CHAPTER XXV

GROWTH OF BRITISH ADMINISTRATION (1772-1793)

SECTION 1

WARREN HASTINGS

END OF DOUBLE GOVERNMENT

Warren Hastings became Governor of Bengal in April, 1772, and Governor-General in October, 1774. Sir Alfred Lyall says that he ‘showed a genius for pioneering administration’. The Company decided to abandon the Dual system of internal government. As Governor Hastings had not the least difficulty in managing his Council of 12 or 13 members; he succeeded in establishing his personal ascendancy. He sought to bring freedom into the markets of Bengal. He totally abolished the use of the Dustuck or free pass which exempted the Company’s servants or agents from Government dues and of which such fraudulent use was made. As the Company was now the Government there was no difficulty in enforcing this. He also suppressed the Zamindari chokeys or customs houses. Only five central customs houses were henceforth to be maintained at Calcutta, Hughli, Murshidabad, Patna and Dacca. Customs duties were lowered to a fixed rate of 2½ per cent. on all goods except the monopolies of salt, betelnut and tobacco, and this duty was to be paid by all alike. Warren Hastings carried out this reform which was long overdue at the instance of the Court of Directors.

The Company’s decision to ‘stand forth as the Dewan’ involved the abolition of the offices of Naib Dewan of Bengal and Bihar. Reza Khan and Shitab Rai were not only dismissed but prosecuted for peculation in accordance with the instructions of the Court of Directors, but they were honourably acquitted. Hastings reduced the Nawab’s pension which had already been brought down from 32 lakhs to 16 lakhs.
REVENUE SYSTEM OF HASTINGS

Hastings had, however, the greatest difficulty in devising a simple system of land revenue administration; he failed in this task. The existing system has been described as an 'impenetrable labyrinth of which the key was sought in vain'. Clive had retained the old organisation. Warren Hastings sought to create his own machinery for assessment and collection. The Zamindars of Bengal were even in the days of Akbar 'rich, powerful and numerous'. In the early years of the eighteenth century, when Murshid Quli Khan was the Dewan and Nazim of Bengal, the hereditary character of the Zamindars' connection with the land was recognised, though that masterful ruler has left behind him a tradition as a chastiser of Zamindars. Besides the Zamindar, another existing revenue agency was the Kanungo, who was the registrar of a district, the custodian of its records.

Hastings did not co-operate with these existing agencies. He appointed a Committee of Circuit to tour through various districts. It was decided to farm the revenue for five years to the highest bidders in order to ascertain the true value of the land. The result was naturally disastrous: the country, already ruined by the famine of 1770, fell into the hands of speculators who rack-rented and absconded. The opinion gained ground that it would be far better to deal with the Zamindars who were men of substance and character and could be depended upon. The President and Council formed a Committee of Revenue and revenue administration was placed directly under their control. The Khalsa (or the treasury office) was removed from Murshidabad to Calcutta. In each district the Supervisor (under the name of Collector), assisted by an Indian Dewan, was made responsible for revenue administration.

In 1772 the Court of Directors sent orders to recall the Collectors and to adopt other measures for the collection of revenue. A Committee of Revenue was set up at Calcutta consisting of two members of the Council and three senior servants below the Council to supervise the work in the districts. They were to be assisted by the Ray Rayan, an Indian official who was supervising the work of the Indian Dewans. Occasional inspectors could be sent. The three provinces were
temporarily to be divided into six divisions, each under a Provincial Council, each consisting of a chief and four senior servants of the Company. Each district was to be under an Indian Dewan, the Collector being withdrawn.

**JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF HASTINGS**

The Governorship of Warren Hastings marks the beginning of an administrative service separated from the commercial organisation. The greatest achievement of Warren Hastings as Governor was the creation of judicial courts. From Mughal times there was a close connection between land revenue and civil justice. In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee of Circuit, two courts were established in each district—the Mufassil Dewani Adalat over which the Collector presided, and the Faujdari Adalat (or the court of criminal police) where the Qazi or the Mufti expounded the law and inflicted punishment and the Collector attended with a view to regulate the proceedings. At the Presidency of Fort William superior courts were established—the Sadr Dewani Adalat to deal with appeals from the Mufassil Dewani Adalats, and the Sadr Nizamat Adalat to deal with appeals from the Faujdari Adalats. Over the Sadr Dewani Adalat the President with two members of the Council presided; over the Sadr Nizamat Adalat a chief officer of justice appointed by the Nazim presided. Supervision was also exercised over criminal justice so that the Company’s administration in the character of the King’s Dewan might be satisfied.

The tendency of Warren Hastings to centralize is clearly visible. “In transferring from Murshidabad to Calcutta the seat of the supreme courts of justice, the head seat of revenue administration and the Khalsa, Hastings was instituting a policy deliberately designed to make the last named place the capital of British Bengal.” “Under the plea that they were acting within the constitution of the Mughal Empire, the Company’s servants built up a system of internal government and when the walls of their government had reached a certain height, the sun of the British crown rose to its meridian and the shadow cast by the setting constellation of the Mughal Empire disappeared for ever.”
HASTINGS AND HIS COUNCIL

After the passing of the Regulating Act Warren Hastings, as Governor-General was, during the period 1774-76, constantly outvoted in his small Council by Francis, Clavering and Monson. In 1776 Monson died and Hastings held the mastery by his casting vote. Clavering died in August, 1777, and Hastings's control over the Council was thereby greatly strengthened. On the whole he retained his mastery until his departure from India in 1785. One of the consequences of his quarrel with the Council was the creation of a spirit of partisanship throughout the entire service, but the new Council also brought a new spirit of enquiry. Sir Philip Francis showed a remarkable grasp of the revenue problem and in his minutes advocated a fixed settlement with the Zamindars. The idea might have been suggested by some district officers but Francis must be described as 'the original promoter of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal'.

