been assessed, and in many instances higher than had ever before been realized by the exertions of any government, Mohomedan or British. Therefore, the Government sacrificed nothing in concluding that settlement. If it had not been formed, the landlords (Zamindars) would always have taken care to prevent the revenue from increasing by not bringing waste lands into cultivation, and by collusive arrangements to elude further demands; while the state of the cultivators would not have been at all better than it is now. However, if the Government had taken the whole estates of the country into its own hands, as in the ceded and conquered provinces and the Madras Presidency, then by allowing the landholders only ten per cent. on the rents (Malikanah), and securing all the rest to the Government, it might no doubt have increased the revenue for a short time. But the whole of the landholders in the country would then have been reduced to the same condition as they are at present in the ceded and conquered Provinces of the Bengal Presidency or rather annihilated, as in many parts of the Madras territory; and the whole population reduced to the same level of poverty. At the same time, the temporary increase of revenue to Government under its own immediate management would also have soon fallen off, through the misconduct and negligence of the revenue officers, as shown by innumerable instances in which the estates were kept 'khas,' i.e., under the immediate management of Government".

"Besides, Government appropriates to itself an enormous duty on the transit and exportation of the produce of the soil, which has, since the period of the Perpetual Settlement, increased to a great amount from the exertions of the proprietors in extending and
improving cultivation, under the assurance that no demand of an increase of revenue would be made upon them on account of the progressive productiveness of their estates”.

The Raja contrasts the effects of the permanent and periodical systems of assessment in two statements:

“By a comparative view of the revenue of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, from the period of the Perpetual Settlement, it appears that, in the thirty-five years, from 1792-93 to 1827-28, there was a total increase on the whole amount of the revenue of above 100 per cent (101.71), and that this increase has been steady and progressive up to the present time; .........”

“By a comparative view of the revenue of the old British territory in Madras, it appears that during the same period of thirty-five years (i.e., from 1793 to 1828) there was an increase of only about 40 per cent. (40.15) on the total amount of the whole revenue. That the increase during the first 17 years was 43 $\frac{23}{100}$ per cent.; that in the next 8 years the increase was only about 3$\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; and that in the last 18 years there has been a decrease of 2.15 per cent”.

In an appendix he very strongly urged the policy of fixing a maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator, so “that their rents, already raised to a ruinous extent, might not be subject to further increase.”

VIII. POLICE AND PRISON ADMINISTRATION

1. The Police

At the time, when the British began to rule in India, the duty of maintaining law and order was vested in the local landlords who were required to maintain a quota of troops to suppress internal disorders and to deal with theft and robbery. Lord Cornwallis relieved the landlords of their police duties and transferred them to the District Magistrates. Each District was divided into a number of thanas, each under a daroga with a number of armed men under him to maintain peace and order in the locality. This system, however, proved to be an “expensive failure”. Crimes increased everywhere; robberies and murders, accompanied by atrocious cruelties, were of frequent occurrence, and “the people did not sleep in tranquillity.” The darogas could not effectively check the forces of disorder, and they themselves were often notoriously corrupt. The Fifth Report noted that the darogas of the new system were “not less corrupt than the Tannahdars, their predecessors, and they themselves and the inferior officers acting under them, with as much
inclination to do evil, have less ability to do good than the zamindary servants employed before them."

In 1813 the Court of Directors appointed a Special Committee to enquire into the state of police administration in the Company’s territories in India, and in 1814 the Court issued orders condemning the establishments of darogas and their subordinates and for re-establishing the village police. Sir Thomas Munro and Mr. Straton were appointed Commissioners to give effect to these orders, and on their recommendation was passed the Madras Regulation XI of 1816 for the establishment of a general police system throughout that Presidency. The system was thus described by Munro: “We have now in most places reverted to the old police of the country, executed by village watchmen, mostly hereditary, under the direction of the heads of the villages, tahsildars of districts and the Collector and Magistrate of the province. The establishments of the tahsildars are employed without distinction either in police or revenue duties, as the occasion requires”. In Bombay, also, Regulation XI of 1827 established a police system “founded chiefly on the ancient usages of the country”, and similar in essential features to that established in Madras in 1816.

In 1808 the Government of Lord Minto took a step to introduce “especial and expert control” by appointing a Superintendent of Police for a Division. The Superintendent had to work largely with the help of goyendas or spies, who were to trace the criminals, and the girdawars or overseers who were to apprehend them. But the goyendas, in collusion with the girdawars, actually committed “deprivations on the peaceable inhabitants, of the same nature as those practised by the dacoits whom they were employed to suppress”.

In the general changes, introduced by the Government of Lord William Bentinck in the Company’s administration in India, the Divisional Commissioners or Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit were first appointed and the office of the Superintendent of Police was abolished, mainly on the ground of economy and partly also to prevent dual control over the Magistrate. Soon the office of the Magistrate was transferred from the Judge to the Collector, and the Collector-Magistrate became the head of the police in his jurisdiction, and the Commissioner for each Division performed the function of the Superintendent of Police. In 1835 and 1837 the Commissioner was relieved of his judicial functions so that he might have more time to pay adequate attention to the affairs of the police and general administration.

But despite these changes, corruption and inefficiency in police administration increased. The Select Committee, appointed in 1832
to report on the affairs of the East India Company, pointed out the dark aspects of police administration.

The inefficiency and corruption of the Police are vividly described in the following passage in a contemporary periodical, quoted in the Calcutta Gazette of 30 April, 1827.

"It is common in the country when any case of burglary occurs in the house of any person, to prevent, if possible, its coming to the knowledge of the Magistrate, and the person robbed generally contrives to fill up the hole privately, in the course of the night and gives some bribe to the Chowkidars who may discover it: the reason of this is, that were he to give publicity to his loss, and make complaint before any public authority, he would seldom recover his property, but only have to pay the Amla something from the remainder. When a case of theft occurs, the Amla consider it an occasion of profit, and give full vent to their disposition for pillage and plunder."\(^\text{113}\)

The Calcutta Gazette of 10 June, 1830, quotes a long letter published in the well-known vernacular paper Chandrika, adding that "we entirely concur in the opinion expressed by the correspondent of the Chandrika". A few passages from this letter are quoted below:

"...To detect theft, and to prevent the violence of rogues and robbers, the Magistrates have appointed in the various zillas, Police Darogas, Buksees, Muhuris, and Peons; but these men inflicted far greater distress on the poor inhabitants than either thieves or robbers can do, for when they come with great power and pomp, they seldom refrain from theft. Thieves use some caution in their villainy, but the Darogas and more particularly those belonging to the Police, plunder with violence". ..."Whenever a new Daroga arrives, he takes written engagement from all the Talookdars, their Gomasthas, Munduls and Peons, as is the custom; but forgets not to take a rupee for each engagement. From each Peon he exacts either four or eight annas. All these people pay the sum thus extorted, at first indeed, from their own purse, but afterwards levy it upon the householders as the legitimate duceur of the Daroga. Thus he raises contributions on various pretexts from rogues, whose term of confinement has expired, from notorious characters, as well as from industrious. When therefore the people hear that a new Daroga has arrived, they tremble".\(^\text{114}\)

"Whenever a theft has been committed in the dwelling of a householder, he labours in every possible mode to conceal it from the public office; for if it should get wind, that which the thieves have left, the officers will seize..."\(^\text{115}\)

"Whenever a robbery has been committed in any house, the village watchman, if near, on that night, otherwise the next morning, gives information of it, and the Daroga, with all his establishment, proceeds to the house and opens the enquiry as commanded in the Regulations, and then makes a report to the Magistrate, who sends his Nazir; if the affair be one of murder or of very serious character, the Shristaradhar, and several other officers. With them proceed constables, bearers, servants, and a large body of men, who are not provided with food by those officers; neither do I think it is found them by Government, for we find that the expense falls on the householders, or if he be poor, is raised by a general contribution. When they arrive at the village, they find out the men of property, seize and bind them and seeking only their own profit and advantage, remain there for a month till they have squeezed out as much money as they desire, as described in the
case of theft. They then seize two or three innocent individuals, make out a report as abovementioned and extol their own exertions to the Magistrate. When the Commissioner of Circuit arrives, the accused bring their own witnesses, establish their innocence, and are dismissed. Very large sums are expended monthly in support of the police establishment, and the officers of the Thannah are appointed solely to prevent theft and robbery; yet when thefts and robberies do occur, instead of their being reproved, those very crimes become to them a source of profit. Not one of them dreams of seizing the offenders; they look only to their own profits. This is not pleasing to any Rulers, but it falls to the lot of the natives of Bengal through their own evil destiny".\textsuperscript{116}

A writer in the \textit{Calcutta Review} (1846), while recommending better payment to the Daroga and recruitment from better classes, observes as follows:—

"No person requires to be told of the evils resulting from the employment of uneducated persons—evils, the nature of which has been but too well ascertained by sad experience—and of the impossibility of living decently in this country under 100 Rupees. Our two latter propositions however require a little explanation.

