CHAPTER I

SUCCESSION OF GOVERNORS-GENERAL

The brilliant administration of Marquess of Hastings came to a sad end, owing to the unfortunate controversy over the transactions of William Palmer and Co. in Hyderabad. This firm advanced huge loans to Chandu Lal who, in concert with the Resident, exercised the real authority in the Nizam's dominions. Under an Act of Parliament passed in 1797 such loans were made illegal, unless advanced with the previous written permission of the Court of Directors or of one of the Governors in Council in India. Apprehending that their previous loans might be invalidated by this Act the firm covered them by a fresh loan of sixty lakhs of Rupees. This new loan was represented to be necessary for improving the finances of the State and received the sanction of the Governor-General in Council. But it transpired later that "there had been no real advance and the loan was nothing more than the transfer of a previous debt to a new account." The sanction of the Government had thus been obtained by false pretences. Several factors in this transaction touched the Governor-General personally. The proposal for sanctioning the loan was carried in the Council by the casting vote of the Governor-General. The wife of a leading member of the firm of William Palmer and Co. had been brought up by Marquess of Hastings in his family and loved like a daughter. These naturally gave rise to insinuations about the personal integrity of the Governor-General, though there are good grounds to believe that he was guilty of no more serious crime than lack of proper caution and an error of judgement. In any event the Court of Directors strongly disapproved of the whole of the transaction, and asked the Government of India to revoke their sanction and not to help the firm in enforcing their claim. These instructions, particularly the suspicion cast on his honour, which some expressions in them seemed to imply, mortified Marquess of Hastings. He resigned the office of Governor-General in 1821 and left India on January 9, 1823.

The Court of Directors and Proprietors jointly passed a vote of thanks to him for his able administration, but a motion for the award of a pecuniary grant was not carried. Later, after all the relevant papers were circulated, a meeting of the General Court "while admitting that the purity of his motives could not be impeached," "approved of certain despatches in which the Directors strongly censured the countenance" given to the firm of William Palmer and Co.²
On the resignation of Marquess of Hastings, Mr. Canning, a notable figure in British politics, was appointed his successor. Canning accepted the appointment, but changed his mind on the sudden death of Marquess of Londonderry as this unexpected event opened to him the possibility of becoming the Foreign Secretary. Lord Amherst was then selected as the successor of Marquess of Hastings, and he joined his post on August 1, 1823, Mr. Adam, the second member of the Council, having officiated during the interval.

The chief event during the period of Amherst's office was the First Burmese War (1824-26). Among others may be mentioned the mutiny of troops at Barrackpur, the rebellion at Bharatpur, treaty with Nagpur, acquisition of territories in Malay Peninsula, and treaty with Siam.

In March 1828 Lord Amherst left India, and Mr. Butterworth Bayley officiated as Governor-General. Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck, who succeeded Amherst, was the second son of Duke of Portland. He began his life as a soldier, and took part in the Napoleonic wars. In 1803 he was appointed Governor of Madras, but the Court of Directors disapproved of his conduct in connection with the mutiny at Vellore in 1806, and he was recalled in 1807.

After his return, Bentinck resumed his military career and took an active part in the Peninsular War. In 1811, he was appointed Commander of the English troops in Sicily, and fought with the French in Italy. On his return he entered the Parliament and was offered the Governorship of Madras in 1819, which he declined. But in 1822 when the return of the Marquess of Hastings was announced, he made "a representation of his claims to be nominated his successor." A hostile critic has condemned it as "the unusual step of offering himself as a candidate." But as Bentick himself put it, he was prompted by the idea that his selection as Governor-General would be a gratifying vindication of his conduct in 1806. He was, not, however, successful in his endeavour. But when Lord Amherst retired he was appointed to succeed him and joined his post on July 4, 1828.

The most memorable event during the administration of Bentinck was the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1833, and the consequent changes both in its character and the method of administration of its Indian territories. His rule was distinguished by social and educational reforms of a far-reaching character, in particular the suppression of the sati and the official adoption of western education for India. Among his most important administrative measures may be mentioned the suppression of the thuggee, the systematic appointment of Indians in administrative
OFFICES which were hitherto reserved exclusively for Englishmen, and the restoration of financial stability by curtailing expenditure, both civil and military. The reduction of Batta (extra allowance to military officers), which caused a saving of £20,000, caused a great commotion, and "during the whole controversy (1828-30) the Calcutta Press teemed with personal attacks on him, often of abusive nature." In his relations with Indian States, Bentinck followed the traditional imperial policy, and his annexation of Cachar and Coorg, and taking over the administration of Mysore can only be regarded as high-handed acts inspired by an aggressive expansionist policy.

Widely divergent opinions have been held of the ability of Lord Bentinck and the success of his administration. High encomiums have been paid on him by Macaulay and these found an echo in the hearts of the Indians. But contemporary Anglo-Indians, particularly the official world, held a very poor opinion of his ability and character. The historian Thornton even proceeded so far as to remark that but for the indulgence in a variety of whimsical or inconsiderate acts which did him little credit, "the administration of Lord William Bentinck would appear almost a blank, and were all record of it obliterated, posterity would scarcely observe the deficiency, while it is certain they would have little reason to regret it." He makes only a single exception, namely the abolition of Sati.

Early in 1835, Bentinck tendered resignation of his office and Sir Charles Metcalfe, a distinguished official in India, was selected by the Court of Directors to succeed him, as a provisional measure. But this was objected to by the British ministry on two grounds. First, that a permanent successor should be appointed without delay, and secondly, that in their opinion "the highest office in the Government of India should not be held by any servant of the Company, however eminent his knowledge, talents and experiences might be;—it should be always filled from England in order to maintain the one main link between the systems of the British and Indian governments". The Court of Directors thereupon selected Lord Heytesbury, and the appointment was immediately approved by the crown. But shortly after Lord Heytesbury was sworn into office, there was a change of ministry in Britain, and the Whig party came into power. Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, was an inveterate Russophobe and did not like Heytesbury who had been an ambassador at St. Petersburg, and was an ardent admirer of the Tsar Nicholas. At Palmerston's instigation the Cabinet advised His Majesty to revoke the appointment, and postponed the question till the arrival of Lord William Bentinck. The Court of Directors strongly remonstrated against this measure which, in effect, rendered
the appointment of Governor-General a matter of party politics. The question was also debated in the House of Commons, but the ministers did not yield their ground.

Lord William Bentinck left India on March 20, 1835, and Sir Charles Metcalfe succeeded him by virtue of his provisional appointment. His brief tenure of office for one year has been memorable by the new press law which removed the restrictions to which the public press in India was subjected.

In the meantime Lord Auckland was appointed to succeed Bentinck. George Eden, Earl of Auckland, second son of the first Baron, had a distinguished Parliamentary career. He held the two posts of President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint in 1830-34, and became the First Lord of the Admiralty on the reconstitution of the Whig ministry in 1834.

He took over charge as Governor-General on March 5, 1836. The tenure of his office is marked by the First Afghan War which caused the greatest misfortune that ever befell the British arms and dealt a severe blow to their prestige in India. This grim tragedy occurred on the eve of his retirement, and the post was offered to Lord Ellenborough. He was Lord Privy Seal (1828) and President of the Board of Control for India (1828-30). He became President of the Board of Control in 1841, when he was appointed Governor-General "to restore peace in Asia". He arrived at Calcutta on February 28, 1842, and Auckland, promoted to an Earldom for his initial success in the Afghan War, sailed for home on March 12.

Lord Ellenborough brought the Afghan War to an end after the honour and might of the British were vindicated by a successful expedition to Kâbul. His short regime was marked by two highhanded acts of injustice, namely, the annexation of Sindh and the coercion of Sindhi into a humiliating treaty. But he was not allowed to complete his term of office. The Court of Directors recalled him after two years,—the only instance of the exercise of a power vested in that body by the Act of 1784. Apart from his unjust annexation of Sindh and arbitrary coercive measures adopted towards Sindhi's Government, Ellenborough had irritated the Court of Directors by his other arbitrary acts and haughty, almost insolent, attitude towards them. He had dominated over them for many years as the President of the Board of Control, and could not adjust himself to his new position in which he was theoretically the servant of the body. His reply to the criticism of his actions by the Court of Directors was not always couched in a language befitting his new office, though it must be admitted that in some matters, precipitating the crisis, he was undoubtedly within his rights. His
for instance, to admit the Law Member to the meetings of his Council which discussed purely executive and not legislative matters, was strictly in accordance with the letter of the law. There is perhaps some truth in his view that the Directors disliked him because he stood in the way of their patronage by way of appointments. In any case, the Court of Directors felt that Ellenborough was placing their authority at naught and setting up the powers and privileges of the Councils, and the Company's own servants, against their own power. So, in defiance of the Cabinet and express remonstrances of Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, the Court of Directors unanimously passed a resolution on April 24, 1844, recalling Lord Ellenborough. In justification of their resolution they placed on record a comprehensive review of the whole administration of Lord Ellenborough, including his treatment of Sindh and Sindbia. But, as the Chairman of the Board of Directors admitted, the main ground of recall was "their desire of preserving their own authority". Ellenborough's recall was, therefore, due not so much to his iniquitous acts as to his defiance of the Court of Directors and the usurpation of what they conceived to be their rights and prerogatives.

The disgrace implied in the recall was, to some extent, counteracted by the vote of thanks passed by the House of Commons to the retiring Governor-General, though it was not without some opposition. Broad hints were also conveyed to the Directors that their crime would be punished by the curtailment of their rights at the next revision of their charter. In any event, the Directors climbed down and, to make amends, agreed to appoint as Ellenborough's successor his brother-in-law, Sir Henry Hardinge, who took charge from him towards the end of July, 1844.7 Hardinge had distinguished himself as a military officer in the Peninsula War. In the final stages of the war against Napoleon in Belgium, he joined the Prussian army under Blucher as British Military Commissioner and lost his left hand at the battle of Ligny. The Duke of Wellington had presented the sword of the great Napoleon as a sword of honour to Hardinge. Hardinge had also a Parliamentary career extending over twenty years. The period of his rule in India is chiefly memorable for the First Sikh War. He took an active part in this campaign and while the critical battle was being fought at Ferozeshah, he unbuckled Napoleon's sword which he had been wearing, and sent it to a place of safety in the rear, lest it should fall into the hands of the Sikhs. He introduced the principle of giving preference to English-educated Indians for public employment—a policy which gave great fillip to English education but changed its character.
The suppression of human sacrifice by the Khonds was his other great achievement.

Lord Hardinge left India in January 1848 after personally handing over charge to his distinguished successor, Lord Dalhousie, in Calcutta, on the 12th of that month. The father of the new Governor-General was one of Wellington's Generals and had become Commander-in-Chief in India.

Lord Dalhousie entered Parliament in 1837 and succeeded Gladstone as President of the Board of Trade in 1845, in the second Peel Cabinet. After the resignation of Peel in 1846, the new Prime Minister Lord John Russell offered him a seat in the Cabinet, but Dalhousie declined it. Next year, when he was merely thirty-five years of age, he was offered the post of Governor-General of India. He had to choose between a promising political career in Britain and the highest office in India. He accepted the latter on the understanding that he was to be left in "entire and unquestioned possession" of his own "personal independence with reference to party politics."8

The strong personality indicated by the above expression was manifest throughout his long career of eight years in India (1848-56) unusually crowded with big events. When Dalhousie assumed his office he assured Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, that everything was quiet. Lord Hardinge, too, had remarked on the eve of his retirement, that so far as human foresight could predict, it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years. The English Press echoed the same view. But before three months had elapsed Dalhousie was engaged in the Second Sikh War, perhaps the one most severely contested in the whole history of British India. He was also involved in war with Sikim and Burma. The result of the Sikh War was the annexation of the Punjáb. Henceforth the annexation of native states seems to have been adopted as the guiding policy by the new Governor-General, who thus reverted to the principles of Marquess of Wellesley and Marquess of Hastings.

No other single Governor-General of India added even half the extent of territories which were incorporated into the British dominions during the administration of Lord Dalhousie, and were nearly twice the area of England and Wales. Besides the Punjáb, Lower Burma and tracts of Sikim were conquered by arms, and the kingdom of Awadh (Oudh) was seized by mere threat, on the plea of misrule of its ruler. Berâr, at first held as a security for the regular payment of the British contingent in Hyderâbâd, was for all practical purposes annexed to the British dominions. In addition to these
the kingdoms of Nāgpur, Sātārā, Jhānsi and a number of minor States were annexed by the application of the Doctrine of Lapse, i.e., due to the failure of male heirs, an adopted son not being recognized as such. Besides, Dalhousie abolished the titles of the Nawab of Carnatic and the Raja of Tānjore, and stopped the pensions of ex-Peshwa Baji Rao after his death.

But the annexations of territories, by which Dalhousie left to his successor “a country whose area was a third and a half larger than the country he had himself received charge of from his predecessor”, were not the only distinctive features of his administration. The improvements he effected in the internal administration of the large empire were many and varied in character. These would be referred to in detail in proper places. It would suffice here to mention only a few. The Governor-General was relieved of his additional but onerous duty of governing also the province of Bengal, which was in future to be ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor with his headquarters in Calcutta. This city still remained the imperial capital, but in view of the large accessions of territory it was decided to locate the imperial Government at Simla during a considerable part of the year, and also to remove the military headquarters from Calcutta to an inland station a thousand miles away. The introduction of the Railway and the Telegraph systems, along with cheap postage, revolutionised India in more senses than one. These, along with the creation of Public Works Department and the construction of many canals, including the great Ganges Canal, vigorous campaign of social reforms and organisation of education on the lines laid down in the famous despatch of 1854, must be reckoned as the great factors in the evolution of modern India.