DEVELOPMENT OF HASTINGS'S REVENUE POLICY

Hastings gradually came to favour settlement for a life or two joint lives. He appointed a Commission in 1776 known as the Amini Commission; it collected valuable data. But the Directors' policy of marking time in view of conflicting data was responsible for annual settlements. Warren Hastings, master of his Council, was, however, responsible for carrying to completion his favourite policy of centralisation. The Provincial Councils were dissolved and their powers were transferred to the Committee of Revenue. The Collectors were re-appointed but were denied any interference with the new settlement of revenue. "It was hoped that a central authority aloof from the corruption of the country would be able almost unaided to control an unknown and antiquated system". As Sir John Shore put it in 1782, "the real state of the districts is now less known and the revenue less understood than in 1774." Warren Hastings thus failed to devise a system of land revenue administration that could be regarded as workable.

BEGINNINGS OF CIVIL SERVICE

Another limitation should also be noted so far as the growth of British administration was concerned. Hastings laid
the foundations of a civil service, distinct from commerce, but he could not create very healthy traditions for it as he made many improper appointments to gratify persons in power. This demoralised his system. He secured the support of the Archbishop of York by giving the control of Benares to his son aged 21, and of Sullivan, Chairman of the Court of Directors, by granting the opium contract to his son who sold it for £40,000. It should not be forgotten that he was the principal servant of a chartered commercial Company, not a senatorial Proconsul like Cornwallis and Wellesley, and in his shaky position he had to compromise to a large extent with evil. But there is one redeeming feature. He had not the distrust of Indian agency that characterised the administrative system of Lord Cornwallis who built on the foundations laid by him.

IMPEACHMENT OF HASTINGS (1788-1795)

An estimate of the achievements of Warren Hastings as an administrator raises certain controversial issues. On his return to England he was impeached by the House of Commons before the House of Lords on some grave charges—his treatment of Chait Singh and the Begams of Oudh, his fraudulent contracts, as also the presents and bribes which he took. He was sought to be impeached for the Rohilla War, but the Commons did not sanction the inclusion of this among the articles of impeachment.

CASE OF NANDA KUMAR (1775)

Suspicion also attaches to him in connection with the Nanda Kumar case. The facts of this case are well-known. Nanda Kumar, an influential Brahmin who had held important posts under the Nawabs, accused Warren Hastings in the Council of taking a heavy bribe for nominating Moni Begam, the widow of Mir Jafar, as the guardian of the Nawab. Hastings had taken a sum of 150,000 rupees as his allowance during his stay at Murshidabad. Therefore, there was some substratum of truth in the charge of Nanda Kumar. While this was being enquired into, Nanda Kumar was committed for trial on a charge of forgery brought against him by a
banker's agent; he was found guilty by the Supreme Court and put to death, as it was generally believed, nominally for forgery but really for accusing the Governor-General. Collusion between the Governor-General and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court cannot be proved. But, in the words of Sir Alfred Lyall, Impey, the Chief Justice, was always inclined to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Hastings and later even gave 'legal countenance to raids upon the Begams' money bags'. It was a fit case for reprieve as the Act under which Nanda Kumar was condemned was of doubtful application to India, and the idea of forgery as a capital offence was opposed to the customs and manners of the country. No Indian after Nanda Kumar was executed for forgery and later, in 1802, the Judges of the Supreme Court expressly admitted that the crime was not capital. The condemned man was also the accuser of the Governor-General. The Chief Justice had the power of reprieve which he did not exercise, and there is also evidence to prove that one of the dependents of Warren Hastings attempted to prevent Farrer, Nanda Kumar's counsel, from presenting a petition for reprieve.

CASE OF CHAIT SINGH (1778-1781)

Hastings's treatment of Chait Singh, Raja of Benares, has been described as 'merciless and vindictive'. He wanted money for the wars against France and the Marathas. The Raja of Benares had great wealth. He had also incurred the resentment of Warren Hastings. In 1777, when there was a dispute on the question as to whether Warren Hastings had resigned, the Raja had sent an agent to Clavering who had set himself up as a rival Governor-General. The Supreme Court decided in favour of Warren Hastings, who perhaps never forgave the Raja for trying to make terms with his rival. When the Maratha War and the outbreak of hostilities with France compelled the Governor-General to seek expedients to replenish his treasury, he decided to ask the Raja to pay an extraordinary war subsidy of 5 lakhs, which was paid (1778). In 1779 the demand was renewed and payment was made after some delay. In 1780 the Governor-General asked him to furnish a contingent of 2,000 cavalry. He protested and the demand was reduced
to 1,000 cavalry. He got together 500 horse and 500 infantry and informed Hastings who had, however, by now made up his mind to impose on him the extraordinary fine of 50 lakhs. Hastings wrote, "I was resolved to draw from his guilt the means of relief to the Company's distress". He also decided to remove the Raja in case of non-compliance and came to Benares. The Raja's answers were deemed equivocal and he was ordered to be put under arrest. His troops resented this, suddenly rose, and massacred a company of Sepoys and their officers. Hastings had to fly to Chunar. British troops arrived. Chait Singh escaped to Gwalior. His territory was sequestered and conferred upon a nephew, the tribute being almost doubled. The Company got nothing out of this affair, the soldiers keeping what they seized as prize money. The heavy increase of tribute was responsible for the rack-renting of the Benares district which did not recover until the heavy financial imposition was reduced.