"It is incumbent upon Government to change the name of Darogah, because it is one with which the most odious associations are connected,—one, which is almost synonymous with dacoit—which carries terror in its very sound—which reminds the poor cultivator of him over whom there is no control, of him who lives upon cruelty and extortion, and whose very vocation is corruption. No real native gentleman, however distressed his circumstances, will condescend to take a Darogaship as long as it bears its present designation….The present Darogahs are often the dregs of native society. When out of office they are held in the same estimation by their countrymen as porters and grooms. Imagine a durwan, with a salary of Rs. 50, placed in charge of an immense tract of land situated leagues away from the Sudar Kacheri, and holding command over some fifteen or twenty armed men,—his brethren as regards ability and dishonesty,—and you have no inadequate conception of the head native Police officer of the present day. If it be desirable to employ efficient and respectable persons as Darogahs,—the name must be changed—there is no alternative".\textsuperscript{117}

In a charge to the Grand Jury in the Supreme Court on 7th January, 1825, the presiding Judge referred "to the many robberies which were committed of late in Calcutta", but observed that "he could not order a man for execution unless there was every precaution used by the Police to prevent the commission of the crime".\textsuperscript{118}

A correspondent writes to the \textit{Government Gazette} on March 1, 1830, that the Dhurrumtollah Road in Calcutta has been lately much infested with robbers and that great suspicion has fallen on the Chowkidars as being concerned in the several robberies lately committed.\textsuperscript{119} Sir W. H. Sleeman, who served the Company in India in various capacities between 1809 and 1856, writes in his \textit{Rambles and Recollections} (based on the Journal of his march from Jabalpur to Meerut, 1835-36):—

"Still, however, the inconvenience and delay of prosecution in our courts are so great and the chance of the ultimate conviction of the great offenders is so
small that strong temptations are held out to police to conceal or misrepresent the character of crimes, and they must have a great feeling of security in their tenure of office, and more adequate salaries, better chances of rising, and better supervision over them before they will resist such temptation. The Magistrate of a district gets a salary of from two thousand to two thousand five hundred rupees a month.\textsuperscript{121} The native officer under him is the Thanadar or Head native police officer of a sub-division of his district, containing many towns and villages, with a population of a hundred thousand souls. This officer gets a salary of twenty-five rupees a month.\textsuperscript{120} In Bengal a Committee was appointed in 1837 to draw up a plan for more efficient organisation of the mofussil police. The Committe submitted its report next year, but nothing was done immediately to reform the police in Bengal, and its abuses went on increasing. Sir George Campbell wrote in his Modern India in 1852 that the Bengal Police “has attained an unfortunate notoriety as being more active for evil than good. The misdeeds of the Bengal police may be a good deal exaggerated, but they are doubtless inefficient and apt to be corrupt. The chance of efficiency seems to be much lessened by the precautions which it is necessary to take against extortion and malversation on their part... It is certain that, at this moment, in many districts of Bengal, the inhabitants are not only in danger of secret thieves but of open robbers; that gang-robberies are frequent, and any man’s house may be invaded in the night by armed force”.\textsuperscript{122}

Sir Frederick Halliday, who assumed the office of the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in May, 1854, made some definite suggestions in April, 1855, to the Supreme Government for the improvement of the police. He suggested that the salary of the lower grades of police should be increased, and thereby proposed to remove what had hitherto been a standing reproach of Indian administration in Bengal.\textsuperscript{123} No immediate orders were passed by the Government of India on this issue. But again in an elaborate Minute, dated 30 April, 1836, Sir Frederick Halliday pressed the question of improvement of the police and criminal administration in Bengal. He admitted the badness of the mufassal police and the corruptions of the village chaukidars and the inefficiency of the measures previously taken to improve them. He considered the thirty-nine subdivisional magistrates, then existing, as inadequate to exercise effective control, and urged thorough reforms of the general administration of criminal justice in Bengal, as “the badness of the police and the inefficiency of the tribunals act and react upon each other”. He added: “Whether right or wrong, the general native opinion is that the administration of criminal justice is little better than a lottery, in which the best chances are with the criminals; and I think this also is very much the opinion of the European mufassal community... the corruption and extortion of the police which causes it to be popularly said that dacoity is bad enough, but the subsequent police enquiry very much worse”.\textsuperscript{124}

Sir Frederick Halliday considered the following five measures to be indispensably necessary: (1) “the improvement of the charac-
ter and position of the village chaukidars or watchmen, (2) adequate salaries and fair prospects of advancement to the stipendiary police, (3) the appointment of more experienced officers as covenanted Zila Magistrates, (4) the appointment of one hundred more Deputy-Magistrates and the junction of judicial and executive power in all Magistrates, and (5) improvement in the Criminal Courts of justice”. He also dwelt upon the importance of good roads and of a popular system of vernacular education”.

The proposals of the Lieutenant-Governor bore no fruit until after 1858. But in 1856 he succeeded in getting passed a Chaukidari or local Police Act, which came into operation chiefly in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, its main object being “to provide for the watch and ward of the places to which it was extended”. In such places chaukidars were appointed by the District Magistrate on such pay as they thought fit. The expenses were met by the rates paid by the inhabitants, in proportions determined by panchayats or Committees of at least five men nominated by the Magistrate. After the Santal insurrection a body of military police was raised for the internal defence of Bengal.

Meanwhile some reforms in police administration had been introduced in Sindh, Bombay, Madras and the Panjáb. After the annexation of Sindh in 1843, Sir Charles Napier organized there a regular police force, the chief features of which were “separate organisation, severance of police and judicial functions and a reasonable degree of discipline”. In 1853 the Bombay Police was remodelled, the main features of reform being the “appointment to every District of a Superintendent who, while generally subordinate to the Magistrate, had exclusive control over the police; the appointment to every tahsil of a native Police officer, holding to the mamlatdar (tahsildar) the same relations as between the Superintendent and the Magistrate, and the transfer of the supreme control over the police from the court of Fauzdar Adalat to the Government”. The last feature was abandoned in a few years, when the administration of the police was transferred to the Commissioner of Police, who was also Inspector of Prisons.

The Torture Commission of 1855 revealed glaring abuses in the working of the police in the Madras Presidency. It recommended separation of revenue and police functions and the placing of police administration under independent European officers. These were given effect to by Act XXIV of 1859 and the police was re-organized on English and Irish lines. The police administration of the Presidency was entrusted to a Commissioner of Police (subsequently called Inspector-General), who was assisted by deputies.
Each District was placed under a Superintendent and his assistants. The village watcher was not removed.

After the annexation of the Panjāb in 1849, police was organized there somewhat on the lines of the Sindh police. It had two branches —Civil Detective police and a Military preventive police.

2. Thugs and Dacoits

It is difficult to convey an adequate idea of the enormity of the crimes perpetrated by a particular class of the dacoits (robbers) known as thugs. These were organized bands of murderers who followed murder and robbery as hereditary professions. The thugs had been an institution for ages and its victims were to be counted not by hundreds, but by tens of thousands. Every year added to the victims of thugs. Disguised as travellers, following ordinary avocations of life, the thugs made friends with other unsuspecting fellow-travellers, and while accompanying them, strangled them from behind by means of a piece of cloth, with a small weight attached to one end, by suddenly swinging it, with great dexterity, round the neck of the intended victim. After murdering the travelers, they took away their money and other valuables and then buried them by the roadside. The disguises and crafty methods of these robbers probably earned for them the designation thug which ordinarily means a cheat. Before starting on expeditions to rob and murder, the thugs worshipped the goddess, known by various names such as Kāli, Durgā, Bhabānī etc. The two simple objects required for committing their foul crimes, namely, the strip of cloth for strangling the victims and the pickaxe for digging their graves, were consecrated in the temple of the goddess with due rite. The thugs regarded their victims in the same light as the animals sacrificed to these goddesses by pious Hindus in the normal courses of their worship.

It is difficult to fix any particular date when this kind of crime originated or first attained general notoriety. Isolated instances of this may be traced to the thirteenth century A.D. But the thugs were a great terror almost all over India early in the nineteenth century. It was well-known both to the people and to the Government that hundreds, if not thousands, among those who left for journey abroad never returned to their homes and left no trace of their fate. The nature of thugs' activities was also no longer a secret or mystery. But it was not till the thirties that the British Government took any serious steps to suppress this foul crime. A Thagi and Dacoity department was created by Lord Bentinck, and in 1835 W. H. Sleeman was appointed General Superintendent of
the operations, and later Commissioner for the suppression of Thagi and Dacoity. The great problem of Sleeman was the difficulty of securing conviction. "So in 1836 a special act was passed by which any person convicted of belonging or having belonged to a gang of thugs became liable to imprisonment for life. Thus all that was necessary to secure conviction was to prove association of an individual with these pests of society. Encouraging approvers, Sleeman and his officers by indefatigable and comprehensive operations gradually put an end to thagi, rooting out what he justly calls "an enormous evil which had for centuries oppressed the people and from which it was long supposed that no human efforts could relieve them". "By 1852 the guild had been scattered, never again to reassemble". The name of Sleeman occupies an honoured place in Indian history for the successful exertions he made for the extirpation of the thugs, and the well-known work, Confessions of a Thug, by Meadows Taylor, gives a lurid picture of these criminal bands.

A kind of river thugs also carried on their nefarious activities in Bengal. Their modus operandi is thus described by a writer in the Government Gazette of 1st January, 1829.