The heavy burden of responsibility and enormous amount of work carried on during eight years of unremitting labour, amid domestic sorrows, completely broke down the health of Dalhousie. He came to India in the plenitude of his youthful vigour, but when he handed over charge to Lord Canning, he was, as he described himself, a “poor, miserable, broken down dying man.” He set sail for England on March 6, 1856, and died on December 19, 1860.

Lord Canning, who succeeded Dalhousie, was the third son of William George Canning, a distinguished English statesman and Foreign Secretary who, as noted above, had accepted the office of Governor-General in 1823, but did not actually join his post. Lord Canning served as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs and also obtained a seat in the Cabinet in Lord Palmerston’s ministry (1855). Like Dalhousie, Canning sacrificed a promising political career in England by accepting the Governor-Generalship of India. Canning
reached India early in 1856, but as he halted at Bombay and Madras, he did not reach Calcutta and take over charge till the month of February.

As at the beginning of his predecessor's administration, everything in India seemed quiet. But Dalhousie's experience had made him wiser, and in a narrative of his rule written later in life he had observed: "No prudent man would ever venture to predict unbroken tranquillity within the Eastern possessions of Great Britain." Canning also echoed the same feeling in a speech which he delivered at a farewell banquet given in his honour by the Court of Directors. "We must not forget," said he, "that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing bigger and bigger, may at last threaten to overwhelm us with ruin. What has happened once may happen again." What exactly the Governor-General designate had in view, particularly in the last sentence, no one knows. Whether it was merely a premonition, psychological in character, or a shrewd anticipation of events, it is impossible to say. But Canning's words turned out to be a prophetic utterance, and have been quoted, ever since, more often than perhaps any other saying of any Governor-General. For, a little more than a year after Canning took over charge of his high office, the thunderstorm burst in the shape of the mutiny of sepoys which was soon widely spread and gradually merged itself into a popular revolt in certain areas, threatening to overwhelm the British dominions in India in utter ruin. That story will form the subject-matter of Part II.

Taking a broad view, the period of forty years (1818-1857) covered by these Governors-General must be regarded as one of great importance in the history of British rule in India. The British definitely assumed the powers and responsibilities of the paramount power and the first phase of British imperialism made itself fully manifest with all its good and evil characteristics. So far as the Indians were concerned, they did not accept the new position without demur or expressions of discontent. The chiefs and people of India chafed at the rigours of the new rule and regarded themselves as helpless victims of the iron yoke of the British. Nevertheless discontent sometimes led to armed resistance not unoften developing into open rebellions. Although these were local or sectional risings, and there was no concerted plan of action, it would be a mistake to dismiss them as of no significance. They were the outward manifestations of a sullen spirit of resistance against a foreign rule and novel system of administration, and mark the tedious and painful stages through which the British Government had to pass before
they succeeded in establishing the Pax-Britannica in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Again, it is to be noted that these disturbances and risings set the stage for the great upheaval of 1857, which shook the mighty British Empire to its very foundation. With the failure of that rising, but not till then, did the Indians realise the futility of armed resistance against the British and accept their rule as a fait accompli. The period from 1818 to 1857 may thus be looked upon both as a culmination of the process that had set in with the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and a preparation for that unchallenged supremacy of the British which gave to India peace for a century known as Pax Britannica.

2. Ibid, 123.
4. Thornton, V. 177.
5. Ibid, 234-6.
6. Thornton, VI. 22-3; CHBFP, II. 201.
7. Imlah, 224.
CHAPTER II
THE BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY AND IMPERIALISM

I. GENERAL REVIEW

The end of the Third Marāṭhā War constitutes a definite landmark in the history of the British rule in India. The kingdom of the head of the proud Marāṭhā nation was now a part of the British dominions, and the other Marāṭhā chiefs were humbled to the dust. There was no power in the whole of India, from the Himālayas to the Cape Comorin and the Sutlej to the Brahmputra, which could challenge the authority of the British.

The part England took in destroying the power of Napoleon gave her self-confidence and raised her prestige as a great military power of the world. It is not surprising therefore that the political outlook of the British in India also underwent a great transformation. Hitherto they were engaged in the task of consolidating their rule; now they looked upon themselves as the Paramount Power in India. The Marquess of Hastings, whose achievements brought about this change, had a very clear conception of this new position and planned his activities accordingly. He himself enunciated the new policy in the following words:

"Our object ought to be to render the British Government paramount in effect, if not declaredly so. We should hold the other States as vassals, in substance though not in name; not precisely as they stood in the Mogul Government, but possessed of perfect internal sovereignty, and only bound to repay the guarantee and protection of their possessions by the British Government with the pledge of the two great feudal duties."

"First, they should support it with all their forces on any call. Secondly, they should submit their mutual differences to the head of the confederacy (our Government), without attacking each other’s territories, a few subordinate stipulations on our part, with immunities secured in return to the other side (especially with regard to succession), would render the arrangement ample without complication or undue latitude. Were this made palatable to a few States, as perhaps it easily might, the abrogation of treaties with the Powers who refuse to submit to the arrangement would soon work upon their apprehensions in a way that would bring them at last within
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te pale of the compact. The completion of such a system, which must include the extinction of any pretension to pre-eminence in the court of Delhi, demands time and favourable coincidences. While, on the other hand, the difficulties bequeathed to me are imminent, and might break upon me at any instant. A new Government always produces some suspension in animosities. I have endeavoured to improve the juncture by courteous and conciliatory language to the native Powers; and I do hope I may remove considerable soreness. As for the rest, fortune and opportunities must determine; but it is always well to ascertain to oneself what one would precisely desire had one the means of commanding the issue."

Lord Hastings himself gave a practical demonstration of this new policy in his settlement with the Marathā and Rājput States, to which reference will be made in the next section. His successors not only followed his policy but carried it to its logical conclusion. Between Paramountcy and aggressive Imperialism there is but a short step, and sometimes there is hardly any line of demarcation. So Paramountcy cum Imperialism was the key-note of British policy in India during the period under review.

The British historians and statesmen have given wide currency to the view that the establishment of the British empire in India was the effect of a number of unforeseen factors, and not the result of a policy of aggressive imperialism deliberately adopted by the authorities. This is only partially correct, but in view of its hold on the public mind it is necessary to review the question at some length.

As far back as 1784 the British House of Commons adopted a resolution to the effect that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India is contrary to the wish, the honour, and policy of the British nation". But in spite of it the House of Commons accorded its sanction to the wars and conquests of Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley. The Court of Directors, with the true instincts of a mercantile body, was more sincere in its desire to avoid further expansion of its Indian dominions. It opposed the expansionist policy of Wellesley, and for some time studiously avoided all political complications in India in spite of urgent remonstrances. It endorsed and reiterated the Resolution of the House of Commons with the following preamble: "The territories which we have lately acquired...are of so vast and extensive a nature that we cannot take a view of our situation without being seriously impressed with the wisdom and necessity of that solemn declaration of the legislature...".

Among those who most vehemently denounced the conquests of Wellesley was the Earl of Moira, the future Marquess of Hastings.
When he accepted the office of the Governor-General he decided to follow the policy of peace without any reservation, and as he himself said, "in his original plan there had not been the expectation or the wish of adding a rood to the dominions of the Honourable Company". But his views underwent a radical change after a few years' residence in India, and he adopted an out and out imperial outlook, as has been mentioned above. As usual, the Court of Directors censured the Governor-General, both for his military campaigns and the extension of territory, but were not prepared to forego the profits accruing therefrom.

The Marquess of Hastings was not, however, either the first or the last Governor-General who left the shore of England with an avowed determination to pursue a policy of peace, but was seriously engaged, while in India, in costly campaigns to further the imperial interest of the British. Lord Ellenborough, for example, came out to India "to restore tranquillity to both banks of the Indus; in a word to give peace to Asia". But once in India, he proved himself to be one of the worst among the imperial autocrats, in his dealings with Sindh and Gwalior. Sir Henry Hardinge was chosen his successor with the strictest injunction to avoid war and, above all things, annexation. But he fought one of the bloodiest campaigns in India and, as will be shown later, it was certainly not a fight in self-defence as it is generally believed. When Hardinge retired from India he declared that there would not be a shot fired for the next seven years. But before a year was over, Lord Dalhousie fought another bloody war and pursued that policy of military conquest and annexation by all means which coloured red the whole map of India.

A perusal of the following pages will show that in almost all cases, the British Governors-General, including those mentioned above, were not forced by circumstances to pursue an aggressive imperial policy, but adopted it as a matter of choice, though in many cases it involved gross injustice and breach of pledges. It would perhaps be unjust and unnatural to regard all the Governors-General as devoid of sense of justice and morality. The real explanation of the strange phenomenon recorded above evidently lies in the political disintegration of India and the ease with which her different parts could be absorbed in the British Empire. India presented the spectacle of gardens full of ripe mangoes without any strong watchmen to protect them from intruders, and the Governors-General were overcome by the irresistible temptation to swallow them. It might be illegal, unjust and immoral, but may also be looked upon as a law of nature, howsoever undesirable its effect might be upon the owners of the gardens. The same idea has been put in a more precise scientific
form, and a British writer has put up the best defence of the action of his countrymen, in the following words:

"It is unavoidable not to recognise a law, like that which in Physics makes the greater attract and absorb the less, compelling the march of the energetic Saxon over and through the weak oriental mass. Acts of injustice, indeed, must not shield themselves under any such law, but practical sense will acknowledge its existence."²

Whatever we might think of this defence, it is difficult to endorse the view that the British empire in India was the result of a series of unforeseen accidents, and not the effect of any deliberate effort. The analogy of the mango garden gives us a clue to the real explanation. It may be true, to a certain extent, that the British did not come to India with a ready-made plan to rob the mango gardens, but it is equally true that the mangoes did not fall into their mouths, of themselves, directly from the trees; they had to pluck the fruits one by one, through ingenious devices backed by force, too strong for the helpless watchmen.

Thus, whatever might have been the views or desire of the home authorities, their pro-consuls deliberately dragged them on along the road which led to British imperialism in India. In the history of its progress the year 1818, as noted above, constitutes a definite landmark. The struggle for supremacy was over, and there was no Indian power which could question the authority of the British power or dare raise their voice or hands against it. Slowly but surely, the Government of India adjusted itself to the new position and realised its duties and responsibilities. But, as in the physical world, a force, once it gets a momentum, is apt to run its full course, so also in the political world the imperialistic idea, once set in motion, is hard to stop and often runs beyond the limit which prudence or justice might dictate. So it happened in India. The Government of India, in most cases without the knowledge or approval, and not in a few, in open defiance of the home authorities, pursued unchecked the policy of aggressive imperialism in all its naked brutality, under the thinly veiled disguise of the duty of a Paramount Power. The political history of India during the period under review is but the history of this imperialistic policy pursued by the British rulers in India. In some cases it may be accounted for, even justified, by the considerations of the duty and prerogative of Paramountcy; in others the unselfish character of the motive, as well as the justice of the course actually pursued, may be seriously doubted; and there are not a few which deserve serious condemnation as unprovoked aggression.
BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY AND INDIAN RENAISSANCE

It appears that with the gradual expansion of the British empire in India and the material gains accruing therefrom, the views of the home authorities also underwent a radical change. In 1841 the Court of Directors laid down that the Company should "persevere in the one clear and direct course of abandoning no just and honourable accession of territory or revenue, while all existing claims of rights are at the same time scrupulously respected," a sentiment that was echoed by Dalhousie. If it is remembered that the determination of "justice" or "rights" was necessarily left to the ex parte decision of the Paramount Power, the principle, enunciated above, practically gave a free rein to the galloping horse of British imperialism in India.

The imperialistic policy, broadly speaking, assumed two forms. First, the tightening of the hold over, leading sometimes to the annexation of, smaller States within the limits of the British empire in India; and secondly, the expansion of its frontier both towards the east as well as to the west, even beyond the natural boundaries of the country.

As regards the first, it was inevitable that there would be clashes between the Paramount Power and the subordinate States ruled over by Indians. The inefficiency and corruption of many of these States sometimes brought about such chaos and confusion in the internal administration that the Paramount Power could hardly look on with indifference upon the miseries of the suffering subjects, or the reaction it was not unlikely to produce upon the neighbouring territories. On the other hand, temptation to extend authority or dominions on the pretext of misrule in Native States was too great not to profoundly influence the judgment or decision in many cases. It was in any case a difficult task to avoid the Scylla of laissez faire and the Charybdis of undue and unjust interference. The difficulty was further increased by the tacit assumption, gradually growing into a deep-rooted conviction in the minds of many Britishers, that British rule being hundred times preferable to a native rule, the extension of the former must be effected by all means, fair or foul, the end always justifying the means. This policy was buttressed by the specious plea that the people of the Native States themselves preferred the British rule. This might have been true in some cases, but in most cases where the plea was put forward, either as a cause, or as a justification, of the interference, it was demonstrated to be false by the subsequent conduct of the people themselves.

A definite change was noticeable in the attitude of the British rulers in India. While, previous to 1818, they were generally satisfied with the exercise of influence and suzerainty over the Native
States, they were gradually led to the idea of incorporating them in the British dominions. A pointed reference to this change is made by Sleeman in his letter to Sir James Hogg, as the following extract will show:

"Few old officers of experience, with my feelings and opinions on this subject, now remain in India; and the influence of...a school...characterised by impatience at the existence of any native state, and its strong and often insane advocacy of their absorption—by honest means, if possible—but still, their absorption...is too great over the rising generation, whose hopes and aspirations they tend so much to encourage. There is no pretext, however weak, that is not sufficient, in their estimation, for the purpose (of annexation); and no war, however cruel, that is not justifiable, if it has only this object in view."  