The question whether Chait Singh was an almost independent Raja or a 'mere Zamindar' has been argued at length. Even if he was a mere Zamindar it is curious to find that no other Zamindar was called upon to meet such extraordinary demands and there was no general tax levied on all Zamindars. The insurrection was precipitated by the imprudence of Hastings. We would not be wrong in concluding that Hastings deserved severe censure in view of 'impolitic severity and precipitation' about his proceedings against Chait Singh.

CASE OF THE BEGAMS OF OUDH (1782)

Hastings failed to get any money from Benares and turned to Oudh. The state of things in Madras and Bombay necessitated an immediate supply of money. Nawab Asaf-ud-daula of Oudh, son and successor of Shuja-ud-daula, was in debt to the Company. He declared his inability to pay unless his mother and grandmother, who were in possession of a very considerable portion of the treasure of the late Nawab, were made to pay. But the Company had in 1775 guaranteed those Begams of Oudh in possession of their treasure and estates. Hastings withdrew this guarantee, and when the Nawab began to hang back he was goaded by the British authorities. The
Resident, Middleton, was not sufficiently energetic in applying coercion and was replaced by Bristow. The Begams' ministers were kept in prison for many months and were for sometime even put in irons and deprived of food. The eunuchs were kept in confinement. The treasure of the Begams was seized in December, 1782.

Hastings alleged that the Begams had supported the rising of Chait Singh. Impey took affidavits to support the Governor-General. The evidence is not, however, convincing and as Roberts says, 'it was a sordid, shabby and sorry business'. It should be noted in this connection that, as Chait Singh made a present of Rs. 20,000 to Hastings to escape from his demands, so the Nawab of Oudh offered him ten lakhs as a bribe to release him from his task of coercing these old relatives. Hastings took this bribe, employed the money in the Company's service and persisted in his course of action. Well might the accusers of Hastings describe these as 'the donations of misery to power, the gifts of wretchedness to the oppressors'. These 'sinister fiscal operations' of Warren Hastings must be regarded as unworthy and indefensible. His only argument was the state of public emergency.

RESULT OF IMPEACHMENT

The impeachment of Hastings was a long trial and though he was acquitted on all the counts the highest number of votes was recorded against him on the cases of Chait Singh and the Begams. The Whig party made this occasion 'a manifesto for their humanitarian sentiments and an exercise in vituperation'. An enquiry was certainly necessary in order that 'the unhappy features of his period of office should not be allowed to become precedents for British policy in the East', but the long drawn agony of a trial that left him financially broken must be regarded as an act of British ingratitude. Warren Hastings's case is best put in his own words: "I received the government of Bengal with incumbrances, . . . . I gave it both form and system. The value of others acquired, I enlarged and gave shape and consistency to the dominion you hold there. I preserved it. I sent forth its armies with an effective but economical hand, through unknown and hostile regions, to the
support of your other possessions, to the retrieval of one from degradation and dishonour and the other from utter loss and subjection... I gave you all and you have rewarded me with confiscation, disgrace and a life of impeachment.”

HASTINGS AS A PATRON OF LEARNING

From the Indian point of view the most remarkable achievement of Warren Hastings was his patronage of literature, scholarship and the arts—“Nathaniel Haldane and Sir Charles Wilkins as pioneers, Sir William Jones and Henry Thomas Colebrooke as scholars and Hastings as their enthusiastic patron.”

THE REGULATING ACT, 1773

The intervention of Parliament with definite authority in Indian affairs was inevitable after 1757. The East India Company’s financial embarrassments precipitated this intervention in 1773. The Regulating Act of 1773, passed at the instance of Lord North, was the first of the long series of Parliamentary enactments relating to India. The constitution of the Company in England was changed, but more important was the change of the structure of the Government in India.

In England the power of vote in the Court of Proprietors was restricted and it was provided that the Directors would be elected for four years. The number of Directors was 24, of whom one-fourth would retire every year. The Directors were required to ‘lay before the Treasury all correspondence from India dealing with the revenues; and before a Secretary of State everything dealing with civil or military administration’. Thus for the first time the British Cabinet was given the right of controlling Indian affairs, although the right was imperfect.

As regards the government of India the Act laid down that there was to be a Governor-General of Bengal who was to be assisted by four Councillors.¹ They were all appointed by name for five years and could be removed earlier only by the King on the recommendation of the Court of Directors. Future appointments were to be made by the Company. The vote of

¹ Clavering, Monson, Barwell, Philip Francis.
the majority was to bind the whole body, the Governor-General having only a casting vote in case of an equal division. The Governor-General and Council were vested with the civil and military government of the Presidency of Fort William. They were also to manage and govern the territorial acquisitions and revenues in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa as they were exercised by the President and Council or Select Committee. They were to superintend the subordinate Presidencies of Madras and Bombay in the making of war and in the conclusion of peace. But in case of imminent necessity or on the receipt of special orders from the Home Government the subordinate Presidencies might act otherwise. The Act also provided for the establishment of a Supreme Court of Justice by a Royal Charter, which would consist of a Chief Justice (Sir Elijah Impey) and three puisne Judges. Liberal salaries were granted to the Governor-General, Councilors and Judges.