"These pirates, generally, have Punsays, or boats at their disposal. They often come in two or three boats, each containing three or four men, and some six to eight—and get employment in the Ghats. The Ghat Mangee, who knows little or nothing of their character, or perhaps one of their club, recommends them to such as are desirous of their services, for which he receives a fee of one anna per rupee, and sometimes more. When these pirates succeed in obtaining a passenger, rich or poor, they, in some lonely spot, seize the opportunity to plunder and perhaps murder him, and, in a very few cases, a man escapes from their hands. Hence the numerous casualties in the families of those who are obliged to travel by water. Some of the pirates who have no boats, generally hire one, and station themselves in some parts of the river, and assuming the character of men of authority, exact exorbitant sums from laden boats, as well as from those that contain travellers; if these resist their demands, then the most woeful cruelties are practised on them by these men. In many cases they are apprehended; but very often they escape detection."

It was estimated in 1854 that about 250 boats were employed in carrying on piracies on the Ganga between Calcutta and Banaras.

Dacoities of ordinary character were also rampant and continued long after the thugs were suppressed. The Thagi police force checked the crime by breaking some gangs of dacoits, but there was again the difficulty of securing conviction. "So in 1843 an act was passed similar to that previously directed against thagi. To secure conviction it sufficed merely to prove association with a gang of dacoits either within or outside the Company's territories before or after the passing of the new measure." Doubt, however, arose as to the applicability of this enactment to dacoits who did not belong to
certain tribes therein specified. In 1851 this doubt was removed by further legislation. Kaye tells us that even then by terrorism, by producing numerous false witnesses, and by availing themselves of the barriers which the complicated machinery of the law placed between “the eyes of the British functionary and the crimes which were committed around him”, the dacoits were still glorying in their exploits “as sportsmen do.”

“In 1852 Wauchope, the magistrate of Hughsli, forwarded to the superintendent of police a list of 287 dacoits belonging to three gangs which were concerned in eighty-three dacoities, adding that at least thirty-five gangs were then committing depredations near Calcutta. He was himself appointed special Dacoity Commissioner and, assisted by the new enactments, rapidly improved the situation. But the central difficulty of the situation was the fact that the sufferers were too apathetic to defend themselves individually, and even in 1859 the Dacoity Commissioner was still indispensable”.130

On the whole the crime seems to have been steadily on the increase as the following table shows:131

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Arrested</th>
<th>Acquitted</th>
<th>Convicted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>38,893</td>
<td>43,787</td>
<td>12,181</td>
<td>26,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>43,487</td>
<td>82,987</td>
<td>30,809</td>
<td>45,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>117,001</td>
<td>86,623</td>
<td>32,831</td>
<td>50,235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Prison

“The early Indian Jail system was, like its English prototype, insanitary, demoralizing, and non-deterrent”.132 Heavy punishments were inflicted on the prisoners; they were often employed in gang-labour on the roads; health rules were not observed; and death rate “exceeded 100 per mille”.133 The earliest attempt for prison reform was made by the Regulation of 1834 at the initiative of Lord Macaulay. At his suggestion a Committee was appointed on 2nd January, 1836, to collect information regarding the actual state of the jails in India and to prepare a plan for their improvement.

The report of the First Prisons Committee, dated 8 January, 1838, contained, among others, two recommendations involving organic changes—namely the abolition of outdoor labour, and a partial recognition of the solitary confinement within doors. Among the other recommendations may be mentioned (1) the building of great central penitentiaries; (2) a better classification of prisoners; (3) supply of rations instead of money allowance; (4) the abolition of the practice of permitting each convict to cook his own meals and (5) appointment of an Inspector of Prisons.134 No change for the better was introduced until the passing of an Act in 1855, which
provided for the appointment of Inspector General of Prisons in each Presidency, and the passing of Act VII of 1856 by which the Judges of the Sadar Faujdari Adalat were relieved of the charge of jails.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT

1. Railways

India had a brilliant tradition of State activities for the promotion of public works, before the English East India Company established their political supremacy here. Different parts of the country were interconnected by roads and water-transport for commercial and other purposes. Records of the early surveys of the East India Company, such as those of Martin in 1750, of Major James Rennell (1763-66), and of Hamilton Buchanan during the early years of the nineteenth century give us an idea of what had existed in the past in the shape of communications and facilities for travel and transport, especially in Northern India with its vast plains.

With the new political and economic changes in the West as well as in India, there was naturally a demand for improved and extended means of communications about the middle of the nineteenth century. It was in 1843-44 that the earliest proposals were made for construction of railways in India. These envisaged construction of railways by companies incorporated in England, a minimum profit being guaranteed by the East India Company for a definite period. So contracts were made with the East Indian Railway Company and the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company, formed in 1845, for construction of two small railway lines near Calcutta and Bombay, respectively. In 1855, the total length opened was 121 miles from Calcutta to Ranigunge by the former and 37 miles from Bombay to Kalyan by the latter. The Madras Railways completed 65 miles from Madras to Arcot in 1856. Five other Railway companies were formed, but their lines were not open before 1858.

It was Lord Dalhousie, who, during his term of Governor-Generalship of India (1848-56), launched important schemes of railway construction. In his famous Minute of 1853, Lord Dalhousie advocated the construction of a system of trunk lines connecting the interior parts of each Presidency with its chief port and the several Presidencies with one another. His objects for the introduction of railways in India, as he stated, were "to immensely increase the striking power of his military forces at every point of the Indian Empire", to "bring British capital and enterprise to India", to
"secure commercial and social advantages to India, and to "bring into the ports produce from the interior".

During the first period of railway construction in India, the up to 1869, railway lines were constructed under a guarantee system by Joint-stock Companies. The Government of India appropriated free lands for a term of 99 years, and an annual interest of 6 per cent. on all capital raised by them. The Companies were required to pay to the Government, when they earned more than 6 per cent., half the surplus in every half year. The Companies were to be under the general supervision and control of the Government, and after the first term of twenty-five years, on the second term of fifty years, the Government had the right of retaining these railways on payment of all shares of capital held in the Company concerned.

R 2  Roads

During the period of absentee and native rulers in the early part of the 19th century, constructions and repairs of roads were neglected. The following description, though slightly paraphrased to make it more taken as a fair picture of the general state of things under British rule was established, there was not a single road of any length fit for wheeled traffic; even the main streets of many of the largest towns were unusable by vehicles. Wheeled traffic was limited to rough farm carts on solid wheels. At first there was a great deal of military road-making, but the money spent on it was mostly wasted. Commercial roads were first considered in 1813, and then there was not a road which was not either dilapidated or decayed. Bridges were almost unknown. In 1852 there was probably not a single mile throughout the presidency equal to an ordinary English turnpike road, and there were certainly not a thousand miles on which one could comfortably drive at six miles an hour. There were almost no roads or bridges in Bengal. Some idea of the backward state of communications may be formed from the facts that even in 1855-6 four streams on the Grand Trunk Road (from Calcutta to North-Western India) remained unbridged, and only then was a project for bridging the Hugli at or near Calcutta considered."

Till about the middle of the nineteenth century, the East India Company's attention was mainly directed toward the construction and repair of only two military roads, and there was no interest in improving the state of transport for civil population. Shore wrote in May, 1833: "As to the roads, except in those between the limits of the civil luters, 10 miles between Calcutta and Barrackpore is
all that we can boast of. In addition to this the foundations of a road between Benaras and Allahabad and of one between Jubbalpore and Mirzapur have been commenced, and an attempt is now making for another between Allahabad and Delhi; but unless the construction of these roads be on a better plan, and the provision for keeping them in repair on a better footing, than has been the case with the attempts hitherto made by the English in road-making, Government might just as well spare their money".\textsuperscript{137}

Lord William Bentinck conceived the idea of a new trunk road connecting Calcutta with the Upper Provinces, and this project was pushed forward by Mr. Thomason, Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces from 1843 to 1853. The conquests of Lord Dalhousie created greater needs for control over roads, and road-construction in India received much impetus during his administration. Hitherto the main roads were under the control of a Military Board in each Presidency. An attempt was made to entrust general control over local road operations in Bengal and Northern India to the Military Board in Calcutta. But still the conditions continued to be chaotic. An important reform was made in 1854, by which the inefficient Military Boards were abolished and the charges of roads and other public works were made over to Public Works Departments, which were constituted in the Provinces under the general control of the Central Government, exercised through its newly established Public Works Secretariat.