The *modus operandi* of the annexation of the Indian States is thus described by the Marquess of Hastings:

"In our treaties with them we recognise them as independent sovereigns. Then we send a Resident to their courts. Instead of acting in the character of ambassador, he assumes the functions of a dictator; interferes in all their private concerns; countenances refractory subjects against them; and makes the most ostentatious exhibition of this exercise of authority. To secure to himself the support of our Government, he urges some interest which, under the colour thrown upon it by him, is strenuously taken up by our Council; and the Government identifies itself with the Resident not only on the single point but on the whole tenor of his conduct. In nothing do we violate the feelings of the native princes so much as in the decisions which we claim the privilege of pronouncing with regard to the succession to the musnud. We constantly oppose our construction of Mahomedan law to the right which the Moslem princes claim from usage to choose among their sons the individual to be declared the heir apparent."  

He might have well added Hindu Law in the same category.

The word 'interest' in the above extract deserves more than a passing notice. What type of interest the Marquess had in view it is difficult to say. But in practice, the climate, strategic position or commercial possibilities of a State or locality offered the strongest inducement to British officers to annex the territory to the British dominions.

In addition to the *modus operandi* described above there were many others, the most favourite ones being to paint an Indian ruler in the blackest colour, attributing to him all types of cruelty and
vices, or to charge him with intrigue against the British Government, sometimes with even treasonable plot to conquer British territories. There was almost no limit to such extravagant or ridiculous charges put forward for ousting an Indian ruler. Fortunately for historians there were not wanting a few honest British people who could rise above the petty meanness of officialdom and dare express the bare truth exposing the hollowness of these charges. The history of India owes a great deal to these noble men, for, but for their testimony, it would have been difficult to ascertain the truth, and the official version would have been taken as historical facts. What is still more important, their testimony furnishes the most irrefutable evidence about the generally unreliable character of the version, supplied by the Government of India, about their own iniquitous activities.

One of the underlying causes of interference, in not a few cases, was the conscious or unconscious desire to remove a strong personality from the helm of affairs in a Native State. A Paramount Power would naturally prefer only mediocrities who were more likely to be subservient to it. A preference for this class, and an aversion towards the other, explain many cases of interference in Native States. Indeed a British Minister openly declared in the House of Commons that the Government of India had never encouraged men of ability, good character and popularity to wield any power or authority in a Native State—they had always hated and discouraged independent and original talent, and had always loved and promoted docile and unpretending mediocrity. This was a policy, he continued, which they had inherited from Tarquinius Superbus. But times were changed. So, they did not cut off the heads of the tall poppies, as recommended by the Roman king, but took more merciful means of removing any person of dangerous political pre-eminence to a harmless condition. Though this confession was made by an Under-Secretary of State for India towards the close of the period covered by this volume, there is no doubt that the policy was at work even at the very beginning. As will be shown in Ch. VI, Maharaja Pratap Singh of Satta is an early victim to it, but he was neither the first nor the last victim of this type during the British rule.

This naked spirit of aggression was sought to be hidden under a cloak of piety. The expansion of British dominions, in and outside India, was always represented as a measure which was urgently required for safeguarding the interests of Indian people, or forced upon the British by the contumacy, arrogance, or evil designs of the opponents. But in most cases, if not all, it would appear to be the result
of British imperialism masquerading in the guise of political necessity or injured innocence, and dictated by the interests of the British people rather than the Indians. The British rule in India has always been the rule of one people by another people and for another people. The establishment of the British empire in India may have been fully justified by its results. This and the allied questions will be discussed elsewhere. But these speculations are beside the point in an objective study of the history of the British empire in India. It would be hard to maintain that the successive stages of its growth were always marked by political virtues, and dictated by an altruistic motive or benevolent spirit, as most Englishmen, historians included, would have us believe. The British empire in India rose and fell very much like all empires in ancient, medieval, and modern age, and if the method pursued can hardly claim any special virtue, it does not call for any special condemnation. These preliminary considerations would be of great help in forming a just and proper estimate of the history of the British empire in India which it is the object of this volume to unfold.

The new consciousness of the British Paramountcy in India was also manifested in the attitude of the Governors-General to the titular Emperor of Delhi. He had by this time lost all authority outside the precincts of his palace (Red Fort) in Delhi, but although the substance of his imperial authority was gone, the shadow still remained. It should be remembered that by the treaty of 1765 the East India Company held their possessions as the Diwan of the Emperor, and as this was not amended or modified by any subsequent treaty, the old fiction continued in so far as it was compatible with the actual state of affairs. The money coined by the Government of India still bore the effigy of the emperor of Delhi, and was “issued in the 9th regnal year of Shah Alam”! The British Resident at Delhi, on certain ceremonial occasions, presented him the usual nazar in the name of the Governor-General, and the Governor-General's Seal bore a phrase declaring himself to be the servant of the Emperor. The Marquess of Hastings abolished both these practices as in pursuance of his imperial policy he found it necessary to 'extinguish the fiction of the Mogul government.'

This attitude of the Marquess is perhaps also to be explained by the change in the relations in which India stood with His Britannic Majesty. Although the British Parliament interfered in the affairs of the East India Company, the latter was still regarded as the sovereign of India, and a distinction was maintained between British subjects and Indians. It was not till 1813 that the British Government took advantage of the renewal of the Company's Char-
ter, to declare in unequivocal terms "the undoubted sovereignty of the crown of the United Kingdom" in and over the territorial possessions under the 'control' of the Company.

We need not enter into the legal quibble whether this clause in the Charter Act of 1813 automatically dissolved the status of the Company as Diwan of the Emperor of Delhi created by the treaty of 1765. The Marquess of Hastings, in any case, "denied that the Company held territory on this dependent tenure" and hence "held it right to discountenance any pretension of the sort (on the part of the house of Timur), either as it applies to us or to any of the native princes!"  

A practical demonstration of the new attitude was given by the Marquess in 1815 when he was touring near Delhi. It was suggested that he should pay a formal visit to the Emperor Akbar II who had succeeded his father Shah Alam in 1806. Hastings refused point blank because, as he says in his private journal, "His Majesty expected my acquiescence in a ceremonial which was to imply an acknowledgement that he was the liege-lord of the British possessions".

A further and more striking illustration of the Marquess' view, quoted above, is afforded by the change in the title of the ruler of Avadh. He was encouraged by the Governor-General to discard his old title of Wazir or chief minister (to the Mughul Emperor) and assume that of Pādshāh or independent king, in 1819. The Marquess of Hastings says that he "sanctioned the change" (euphemistic way of expressing that he instigated it) "on the ground that it would benefit British interests, by dividing the Muhammadans among themselves, and by weakening the moral power of the house of Timūr which nominally reigned at Delhi."  

The Nizam, however, resisted a similar suggestion, as he regarded it as an act of rebellion against the Emperor.

The refusal of the Marquess of Hastings to visit the Emperor of Delhi had the desired effect. The objectionable ceremonials were abolished and in 1827 Lord Amherst met Akbar II on equal terms at the Diwan-i-Khas within the Red Fort of Delhi. Amherst also introduced modification in the style of communication with the Emperor. The old conventional form, conveying allegiance on the part of the Company, was removed, though the new one, in a way, recognized the superiority of the Emperor. In 1835 the old coins were replaced by new ones bearing the name and image of the British sovereign.

The Emperor Akbar II sent Rāmmohan Roy as an envoy to London to represent his grievances to the British King, George IV, and
seek redress. The principal items of complaint were the smallness of the annual stipend granted to him (12 lakhs of rupees), and the change in the ceremonials and forms of address introduced by Lord Amherst. The Emperor invested Rāmmohan with the title of 'Rāja', and sent a personal letter with him to the king of England. The Governor-General, Lord Bentinck, refused to recognize either the title or the character of envoy conferred upon Rāmmohan, and so the latter proceeded to England (November, 1830) as a "private individual". Nevertheless he circulated to influential Englishmen a printed statement corresponding in substance to the letter from the Emperor. As a result of the exertions of Rāmmohan, the Court of Directors increased the annual stipend of the Emperor by three lakhs of rupees (February 13, 1833), but the latter got no redress of the other grievances.

Even the additional stipend did not benefit the Emperor in the least. The Court of Directors, in their letter, dated 13 February, 1833, directed the Governor-General to raise the royal stipend to 15 lakhs of Rupees per annum, leaving it to him to distribute the additional amount of three lakhs among the other members of the imperial family in such manner as he thought just and proper upon a consideration of their respective claims. The Emperor of Delhi did not like this idea and at first declined, but later accepted, the additional grant. The scheme of distribution proposed by him was, however, thrown away, and he complained to the Governor-General that according to the distribution made by the Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces, "not a farthing (has been) reserved for me, my sons, nor their descendants". The Governor-General refused to interfere in the proposed distribution, and so the titular Emperor of Delhi did not get any part of the increased allowance of three lakhs.\textsuperscript{10a}

As mentioned above, the practice of payment of the nazar by the Governor-General was abolished by the Marquess of Hastings. The Commander-in-Chief, however, paid the nazar as late as 1837, on the accession of Bahadur Shah. When Lord Ellenborough paid a visit to Delhi in 1842-3, his secretaries consulted the darbār records and followed the usual practice of presenting nazar without any reference to the Governor-General. The latter was surprised and indignant in the extreme, when he heard of this, and put a stop to the nazar-giving for ever. Mr. William Edwards, one of the secretaries, has left a graphic account of the ceremony of presenting "the last nazar to the king of Delhi". The following extract will give some idea of the ceremony destined to be the last of its kind.
"Mr. Thomason and myself, accompanied by Colonel Broadfoot, proceeded to the palace on elephants, each being provided with a silk bag full of gold mohurs for presentation to the King. We were required to proceed without any shoes into the immediate presence—such having been in all ages in India the usual mark of respect on the part of an inferior on approaching a superior. On this occasion we compromised the matter by putting short worsted Cashmere socks over our boots, and thus entered the hall of audience. On a curtain being drawn aside, we saw the old King, then apparently a very feeble old man above seventy years of age, seated on his throne, which was elevated so as to have the royal person, as he sat cross-legged, on a level with our faces. We made a low obeisance to the Emperor, and on approaching the throne, each in succession presented the bag of gold mohurs, and inquired after his Majesty's health and prosperity. I confess to a feeling of awe and solemnity passing over me as I stepped up and addressed this representative of a long line of kings and of a once powerful empire, and presented my nuzzur for his Majesty's acceptance,...The King simply received it, and ordered us to be robed in dresses of honour, and to have turbans bound round our heads. This was done in due form; we made our obeisance to the King, and departed."

The process of debunking the titular Emperor of Delhi went on apace, though at times the authorities at home had to curb the zeal of their pro-consuls in India. Ellenborough abolished the payment of nazir, both on his own behalf and on that of the Resident: but he did not succeed in carrying out his scheme whereby the Emperor would voluntarily (?) resign his title and quit the Red Fort in Delhi, and then the Chiefs of India would voluntarily (?) offer the imperial title to the Queen of England. Dalhousie, who abolished the title of 'Nawab of the Carnatic' and 'Raja of Tanjore', proposed that the imperial dignity and royal title should be abolished and the Red Fort should be vacated after the death of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II, who had succeeded his father Akbar II in 1837. Although the Court of Directors were strongly opposed to this view, they were forced to sanction it at the dictation of the President of the Board of Control. In view of the strong opposition at home, Dalhousie modified his plan, and a secret agreement was reached with the heir apparent, Prince Fakir-ud-din, by which the latter was to be recognized as the head of the family, on the death of his father, on condition that he would be satisfied with the title of mere Shahzada or Prince, agree to meet the Governor-General on equal terms, and vacate the Red Fort, taking his residence with his family somewhere near the Qutb Minar. The Prince evidently agreed because he feared, and rightly too, that his claim would be passed over by his father.
Unfortunately, nothing came out of it, as the Prince died before his father, in 1856. But the secret leaked out, and caused great resentment and mortification to the Emperor and his family. Further complication arose when Bahadur Shah nominated, as his heir, Jawan Bakht, a younger son by his favourite queen Zinnat Mahal, and, in spite of repeated requests of the Emperor, the Governor-General refused to recognize his nomination, or to increase his pension. Canning, who succeeded Dalhousie, reiterated his proposal to abolish the imperial dignity altogether. The home authorities agreed, and it was decided that the imperial dignity, descending in an unbroken line from Babur more than three hundred years ago, should end with the life of Bahadur Shah. But the question was decided long before that event and in a far more tragic manner. Bahadur Shah II was tried for the part he took in the mutiny of troops at Delhi in 1857. condemned, and exiled to Rangoon, and all pretension of the imperial dignity of the house of Timur was extinguished for ever. The consummation of the efforts of successive Governors-General was reached when Queen Victoria was declared the Empress of India (Kaisar-i-Hind) on January 1, 1877. The credit for this crowning achievement, however, belongs to the two great imperialists, Lord Lytton and Benjamin Disraeli.

One of the earliest instances of the exercise of authority as Paramount Power by the British is furnished by the events in the State of Alwar in 1824. Ahmad Buksh Khan, a soldier of fortune in the service of Alwar, was rewarded for his help to the British during the Second Maratha War with the principality of Firozpur under the supremacy of the British. An attempt was made to assassinate Ahmad Buksh. The assassin, when seized, confessed that he was employed by a minister and some influential members of the court of Alwar. The British Government directed the Raja of Alwar to arrest the accused persons and send them to Delhi for trial. The Raja did not comply with this request, and even rejected the proposal of a judicial investigation by British functionaries as incompatible with his rights as an independent prince. The Raja assembled an armed force, put the fortress of Alwar in a state of defence, and opened negotiations with the rulers of Jaipur and Bharatpur, “in both of which, dissatisfaction with British policy was busily fermenting”. Nothing serious happened in Alwar or Jaipur, but it was necessary to send a regular military expedition to Bharatpur to which reference will be made in Section III of this Chapter.