DEFEATS OF THE REGULATING ACT

Ilbert writes, "The provisions of the Act of 1773 are obscure and defective as to the nature and extent of the authority exercised by the Governor-General and his Council, as to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and as to the relation between the Bengal Government and the Court." It was very unfortunate that the Governor-General was not given the power to override his Council in the last resort. Hastings argued in vain in favour of this right which was not conceded until 1786. Sir John Strachey describes this plan of governing an Empire by a constantly shifting majority at Council board as 'impossible' and 'folly'. Second, Calcutta's power to control the subordinate Presidencies was a mere negative power and nothing more. They were so long independent and the exceptions noted in the Act provided them with a disastrous latitude. Bombay's dealings with the Poona Darbar during the First Anglo-Maratha War and the relations of Madras with the Nizam and Haidar Ali during the Second Anglo-Mysore War showed that the Act did not certainly help the development of a tradition of loyalty to the Supreme Government.

Thirdly, the Supreme Court was given jurisdiction over British subjects in India, but the term 'British subject' was not
explained. The Act avoided a declaration on the question of sovereignty and this mistake was not rectified until the Charter Act of 1813. It brought into existence a Court of King’s Judges and professional men of the law but it did not define the field of jurisdiction, the law that was to be administered and the relations between the Council and the Court. A violent quarrel between the Executive and the Judiciary thus developed. The Judges felt that they were entrusted with the task of dealing with oppression by the Executive Government; but there is no doubt that the government of the country was seriously disturbed because the Supreme Court intervened in matters belonging to the Dewani and the Nizamat. In the Kasijora case the Supreme Court claimed that a Zamindar must be held subject to its jurisdiction in a case of a claim for a private debt. In the Patna case the Court asserted authority to penalise the judicial action of officers of the Company. All this made for confusion. Warren Hastings sought a way out of the difficulty by obtaining Impey’s acceptance of the Presidency of the Sadr Dewani Adalat. Impey was granted a large salary for this additional work of supervising the Dewani Courts. Macaulay calls the offer a bribe and describes the Chief Justice as ‘rich, quiet and infamous’. It was felt by many that the Chief Justice compromised the independence of the Supreme Court by taking this salary. In 1782 under instructions from the Court of Directors the Governor-General and Council resumed the Sadr Dewani Adalat jurisdiction which had been assigned to the Chief Justice in 1780.

ACT OF 1781

An amending act was passed in 1781 which effected important changes in the system of 1773. It laid down that the Governor-General and Council were not to be jointly and severally subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court was not to exercise any jurisdiction in matters concerning the revenue. The extent of its general jurisdiction was also precisely defined. The Courts dependent on the country constitution were also recognised. The two systems were to remain side by side until a final fusion took place in 1861.
PITT'S INDIA ACT (1784)

The Regulating Act was in operation for eleven years until it was superseded by Pitt's India Act in 1784. The Act of 1784 concerned itself mainly with the Company's Home Government in London. The Act established a Board of Commissioners to supervise the civil and military government of the Company, popularly known as the Board of Control, which was to consist of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a Secretary of State and four Privy Councillors appointed by the King. Its secret orders were to be transmitted to India by a Secret Committee of three Directors. The Court of Proprietors could not annul or suspend a joint decision of the Board and these Directors. The Governor-General was to have three Councillors, one of whom was to be the Commander-in-Chief. The subordinate Presidencies were to be definitely subject to Bengal in all questions of diplomacy, war and revenue. By a supplementary Act passed in 1786 the Governor-General was authorised in special cases to override his Council and also to hold the office of Commander-in-Chief.

The Act of 1784 was a very skilful enactment bearing all the marks of a political compromise. The Board of Control had no independent executive power. It has no patronage; its power was veiled. But it had access to all the Company's papers and its approval was necessary for all despatches that were not purely commercial, and in case of emergency the Board could send its own draft to the Secret Committee of the Directors to be signed and sent out in its name. The Act thus placed the civil and military government of the Company in due subordination to the Government in England. The Court of Directors remained satisfied because they retained their patronage and their right of dismissing their servants. Mill says, "Of the power which the Directors retain much is inseparable from the management of detail". It is also relevant to note that "the Board of Control passed into oblivion as such." Dundas succeeded in eliminating the other members; the management fell in practice to the President who became practically a Secretary of State for India, Indian affairs thus becoming a matter for the British Cabinet. Pitt's India Act thus settled the main lines of the Company's Home and Indian
Government for more than seventy years. It also laid down that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour and policy of this nation"—a declaration more honoured in breach than in observance in India.

SECTION II

LORD CORNWALLIS

ADVANTAGES OF CORNWALLIS

After the resignation of Warren Hastings the post of Governor-General was held temporarily for more than a year (1785-86) by Sir John Macpherson, who was succeeded by Lord Cornwallis in September, 1786. Cornwallis was the first senatorial Proconsul. He has been described as 'the right kind of aristocrat'. He was the personal friend of Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control, and of Pitt, the Prime Minister. He had the most enthusiastic support of the Court of Directors. According to the Act of 1786 he could overrule his Council. He exercised effective control over Madras and Bombay. He was also invested with military control as Commander-in-Chief. He could determine policy with the full assurance of support from the House of Commons. His position as the first Parliamentary Governor-General was thus very secure and he made very good use of his time. His main task in India was administrative organisation and he had excellent administrators to guide him, who had come into prominence in the days of Warren Hastings—John Shore, James Grant and Jonathan Duncan in the field of revenue and general administration, Charles Grant on the commercial side and Sir William Jones in judicial matters. Cornwallis himself had not perhaps conspicuous abilities, but he had industry, honesty and public spirit.