This reform of Lord Dalhousie marks a new era in the improvement of communications in India. "His engineers metalled a longer mileage of roads than had been constructed by the four preceding governors-general. Before he resigned office a system of trunk lines had been sketched, and the first section of the East India Railway had been opened; the modern postal system had been inaugurated; a telegraph line ran from Calcutta to Agra. Modern India had begun to take shape."\textsuperscript{138}


In 1826, the first steam-vessel arrived at Indian shore direct from England.\textsuperscript{139} Two years later a newspaper reports: "A large concourse of the inhabitants of Calcutta assembled at Kidderpore, on Saturday last (19 January, 1828) to witness the launch of the new Government Steam Vessel, from the Dockyard of Messrs. Kyd & Co. She was named the Berhampooter (Brahmaputra) by Commodore Häyes, and is intended solely for the River navigation. Her length is one hundred feet, her breadth eighteen; and burthen about one hundred and fifty-three tons, drawing not more than two feet and
seventy inches of water. She has two Engines, of twenty-five horse power each, and promises to fulfil the object of her construction in all respects. Nautical men say, that she is a beautifully built vessel.\textsuperscript{140} Another steamer, the Hooghly, for Government, of the same dimensions as the Brahmaputra, was launched on 29 March, 1828, for river navigation.\textsuperscript{141}

A project was set on foot to open a regular communication between England and India by way of the Mediterranean. The following paragraph appeared in the Observer of 8 February, 1830. "The Meteor Steam-vassei, Lieutenant Symons, is to leave this port tomorrow, for Falmouth, from whence it is fully expected she will take out the Malta and India mails. The letters for India will be conveyed across the Isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea, by well-guarded couriers, for which, we understand, the Phasha (Sic) of Egypt has offered every facility; and it is expected that on their arrival on the borders of the Arabian Gulf, the Enterprise steamer, which was appointed to leave Bombay with letters for England, will be ready to receive the bags, and return with them to India. It is calculated that, should no unexpected obstacle intervene, the communication with India, by this route, may be effected in half the present time, which would be an important advantage to both countries."\textsuperscript{142} Attempts were also made in 1830 to promote steam communication between India and England by the way of Cape of Good Hope. A Committee, set up in Calcutta for the purpose, offered thanks to Mr. Waghorn for the efforts he made to carry out this project. Thanks were also offered to Commodore Sir John Hayes for the zeal and ability displayed by him in forwarding the cause of steam communication between India and England.\textsuperscript{143} Mr. Waghorn's attempts did not immediately succeed, but in course of twenty years regular communication was established between England and India by steam vessels in two stages—from England to the Mediterranean Coast of Egypt, and then after a short land-journey, from the head of the Red Sea to India.

X. GENERAL REVIEW.

The detailed account of the different branches of administration may be fittingly concluded with a general review based on the publicly expressed opinions of contemporary Indians whose position and status lend great weight to their views. For whatever may be the degree of excellence claimed for it, on abstract principles, the real merit of an administrative system depends to a very large extent upon the views and sentiments of the people affected by it.
We have the benefit of the views expressed by Raja Rammohan Roy, both in his writings as well as in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1831, to which reference has been made above in connection with the land-settlement. Raja Rammohan Roy was one of the most towering personalities of India in the nineteenth century, whose social, religious, and political views and activities have deeply influenced the course of Indian history during the last century and a half. He was a great admirer of the British Government in India and concluded one of his 'Appeals' by thanking "the Supreme Disposer of the Universe for having unexpectedly delivered this country from the long continued tyranny of its former rulers". But while the Raja fully appreciated the "more secure enjoyment of civil and religious rights" than was possible under the Muslim rule, and other blessings of the British rule, he was equally alive to the defects and deficiencies of the British system of administration and made constructive suggestions with a view to removing them. Reference has already been made above to his scathing criticism of the oppressive land revenue and the consequent poverty of the cultivators, as well as to his observations on the annual drain of Indian wealth to Britain. He proposed taxation on luxury goods to compensate the loss incurred by the reduction of land revenue suggested by him. He recommended three methods for ensuring good legislation for India. The first was the grant of freedom of the press in India, so that the Indian public may place before the Government their opinion on matters vitally affecting their interest, and bring to the notice both of the Government of India and the Court of Directors the grievances arising from tyrannical acts either of the officials or of the Government. The second was the appointment of periodical commissions composed of persons unconnected with Indian Government, to investigate on the spot the condition of the Indians under the existing system of law and administration. The third was to ascertain the opinion of the aristocracy of wealth and intellect regarding any proposed law, which should be enacted finally by the Parliament after considering all the official and non-official views on the subject. Rammohan also suggested various measures to remove the evils in the administration of justice. One of his suggestions was the 'superintendence of public opinion'. He proposed that the people should watch the judicial proceedings in order to be satisfied that justice was being done. He also recommended the revival of the old panchayat system in the shape of modern jury. He proposed that the judges of the Sadar Diwani Adalat should have the power of issuing habeas corpus according to the practice of the English courts and that the Magistrates should be liable to judicial prosecution, even for official acts, if they amount to abuse of power.
He recommended that the Sadar Amils should be stationed at such distances that the sutors might not have to travel far from their homes in order to seek justice. He was against reducing the salary of European Judges but demanded a substantial increase in the salary of Indian Judges. Among other reforms suggested by him may be mentioned the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the Courts of law, separation of the offices of Judge and Revenue Commissioners, and those of Judge and Magistrate, and the codification of laws.

The views of Ram Mohan Roy clearly show that while the British system of administration was highly appreciated as marking a great improvement upon the existing system, the enlightened public opinion in India, already in the third decade of the nineteenth century, regarded it as outmoded, and demanded a higher and nobler one on the model of the British. The views of the Raja were taken up by his followers who suitably modified and enlarged them in the light of experience, and the persistent demand of the enlightened section of the Indians for various reforms may be taken as a fair measure of the condemnation of the system then in force. The state of Indian feeling in this respect about the middle of the nineteenth century may be gathered from the petitions submitted by the various political organizations of Indians to the British Parliament on the eve of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1853. As a specimen, reference may be made to the petition from Madras the least politically advanced of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras.

The Madras Native Association sent a petition signed by eleven members to the House of Commons on 21 May, 1853. In this petition they first enumerated the immediate grievances of the Madras Presidency which they considered to be the most important. These were four in number:

(i) The agricultural rent is most oppressive and has reduced the cultivators to the extremity of wretchedness and poverty.

(ii) The Salt monopoly is a burden of the most painful and intolerable pressure on the poor.

(iii) The defects and evils attending general administration of justice. Reference is made to the delay and expenses of the Company's court of law. It is also pointed out that the system does not ensure that fair and open trial by their peers which obtains in the Queen's court and which should also be available to her Indian subjects.
(iv) The almost total negligence of national education, there being no provincial school established by Government throughout the entire Presidency, and only one at the capital.

In addition to the above major grievances, reference is also made to the insufficiency of roads, bridges and irrigation works, necessity for the reduction of public expenditure and need of a form of Local Government more generally conducive to the happiness of the subjects and prosperity of the country.

In an explanatory note it is said that the judicial service of the Company is a "refuge of the destitute", those persons, "who are too incompetent for the revenue Department, being transformed into Judges and dispensers of the Criminal and Civil Law of the Moffusil".

Many other grievances are also mentioned:—

(i) The enormous powers granted to the Governor-General.

(ii) Interference with the law of inheritance.

(iii) Undue favours shown to the converts to Christianity. It is also complained in this connection "that the judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature of Madras exercise their powers and authority in high-handed manner to the detriment of the Hindus". Reference is also made to "judges affected by religious bias which induces them to carry their peculiar creed to the bench of justice".

The petitioners also protest "against the injustice and injury they suffer from the system which places the resources of the Province at the disposal of the Supreme Government by which the importance of this portion of India is retarded and the poverty of the population augmented". As a remedy against this it is suggested that the Governor in Council of Madras should be allowed greater powers for providing for the welfare and prosperity of the people and that the Governor's Council should be composed of officials and non-officials in equal numbers, six or seven of each. The former are to be nominated by the Government and the latter to be selected by the Governor, out of a list of 18 or 21 persons chosen by the rate-payers of Madras.

The petitioners also suggest the reduction in the salaries of the Governor and other officials and the establishment of a Legislative Council as distinct from Executive Council in every province. The petitioners also advocate the introduction of popular element in the Supreme Legislative Council and recommend that besides Presidential representatives there should be three persons appointed from England. These three from England should constitute the Executive Council, the Governor-General being President of both.
ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

The fusion of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, or in the alternative, another body presided over by the Secretary of State for India is suggested.

The petitioners demand further the abandonment of the system of governing the country exclusively by the covenanted Civil Service. The recruitment to this service of young men fresh from schools in England, without knowledge of the world and ignorant of the language and customs of the Indians, is strongly deprecated. To remedy the evils inherent in the system the employment of the educated and trained natives is advocated.

On May 21, 1853, another petition was sent to Parliament by "the Madras Native Association and other Native inhabitants of the Presidency of Madras". This was by way of protest against the decision of Her Majesty's Ministry to refer the grievances, enumerated in the former petition, to the local Government. The petitioners point out that the revenue system against which they "stated their strongest objections" was commended by some servants of the Company. But, they continue, "this favourable opinion respecting the ryotwari settlement was given at an early period of its trial on a small scale, and was derived from the opinion of three or four Collectors, who had been instrumental to the introduction of the experiment. The petitioners know that, under its operation, the ryots have been reduced to poverty and wretchedness; and your petitioners pray that, as the Parliament has been the author of it, or that, at least, it has been established by its sanction although in opposition to the opinion and wishes of the local authorities, who declared it to be contrary to the ancient national institutions, and unsuited to the condition and genius of the people, the same authority may now be the instrument of its abolition; not by acting upon the evidence of the Company's servants, taken in England, but by instituting a full and impartial enquiry into its merits and demerits, on the spot where it is in operation, and among and from the people who are suffering under its withering oppression.