But while interference in Alwar and Bharatpur may be regarded as beneficent aspects of Paramountcy, the worst features of Paramountcy cum Imperialism were manifested in the high-handed and
unjust action of Lord Ellenborough in his handling of the situation at Gwalior in 1843. The episode was much criticised at the time and formed one of the grounds for the recall of Ellenborough; but curiously enough, British historians have generally paid but scant attention to it, and represented the whole thing as mainly an act of rebellion on the part of the all-powerful but unruly troops of Sindhia. Nothing can be further from the truth. In reality, Ellenborough's act is a prominent illustration of the abuse of the newly assumed dignity of Paramountcy. A military expedition was undertaken by the Governor-General in person to coerce a ruler on the ground of his contumacy, though the latter had not violated a single provision of the treaty which regulated his relation with the Paramount power, and made humiliating submission even to the most unjust demands of the Governor-General. The pleas advanced by Ellenborough to justify the action he took reminds one of the Aesop's fable of the wolf and the lamb, and his arguments aptly illustrate the logic of the strong towards the weak. In order to demonstrate the true nature of the episode and remove the false impressions that have been created by current history, it has been necessary to discuss the question at some length which may appear to be somewhat out of proportion to the intrinsic importance of the subject. The elaborate and detailed account given in Ch. IX will show that the ostensible ground for the military expedition against Sindhia was a mere pretext to cover the real motive of removing a strong force close to Agra which might prove to be a great danger in the rear in the impending conflict with the powerful Sikh army of 70,000 men standing in a menacing attitude on the banks of the Sutlej.

Other concrete illustrations of the different phases of British imperialism are furnished by the military expedition to Afghanistán in 1839, described in section IV of this Chapter, and the annexations of various kingdoms, in and outside India, dealt with in the next two Chapters.

II. SETTLEMENT OF THE MARQUESS OF HASTINGS.

A. Marāṭhā Dominions

As a result of the Third Marāṭhā War in 1817-18, described in the preceding volume, the Peshwa, Baji Rao II, Appa Sahib, the Bhonsle chief of Nagpur, and Malhar Rao Holkar were all defeated by the British. Baji Rao lost his throne and was exiled to Bithur, near Kanpur, on a pension. His vast possessions were incorporated in the British dominions, with the exception of a small portion, which formed the Sātārā State, and two parganas granted to the
Raja of Kolhāpur. The post of Peshwa was abolished, and with it even the nominal symbol of the Marāthā sovereignty and unity was extinguished for ever.

Holkar concluded the treaty of Mandāsor on January 6, 1818, by which he accepted a British Resident at his Court, ceded all territories south of the Narmadā, gave up all claims of sovereignty in Rājputāna and other outlying territories, acknowledged the independence of the Pathan chief Amir Khan, reduced his own army, and agreed to maintain a contingent to co-operate with the British.

Appa Sahib, the Bhonsle chief of Nagpur, concluded a treaty on January 6, 1818, by which he ceded all territories lying to the north of the Narmadā, and was allowed to retain a nominal sovereignty over the rest of his kingdom. But as he once more began to intrigue with the Peshwa he was arrested and deposed. His escape and subsequent adventures have been noted above. A grandson of Raghuji Bhonsle was placed on the throne. But as he was a child, the administration was carried on by British officers under the supervision of the Resident, and Bhonsle's army was placed under British officers.

In December, 1826, a treaty was concluded between the British Government and the Bhonsle chief of Nāgpur. By virtue of this new treaty, the English ceased to act as the guardian of the Raja and he was permitted to administer his own kingdom. By other provisions of this new treaty, the hills of Sitābaldī and the neighbourhood were annexed to the British Residency, and the British Government was entitled to garrison and occupy such forts and strong places as they might determine. The Bhonsle Raja gave up all connection with the other Marāthā rulers, including the Raja of Sātārā, and all pretensions and ceremonies associated with his former position in the Marāthā confederacy. His relations with foreign powers, as well as the strength of the force to be maintained by him, were to be regulated by the British. The Raja also formally gave up all his claims to the territory ceded to the Company by Appa Sahib by the treaty of 1818, the other provisions of which were all renewed as far as they were compatible with the preceding provisions.

Sindhia was forced, without any actual war, to conclude a treaty at Gwāllior in November, 1817. He agreed to co-operate with the British in the campaign against the Pindāris, and also to cancel the clause in the treaty of Surjī Arjungāon (A.D. 1808) by which the British were prevented from concluding alliance with Rājput and other chiefs. As Sindhia did not render the promised help in the Pindāri campaign he was forced to conclude another treaty in
1818 by which he ceded Ajmir to the British. As noted above, he was deprived of the fort of Asirgadh in consequence of his duplicity.

The Gaekwar of Barodā had already entered into subsidiary alliance with the British in 1802,\(^{12}\) and had been loyal and faithful to them ever since. The treaty concluded between the Peshwa and the British Government on June 13, 1817 contained some stipulations in his favour which increased his revenue to the extent of twenty-two lakhs of Rupees. In return the Gaekwar agreed, by a treaty in November, 1817, to increase the subsidiary force maintained by the British at his expense. As the Gaekwar, Anand Rao, was an imbecile, the administration was practically carried on by the British. On his death in 1819 he was succeeded by his brother Sayaji Rao, who concluded a new treaty with the British in 1820, by which the British control was relaxed a little and the Gaekwar's authority in the internal affairs was somewhat increased.

The dominions of the Peshwa, with the exception of those portions where native rulers were set up, were incorporated into the British empire and formed the major part of what now became the Presidency of Bombay. Elphinstone, who became its Governor in 1820, adopted wise measures in order to reconcile all classes of people to the new government and in this he was eminently successful.

Among the new Native States carved out of the Peshwa's dominions, the most important was that of Sātārā, where a descendant of Shivaji was placed on the throne with very limited powers. The circumstances under which Pratap Singh became the first ruler of Sātārā, and was later deposed on allegations, which appear to be unfounded to a very large extent, will be described in detail in Chapter VI.

The districts ceded by the Bhonsle in the valley of the Narmadā, hitherto ruled by various native chiefs, were placed under a Commissioner in 1818; in 1827 Sāgar was added to his jurisdiction, constituting the 'Sāgar and Narmadā' territories.

Like the Gaekwar of Barodā the Nizam of Hyderābād was also rewarded for his loyalty out of the spoils of the Third Marāthā War. He was relieved of the antiquated claim of Chauth made by the Peshwa which had been a perpetual source of dissensions and disputes. There was also an exchange of territories. The Nizam received certain districts ceded by the Bhonsle, the Peshwa, and the Holkar, which were contiguous to his territories, and gave up, in return, to the British territory of less value. By this exchange the Nizam's dominions were consolidated and the frontiers on the west more precisely defined.
THE BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY AND IMPERIALISM

B. Rājput States

The treaties with the Marāthā leaders freed the old States in Rājputāna from the control which the Sindhia and Holkar had exercised over them. This paved the way for a series of treaties concluded between the British and the various major and minor Rājput States which placed them under the protection of the Government of India, with rights and obligations, which continued, without much alteration, down to the end of British rule, one hundred and thirty years later. There can be no question that the Rājput rulers welcomed the British Protectorate. They had suffered so long and so severely from the depredations of the Sindhias and Holkars, as well as of the Pathan or Pindari hordes, that most of them were reduced to a state of utter exhaustion, and found no means to protect themselves without the aid of the British. The position was summed up by one of them as follows:—"Some power in India had always existed to which peaceable States submitted, and in return obtained its protection against the invasions of upstart chiefs and the armies of lawless banditti; that the British Government now occupied the place of that protecting Power and was the natural guardian of weak states, which were continually exposed to the cruelties and oppression of robbers and plunderers, owing to the refusal of the British Government to protect them."\(^\text{13}\) These few lines put in a nutshell the cause and justification of the assumption of the rights and obligations of the Paramount Power in India by the British. It was a natural sequel of the military triumphs of Wellesley, but its operation was suspended by the policy of non-interference since pursued by the British for more than a decade. The Marquess of Hastings rendered this paramountcy practicable, nay almost inevitable, by bringing within direct British control, or their sphere of influence, the vast stretch of region roughly comprising Mālwa, Central India and Rājputāna. The Marāthā chiefs and Pindaris had to yield to the force of arms, but the Rājput chiefs agreed with alacrity to barter away their independence for a British Protectorate.

When Lord Hastings decided to crush the Pindaris he formulated a general policy of bringing the Rājput States within the sphere of British influence in order to "establish a barrier against the revival of the predatory system or the extension of the power of Sindhia and Holkar". With this view it was thought desirable to conclude engagements with the Rājput States "on conditions which should give to the British Government the entire control over their political relations and proceedings with each other and with foreign States, secure to them the enjoyment of their territorial possessions and the independent exercise of their internal adminis-
tration under our protection and guarantee, and render their resources available for defraying the charge that will be incurred in the establishment and support of this system.”

This new system was accepted by several minor Rājput States, such as Karauli and Kotā in 1817, and Bundi, Bikāner, Kishangarh, Bānswārā, Pratābgarh, Dungārpur and Jaisalmer in 1818.

The relation with the three major Rājput States, namely Mewār (Udaipur), Jaipur (Amber), and Mārwār (Jodhpur) was defined by treaties which provided for ‘perpetual friendship, alliance and unity of interests’ between these States and the British from generation to generation. The treaty with Mewār was signed in Delhi on January 13, 1818; its main provisions are noted below.

1. The British Government undertook to “protect the principality and territory of Udaipur.”

2. The Rānā of Udaipur promised to “act in subordinate cooperation with the British Government and acknowledge its supremacy”, and not to have “any connection with other chiefs or States”, nor “to enter into any negotiation with any chief or State without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government.”

3. All disputes between Mewār and other States would be submitted to the arbitration and award of the British Government.

4. The Rānā should always be the “absolute ruler of his own country” and British jurisdiction should not be introduced into his principality.

5. The Rānā agreed to pay an annual tribute amounting to one-fourth of his revenue for the first five years, and to three-eighth after that in perpetuity.

The treaty with Jaipur was signed on April 2, 1818. It included the first four provisions, mentioned above, and fixed the annual tribute on a graduated scale, amounting to eight lakhs in the sixth year and ever afterwards, until the Raja’s revenue should exceed forty lakhs, when, in addition to eight lakhs he should pay five-sixteenth of all the revenue beyond forty lakhs. The treaty further provided that Jaipur “should furnish troops according to its means at the requisition of the British Government.”

The tribute imposed upon Jaipur was undoubtedly very heavy. Tod observed: “The Jeypur Court justly deemed one-fifth (eight lakhs) of the gross revenues of the crown, a high rate of insurance for protection; but when we further stipulated for a prospective increase of nearly one-third of all surplus revenue beyond forty lakhs, they saw, instead of the generous Briton, a sordid trafficker
of mercenary protection whose rapacity transcended that of the Mahratta."15

The treaty with Mârwâr, concluded on January 6, 1818, included the first four provisions mentioned above in connection with the treaty with Mewâr. The Rânâ further agreed to pay to the British the tribute which he had hitherto paid to Sindhia (one lakh and eight thousand Rupees). It was also stipulated that "the State of Jodhpur shall furnish 1,500 horse for the service of the British Government whenever required, and when necessary, the whole of the Jodhpur force shall join the British army, excepting such a portion as may be requisite for the internal administration of the country."

The proud Râjputs who had defied the Muslims for five hundred years voluntarily surrendered their independence to the British.

The annexation of Cutch may also be regarded as a part of the general settlement of the Marquess of Hastings. Reference has been made above to the treaty of alliance concluded between the British and Rao Bharmal II, ruler of Cutch, in A.D. 1816. But when the Rao murdered his cousin, and the British interfered on behalf of the widow of the deceased, he regarded it as undue interference in his internal administration not authorised by the treaty. He raised Arab troops to fight against the British and, in 1819, laid siege to a fortified town belonging to a Jhareja chief under British protection. A British force accompanied by the leading Jhareja chiefs laid siege to the capital city Bhuj and captured it without any difficulty. The Rao, Bharmal, who surrendered, was deposed, and his infant son, Rao Desal II, was installed as chief. The administration was carried on by a Regency with the British Resident as its head and some Jhareja chiefs as members. A new treaty was concluded in 1819 which confirmed most of the articles of the treaty of 1816. The State agreed to pay a subsidy of two lakhs of Rupees per annum and in return the Government of India guaranteed the integrity of Cutch and promised to protect it from all internal and external enemies.16 But, though Cutch thus came within the sphere of British empire, disturbances continued for a long time, as will be described later.