COMMERCIAL REFORMS

He first reformed the commercial administration of the Company in Bengal. Provisions for the Company's investment
were made by a Board of Trade of eleven members. It was reduced to five members. Instead of contracts for supply with the Company's own servants the Board was to provide investments by contracts with the merchants. Warren Hastings had tried to deliver the weavers from the oppression of the Company's gomasthas who practised roguery beyond imagination, exercising a quasi-monopolistic control, but the Court of Directors had prevented any real reform. This oppression, this monopoly and coercion proved destructive of the industry, and regulations had to be laid down to prevent oppression of the primary producer or the Indian or foreign trader. Cornwallis boasted in 1789 that "the investment is now reasonably and intelligently purchased and delivered to the Government at its real cost." But the Company's commerce became progressively of less importance and the Company lost its monopoly of trade with India in 1813.

JUDICIAL REFORMS

The judicial reforms of Cornwallis concerned civil as also criminal justice and police. By his regulation dated 3rd December, 1790, he took away from the Nawab his power of administering criminal justice and removed the Sadr Nizamat Adalat to Calcutta. It was to be presided henceforth by the Governor-General and Council, aided by the Chief Qazi and Muftis. Four Courts of Circuit were established, each under two British judges aided by Qazis and Muftis. They were to make tours twice a year throughout the districts. The Collectors in the 23 districts were given further magisterial powers. In 1791 Superintendents of Police were created for Calcutta. Small areas were put under Darogas who were placed at the head of police stations. They were to be subject to the control of the District Magistrate. It was the beginning of the establishment of a regular police force.

After the introduction of the Permanent Settlement Cornwallis finally separated civil jurisdiction from revenue administration. He took away the purely judicial powers of the Collectors even in matters of revenue and vested them in the civil judge. Revenue Courts disappeared and revenue cases were referred to district courts, now reorganised as three city
courts and 23 zilla courts, each presided over by an English judge. Four Provincial Courts of Appeal at Calcutta, Patna, Dacca and Murshidabad intervened between the district court and the Sadr Dewani Adalat. To the Sadr Dewani Adalat, consisting of the Governor-General and Council, appeal could be made in larger causes, with a further appeal to the King in Council in still larger cases. Over the Provincial Courts were three English Judges who were also to preside over the criminal Courts of Circuit at those towns. The Collectors of revenue and all the officers of the Government were made amenable to these courts for acts done in their official capacity. For very minor cases upto 50 rupees Indian Munisifs and Sadar Amins were given jurisdiction, and Registrars of the courts dealt with cases upto 200 rupees subject to appeal.

In this connection it is only fair to note that Warren Hastings had already brought Faujdari or criminal jurisdiction under the control of British officers. He had already begun the separation of revenue work from judicial work. He had already provided for the 'addition of new courts of justice distributed at equal distance throughout the provinces.' Cornwallis thus developed and completed a scheme of reform which in its main features had been initiated by Hastings. The judicial system of Cornwallis was concerned mainly with procedure and it was sometime before a good system of laws came and reasonably speedy justice could be ensured.

PERMANENT SETTLEMENT

One of the most important contributions of Cornwallis was in the field of land revenue. In the days of Hastings the view had come to the forefront that revenue should be fixed once for all with the Zamindars. Sir Philip Francis made this idea popular in England. It would ensure a uniform and simple title in place of the complex conditions and uncertainty that then prevailed. Cornwallis was not the originator of the Permanent Settlement in any way. His instructions required him to make a settlement with the Zamindars for a period of ten years. Cornwallis differed from his expert, Sir John Shore, in his conclusion that the data collected in connection with the settlement of 1790 could be regarded as sufficient to justify the Com-
pany in making the settlement permanent. His view was accepted in England and the Permanent Settlement of Bengal came formally into existence in 1793.

Hunter has pointed to the imperfections in form and also the fundamental errors that vitiated the settlement. The areas of the Zamindari estates were unknown, the areas of rent free grants and maintenance lands were unascertained, the areas of pasture lands and waste lands remained unascertained, when the settlement was declared permanent. This led to endless confusion and opened the flood gates of litigation. These defects were, however, capable of amendment. But the rigour of the sale law was disastrous in its immediate consequences. "It was vain to expect the ancient Rajas of Bengal, encumbered with all the costly paraphernalia of petty courts and military retainers, to suddenly transform themselves into punctual tax-collectors. The ancient houses of Bengal broke down under the strain. Within 22 years from ½ to ½ of the landed property of Bengal was actually sold on this account." It was found that the only escape for the ancient houses was to lease the land to middlemen. Sub-infeudation, though opposed to the purposes of the Permanent Settlement, had to be recognised as one of its essential features.