"They, your Petitioners, are convinced that by no other mode will your Right Honourable House be able to form a just and clear judgment on the question so momentous to the native subjects of the Crown in the Presidency of Madras; for, without reference in this place to the bias from which the servants of the Company cannot be supposed to free themselves, when speaking as to the effects of the favourite system of their employers, and which they have contributed to enforce and maintain, your Petitioners will advert to a particular instance of misinformation given by a gentleman, who, without
being suspected of bias, has given positive evidence, the contrary of fact, before the Committee of your Right Honourable House."

After proving this charge against Mr. Charles Hay Cameron, formerly the fourth or Law Member of the Council of India, the petition continues:

"That your Petitioners allude to this circumstance chiefly to show the manifest uncertainty of the evidence taken before the Parliamentary Committees; and as the witnesses examined, without a single exception are persons who have received, or are still in the receipt of, benefits from the East India Company, your Petitioners are compelled to believe that the actual state of things cannot be correctly ascertained, without sufficient evidence being admitted on both sides of the several questions which have to be determined, and your Petitioners therefore humbly represent, that nothing except a full and impartial investigation, in this country, accessible to the complainants, as well as to the defendants, can place before your Right Honourable House the real state of India, and the existence of the many and heavy grievances of which they have complained as regards the Presidency of Madras; they therefore respectfully request that a Royal Commission may be appointed, before which they may have the opportunity of substantiating the facts advanced in their former petition.

"That your Petitioners beg to represent that an Indian Commission is not altogether a novelty, there being a precedent in the one appointed in the year 1814, of which Sir Thomas Munro was the head, for the purpose of inquiring into and amending the judicial system then obtaining at this Presidency; but as not only the judicial system, but likewise that of the revenue, is also the various other complaints preferred by your Petitioners, imperatively demand investigation at an earlier period, your Petitioners pray that the Commission they now more may be constituted upon the widest practicable basis, to the end that the inquiry may be searching, impartial and complete; and that no permanent legislation for India may be undertaken until the fullest information possible shall have been had before, and fully discussed by the Imperial Parliament of the United Kingdom.

"That your Petitioners have already requested the continuance of the Council of the minor Presidencies, and they now respectfully reiterate their prayers to have them constituted on the precedent of the Council of the island of Ceylon, in which your Petitioners' countrymen have enjoyed seats for a series of years; and, as your Petitioners understand that constitutions have been, or are on the point of being, granted to the settlements of the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand, admitting European Colonists, they humbly and anxiously trust, that your Right Honourable House will not deem the barbarians of the former, and the cannibals of the latter colony more deserving or more fitting to be entrusted with a share in the management of their own affairs, than the inhabitants of a country which, for scores of centuries, has been renowned throughout the world for its civilization, literature and commerce, and which had its own sovereigns, governments and codes of law long before the English nation had a name in history.

"That while your Petitioners acknowledge, and have asked for, the advantage of a reconstruction and improvement of the home and local administration of India, yet that alone will be of no avail to redress the grievances and reform the abuses of the local governments, so long as they are composed of two or three Company's officials legislating in the utmost secrecy, and concealing with the most
ASSIDUOUS CAREFULNESS THE WHOLE OF THEIR TRANSACTIONS; SECURE NOT ONLY FROM ALL CHECK, BUT FROM THE LEAST SHADOW OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE, Whose INTERESTS ARE UNFORTUNATELY CONSIDERED OF NOT THE SLIGHTEST CONSEQUENCE TO THE GOVERNMENT, WHOSE DUTY IT IS TO LEGISLATE FOR THEIR SOLE BENEFITS.

"THAT YOUR PETITIONERS WILL CONSIDER THEMSELVES AND THEIR COMMUNITY DEEPLY HUMILIATED AND DEEPLY AGRGRIEVED IF, AFTER THE OPEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PERSONS HIGH IN OFFICE IN THIS COUNTRY AND IN ENGLAND, THAT THEY ARE AS CAPABLE TO HOLD RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYMENTS AS THE MEMBERS OF NOW EXCLUSIVE CIVIL SERVICE; THAT THEY ARE THEIR EQUALS ON THE BENCH, AND SUCCESSFUL COMPETITORS IN THE STUDY OF EUROPEAN ARTS, SCIENCE AND LITERATURE; THEY ARE SHUT OUT FROM THE OFFICES FOR WHICH THEY ARE CONFESSIONALLY QUALIFIED, WHILE THE SAVAGE HOTENTOT AND NEW ZEALANDER ARE PREFERRED BEFORE THEM.

"THAT YOUR PETITIONERS FINALLY CONCLUDE WITH THE EXPRESSION OF THEIR EARNEST HOPE AND PRAYER, THAT SUFFICIENT TIME MAY BE GRANTED FOR A THOROUGH INQUIRY INTO ALL POINTS AFFECTING THE WELFARE OF THIS COUNTRY, AS DISTRIBUTED UNDER THE EIGHT HEADS LAID DOWN BY THE COMMITTEE OF YOUR RIGHT HONOURABLE HOUSE; THAT THE LOCAL COUNCILS MAY BE RETAINED, AND MODELED UPON THE CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE BEFORE ADVERTED TO; AND THAT A ROYAL COMMISSION, COMPOSED OF EUROPEANS AND NATIVES CONJOINTLY, CHOSEN PARTLY IN EUROPE AND PARTLY IN INDIA, MAY BE ISSUED TO ENTER UPON AND COMPLETE THE NECESSARY INVESTIGATION IN THIS COUNTRY."

APART FROM A VERY LUCID STATEMENT OF THE GRIEVANCES FELT BY THE PEOPLE IN RESPECT OF BRITISH ADMINISTRATION, THE PETITIONS OF MADRAS NATIVE ASSOCIATION THROW A GREAT DEAL OF LIGHT ON THE PROGRESS OF POLITICAL IDEAS IN MADRAS. THEY ARE SPECIALLY VALUABLE AS WE HAVE VERY LITTLE INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE.

A SIMILAR PETITION WAS SENT BY THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION AND OTHER NATIVE INHABITANTS OF THE BENGAL PRESIDENCY IN 1852. THE FOLLOWING EXTRACTS FROM THIS PETITION WOULD GIVE SOME IDEA OF THE GRIEVANCES FELT BY THE PEOPLE AND REMEDIES SUGGESTED BY THEM:

10. THAT THE UNION OF POLITICAL OR EXECUTIVE POWER WITH THE LEGISLATIVE IS NOT ONLY ANOMALOUS IN ITSELF, BUT PREGNANT WITH INJURY TO THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE. ............ YOUR PETITIONERS THEREFORE SUBMIT THAT THE LEGISLATURE OF INDIA SHOULD BE A BODY NOT ONLY DISTINCT FROM THE PERSONS IN WHOM THE POLITICAL AND EXECUTIVE POWERS ARE VESTED, BUT ALSO POSSESSING A POPULAR CHARACTER SO AS IN SOME RESPECTS TO REPRESENT THE SENTIMENTS OF THE PEOPLE AND TO BE SO LOOKED UPON BY THEM.

11. THAT IT IS A MOST UNPRECEDENTED CIRCUMSTANCE THAT THOUGH THE NATIVES OF INDIA HAVE, FOR THE BEST PART OF A CENTURY, BEEN SUBJECTS OF THE CROWN OF GREAT BRITAIN, THEY HAVE NOT, TO THIS DAY, BEEN ADMITTED TO THE SMALLEST SHARE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE AFFAIRS OF THEIR COUNTRY, BUT HAVE CONTINUED UNDER A GOVERNMENT THAT UNITES IN ITSELF THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS, AND AVAILS ITSELF OF THOSE POWERS TO MAKE SUCH LAWS AS MAY SUBSERVE ITS OWN FINANCIAL
purposes, often without reference to the interests and wishes of the people.

12. That not only are laws enacted without reference to the people, but they are enforced against the strongest complaints and remonstrances (reference is made to the Regulation III of 1828 which made a Collector also the Judge in cases of resumption of lands).

13. Your petitioners refer to the Act XXI of 1850, which, under the guise of extending the principle of section 9, Regulation VII of 1832 of the Bengal Code, to the other presidencies, the provisions of which had never come into operation, alters the rules of inheritance of the people of this country, which are well known to be based upon their religious tenets, by allowing persons excluded from caste, whether on account of immoral or infamous conduct, or of change of religion, to inherit, contrary to the express rules of the Hindoo law. On learning the intentions of the Government, many of the people of Bengal and Madras united to remonstrate against it, on the ground of the guarantee given them that their laws and customs should be respected, and of its being the tendency if not the design of the intended law to facilitate proselytism to other religions. But these remonstrances were not even noticed by the Government.

14. That for these and other reasons too numerous to be detailed, your petitioners consider the power of making laws and raising taxes conferred exclusively on the Governor-General in Council as impolitic as well as unjust to the native subjects of the British Crown. . . . . . . Hence they are desirous that the legislature of British India be placed on the footing of those enjoyed by most of the Colonies of Her Majesty, . . . . . . They accordingly submit for the consideration of your Right Honourable House the propriety of constituting a Legislative Council at Calcutta, composed of 17 members, three selected from amongst the most respectable and qualified native inhabitants of each presidency, to represent the natives thereof (details of the composition and powers of the Council follow).