III. BHARATPUR

The first clear and formal enunciation of British Paramountcy in India was made in settling the affairs at Bharatpur. Raja Rana-dhir Singh, the ruler of Bharatpur, died in 1823 without any issue. His brother named Baldeo Singh thereupon assumed the government and requested the British authorities to send him Khilat of investiture. Sir David Ochterlony, the British Resident in Mâlwa and Râjputânâ, supported the application of Baldeo Singh, but intimated
at the same time that Durjan Saul, the son of a younger brother of the deceased Raja, was likely to contest the succession on the ground of his having been adopted by the late ruler. But as the claim of Durjan Saul proved to be utterly unfounded, Baldeo Singh was recognised as a ruler of Bharatpur and received due investiture. On ascending the throne the new ruler of Bharatpur asked for the British guarantee for his minor son to succeed him. Although the British Government did not actually agree to this, and no definite authority was given to the Resident, the latter communicated to the ruler that his son was acknowledged as his heir and the ceremony of investiture took place early in February, 1824. On February 26, 1825, Raja Baldeo Singh died. Thereupon Durjan Saul, obviously encouraged by the reports of British reverses in the Burmese War, won over several battalions, captured the fort of Bharatpur, seized the boy-ruler, and murdered his uncle, who was his guardian and the prime minister. At this turn of events Ochterlony assembled all the soldiers he could gather and issued a proclamation that British troops were advancing to rescue Balwant Singh, the boy-ruler, from the hands of the usurper Durjan Saul. These acts were, however, strongly disapproved by the Governor-General in Council and all the military preparations were suspended. The Government also practically censured the Resident on the imperfect manner in which he reported the events of Bharatpur. Thereupon Sir David Ochterlony resigned his office. Sir Charles Metcalfe was appointed to the Residency of Delhi, and the duties connected with Rājputāna were allotted to him, Mālwa being transferred to another officer. As soon as the military preparations were countermanded, Durjan Saul preferred a claim to the throne on the ground that he had been adopted by a previous ruler of Bharatpur. The situation of Bharatpur became further complicated by the quarrels between Durjan Saul and his brother Madhu Singh, who retired to the strong fortress of Deeg, established his authority over the surrounding region, and collected troops with which he repulsed the attack made by Durjan Saul. This civil war led to chaos and confusion, not only in the dominions of Bharatpur but also in the neighbouring British territories, which were plundered by some of the Marāthās, who joined one or the other of the rival parties. The Governor-General in Council now regarded the situation as alarming, but there was a difference of opinion among the members of the Council regarding the proper line of policy to be pursued. The Governor-General held the orthodox view that it was inexpedient to interfere in the internal concerns of Bharatpur, and argued “that such interference was not called for by the treaty nor had ever been practically exercised, except in acknowledging, when invited, the lawful successor to the Raj.” The other members
of the Council were, however, strongly in favour of interfering in the affairs of Bharatpur. Their arguments more or less amounted to this that the British Government now occupies the position of paramount authority in India and the duty of maintaining general security and prosperity of the whole country "is now happily vested in the British Government." The Commander-in-Chief upheld the same view on the ground of the danger "to which the British Government was exposed by the probable extension of disturbances beyond the boundary of Bharatpur." On the arrival of Sir Charles Metcalfe in Calcutta (from Hyderabad where he was posted before) all the reports and the documents connected with the affairs of Bharatpur were placed before him and he was requested to state his opinion. Sir Charles Metcalfe drew up a memorandum which must be regarded as very important inasmuch as it enunciated a new policy of imperialism which henceforth guided the policy of the British Government in India. He admitted that things have changed a great deal after the Third Maratha War, which made the British the paramount State of India, and asserted that it was now "an established principle of our policy to maintain tranquillity among the states of India, and to prevent the anarchy and misrule which were likely to disturb the general peace." He further held that if the British Government refused to put the legitimate ruler on the throne of Bharatpur, they would "throw the weight of British power into the scale of usurpation and injustice." He continued: "Our influence is too pervading to admit of neutrality, and sufferance would operate as support." He further observed with reference to Indian States that "we cannot be indifferent spectators of long-continued anarchy therein without ultimately giving up India again to the pillage and confusion, from which we rescued her in 1817 and 1818". He also pointed out, by quoting instances, that the policy of non-interference adopted after the peace of 1806 had absolutely failed. In conclusion he observed: "We are bound, not by any positive engagement to the Bharatpur State, nor by any claim on her part, but by our duty as supreme guardians of general tranquillity, law, and right, to maintain the legal succession of Raja Balwant Singh to the raj of Bharatpur, and we cannot acknowledge any other pretender. This duty seems to me to be so imperative, that I do not attach any peculiar importance to the late investiture of the young Raja in the presence of Sir David Ochterlony. We should have been equally bound without that ceremony, which, if we had not been under a pre-existing obligation to maintain the rightful succession, would not have pledged us to anything beyond acknowledgment." On perusal of the memorandum of Sir Charles Metcalfe the Governor-General changed his views and remarked: "I have hitherto entertained the opinion that our inter-
ference with other states should be limited to cases of positive injury to the Honourable Company, or of immediate danger thereof. In that opinion I have reason to believe that I am not supported by the servants of the Honourable Company most competent to judge of its interests and best acquainted with the circumstances of this country. I should, therefore, have hesitated in acting upon my own judgment in opposition to others; but I am further free to confess, that my own opinion has undergone some change, and that I am disposed to think that a system of non-interference, which appears to have been tried and to have failed in 1806, would be tried with less probability of success, and would be exposed to more signal failure, after the events which have occurred and the policy which has been pursued during the last nineteen or twenty years. A much greater degree of interference than was formerly called for appears to have resulted from the situation in which we were placed by the pacification of 1818. It might be a hazardous experiment to relax in the exercise of that paramount authority which our extended influence in Malwa and Rajputana has specially imposed on us. Applying these general principles to the particular cases before us, and believing that without direct interference on our part there is a probability of very extended disturbances in the Upper Provinces, I am prepared, in the first place, to maintain by force of arms, if necessary, the succession of Balwant Singh to the raj of Bharatpur. Thereupon a resolution was passed by the Governor-General in Council on September 18, 1825 to the following effect: "Impressed with a full conviction that the existing disturbances at Bharatpur, if not speedily quieted, will produce general commotion and interruption of the public tranquillity in Upper India, and feeling convinced that it is our solemn duty, no less than our right, as the paramount power and conservators of the general peace, to interfere for the prevention of these evils, and that these evils will be best prevented by the maintenance of succession to the rightful heir to the raj of Bharatpur...authority he conveyed to Sir C. T. Metcalfe to accomplish the above object, if practicable by expostulation and remonstrance, and, should these fail, by a resort to measures of force." The fort of Bharatpur, which had defied four attacks of Lord Lake in 1805, was regarded as an impregnable one throughout India, and the British Government now wanted to remove this impression caused by their previous failure. So after the negotiations with Durjan Saul proved futile, Sir Charles Metcalfe, on November 25, 1825, issued a proclamation denouncing the pretensions of Durjan Saul and declaring the intention of the British Government to support the interests of the rightful prince. A large force was sent against Bharatpur under the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Cum-
The General reached Bharatpur on December 10, and after a breach was effected by bombardment from the artillery and by laying underground mines, the fort of Bharatpur was taken by assault on December 18, 1825. The failure of Lord Lake in 1805 was thus avenged. After the fall of Bharatpur other fortresses within the dominions readily surrendered and the Raja's authority was firmly re-established all over the country.\textsuperscript{18}

Though by itself the incident at Bharatpur may be regarded as a trifling one, it has been discussed at some length because the imperialistic policy of the British was never before so clearly and elaborately defined by the Government. As we shall see, this principle henceforth formed the sheet-anchor of the British policy in India.

IV. AFGHAN WAR

The imperial policy of the Government of India, as mentioned above, led them to look beyond the north-eastern as well as the north-western frontier. The result of the first was the war with Burma and that of the second, the war with Afghānistān.

There was, however, an essential difference between the two. The imperial policy on the north-east was primarily inaugurated by the British officials in India and pursued without the knowledge and approval, sometimes in defiance, of the clear direction or instruction of the home authorities. The imperial policy on the north-west was dictated by the latter in the larger interests of British imperialism.

The north-western frontier policy of India began in the closing years of the eighteenth century as a defensive measure against the threatened invasion of India from that side, first by Napoleon, and next by Zaman Shah, ruler of Kābul. To counteract this the British secured the alliance of Persia, and thus this far-off region was thrown into the vortex of Indian politics. But though Napoleonic menace ceased with his downfall, and Afghānistān's striking power practically collapsed as a result of internal dissensions that followed the death of Zaīman Shah in A.D. 1800, a new danger soon appeared in the growing power of Russia. The aggressive and imperialistic policy, pursued by that power in Central Asia, and the methods adopted for its realisation, did not differ in kind from those of Britain in India. But imperialism, as a rule, tolerates no rival, and Russia not only stood in the way of further expansion of British power beyond the borders of India, but even seemed to threaten the security of India itself. The British statesmen naturally stressed only the latter aspect in justification of their anti-Russian policy and measure,
though at that time not only Sindh, the Punjāb and Afgānistān, but a vast stretch of territory beyond the Hindu Kush mountains separated the British dominions in India from the advance-posts of Russia. There is no doubt that the ambition of extending the British power in Central Asia was an important factor in shaping the British foreign policy. Palmerston and Disraeli, the two outstanding statesmen of Britain in the nineteenth century, though belonging to opposite political parties, were at one about the forward policy in Central Asia, and hence imbibed an anti-Russian attitude. The two Afgān wars, at an interval of forty years, may be directly traced to them, and in both cases the Government of India merely carried out the policy dictated by home authorities. But though this remark applies generally to the negotiations with Persia and Afgānistān, and the general line of policy and course of action pursued up to the arrival of Lord Auckland as Governor-General, his personal attitude came to play an increasingly important part in the practical application of the policy which led to the First Afgān War. The policy decided upon was to maintain a friendly Government in Kābul in order to checkmate Russian designs, and a mission was sent to Kābul for this purpose. But Auckland misled the Home authorities by supplying a garbled version of the report of Burnes, the special British envoy sent to negotiate with Dost Muhammad, the Amir of Kābul, and decided to oust him by force and place on the throne Shah Shuja, an ex-ruler of Kābul, who had been living as an exile in India for nearly thirty years. Auckland thus deliberately precipitated a war which could have been easily avoided. He is also, at least partially though indirectly, responsible for the massacre of the entire British force of 4,500 and camp-followers numbering 12,000, the worst tragedy that ever befell the British army in the whole course of their history in India.

A detailed account of the negotiations and events leading to the first Afgān War (1839-42) is given in Ch. VII. It will be seen that the current view about the hands of the British being forced by the pro-Russian and anti-British attitude of Dost Muhammad would not bear a moment’s scrutiny. In any case Dost Muhammad was more sinned against than sinning. The military expedition was decided upon as a counter-measure to the threatened occupation of Herāt by Persia, but when Persia raised the siege of Herāt and withdrew her forces, that fear disappeared altogether. But though the casus belli was removed, Auckland continued the military preparation, which he could easily stop, and launched a full-scale attack upon an inoffensive ruler who, as he knew full well, had done or meant no harm, and, for the moment at any rate, was incapable of doing any. The gross injustice of the war is underlined by the
fact that it was barren of all result that was expected from it. The new friendly Amir, Shah Shuja, who was placed on the throne of Kābul in order to safeguard the interests of the British and help them in the political game, met with a tragic end. The British were obliged to restore Dost Muhammad after unnecessarily making him a bitter enemy. The only positive result was the grim and gruesome tragedy of the wholesale massacre of the retreating British army, the unparalleled disgrace of British arms, and the irrevocable loss of prestige and good name of Britain. So far as India was concerned, she had no say in the whole affair, but had to bear the whole expenditure of the war which was fought in the interest of British imperialism.

2a. Arnold, II. 7-8.
2b. Sketches, 92-3.
2a. Arnold, II. 10.
2b. Ibid.
2c. Ibid, 11.
3. CHI, V. 582.
4. THG, 397.
5. THG, 382.
8. In other words, on principles diametrically opposite to what Abraham Lincoln declared to be essentials for democracy and liberty, namely, the rule of a people by the people for the people.
10. Ibid, 190.
10c. Mill, IX. 183.
11. For the texts of the various treaties referred to in this Chapter Cf. Atchison. For the summary of the treaties with various Rajput States, cf. A. C. Banerji, *Rajput Studies*.
12. A Convention was signed on March 15, 1802, by which the Gaekwar agreed to maintain a Subsidiary Force. A formal treaty was signed to this effect on July 29, 1802. This was supplemented by an agreement in 1803 by which the Gaekwar ceded some districts for the support of the Subsidiary Force. These three engagements were consolidated in a definitive Treaty of General Defensive Alliance on April 21, 1805.
16. SB, 162-3.
17. This decision was probably influenced, to a large extent, by the events of the Burmese War. Wilson observes: "Embarrassed at this period by the continued difficulties and heavy disbursements of the war with Ava, and aware of the unfriendly feeling, with which its progress was watched by the princes of India, the British Government was not unnaturally anxious to avoid a rupture, the consequences of which, in the case of any reverse, might endanger the stability of the British Indian Empire (Mill, IX. 185).
18. This account is based upon Thornton, V. 120 ff.
CHAPTER III

EXPANSION OF BRITISH DOMINIONS (1823-48)

I. BURMA AND ASSAM

Baron (later Earl) Amherst, who succeeded Marquess of Hastings as Governor-General, had every reason to follow the policy of peace. The arduous and prolonged military activities of his predecessor cried aloud for a halt, and this was underlined by the known views of the Court of Directors who selected him after openly denouncing the stormy regime which had just come to an end. Yet we find Amherst engaged in two military campaigns which strikingly illustrate the two different ways, mentioned above, along which British imperialism always advanced in India.