The authors of the Permanent Settlement were aware of the necessity of 'securing to the tenants the same certainty as to the amount of their rents and the same undisturbed enjoyment of the fruits of their industry' as the Zamindars were allowed, but the flood of new business made it impossible to undertake the minute investigation necessary for the declaratory leases. The cultivators were vaguely apprehensive and were not willing to execute their counterpart agreement. Moreover, the twenty years following 1770 were a period of falling rents on account of the loss of population; but during twenty years after the introduction of the Permanent Settlement the tenants were competing for holdings and this state of things meant an unearned increment to the Zamindars. The haste after fixity was a blunder. The tenants were saved by subsequent legislation in their favour; the courts of justice also arrayed themselves on their side. The cultivators developed a power for combined resistance. Another saving factor was the 'easy going, indolent and not altogether self-centred life of the Zamindars'.
The landlords and tenants worked a modus vivendi from a legislative blunder which might have led to agrarian anomaly among a less self-controlled or a less forbearing people."

CIVIL SERVICE

Cornwallis created new traditions for the Company's Civil Service. He insisted on 'strict discipline and the maintenance in India of the ethical standards which had now won acceptance in England'. His panacea for the existing venality and corruption was high salary, strict supervision and Europeanisation. Upto 1781 the administrative personnel was mixed. In 1781 European Collectors were re-appointed. Sir John Macpherson began Europeanisation of the civil establishment on a very wide scale. Lord Cornwallis adopted this principle of Anglicising the personnel of public administration with a thoroughness that marks a new departure. The testimony of Cornwallis himself, as also that of Shore, is there to prove that the European servants of the East India Company were no less corrupt than the Indian. If the remedies proposed by Cornwallis could cure the evils so far as the Europeans were concerned, they could have also raised the Indians out of the rut. A Collector in 1787, according to the system of Cornwallis, was not to receive Rs. 1,200/- a month, which was considered inadequate, but was to be paid Rs. 1,500/- and he was to have in addition a commission on the revenue of about 1 per cent. The commission of the Collector of the district of Burdwan amounted to 27,500/- rupees per annum. The principle of exclusion of Indians was confirmed by the Charter Act of 1793, which laid down that "no office, place or employment, the salary and perquisites whereof shall exceed £500 per annum, was to be conferred on anybody for the space of three years who was not a covenanted servant of the Company." As no Indian could be a covenanted servant of the Company, the exclusion of the Indian Agency was thus placed on a legislative basis.

The consequence of this system from the Indian standpoint is best described in the words of Sir Thomas Munro, who was one of the most gifted servants of the East India Company and rose to be the Governor of Madras. He wrote, "The natives of the British provinces may without fear pursue their different
occupations as traders, meerasidars or husbandmen, and enjoy
the fruits of their labour in tranquillity but none of them can
aspire to anything beyond this mere animal state of thriving
in peace. It is from men who either hold or are eligible to
public offices that natives take their character. Where no such
men exist, there can be no energy in any other class of com-
munity. No elevation of character can be expected from men
who in the military line cannot attain to any rank above that
of Subahdar and in the civil line can hope for nothing beyond
some petty judicial or revenue office in which by corrupt means
he can make up for his slender salary.” The increasing
Europeanisation of the bureaucracy and the diminution of
Indian influence set up barriers between the two races and the
growing alienation was apparent to the discerning student of
contemporary history as early as 1815.

THE CHARTER ACT OF 1793

When the Regulating Act was passed the Charter of the
Company had been extended for twenty years. As the time
for its renewal came near an agitation was started in England
in favour of the opening of the Indian trade to private merchants.
Lord Cornwallis opposed the abolition of the Company’s
monopoly on the ground that the opening of the trade would
bring to India ‘desperate speculators’ from England. In 1793
the Charter was renewed for twenty years without any material
change. The Company’s privileges were not abolished. No
important constitutional change was introduced by this statute
of consolidation.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

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CHAPTER XXVI

FALL OF MYSORE AND DECLINE OF THE MARATHAS
(1786-1805)

SECTION 1

THE THIRD ANGLO-MYSORE WAR

TIJU'S WAR WITH THE MARATHAS AND THE NIZAM (1786-87)

The most important political event of Cornwallis' term of office was the Third Anglo-Mysore War. Tipu had succeeded in bringing the Second Anglo-Mysore War to a successful close by the treaty of Mangalore which Hastings regarded as a 'humiliating pacification' from the British point of view. Hastings had even asserted that he did not disavow or annul it because of the 'confusion which must have resulted to the Company's affairs'. But Tipu was restless and war very soon began between him and the Marathas who were in league with the Nizam. This was the great difference between the father and the son. Haidar had certain rules which made the practice of power politics in his hands relatively safe. He somehow saw to it that his enemies—the Marathas, the Nizam and the British—did not combine against him; he normally fought one enemy at a time and in his last years brought about a combination of all the Indian Powers against the British. Tipu stands in the same relation to Haidar in the matter of foreign policy as did Kaiser Wilhelm II to Bismarck. He violated every one of the rules that governed the foreign policy of his predecessor and thus drove his enemies who were hostile to each other to combine against him. In 1786 he fought against both these Powers, and though triumphant in the engagements, he expressed his anxiety to end the war, as he was apprehensive that the British might join the confederates. The terms were more favourable to the Marathas and the Nizam than the state of the campaign warranted.
ORIGIN OF THE THIRD ANGLO-MYSORE WAR

Tipu's conduct was capricious and he was responsible, inspite of the treaty, for fresh aggressions against the Marathas. The Nizam, apprehensive of the Marathas and distrustful of the British, made approaches to Tipu who, however, wanted a marriage alliance. The Nizam haughtily rejected such a connection and tried to draw closer to the British. Tipu sent envoys to France and received some encouragement; but in the nature of the circumstances he could not hope for any effective support. He also matured his plan of invading Travancore. He calculated that if he succeeded he would invade from the south and by the time the British army could be assembled "he could commence the war with the Caveri as his northern frontier towards Coromandel, a boundary anxiously and incessantly desired by the rulers of Mysore since 1751."