20. That there should be a reduction of the salaries of the higher offices, and that the saving thereby effected should, in part, be applied to the increase of the allowances of the lower, which are confessedly inadequate to their duties and responsibilities . . . . The salaries of the Governor-General, the Members of Council, the local Governors, and the principal covenanted officers, are on an exorbitant scale, and susceptible of great reduction without impairing the efficiency of the service . . . . . Much public treasure is also expended, without any corresponding advantage, in paying extravagant salaries to the Resi-
26. The Magistrates act in the double capacity of superintendents of police and judges of cases not liable to a sentence exceeding three years' imprisonment. In the former capacity they have been acknowledged by their superiors to have a strong leaning towards the conviction of those who are brought before them for trial. In the latter capacity they are authorised, in certain cases, even to adjudge imprisonment and fine without appeal, and in general they exercise, according to the admissions of high authorities, powers which are not committed to magistrates in any civilized country, and for which they are disqualified by their youth and inexperience.

31. That the monopoly of the salt trade by the Company injuriously affects the poor, . . . . The selling price of salt is arbitrarily fixed by the Government, and is at all times so high that, though the country has abundant resources for the manufacture of the article, English merchants can afford to import it. . . . . But as salt is a necessary of life, the duty on salt should be entirely taken off as soon as possible. . . . . The monopoly of opium trade is a source of vexation to the cultivators, who are compelled to cultivate the poppy, and supply the produce to the Government, at the valuation fixed by their own officers. Nor can it be otherwise than that the cultivators should be at a disadvantage, and be liable to oppression, when the other contracting party is armed with all the power and resources of the state. Justice, therefore, requires that the interference of the Government with the cultivation should cease. . . . . By the adoption of this principle, the cultivators will possess that freedom of action which all men possess under governments that are not constituted on arbitrary and despotic principles; . . . .

32. That the abkaree duties, or revenue raised from the sale of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs, and the stamp duties, levied by obliging litigants and complainants to write their petitions on stamped papers, are highly objectionable in principle. . . . .

36. That the provisions for an ecclesiastical establishment expressly for the advantage of British subjects are out of place among the arrangements for the government of British India. That government is for a mixed community the members of which are of various and opposite sects, and the majority is composed of Hindus and Mahomedans . . . . Your petitioners do not object to the appointment of chaplains to the European regiments that are sent out to this country, . . . . but to support of bishops and other highly paid functionaries, out of the general revenues of the country, for the benefit of a small body of British subjects. . . . .
Liberal-minded Englishmen also joined with the Indians in condemning various aspects of the administrative system of British India. This may be best shown by quoting extracts from the writings of three highly placed Englishmen, who had intimate and personal knowledge of Indian affairs, and cannot be suspected of having any grudge or bias against the British administration. The first discusses the general principle and practice of British-Indian administration, while the other two make a comparative estimate of the British administration and the one superseded by it.

Frederick John Shore, one of the best British administrators in the thirties, observes as follows:

"More than seventeen years have elapsed since I first landed in this country; but on my arrival, and during my residence of about a year in Calcutta, I well recollect the quiet, comfortable, and settled conviction, which in those days existed in the minds of the English population, of the blessings conferred on the natives of India by the establishment of the English rule. Our superiority to the Native Governments which we have supplanted, the excellent system for the administration of justice which we had introduced; our moderation; our anxiety to benefit the people—in short, our virtues of every description were descanted on as so many established truths which it was hereby to controvert. Occasionally I remember to have heard some hints and objections of a contrary nature from some one who had spent many years in the interior of the country, but the storm which was immediately roused and thundered on the head of the unfortunate individual who should presume to question the established creed was almost sufficient to appall the boldest.

I was thus naturally led to an inquiry into the principles and practices of British-Indian administration. Proceeding in this, I soon found myself at no loss to understand the feelings of the people both towards the Government and to ourselves. It would have been astonishing indeed had it been otherwise. The fundamental principle of the English had been to make the whole Indian nation subservient in every respect, not to the interests and benefits of themselves. They have demanded in the utmost limits, every successive Province, as it has fallen into our possession, has been made a field for higher exaction; and it has always been with a view partly we have raised the revenue above that which the native rulers were able to exact. The Indians have been excluded from every honour, dignity, or office which the lowest Englishman could be prevailed upon to accept."

Emphasizing the drain of wealth from India, Shore remarks: "The halcyon days of India are over; she has been drained of a large proportion of the wealth she once possessed; and her energies have been cramped by a sordid system of misrule to which the interests of millions have been sacrificed for the benefit of the few".

The other two are Sir Thomas Munro and Sir John Malcolm, two of the most distinguished British officials in India who rank with Elphinstone as builders of the British Empire. Here is an extract from Munro's Minute recorded on 31 December, 1824.
ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

"If we make a summary comparison of the advantages and disadvantages which have occurred to the natives from our Government, the result, I fear, will hardly be so much in its favour as it ought to have been. They are more secure from the calamities both of foreign war and internal commotions; their persons and property are more secure from violence; they cannot be wantonly punished or their property seized by persons in power; and their taxation is, on the whole, lighter. But, on the other hand, they have no share in making laws for themselves, little in administering them, except in very subordinate offices; they can rise to no high station, civil or military; they are everywhere regarded as an inferior race, and often rather as vassals or servants than as the ancient owners and masters of the country.

"It is not enough that we confer on the natives the benefits of just laws and of moderate taxation, unless we endeavour to raise their character; but under a foreign government there are so many causes which tend to depress it that it is not easy to prevent it from sinking. It is an old observation that he who loses his liberty loses half his virtue. This is true of nations as well as of individuals. To have no property scarcely degenerates more in the one case than in the other to have property at the disposal of a foreign government in which we have no share. The enslaved nation loses the privileges of a nation as the slave does those of a free man; it loses the privileges of taxing itself, of making its own laws, of having any share in their administration, or in the general government of the country. British India has none of these privileges. . .

One of the greatest disadvantages of our Government in India is its tendency to lower or destroy the higher ranks of society, to bring them all too much to one level, and by depriving them of their former weight and influence to render them less useful instruments in the internal administration of the country. The native governments had a class of richer gentry composed of Jagirdars and Enamdars and of all the higher civil and military officers. These, with the principal merchants and Ryots, formed a large body, wealthy or at least easy in their circumstances. The Jagheers and Enams of one prince were often resumed by another, and the civil and military officers were liable to frequent removal, but as they were replaced by others, and as new Jagheers and Enams were granted to new claimants, these changes had the effect of continually throwing into the country a supply of men whose wealth enabled them to encourage its cultivation and manufactories. These advantages have almost entirely ceased under our Government. All the civil and military offices of any importance are now held by Europeans, whose savings go to their own country".162

The following is an extract from the evidence given by Sir John Malcolm before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1832.

Question. "In your opinion, was the substitution of our government for the misrule of the native princes the cause of greater prosperity to the agricultural and commercial part of the population?"

Answer. "I cannot answer this in every Province of India, but I shall as far as my experience enables me. I do not think the change has benefited, or could benefit, either the commercial, the menial, or the agricultural classes of many of the native States, though it may be of others. It has not happened to me ever to see countries better cultivated, and so abounding in all produce of the soil, as well as commercial wealth, than the Southern Maharatt Districts, when I accompanied the present Duke of Wellington to that country in the year 1803; I particularly here allude to those large tracts near the borders of the Krishna."
Poona, the capital of Peshwa, was a very wealthy and thriving commercial town, and there was as much cultivation in the Deccan as it was possible so arid and unfruitful a country could admit....

"With respect to Malwa....I had ample means afforded me, as the person appointed to occupy that territory and to conduct its civil, military, and political administration, to learn all that the records of the Government could teach, and to obtain from other sources full information of this country; and I certainly entered upon my duties with the complete conviction that commerce would be unknown, and that credit could not exist....I found, to my surprise, that in correspondence with the first commercial and monied men of Rajputana, Bundelkhand, and Hindustan (Northern India), as well as with those of Gujrat, dealings in money to a large amount had continuously taken place at Ujjain and other cities, where Soucers or bankers of character and credit were in a flourishing state, and that goods to a great amount had not only continuously passed through the Province, but that the insurance offices which exist throughout all that part of India, and include the principal monied men, had never stopped their operations, though premiums rose at a period of danger to a high amount....And I do not believe that in that country the introduction of our direct rule could have contributed more, nor indeed so much, to the prosperity of the commercial and agricultural interests as the establishment of the efficient rule of its former princes and chiefs....