The first arose out of the growth of Burmese power in the north-eastern corner of the British territory. Neither the increase in Burmese activities nor the troubles arising therefrom on the borders of Assam and Chittagong were of recent origin, and had been going on for some time. But now that the British power was thoroughly established and there was no danger of internal troubles, the imperial instincts of the British rulers in India looked for fresh fields and pastures new. Several reasons combined to induce them to make a serious endeavour to curb the growing power of the Burmese. The security of the borderlands was certainly one, but only one, of the reasons. It was the only one publicly announced, but it is difficult to believe that the further expansion of British dominions to the north-east, up to the natural frontier, and to secure a footing on the soil of Burma, rich with commercial possibilities, were not equally imperative motives behind the campaign. A medieval country like Burma, ill-acquainted with weapons and methods of modern warfare, and with its base situated at a great distance from Indian border and divided from it by almost impenetrable hills and forests, could by no means be regarded as a serious menace to the British power in India after A.D. 1820. Her claims of sovereignty over Eastern India and pretentious demands couched in insolent language, which formed the casus belli, were more deserving of ridicule than any serious consideration. As regards border disputes which led to warlike operations, any impartial critic is bound to admit that there were provocations on both sides, and even according to the British version of the case, which alone is available, it would be unfair to throw the war-guilt upon the Burmese alone. In any case the actual matters of dispute were so trivial in nature
as could be easily settled, perhaps amicably, and if necessary by local military expeditions.

A detailed account of the First Burmese War (1824-26), and the events leading thereto, has been given in chapter V. The declaration of Cāchār as a British protectorate, which was the immediate cause of the war, was certainly calculated to give just offence to the Burmese who had a claim over it, which was at least far more legitimate than that by which the British had acquired most of their possessions in India. This justice of the Burmese cause was patent even to some British officials, but Amherst paid no heed to their advice. The real motive of the Governor-General is revealed in his despatches. The Burmese had established their political authority in Assam and the neighbouring districts, up to the borders of Bengal, by the same method which was followed by the British. But the two of a trade can never agree, and so the growing empire of Burma was looked upon as a rival to the British empire in India, and became an eyesore to the Governor-General. The First Burmese War was, therefore, really a struggle between two rival empires, and was the first fruit of the new imperialistic ambition which animated the British rulers in India. But this was not all. Amherst had far-reaching designs. The very fact that in addition to military campaigns on the borders of British India, the war was carried to the soil of Burma proper by a well-equipped British expedition to a remote and unknown region in South Burma shows the ambitious designs of the Governor-General. It would be idle to pretend that such a risky and costly expedition was undertaken only to divert the military resources of the enemy from the British border. The real reason was undoubtedly the establishment of a secure footing in South Burma which possessed good harbours and afforded facilities of a rich trade. After the British power was securely established in India its scope for further expansion lay beyond her borders on the east and the west, the north and south being unfortunately shut off respectively by impassable Himalayas and the Indian ocean without limit. The actual insolence of the Burmese king offered an excuse for the war in the east, and the pretext of insolence on the part of the ruler of Afghānistān gave a similar opportunity on the west. The imperial policy worked on parallel lines in both cases, though there was an interval of more than a decade. On the northwest, too, the security of the border was an excuse, the menace of a rival Russian empire the real ground, and the ambition of carrying British flags to the heart of Central Asia, the dream which determined the imperial policy.

The British expedition in Burma met with serious calamities, not so much from the enemy, but from natural causes and inade-
quate provision to prevent or forestall them. This brought a just rebuke upon the Governor-General. But the fate of the war between a first class modern European power and a medieval Asiatic kingdom was never in doubt. The Burmese were defeated on all fronts and forced to accept terms that fulfilled all the objects for which the war was begun, and must have satisfied even the extreme imperialists. By the treaty of Yandåbu, concluded in 1826, the Burmese ceded not only Assam, Arâkân and the territories between the two which were contiguous to British India, but even the provinces of Yeh, Tavoy, Mergui and Tenâsserim on the east coast of Bay of Bengal. Thus were fixed the two ends of the noose round the neck of Burma, and all that was needed to strangle her was to tighten the rope on suitable opportunities. As three wars with Carthage enabled Rome to finish that kingdom, so three wars during the period covered by this volume ended the existence of Burma as an independent kingdom. The process was hastened by the appearance of France as a rival colonial power in Indo-China, like Russia in Central Asia, but in any case the fate of Burma was sealed by the First Burmese War.

The fate of Assam and the small adjoining districts ceded by the Burmese will be described in detail in Ch. V. These, as well as the other ceded territories, were administered by the Government of Bengal. At the outbreak of the war, the British, in order to win over the sympathy and support of the people of Assam, promised to restore their independence as soon as the Burmese were driven away. But such promises are never meant to be kept. The British immediately annexed a part and adopted various plans to give a semblance of self-rule to the rest. But these did not prove satisfactory to either side, and within almost a decade all the small principalities, set up in the region under British suzerainty, were formally incorporated within the British dominions. Assam proper was annexed in 1838, Central Câchâr in 1834, Jaintiâ in 1835, and most of the frontier States at about the same time. The vestiges of autonomy that remained were gradually swept away.

The Government of Bengal administered Arâkân through its own officers who were given different designations and different degrees of authority at different times. There were at first Joint Commissioners, till 1829; then a Superintendent under the Commissioner of Chittagong till 1834; thereafter a Commissioner, helped by an Assistant Commissioner for each district and the capital city Akyab. Tenâsserim was similarly administered through a Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners for the districts and the capital city Tavoy. But in view of the great distance and difficulties of
communication the Government of Bengal could exercise but little actual control, and mismanagement, maladministration and even corruption among high officials were rife. When Pegu was annexed after the Second Burmese War, it constituted the third Commissionership. But these three Commissionerships of Arakán, Tenasserim and Pegu were formed in 1862 into the new province of British Burma, with its capital at Rangoon, directly under the Government of India. When Upper Burma was annexed in 1885 it was added to the old province, which was ruled by a Chief Commissioner from 1862 to 1897 and thereafter by a Lieutenant-Governor.

II. MYSORE, COORG, AND MINOR STATES

It is a significant comment on British imperialism in India that its process ran the usual course even when a man of pacific disposition like Lord William Bentinck was the Governor-General. Reference will be made in Chapter V to the annexation of the petty States of Cachar and Jaintia in Assam. More importance attaches to the occupation of Mysore and the annexation of Coorg. Historians of India have paid little attention to these imperialistic activities of Bentinck, and the Cambridge History of India\(^1\) devotes one sentence each to Coorg, Mysore and the two States in Assam. Yet the dealings with these four States fairly illustrate the policy of aggressive imperialism which was the order of the day. Only a short war was necessary in the case of Coorg, while the other three were seized without firing a shot. Macaulay’s famous epigram that “peace hath her victories no less than those of war” was thus applicable to Bentinck in more senses than one. In view of the general ignorance or indifference to this aspect of the administration of Bentinck, his political measures, referred to above, require a more elaborate treatment than would otherwise be necessary.

A. Mysore

As mentioned above, the old Hindu ruling family of Mysore was restored to power after the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan in A.D. 1799. A boy of three years was placed on the throne and the administration was carried on by an able Dewan, named Furnia. In 1811 the minor king Raja Krishna Udaiyar attained majority and took over the administration in his own hands. According to the British official version there was gross misrule in Mysore for twenty years with the result that the treasury was depleted and there was a rebellion which could not be quelled till force had been sent from Madras. During this period of twenty years the Governor of Madras more than once remonstrated with the Raja, but no improvement
followed. On September 7, 1831, Bentinck addressed a long letter to the Raja of Mysore stating the above facts and bringing some specific charges of maladministration and misgovernment. He concluded by informing the Raja that by virtue of the articles 4 and 5 of the Treaty of 1799 (which he quoted for ready reference) he has transferred the entire administration of the country into the hands of British officers "who will proceed immediately to Mysore".2

Thus the Raja of Mysore was dethroned with as little ceremony—or perhaps less—as is usually shown in dismissing a clerk in an office. Several interesting facts must be stated in order to form a proper judgment of the whole case.

The chief accusations against the Raja were made by Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, who was strongly opposed to the original plan of restoring the old Hindu family to the sovereignty of Mysore. In 1805, General Sir Arthur Wellesley had written to his brother, the Marquis Wellesley, in the following terms:

"I still fear the new Government of Madras, one of whose objects I believe is to overturn the existing system in Mysore, of which I have hitherto been the principal support".3

A high English military officer writes: "The hostility to the local self-government of Mysore became even stronger than before in Madras about the year 1820, and seems to have been strangely compounded of jealousy against native pretensions and partial independence, the greed of good appointments, and a strong desire to obtain the salubrious and pleasant station of Bangalore either as the permanent seat of the Madras Government, or as an occasional residence for the Governor and his Councillors. This last consideration was even urged by Lord William Bentinck upon the Court of Directors in 1834, as an argument in favour of that plan for dividing the Mysore territories between the Raja and the East India Company..."4

In 1825, Munro visited Mysore and warned the Raja that, if the disorders in the State were not checked, direct interference of the British Government would be unavoidable. Now, under Article 4 of the Treaty which was invoked by Bentinck for taking over the administration of Mysore, it was clearly laid down that in case of maladministration which, it might be feared, would not leave in the treasury sufficient fund for the maintenance of troops, the Government of India shall have full right and power either to introduce such regulations and ordinances as may be deemed necessary for the improvement of administration, or to bring under direct British administration such part or parts of the territorial possessions of the Raja as may be necessary to make available sufficient funds for
defraying the expenses of the army. But Munro issued no ordinances or regulations and allowed the abuses to grow until the outbreak of a rebellion gave a sufficiently good pretext for taking over the administration, not of a part or parts, but of the whole of Mysore.  

Bentinck's action was inspired by the highly exaggerated reports of the Madras Government, and the Raja was given no opportunity to defend himself. How ill-informed Bentinck was may be gathered from a single instance. In his letter dethroning the Raja, Bentinck alleged that "the subsidy due to the British Government has not been paid monthly according to the Treaty of 6th July 1799". But the fact is, as Bentinck himself later indirectly admitted, that the subsidy had never been in arrears even for a day.

After taking over the administration of Mysore, Bentinck appointed a Special Committee of Inquiry into the affairs of Mysore. This Committee submitted its Report on December 12, 1833. The Committee condemned the Raja's misrule, but they included in their censure the period of Purnia's administration, and with the exception of a profuse expenditure, no new charge was brought against the Raja. The Committee held that the assessment all over the country had been screwed up by Purnia to a height at which it could not have been maintained for many years longer; and that the decline of the revenue since the minister's dismissal had not "been caused entirely by misgovernment", but was "partly attributable to causes which were beyond the control of the Raja's administration." The Committee also pointed out that at the same time, and for the same cause, namely oppressive taxation, there was an insurrection in the adjacent British district of Canara, where the assessment of land revenue was much higher than that prevailing in Mysore. The Committee further held that the rebellion which broke out in Nagpur in Mysore was not a popular rising caused by intolerable tyranny, but was chiefly the work of some interested persons, aided by British insurgents and sustained by a firm belief, universally prevalent throughout Mysore, that the British Government was in favour of the insurgents, and would not support the Raja's authority.

The views of Bentinck were radically changed by the Report of the Special Committee of Inquiry as well as by his own local investigations. He also realised the unconstitutional nature of his act in taking over the administration of the whole of Mysore. All this is evident from his long despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated April 14, 1834. He refers to the Raja in the following terms: "It is admitted by every one who has had an opportunity of observing the character of the Rajah, that he is in the highest degree intelligent and sensible. His disposition is
described to be the reverse of tyrannical or cruel. . . . . I believe he will make a good ruler in future. . . .” Accordingly Bentinck suggested that three districts of Mysore yielding sufficient revenue for the upkeep of the military force, should be ceded to the Company and the remaining three districts of Mysore should be restored to the Raja’s direct rule.⁸

In this despatch Bentinck had the candour to admit that he could not help entertaining doubts, both as to the legality and the justice of the course that has been pursued. He then continues:

“The Treaty warrants an assumption of the country with a view to secure the payment of our subsidy. The assumption was actually made on account of the Raja’s misgovernment. The subsidy does not appear to have been in any immediate jeopardy.⁹ Again the Treaty authorises us to assume such part or parts of the country as may be necessary to render the funds which we claim efficient and available. The whole has been assumed although a part would unquestionably have sufficed for the purpose specified in the Treaty; and with regard to the justice of the case, I cannot but think that it would have been more fair towards the Rajah, had a more distinct and positive warning been given him that the decided measure, since adopted, would be put in force, if misgovernment should be found to prevail.”¹⁰

Thus Lord William Bentinck acted in haste and then repented at leisure. He should have appointed the Committee of Inquiry before, and not after, punishing the Raja, and he should have given more serious attention to the actual facts and the exact provisions of the treaty. His belated confession of guilt does honour to his head and heart, but brought no relief to the unfortunate Raja of Mysore, who was not restored to the sovereignty of either the whole or a part of his territory. It is somewhat singular that in spite of the confession of Bentinck himself, the British historians have fully approved of the annexation. Nor did this deplorable action make Bentinck much the wiser. For as we shall see, he pursued the same unwise procedure in the affair of Coorg with more drastic consequences and irreparable mischief.

In fairness to the Britishers, however, reference should be made to the very honest criticism of Bentinck’s action by Major Evans Bell, from which the following extracts are quoted:

“The summary substitution of direct British management was a somewhat harsh remedy for any administrative abuses, when the Treaty gave us the power of dictating and enforcing the acceptance of such ordinances as might have removed all cause of offence. . . . . According to the strict letter of the Treaty (article IV), when it
should be thought necessary to have recourse to this extreme measure, we had no right to attach the whole of Mysore, but only "such part or parts" as should be required to render the funds of the State 'sufficient and available either in time of peace or war'........

"The first attachment of the country by Lord William Bentinck was not justified either absolutely by the terms of the Treaty or morally by any special urgency of outraged humanity, or of danger to the tranquillity of our own adjacent provinces...The fact is that the subsidy had been always paid with the utmost punctuality, and that not a single instalment was due at the date of the Governor-General's letter.