Cornwallis considered a rupture with Tipu as a certainty and wanted vigorous co-operation with the Nizam and the Marathas. He was bound by the non-intervention clause of Pitt's India Act, but he was so anxious for an 'intelligible offensive alliance' that he discovered a way out. On July 7, 1789, he wrote a letter to the Nizam, in which he agreed to furnish him with a subsidiary force not to be employed against certain Powers specifically mentioned; in that enumeration every one was included with the single exception of Tipu. Cornwallis declared that this letter was as binding 'as a treaty in due form could be'. There could hardly be a clearer enunciation of British policy towards Tipu.

Tipu's attack on the celebrated Travancore lines, which had been created as a defensive measure against possible aggression, was launched in December, 1789. He was not at first successful. The next attack in April, 1790, however, met with success. Travancore was in alliance with the English and Cornwallis now intervened. He concluded a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance with the Peshwa and the Nizam in July, 1790. Each of these Powers was to send a contingent of 10,000 horse to act with the English army. There would be an equal division of conquests, but the territory of particular Zamindars and Poligars formerly dependent on the Marathas should be restored to them in full sovereignty. The English wanted to
retain the conquests made by them before the commencement of war by the other parties.

THE THIRD ANGLO-MYSORE WAR (1790-92)

The war that now began lasted for nearly two years. It fell into three campaigns. In 1790 General Medows marched with an army of 15,000. According to the British plan the principal army was to secure the Coimbatore district and advance to Mysore. Another British army, first under Kelly and then under Maxwell, was to watch the passes leading from Mysore to the Carnatic. A Bombay army was to seize the possessions of Tipu in Malabar. Tipu very nearly overwhelmed the force of Maxwell, but Medows at last succeeded in effecting a junction. Though the British army succeeded as a result of the first year's campaign in occupying Dindigul, Coimbatore and Palghat, the aspect of affairs was responsible for the decision of Lord Cornwallis to assume the chief command. In 1791 Lord Cornwallis took a new point of attack, moving by Vellore and Ambur to capture Bangalore. After taking it he advanced to Seringapatam; but Tipu's scorched earth policy was largely responsible for a famine in his camp and he had to destroy his battering guns and relinquish the siege. As he fell back his Maratha allies, who had taken Dharwar in the north and were hastening to join him, brought for him ample supplies that relieved his famished camp. The next campaign was more favourable to British arms. Cornwallis succeeded in drawing his lines around Seringapatam, took possession of the outworks of Tipu's capital and compelled Tipu to sue for peace.

RESULTS OF THE WAR

By the treaty of Seringapatam (March, 1792) Tipu had to agree to surrender half of his territory. The Maratha share lay principally between the Wardha and the Krishna, including also the valley of Sundur near Bellary. The Nizam got the districts extending from the Krishna to beyond the Pennar river, including Gooty and Cuddapah. The English got Dindigul, Baramahal, Coorg and Malabar. Cornwallis justified these territorial acquisitions to the authorities in England as best calculated to secure 'a strong defensive frontier'.
This settlement Cornwallis regarded as final. His triple alliance was the basis of his policy. At the end of the war he perhaps wanted to make this more specific for the future, but the stipulations of the treaty remained merely defensive and could not operate unless Tipu attacked any of the three parties without any just provocation. The policy of reducing the formidable power of Tipu Sultan proved ineffective and another war was to follow in a few years' time.

SECTION II

SIR JOHN SHORE AND THE POLICY OF NON-INTERVENTION

JUSTIFICATION OF NON-INTERVENTION POLICY

Sir John Shore, a distinguished civil servant of the Company, succeeded Cornwallis in 1793. He maintained a strict attitude of non-intervention. He has been very much blamed by Imperialists for pursuing this impracticable policy of restraint which led to a collapse of British prestige. But it is overlooked that "at the root of Shore's policy of non-intervention, as of Cornwallis, was the conviction that the East India Company's army was not strong enough to wage a successful war against the five Maratha powers (Peshwa, Sindhia, Holkar, Bhonsle, Gaikwad) when united among themselves and actively allied with Tipu Sultan who was searching heaven and earth to secure allies." There was no competent British general in India. The Sepoys in the British army outnumbered the British troops as six to one or as seven to one, which was not regarded as a safe proportion. The Third Anglo-Mysore War had left a legacy of heavy debt and in 1795 Shore was not financially in a position to support a war. He believed like Cornwallis that if the Marathas were left alone their internal dissensions would lead to the disintegration of their power, whereas any attack by the British on what they considered their just rights or a point of national honour would unite them and would bring about a Maratha-Mysore combination as in the days of Warren Hastings. It is forgotten that in 1795, with Peshwa Madhav Rao Narayan living and with Nana Fadnavis presiding over the destinies of
the Maratha nation, the state of things was very different from what Wellesley was fortunate enough to find in 1802. It is also overlooked that intervals of peace and retrenchment are necessary even in expansionism. The English conquest of India is said to have been of a pulsatory character. A period of war and conquest was followed by a period of recuperation that lay by reserve for future wars. Shore, Barlow and Minto, with their much abused non-interventionism, played a part that was necessary for the success of the frenzy of conquest which characterised the policy of Wellesley and Lord Hastings.