"With respect to the Southern Mahratta Districts, of whose prosperity I have before spoken....I must unhesitatingly state that the provinces belonging to the family of Putwarden and some other chiefs on the banks of the Krishna present a greater agricultural and commercial prosperity than almost any I know in India. I refer this to the system of administration, which, though there may be at periods exactions, is on the whole mild and paternal; to few changes; to the complete knowledge and almost devotion of Hindus to all agricultural pursuits; to their better understanding, or at least better practice than us in many parts of the administration, particularly in raising towns and villages to prosperity; from the encouragement given to monied men and to the introduction of capital; and above all to the Jaegirdars residing on their estates, and those Provinces being administered by men of rank who live and die on the soil, and are usually succeeded in office by their sons or near relatives. If these men exact money at times in an arbitrary manner, all their expenditure as well as all they receive is limited to their own provinces, but above all causes which promote prosperity is the invariable support given to the village and other native institutions, and to the employment, far beyond what our system admits, of all classes of the population".153

To these observations we may add those of George Thompson, an Englishman who visited India in 1843. The following extracts are taken from his speeches, which were published together in the form of a book, entitled "George Thompson's Lectures on British India".153a

I. It is notorious, however, that the Parliament, like the East India proprietary, have failed in their duty to their possessions in the East. So far from being impressed with a sense of their value and importance, our legislators have appeared to regard them as almost below their serious notice. The experience of more than fifty years has shown, that the most insignificant topic of a local, temporary, or personal character, has a better chance of securing the attention and consideration of the legislature, than the condition and claims of a dominion as extensive as Europe, with a population comprising a sixth part of the inhabitants
of the globe. The very best informed on Parliamentary matters are perfectly aware that this is the painful fact.

If, then, we find this mighty empire at present neglected alike by the East India Company and the Parliament, what shall be done? Shall we abandon to their fate scores of millions of our fellow subjects? Shall we leave a people ignorant of their political rights, and helpless because ignorant, the prey of insatiate tax-gatherers, the victims of every experiment which their rulers may choose to make, to ascertain how far and how long they may extract wealth from a beggared people, in defiance of every principle of good government, and every law of the living God? Are we at liberty to turn a deaf ear to the piercing cry of distress wafted to us from the plains of Hindostan? (p. 25).

II. The condition of India!—Look at the circumstances of the people, impoverished almost to the lowest possible degree. The ranks of society, as nearly as can be, levelled. Princes deposed—nobles degraded—landed proprietors annihilated—the middle classes absorbed—the cultivators ruined—great cities turned into farm villages—villages deserted and in ruins—mendicancy, gang robbery, and rebellion increasing in every direction. This is no exaggerated picture. This is the state and the present state of India. Some of the finest tracts of land have been forsaken, and given up to the untamed beasts of the jungle. The motives to industry have been destroyed. The soil seems to lie under a curse. Instead of yielding abundance for the wants of its own population, and the inhabitants of other regions, it does not keep in existence its own children. It becomes the burying place of millions, who die upon its bosom, crying for bread. In proof of this, turn your eyes backward upon the scenes of the past year. Go with me into the north-western provinces of the Bengal presidency, and I will show you the bleaching skeletons of five hundred thousand human beings, who perished of hunger in the space of a few short months: yes, died of hunger in what has been justly called the granary of the world! Bear with me, if I speak of the scenes which were exhibited during the prevalence of this famine. The air for miles was poisoned by the effluvia emitted from the putrefying bodies of the dead. The rivers were choked with the corpses thrown into their channels. Mothers cast their little ones beneath the rolling waves, because they would not see them draw their last gasp, and feel them stiffen in their arms. The English in the city were prevented from taking their customary evening drives. Jackals and vultures approached, and fastened upon the bodies of men, women, and children, before life was extinct. Madness, disease, despair, stalked abroad, and no human power present to arrest their progress. It was the carnival of death! And this occurred in British India—in the reign of Victoria the First! Nor was the event extraordinary and unforeseen. Far from it: 1835-36 witnessed a famine in the northern provinces: 1833 beheld one to the eastward. 1822-23 saw one in the Deccan. They have continued to increase in frequency and extent under our sway for more than half a century. Under the administration of Lord Clive, a famine in Bengal provinces swept off three millions; and at that time the British speculators in India had their granaries filled to repletion with corn. Horrified monopoly of the necessaries of life! Thus three millions died while there was food enough, and to spare, locked up in the storehouses of the rich! (p. 27).

III. To add to the horror with which we are called to regard the last dreadful carnage, we are made acquainted by the returns of the custom-houses with the fact, that as much grain was exported from the lower parts of Bengal as would have fed the number who perished—(half a million)—for a whole year! (p. 28)

IV. Do you ask, why this wholesale destruction of human life? I reply, and while I do so, I am fully aware of the nature of the accusation I bring against
the government of India, at home and abroad, and am ready to sustain it—because
the people have been virtually robbed of their soil—deprived of the fruits of their
industry—prevented from accumulating the means of meeting a period of drought,
and are thus doomed to death, should the earth refuse, for a single season, to
yield its increase. Our government (says one of the highest authorities) has been
practically one of the most extortionate and oppressive that ever existed; and a
committee of the House of Commons has declared that our revenue system in
India is one of habitual extortion and injustice, leaving nothing to the cultivator
but what he is able to secure by evasion and fraud. Can any evidence be required
more conclusive, in proof of the ruinous nature of our administration, than is furnish-
ished by the fact, that famines are becoming almost general, and that they are sweep-
ing off their victims by hundreds of thousands—and that these famines occur in
the most fertile districts of the globe, and during a period of profound internal
peace? The master evil of the present system in India is the land-tax. The
government has made itself de facto the universal landlord—has assumed the right
to tax the soil to any extent—has fixed an assumed capability on every field of
produce—then, an assumed price on the produce of the field—and then fixed that
from thirty-five to forty-five per cent. of the money value of the crop, shall be
the tax to the state for ever—and, if the cultivator should lay out his money in
the improvement, in any way, of the land under his management, the government
claims the right of making a new assessment, in proportion to the assumed in-
creased value of the crop.

The results of this system have appeared in a thousand afflicting forms. Rural
industry has been crushed—enterprise has been rendered profitless—cultivated
lands, over-burthened by taxation, have been abandoned—the revenue has declined
—the prosperity of the country has been undermined at its foundation—property
has gone on deteriorating, until estates have been sold for less than the amount of
one year's taxes. Mr. Rickards informs us that the land-owners of Malabar offered
their estates to the government, on condition of their receiving a bare subsistence
of rice and curry in return. If the principle of taxation has been bad, the mode
adopted in collecting it has been no better. Mr. Fullerton, when a member of
the council at Madras, thus described it:—

"Imagine (says he) the revenue leviable through the agency of one hundred
thousand revenue officers; collected or remitted at their discretion, according to the
occupant's means of paying, whether from the produce of his land, or his separate
property: and, in order to encourage every man to act as a spy on his neighbour,
and report his means of paying, that he may eventually save himself from extra
demand imagine all the cultivators of a village liable at all times to a separate
demand, in order to make up for the failure of one or more individuals of the
parish. Imagine collectors to every county, acting under the orders of a board,
on the avowed principle of destroying all competition for labour by a general equali-
zation of assessment; seizing and sending back runaways to each other. And
lastly, imagine the collector the sole magistrate or justice of the peace of the
county, through the medium and instrumentality of whom alone any criminal
complaint of personal grievance suffered by the subject can reach the superior
courts. Imagine, at the same time, every subordinate officer employed in the
collection of the land revenue, to be a police officer, vested with the power to
FINE, CONFINE, PUT IN THE STOCKS, AND FLOG any inhabitant within his
range, on any charge, without oath of the accuser, or sworn recorded evidence
in the case." (pp. 29-30).

No impartial historian will possibly deny the truth of these observations. If the four Englishmen have erred, they have done
so on the side of moderation. On a broad review of the first century of British rule in India, the first thing that compels attention is the wretched poverty and distress to which the people were reduced by the ruin of industry and oppressive land-tax, for both of which the British Government must be held directly responsible. The two great blessings of the British rule, namely, the improvement of knowledge on western lines, and the establishment of a good system of administration guaranteeing security of life and property, were not yet fully in evidence. The new system of higher education was as yet confined to a handful of persons, while the indigenous system was visibly declining. So far as the administrative system was concerned, it was a period of experiment, useful in itself, but as yet producing no very satisfactory results. There was security against foreign aggression, but not against theft, robbery, and crimes and oppressions of other kind. The law-courts had not yet become efficient instruments of impartial justice, while the Police served as agencies of oppression rather than protection. The prison house was as wretched as it could be “and the District Magistrate was determined that the prison should be a distinctly uncomfortable place”, while the Medical officer made an equally determined but unsuccessful effort to keep down the terrible death rate in jails. So far as the amenities of life were concerned, they are summed up in two sentences by Sir John Strachey while describing the condition in Bengal in 1854, i.e. after a continuous British rule for nearly a century: “There were almost no roads, or bridges or schools, and there was no protection to life or property. The police was worthless, and robberies and violent crimes by gangs of armed men, which were unheard of in other provinces, were common not far from Calcutta.

All the while the Indians were mere passive onlookers,—they had no place or power in the administration of their own country. The curse of slavery with all the attendant evils, so pithily described by Munro, was exercising a ruinous and degenerating influence upon the character of the people at large. The early dreams and enthusiastic hopes of the small band of English-educated Indians were giving place to disillusion and despair, while the common people, full of discontent and disaffection, bided their time in sullen resentment, marked by occasional outburst of violence. By the time the British completed the first hundred years of their rule, they gained the whole of India, but lost their hold upon the hearts of the Indians. The Government were fully aware of this and made full allowance for this important factor in devising plans for the safety of their Indian Empire.