"Thus the grounds alleged for the original attachment of the country are not only unsustainable by terms of the Treaty, but are found to be even more opposed to truth than Lord William Bentinck was ever made aware".\textsuperscript{11}

There is a great deal of force in the above argument and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the taking over of the entire administration by the British was both unjust and uncalled for. The administration by a Regency headed by the Resident would probably have met the situation. There are, however, two points in connection with the seizure of Mysore, which may be regarded as almost unique in the annals of British imperialism in India. In the first place, the Governor-General, responsible for the action, admitted his mistake and regretted the action taken. Secondly, although the Court of Directors declined to reverse the sequestration, immediately after the error was recognized by its author, they ultimately made amends for it. When the deposed Raja of Mysore died in 1867, the British Government decided to restore the kingdom to his adopted son as soon as he came of age.\textsuperscript{11a} This was actually done in 1881. There has been more unjustified annexation, severely condemned by the Directors, but no restitution. Sindh is a glaring example. The rendition of Mysore is the solitary exception to the rule followed by the British authorities, namely condemning the action but fully enjoying the fruit thereof.

B. Coorg

Mysore shows how the general process of annexation of weak States followed the usual pattern of giving the dog a bad name and then hanging it. This is more strikingly illustrated by the annexation of Coorg (Kodagu) which followed shortly after. Coorg was a small principality on the border of Mysore. The British had received considerable help from the rulers of Coorg during their war with Tipu and a treaty was concluded in 1790 by which the British
‘guaranteed the independence of Coorg and the maintenance of the Raja’s interests as long as the sun and moon endure.’ Since then the rulers of Coorg had always been faithful to the British and not only invested large amounts in East India Company’s Stock, but also advanced considerable amount to the Company. But shortly after the accession of Viraraja the Younger in 1820, serious accusations began to pour in against him from the British officers. He was reported to have practised the most blood-thirsty tyranny, and a series of monstrous crimes, including wholesale massacre of members of the royal family, were attributed to him. The stage was thus set for his ultimate expulsion; and the actual course of events, as officially related, may be summed up as follows:

Being persecuted by the Raja, his sister, together with her husband, fled to Mysore in 1832, and claimed the protection of the British Resident, Mr. Cassamajor. This led to a series of altercations between the Resident and the Raja of Coorg who demanded the surrender of the two fugitives. Other causes of difference soon arose. A rebel from Mysore, which was now being administered by the British, had fled to Coorg, and when the Raja was asked to send him back, he retorted by saying that his claims for the surrender of his rebel subjects, who had taken refuge in Mysore, were disregarded by the British. Cassamajor was gradually convinced of the hostile intention of the Raja who was reported to have increased his army. An envoy was sent to negotiate with him, but the Raja refused to see him on ground of illness. Later, two Indians were sent for the same purpose, one of whom, Karunakara Menon, was forcibly detained by the Raja on the pretence that he was guilty of carrying on intrigues against him. The Governor-General, who proceeded on a tour to South India, personally wrote to the Raja from Calcutta requesting that either he himself or one of his agents might meet him at Mysore in order to adjust the existing differences. As no answer was received to this letter by the time the Governor-General arrived at Madras, he again addressed the Raja on the same subject, expecting to receive a reply at Bangalore. But no reply was received even to this letter, nor was the native agent released.

An ultimatum was given to the Raja of Coorg that unless Menon was released within six days hostilities would begin. On March 15, 1834, Bentinck issued a Proclamation of War against Coorg. It gave a long list of the charges against the Raja, among which the following were the major items:

1. Severe oppression and cruelty towards the people of Coorg.
2. Wanton disrespect of the authority of, and most hostile disposition towards, the East India Company.
3. Letters replete with insulting expressions to the Governor of Madras and the Governor-General.
4. Friendly reception and encouragement to the proclaimed enemies of the British Government.
5. Detention of Menon.
6. General attitude of hostility and defiance.

Immediately after the issue of this proclamation four British armies advanced against Coorg from four different directions. The Raja of Coorg also issued an appeal to his people to resist the invasion. But though the people fought bravely on all fronts, the result was a foregone conclusion. On April 6, the British force entered the capital of Coorg, Madikeri or Mercara, and five days later Coorg was annexed to the British dominions by a formal Proclamation.

The Raja, Viraraja the Younger, surrendered with his family on April 23. He was exiled, first to Bangalore, then to Vellore, and finally to Banaras. In 1848 the Raja asked for permission to visit England, and necessary permission being accorded on March 20, 1850, he sailed for England with the full knowledge of the Government of India that he intended to fight for certain pecuniary claims against the East India Company.

There are good grounds to believe, that as in the case of Mysore, so in the case of Coorg, perhaps in a greater measure, Bentinck was misled by the exaggerated reports of his officers. Fortunately, there are some means to test the truth of the three main allegations against Viraraja, namely, his cruelty, his attitude towards his sister, and the detention of K. Menon. As regards the first, there is no independent and reliable evidence to support it. Even the British officer Col. Fraser, who was in charge of Coorg after the expulsion of the Raja, admitted in his final report that ‘there was no proof to testify to his cruelties.’ Mr. Cassamajor, the British Resident of Mysore, who went to Mercara (Madikeri), the capital city of Coorg, in 1826, to make enquiries on the spot, ‘could not get any bad reports against the Raja’ and Mr. Lewis Rice had to admit that ‘his (Cassamajor’s) account of the Raja was on the whole rather favourable.’ Some members of the royal family, alleged to have been killed by Viraraja, were shown to have died of cholera. Serious charges were made against the Raja by a British officer, Mr. S. Greame, on November 6, 1833. The Raja asked him in writing to let him know the names of the parties he put to death, the place, the date etc. Mr. Greame wrote as follows to the Raja on November 17, 1833: ‘After many humble apologies, I beg to state that it was the mistake of the translator. I do not bring such charges against
you and beg of you to forgive me and what I said was that you must prevent your officers from doing anything of the sort.”\textsuperscript{16} It may not be out of place to mention here that the way in which Virara-ja deported himself after his exile at Banaras elicited high praises from many Englishmen including Lord Ellenborough and Lt. Col. Carpenter, agent to the Governor-General.\textsuperscript{17} No reference to all these is made by historians like V. A. Smith who pictures the Raja as a devil incarnate.\textsuperscript{18}

Most scandalous insinuations have been made regarding the attitude of the Raja towards his sister, but there is no evidence worth the name. It has been suggested that the sister had pretensions to the throne and, as is usual in native courts, made intrigues for this purpose. Ultimately, being foiled in her attempts, she fled with her husband. This version also lacks evidence, but in any case such a state of things is not unusual, and it is not unlikely that in order to poison the minds of the British and advance her own interests she manufactured all the tales of cruelty against the Raja.\textsuperscript{19} As regards the detention of Menon, the Raja, it is said, suspected him to be a spy of the British on account of his not producing proper credentials.\textsuperscript{20} The fact that the Raja did not detain the companion of Menon certainly goes in his favour. In any case the act of the Raja stands on the same level as that of the British in not surrendering the sister of the Raja.

It is therefore difficult either to accept as valid the serious charges brought against the Raja, or to justify the \textit{ex parte} decision of the British to dethrone him. But if this was bad enough, the annexation of Coorg was much worse. It has been justified on two grounds.\textsuperscript{21} The first was the assumption that the Raja was childless. The fact seems to be that the Raja had more than one son.\textsuperscript{22} He had certainly a daughter, who later accompanied him to England and embraced Christianity. The succession of females was well known in this part of India.\textsuperscript{22a} The official proclamation bases the annexation on another ground, namely, “the unanimous wish of the inhabitants of Coorg to be taken under the protection of the British Government.”\textsuperscript{23} This is a pet argument of the British which was frequently advanced to justify any annexation. It is, however, interesting to note that in not a single instance they chose to divulge how, when, and by whom the opinion of the people was ascertained. In the case of Coorg “the unanimous wish” was certainly a myth. In the despatches of Col. Fraser it is said that the people of Coorg desired that their Raja should be retained.\textsuperscript{24} The feelings of the people may be ascertained from an Address presented to the Raja by 500 persons on April 13, 1834, “expressing their satisfaction for
the manner in which he had conducted the State affairs from the beginning to the days of his dethronement...." The removal of the Raja from his country, they continued, "causes us pain and brings shame to us."\(^{25}\) When it is remembered that the Address was presented when the Raja had lost all power and authority over his people, the theory or perhaps pretention of the "unanimous wish" of the people for British rule appears in its true colour.

The ignoble spirit of vengeance with which the East India Company pursued the Raja makes the tragedy still more deplorable. In a petition which was placed before the British Parliament the Raja complained:

"The East India Company took possession of his dominion, seized his treasury and valuable amount of £150,000 and in flagrant violation of the Law of Nations appropriated to themselves the capital of £80,000 East India Stock together with dividends."\(^{26}\) Apparently for this contumacy the Raja was also deprived of his monthly pension.\(^{27}\)

The Raja proceeded to England and appealed to the British Parliament. The Marquess of Clanricarde, who introduced the subject in the House of Lords in 1856, observed with reference to the stoppage of pension, that "a more despotick act was never perpetrated."\(^{28}\) Lord Ellenborough also remarked that "the conduct of the Court of Directors in refusing payment to the prince was very ungenerous and unwise."\(^{29}\) Evidently as a result of the discussion in the House of Lords, the Court of Directors decided to pay the pension in f:.ll from the time of the suspension of its payment. The Raja, however, got no satisfaction for the confiscation of his property.

The money looted from the Raja was generously distributed as prize money among the British officers. Sir P. Lindsay received one-sixteenth of the whole amount and the other officers shared as follows:\(^{30}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonels</td>
<td>Rs. 25,000 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieut-Colonels</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captains</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subalterns</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be ungenerous, but perhaps not unreasonable, to find in such distribution the incentive to wage hostilities against the Indian rulers and prepare the way therefor by attributing all the vices to them. On the whole it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the annexation of Coorg was pre-planned, the alleged cruelty and misconduct of the Raja, and the unanimous desire of the people for the
British protection being merely lame excuse and concocted justification. Coorg lost its independence not so much on account of the contumacy or cruelty of its ruler, as for possessing, like Mysore, a salubrious climate agreeable to the British, and in addition, extensive lands eminently suitable for coffee plantation.31

C. Minor States and Territories

Two other minor annexations were made by the next two Governors-General. The Company had acquired suzerainty over the Jāgīr of Kurnool, in Madras, in 1800. A disputed succession of 1815 led to interference and temporary occupation of the city of Kurnool. In 1839 the Nawab Rasul Khan, whom the British had installed in 1823 after arresting the legitimate heir on a charge of murder, was himself charged with conspiracy against the British. When Commissioners with troops were sent to make inquiry into his conduct he took refuge with some Rohilla and Arab soldiers. He was defeated and his State was annexed by Auckland in 1839.32

The annexation of Kaithal (Kythul) by Ellenborough in 1843 deserves more than a passing notice. Kaithal, in the district of Karnāl, was one of those cis-Sutlej Sikh States which had sought for British protection against Ranjit Singh and had come under British protection in 1809, as mentioned above.33 The proclamation, dated May 3, 1809, which defined the status of these States declared them to be absolute in their own territories and exempt from the payment of any tribute. Nevertheless, when the Chief of Kaithal died, without leaving any male issue, Ellenborough declared that the territory had lapsed to the British. He annexed four-fifths of the territory, leaving the rest to a distant branch of the family. This was a high-handed act, even according to the famous Doctrine of Lapse, evolved a few years later; for Kaithal was not a State created by the British. The Political Officer who proceeded with a small escort to take possession of Kaithal was met by passive resistance on the part of the female relations and ministers of the late chief. The escort was defeated by the military retainers of the State. When a larger British force arrived on April 16, 1843, the town was evacuated and Kaithal was occupied without any further resistance.34

Some small territorial acquisitions were made by more peaceful means. By a treaty signed between Great Britain and the Netherlands in 1824, Dutch territories in Bengal, viz., those at Fultā, Chinsurā, Kalkāpur and Dacca were ceded to the British. The town of Serampore, near Calcutta, was purchased from the king of Denmark in 1845. Darjeeling and adjacent territories were also acquired
from Sikkim, partly as present, and partly by a military expedition in 1850.

III. THE CONQUEST OF SINDH

The disastrous Afghan campaign was followed by the forcible seizure of Sindh (1843) of which a detailed account is given in Ch. VIII. It was an instance of unmasked aggression, backed by sheer brutal force, to which there are few parallels in the whole course of Indo-British history. For this exhibition of the worst type of imperialism the blame must be shared equally, and almost exclusively, by Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier. The elaborate arguments in defence of their action form an apt illustration of the logic of the strong towards the weak. But the annexation of Sindh is marked by a unique feature. It is perhaps the only one of the many unjust annexations of Indian territories by the British which was unequivocally condemned by both the people and the Government in Britain. Even Napier, the joint author of the tragedy, himself described the act as a ‘piece of rascality’. But it is interesting to note, as an illustration of Britain’s political morality, that while fully admitting the injustice of the action, she did not make amends for it by the restoration of the prize, so wrongfully gained, to its rightful owner.

Though mainly dictated by the imperialist policy, the British conquest of Sindh was also partly a reaction of the Afghan war. At its best, it may be described as an attempt to rehabilitate the British power and prestige which had suffered almost irretrievably by the disastrous retreat of the British army through the Khyber Pass. At its worst, it was the action of a bully who, being kicked by a stronger neighbour, wreaks vengeance on a weaker and unoffending one.

IV. THE CONQUEST OF THE PANJAB

The fear entertained by Ellenborough of an impending conflict with the powerful Sikh army was not altogether unfounded. Several reasons combined to make it almost inevitable. The British, who had conquered the rest of India, naturally desired to extend their authority up to the Sindh which formed the natural boundary of India. So long as Ranjit Singh lived and ruled with an iron hand at the head of his wonderfully trained Khalsa army, the Government of India thought it politic to humour him and not to provoke his wrath and hostility. On the other hand, Ranjit was too shrewd a statesman to under-estimate the real power of the British, and always took good care to keep on friendly terms with the Government of India. A man of blood-and-iron policy, he restrain-
ed himself from the conquest of Sindh for fear of incurring the displeasure of the British. His participation with the British in a joint endeavour to place Shah Shuja' on the throne of Kābul, of which a detailed account will be given in Ch. VII, shows how he maintained this friendly attitude till the last.

The death of Ranjit Singh in A.D. 1839 precipitated the crisis. The absence of a strong leader who could succeed Ranjit Singh, and the anarchy and confusion that consequently followed in the Panjāb after his death, offered a tempting opportunity to the British of completing the conquest of India up to its natural frontier on the west. This alone can satisfactorily account for the steady increase in the military force on the border, as will be shortly mentioned. The annexation of Sindh, which left the Panjāb as the only enclave in India free from British control, in a way facilitated its conquest by the removal of a potential danger on the flank.

Either due to a knowledge or intelligent anticipation of such an attitude on the part of the British, or to an under-estimate of the British military strength owing to recent events in Afghanistān, or to some other factor, yet unknown, the Sikhs, forgetting the wisdom of Ranjit Singh's policy, gradually, but unmistakably, developed an unfriendly feeling towards the English. This could be clearly seen in their lack of hearty co-operation with the English in the later stages of their joint military enterprise against Afghanistān to which reference will be made later. So the two-fold reaction of Ranjit Singh's death, on the English and on the Sikhs, tended to bring about a conflict between the two.

The actual events or circumstances leading to the war are but imperfectly known, and these have been described in detail in Ch. X. Although the Sikhs were made to appear as aggressive and unnecessarily provocative, the British were not perhaps the innocent lambs as they are usually represented. The sense of injured innocence which is echoed in the Governor-General's declaration of war is hard to reconcile with the fact that ever since the death of Ranjit Singh the British troops on the border of the Panjāb were steadily on the increase. Up to 1838, there were no more than 2,500 men with six pieces of artillery. Auckland raised it to 8,000, and when Lord Ellenborough left India in 1844 the number rose to 17,612 men and sixty-six guns. By the end of December, 1845, there were 40,523 men and ninety-four guns. This rapid increase could hardly be justified as a purely defensive measure. A critic, designated hostile, made a pithy remark which is very significant. "To be prepared is one thing," he said, "to be always making preparations, another." Besides, the preparations were not all of a
defensive character. Boats were being constructed at Bombay for the construction of bridges of boats across the Sutlej, and troops were assembled in Sindh which could have no other object than attacking Multān. With the fate of Sindh in recent memory, the Sikhs may be certainly excused if, as Cunningham tells us, they looked upon the British military preparations as “a campaign, not of defence, but of aggression.”

As will be explained in Ch. X, there is no doubt that the internal situation of the Panjāb mainly accounts for the fact that the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej without any formal declaration of war. But the righteous indignation felt by the British authorities at this conduct should have been considerably mollified by the reflection that the Sikhs had merely taken a leaf out of the book of their general Sir Charles Napier. Like him, the Sikhs also perhaps believed in a surprise attack as having the best chance of success. In any event, the tactics adopted only two years ago by the mighty British against weak and helpless Sindh, when resorted to by the Sikhs against themselves, need not have inflamed their moral sense to a feverish heat.

Like the origin of the war, the incidents of the campaign are also partly shrouded in mystery. We shall never know what part treachery played in the discomfiture of the Sikhs at the four successive battles of Mudki (December 18, 1845), Firozshāh (December 21-22), Aliwal (January 28, 1846) and Sobraon (February 10, 1846). But there is no doubt that the Khalsa of Ranjit Singh gave a good account of themselves, and as far as fighting quality goes, brought no discredit on the name of their great leader. It was remarked by the British general on December 21, after the first day of battle in Firozshāh, that “the fate of India trembled in the balance”. At the next battle at Mudki, the victory was gained at such a great cost, that the Governor-General requested the home authorities to recall Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, and necessary orders were at once issued, though by the time they reached India the decisive victory of Gough over the Sikhs at Sobraon rehabilitated his credit and it was not thought necessary to make the orders public.

The treaty concluded on March 9 at Lahore brought the hostilities to an end. Its details, given in Ch. X, need not be repeated here. The Sikh Government had to cede the Jālandar doab between the Beas and the Sutlej and all the territories lying to the south of the last-named river. The British also got Kāshmir, Hāzārā and other hilly regions between the Beas and the Sindhu, in lieu of the war indemnity of one and a half crores of Rupees. Out of this
Ghulab Singh, who had rendered valuable services to the British, was granted Kāshmir for a sum of money. Dalip Singh was recognised as the Maharaja, and the British Government promised not to interfere in the internal administration of the country.

A British force was left in the Panjāb and Henry Lawrence was appointed the British agent at Lahore Durbar. Events, however, marched rapidly, as will be described in detail in Ch. X. Intrigues and insurrections, aided by British diplomacy, led to a revision of the treaty which virtually transferred the administration of the State to the hands of the British and authorised the British to garrison the whole country by their own troops at the expense of the Sikh Durbar. So long as Henry Lawrence was the British Resident, things went on smoothly, but under his successor, Sir Frederick Currie, troubles began, and things were cleverly manoeuvred towards an open rebellion on the part of the Sikhs such as would justify the wholesale annexation of the Panjāb, which had long been regarded by the British statesmen as a 'consummation to be devoutly wished for.'

The contumacious conduct of Mulraj, the Governor of Multān, gave the requisite opportunity. It is to be noted that the British Resident, charged with the administration of the Panjāb, did not immediately take sufficient steps to crush him. There are good grounds to believe that disaffection was deliberately allowed to be spread so that the Government of India might have a casus belli for the fight to a finish.

V. TERRITORIES OUTSIDE INDIA

The conquest of the island of Ceylon had been completed in 1815. It has been noted above\(^35\) that during the Napoleonic wars in Europe an expedition from Bengal conquered Java, but it was restored to the Dutch in 1814. The Dutch, however, tried to exclude the British from all share of trade in this region and Lord Hastings felt the necessity of securing the trade-route to China by strengthening British possessions in the east. He therefore approved of the proposal, recommended by Sir Stamford Raffles (originally Governor of British possessions in Java and then of a small colony in Sumatra), of occupying the island of Singapur, which was then peopled by only a few fishermen. In spite of the protests of the Dutch authorities, Raffles seized the almost deserted island in A.D. 1819. Friction between the Dutch and the English continued till 1824, when a treaty was signed defining their respective spheres of influence. By this treaty the British received from the King of the Netherlands the Dutch possessions in India, as well as Malacca and
Singapur, in exchange for the British settlements in Western Sumâtrâ. The situation of Singapur was recognised to be of great importance from both commercial and political points of view, but its possession was involved in some difficulty. Two Malay Princes had a claim over it, of whom one was nominally a vassal of the other, but had actual and effective possession of the territory. The relations of both of these with the King of the Netherlands was also not quite clear. Therefore, on receiving the rights of the latter, the British entered into a definite agreement with the two native princes, known as Sultan and Tumongong of Johor. By a treaty concluded on August 2, 1824, both the princes ceded the island of Singapur together with the adjacent sea-straits and islands, up to a specified limit, to the British “in full sovereignty and property.” In return, an annual grant was made by the British, but this was to lapse with the lives of the existing princes.

During the First Burmese War, a treaty was concluded between the British Government and the King of Siam on July 20, 1826. The help given by the ruler of Siam during the war was fully recognised and mutual alliance and friendship and facility for commerce were provided by the treaty. The British also agreed to recognise the existing boundaries of the kingdom of Siam. This meant, in effect, that the possession of Kedda was guaranteed to the Siamese. The justice and expediency of this may well be questioned, for Kedda had a previous history. It was situated on the Western coast of Malacca and formerly belonged to a Prince with whom the British had concluded several engagements. “In the year 1786, Captain Light, the master of a country ship received from the King of Kedda the island of Pulo Penang (since called Prince of Wales Island), as a marriage portion with the sovereign's daughter. Captain Light transferred it to the East India Company, by whom he was appointed Governor, and an arrangement was concluded with the King of Kedda for the payment to that Prince of six thousand dollars annually, to compensate for the loss of revenue which he was likely to sustain. In 1800, a cession of territory on the mainland was made to the Company. This acquired the name of Province Wellesley, and in consideration of its surrender the payment to the King of Kedda was raised to ten thousand dollars. In 1821, the remaining territories of the King of Kedda were invaded by the Siamese and quickly subdued, the prince thereupon taking refuge in Prince of Wales Island.” In view of the above circumstances it is difficult to justify the action of the British in guaranteeing the possession of Kedda to the Siamese.

Difficulties, however, soon arose when Kedda was restored to its old ruler by means of a military expedition, the preparations for
which were made within the British territory. As soon as this was brought to the notice of the British Government, they forced the ruler of Kedda to remove to Malacca. Further, the British Resident at Singapur helped the Siamese Government in recapturing Kedda by blockading the mouth of the river. This action was disapproved by the Government of Bengal, but before their instructions reached the Resident, the Siamese had already taken possession of Kedda. The whole transaction reflects great dishonour upon the British who gave away to the Siamese the territories of a prince with whom they had friendly relations for forty years.

There were troubles also in Malacca. After receiving this territory from the King of the Netherlands, the British claimed authority over a number of petty native principalities in the neighbourhood. One of these was Nanning, the chief of which resisted the demands of the British, and a military force was sent against him. After a great deal of difficulty, and not without some loss, the British ultimately subdued the chieftain.39

Considerations of trade and commerce influenced British policy not only in the eastern but also in the western sea. The piracy in the Arabian sea was a great menace to trade and several expeditions were fitted out in 1819-20 to check this growing evil. In course of two years piracy was effectively stopped by the suppression of the predatory fleet near the coast of Western India.

Aden was conquered in 1839. The crew and passengers of a ship under British colours, wrecked near Aden, were ill-treated by the Arabs, and the British seized this opportunity to secure possession of this much-coveted entrepot of the trade between the West and the East, famous as such since the beginning of the Christian era. The Sheikh of Lahej, to whom Aden belonged, was held responsible for the outrage, and the Government of Bombay demanded an explanation. The upshot was that the Sheikh was forced to agree, not only to make compensation for the plunder of the ship, but also to sell the town and port of Aden to the British. The son of the Sheikh, however, refused to comply with these terms. Thereupon a combined naval and military force was sent, and Aden was captured and annexed to British India on January 16, 1839.

1. CHI. V. 578.
2. The letter is quoted in Bell-1, p. 278.
4. Ibid. 17. The 'plan' will be referred to later.
5. Sir Frederick Currie says: "The conditions of the 14th Article of the Treaty the British Government had themselves, it must be admitted, 'failed to fulfil,' when they systematically withheld from the Rajah the advice which, by that Article, they are bound to give to him in the conduct of every detailed department of the administration." Sir Henry Montgomery, Member of the India Council, wrote in his Dissent of July 12, 1863: "...it is well-known..."
EXPANSION OF BRITISH DOMINIONS

and officially on record, that not only was no advice tendered, but that it was systematically and purposely withheld". Bell-1, p. 16.

6. Munro had left on record his firm convictions that no good could come of the administration of the Raja, and his successor held the same view. (Bell-1, p. 20).

8. Ibid, 22-3.
9. As noted above, there was no arrear in the payment of subsidy, and Bentinck used this ingenious expression in order to avoid flat contradiction to his original charge that the subsidy was not regularly paid.

12. Aitchison, IX, 357.
15. Ibid, 94.
16. Ibid, 93.
17. Ibid, 75-6.
18. V. A. Smith writes: "He murdered all his male relatives and many of the females, often with his own hands... His adherents contrived a plot to seize Bangalore and overthrow the Company's Government" (Oxford History of India, 1919, p. 660). Smith cites no evidence for the charges. The first of these is directly contradicted by the British officers mentioned above. The second charge is not referred to by the contemporary historian Thornton, and is too ridiculous to be taken seriously into consideration without the strongest positive evidence.
20. Muthanna, op. cit. 64.
22. Muthanna quotes the evidence of British officers to the effect that there were two sons of the Raja born respectively in 1821 and 1832. He also says: "The sons and the widow of the Raja who were in Benares (where the Raja lived in exile before he went to England) had sent men in 1865 to obtain wives from among the leading Codagu families (pp. 95, 96, 99).
22a. The daughter of Viraraja, the Elder, ruled for two years.
23. Aitchison, IX, 361.
25. Ibid, 74.
26. Ibid, 89.
27. Ibid, 85.
29. Ibid.
31. In a letter dated April 17, 1834, the Governor of Madras drew the attention of Col. Fraser to the good climate and other agreeable features of Mysore and Coorg, and it is a reasonable assumption that the arbitrary annexation of Coorg on false pretexts was greatly influenced by these considerations. Even an Englishman, Mr. Cassell, wrote: "Codagu's annexation was preplanned." (Quoted by Muthanna, p. 70).
32. CHI, VI. 38.
33. Detailed account is given in Vol. VIII. Cf. Cunningham, History of the Sikhs (1904), 197-204.
34. Ellenborough's letter to the Queen, dated April 20, 1843; Basu-1, p. 852.
35. See Vol. VIII.
35a. For the terms of the Treaty of 1824, the negotiations leading to it and its effect upon the British expansion in the east, cf. The British in the Malay Indies by Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, Ch. VI.
36. Thornton, V. 189-172.
37. Ibid, 101-4.
38. Ibid, 192-3.