1. Speech of Morley on 23 February, 1909 (Keith, II. 95).
2. Clause IV.
3. ICND, 86-7.
5. ICND, 96-7.
7. See p. 3.
8. CHI, VI. 14.
9a. Strachey, India, its Administration and Progress, (2nd Ed.), p. 112.
10. Ibid, 121.
12. Ibid, 49.
15. The combination of the two offices was strongly criticized in CR, VI, (1846). p. 149.
17. CHI, VI. 41.
19. CHI, VI. 42.
20. CHI, VI. 43.
22. CHI, VI. 66.
23. CHI, VI. 73.
24. "When the territories of Sagar and Narbada came under British rule in 1818, they were first placed directly under the rule of the Indian Government, and were subsequently placed under the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces. In 1842 they were under an Agent directly under the Government of India, and on a later date they were once more transferred to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces." And this state of things continued till 1861 when they were included in the Central Provinces (Dutt-II, 291-2).
25. Lahore Administration Report, 1852, quoted in Dutt-II, 82-3.
27. M. Innes, Henry Lawrence, the Pacifist, Introduction (quoted in Dutt-II, 88).
28. THG, 347.
29. Macaulay's speech in the House of Commons, June, 1853 (quoted in CHI, VI. 358).
30. From the Governor-General in Council to the Court of Directors, 9 July, 1800.
31. Speech in the House of Commons, June, 1853 (quoted in CHI, VI. 358).
32. Macaulay's speech in the House of Commons on 10 July, 1833 (Keith I, 264-5).
33. ICND, 96.
34. Dispatch, 10 December, 1834 (quoted in CHI, VI. 10).
35. CHI, VI. 10.
36. Dispatch, 10 December, 1834 (quoted in CHI, VI. 7).
37. Clause 66.
38. Clauses 43 and 46.
40. Clause 44.
41. Clause 45.
42. Montford Report, para 58.
43. Ramsay Macdonald, The Government of India, p. 69; for example, the Legislative Council discussed the propriety of the grant to the Mysore princes (Libert, 100, f. n., 3).
44. Montford Report, para 62.
46. European British subjects included any subject of His Majesty in U.K. or British colonies, and his son and grandson.
50. B. Majumdar, History of Political Thought, L 175.
51b. See Chapter I.
52. CR, VI, pp. 135-89.
53. Ibid, 137-8.
54. Ibid, 145. The relevant passage has been quoted on pp. 345-6
55. Ibid, 149.
56. Ibid, 150.
57. Ibid, 150. The Editor observes in a footnote that in exceptional cases the darogah may be elevated to the higher grade of 75 or even 100 Rupees.
59. Ibid, 186.
60. Ibid, 171-3.
61. Ibid, 175-77.
62. Ibid, 179-82.
63. Ibid, 183.
64. Ibid, 183-4.
66. Dutt-I. 402-5; II. 212. The amount of gross revenue is given later in this section.
67. Dutt-II. 100.
68. Ibid.
69. Commons' Fourth Report, 1853 (quoted in Dutt-II. 144-5).
70. Dutt-II. 152.
71. Commons' Fourth Report, 1853, quoted in Dutt-II. 153.
72. Dutt-II. 157.
73. Extract from the petition of The Madras Native Association to the House of Commons (Commons' First Report, 1853, Appendix 7). (Dutt-II. 164-5).
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid.
76. In addition to the reduction of military expenses, by reducing Batta to half which saved £20,000 a year, further economies were effected by reduction in the expenses of the land revenue administration, Provincial Courts and costly settlements in the Straits of Malacca (Bentsack, R. I., 60).
77. Dutt-II. 212.
78. Cf. Chapters V and VI.
79. Even expenses incurred in connection with the visit of the Sultan of Turkey to London were paid out of the funds of the Government of India.
80. Dutt-II. 216.
81. Ibid, 217.
82. Ibid.
83. Major Wingate, Our Financial Relations with India (quoted in Dutt-II, 218-9).
84. Dutt-II. 213.
84a. B. Majumdar, 71-2.
85. Wingate, op. cit. (Dutt-II. 213-4).
86. Montgomery Martin. Eastern India. Introduction (Dutt-I, 409-10).
87. See Vol. VIII.
88. Quoted in Dutt-II. 42-3.
89. Dutt-II. 43.
90. Elphinstone's Report, dated 25 October, 1819 (quoted in Dutt-II. 50-1).
91. Ibid.
92. Quoted in Dutt-II. 52.
94. Dutt-II. 61.
95. Ibid, 57.
96. Ibid, 68.
97. Ibid, 69.
98. Ibid.
100. Ibid, 71-2.
102. Dutt-II. 74. Italic mine.
103. Report of the Commission, dated 16 April, 1855 (Dutt-II. 74).
104. Ibid.
105. Dutt-II. 75
106. Ibid, 76.
107. B. Smollett, Madras, its Civil Administration (London, 1858) (Dutt-II. 77).
108. Quoted in Dutt-II. 79-80.
110. Lady Hope, General Sir Arthur Cotton, His Life and Work, p. 276.
111. SB-I, 23-9.
112. Ibid, 29.
112a. Rammohan Roy, p. 84.
114. Ibid, 529.
115. Ibid, 530.
119. Ibid, 448.
120. Vol. II. 210, 213. The manuscript of this book was completed in 1839, and it was published in 1844.
121. The rates were lower in some Provinces.
122. Quoted in Buckland, Bengal Under the Lieutenant-Governors, I. 23.
123. Ibid, 25.
125. Buckland, 26-7.
126. See p. 365.
128. Many erroneous impressions are current about the thugs. These have been critically discussed by Dr. H. Gupta (JIH. XXXVII. 167 ff.).
129. CHI, VI. 33. The view that the thugs formed a guild is a gratuitous assumption for which there is no evidence. There is much less excuse for holding that thugri is a system 'expressly enjoined by Hinduism', or that it has always been 'a feature of Indian life', and a social order—caste—or religious fraternity whose members were bound together by religious vows. The thugs carried on their criminal activities over a wide area, but there is no evidence to show that they had any central or even regional organizations hierarchically formed and knit together or having affiliations with one another. They belonged to various communities, and normally the different gangs worked in separate groups; only in special cases, involving great hazard, two or more units would work together. There can be therefore no question of a religious fraternity or social order. The profession of the thugs on a large scale may be justly regarded as the natural consequence of the anarchy and confusion prevailing in the eighteenth century, the loss of occupation by people with military instincts by the annexation of native States by the British, and above all, the failure of the British and other ruling powers to establish an efficient administration in the nineteenth century. The suppression of the Pindaris had an obvious effect upon the growth of this kind of highway robbery. Poverty and destitution were the real and proximate causes of the origin and growth of the thug, and there is no warrant for the assumption that "the religious element was stronger and the element of gain was less" in prompting a person to take to the profession of a thug. The question has been fully discussed by Dr. Gupta in JIH, XXXVII, 168 ff. Dr. Gupta is not, however, right in assuming that the thugri was a product of the British period. It can be traced as far back as the end of the thirteenth century A.D. According to Ziya-ud-din Barani about one thousand thugs were captured by Jalal-ud-din Khalji (A.D. 1280-95). V. A. Smith wrongly refers this event to the reign of Firuz Tughluq (A.D. 1351-88) in an appendix to his edition of Sleeman's Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official, p. 652. There is, however, no evidence that the evil at any time reached such enormous proportions as it did in the nineteenth century A.D. and 'for centuries oppressed the people' as Sleeman says.
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130. CHI, VI. 34-5.
131. CR, VI (1846), 475.
132. Imp. Gaz., IV. 398. But F. J. Shore takes a different view (Notes on Indian Affairs, I. p. 371). He thinks that the prisoners were better off than the masses outside jail.
133. CHI, VI. 56.
135. CHI, VI. 274.
136. Ibid, 32.
137. Shore, op. cit. 177.
138. CHI, VI. 32.
140. Ibid, 278-9.
141. Ibid. 305.
142. Ibid, 521.
143. Ibid, 537.
144. See pp. 374-5.
145. Works, p. 874. Quoted in B. Majumdar, 47.
146. See pp. 359, 374.
147. B. Majumdar. 37-41.
148. Ibid, 49-54.
149. Rammohan Roy, 87.
149a. These figures refer to the number of paragraphs.
150. The petitions are printed in the Reports of the Select Committee of the British Parliament, session, 1852-3. The petition of the British Indian Association, printed as a pamphlet, is available in the National Library (Catalogue No. 169 A 73). Extracts from it are given in B. Majumdar, 474-89.
151. F. J. Shore, op. cit, II. 28, 516.
153a. Further particulars about George Thompson will be given in Book III, Chapter L.
155. CHI, VI. 32.
156. Minutes of Bentinck, dated 13 March, 1835. Among the internal evils, of which the Government should take due note in making preparations for defence, Bentinck not only included disaffection of the public but also their higher elevation of character, knowledge, improved morality, courage and other noble qualities. In his opinion the spread of knowledge and the operation of the press in India weaken the respect of the Indians for European character and prestige for British supremacy (Bentinck, RI, p. 179).