NANA FADNAVIS

The two outstanding personalities who dominated Maratha affairs at the time when Sir John Shore became Governor-General were Nana Fadnavis and Mahadji Sindhia. Nana Fadnavis, who made the young Peshwa, Madhav Rao Narayan, a mere puppet in his hands, has been described by his European contemporaries as the Maratha Machiavelli. Grant Duff says that "the vigour of his judgment, the fertility of his expedients, the extent of his influence and the combination of instruments which he called into action surprised all India." Though he was very much inimical to Tipu he was also very much opposed to the total overthrow of Mysore.

MAHADJI SINDHIA

Mahadji Sindhia dominated affairs in the North. He had his districts in Malwa. He became the Regent of Delhi in 1784 and took over control of the puppet Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam II. In 1787-88 he was placed in a very critical position by a combination of his enemies in the North against him. He suffered a defeat in the battle of Tunga (near Jaipur) and Ghulam Qadir, the Rohilla chief, and his associate Ismail Beg secured Delhi; but Mahadji succeeded in defeating and killing both Ghulam Qadir and Ismail Beg. Sindhia had to a large extent abandoned the traditional Maratha method of warfare; he relied upon regular troops, who were trained and led by Frenchmen in his service, of whom the most prominent was De Boigne. Mahadji Sindhia was opposed to the entire conquest of Tipu's territory in 1792. The English were suspicious
of him and there is ample evidence of their watchful jealousy. He has been described by Grant Duff as 'a man of great political sagacity and of considerable genius, of deep artifice, of restless ambition and of implacable revenge'. He died suddenly in 1794 and was succeeded by his grand-nephew Daulat Rao Sindhia. Mahadji was in a sense a rival of Nana Fadnavis and his sudden death left Nana all-powerful in Maratha affairs.

The state of Maratha relations with the British in 1794 is best described in the words of the great historian of the Marathas, "The Nizam saw in the British a disposition to assist him and hoped to realize his meditated scheme of raising a barrier between himself and the Marathas so that he might not only resist their future encroachments but evade their present demands. On the propriety of resisting this interposition both Nana Fadnavis and Mahadji Sindhia concurred; but they differed in their opinions with regard to the supposed designs of the English. Sindhia conjectured that they projected an alliance with Nizam Ali for the purpose of obtaining the command of the Nizam's resources and turning them against the Marathas; in consequence of which, for a short time previous to his death, he carried on a friendly correspondence with Tipu Sultan. Nana Fadnavis took a more correct view of the subject in supposing that the English, desirous of becoming umpires, would not risk a war unless to save the Hyderabad state from being subverted."

MARATHA WAR AGAINST THE NIZAM (1795)

After Mahadji's death the situation rapidly developed. The Marathas had outstanding balances against the Nizam on account of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi. For more than a decade discussions on the subject had been going on and the Nizam had been compelled to acknowledge some of these demands. After the war with Tipu, the Nizam wanted to obtain first from Lord Cornwallis and then from Sir John Shore a treaty of guarantee. Sir John Shore would not, however, compel the Marathas to accept British mediation in their dispute with the Nizam and adopted a policy of neutrality. Grant Duff comments, "Whatever might have been the apparent advantage of the Governor-General's interference, if it had enabled Nizam Ali
to effect his evasive purposes it must have been recorded as an injustice to the Marathas'. The Nizam was raising regular troops and these were trained by a Savoyard officer named Raymond. His prime minister became so full of confidence in his strength that he told Maratha envoys who had come to discuss Maratha claims that Nana Fadnavis should be made to attend at the Court of Hyderabad. He boasted that the Peshwa should be despatched to Benares 'with a cloth about his loins and a pot of water in his hand, to mutter incantations on the banks of the Ganges.'

The inevitable war was very short. All the Maratha chiefs responded to the call from Poona. The battle of Kharda (March, 1795) itself was nothing. The fighting was really contemptible. Scarcely 200 men were slain on the field of battle. The young Peshwa Madhav Rao Narayan could not rejoice over the victory and is said to have remarked, 'I grieve to observe such degeneracy as there must be on both sides when such a disgraceful submission has been made by the Mughals and our soldiers are vaunting of a victory obtained without an effort'.

The Nizam's defeat was, however, complete. He surrendered his boastful minister to make amends for the insult, ceded half his territories and paid a large sum of money. He fell from the state of a great and leading power in India and in his impotent rage increased his battalions that were now trained, disciplined and commanded by French officers. Fortunately for the British cause, the suicide of Peshwa Madhav Rao Narayan (in October, 1795) shortly after Kharda was followed by a complicated struggle for power that nullified the effects of the Maratha victory over the Nizam and disorganised the Maratha State. The confusion at Poona provided the British not long after with the welcome opportunity of taking advantage of the internal discord of the Marathas to establish their paramount power in India.

**Oudh**

In Oudh Sir John Shore did not pursue the policy of non-intervention. On the death of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula in 1797 he found two claimants for succession—Sa'adat Ali, the deceased Nawab's brother, and Wazir Ali, whom the late Nawab had
looked upon as his successor. Sir John Shore recognised the claim of Sa'adat Ali and compelled him to sign a treaty (1788) by which the subsidy payable by the Nawab was increased and the fort of Allahabad, 'the military key of the province', was annexed to the Company's dominions.

SECTION III

LORD WELLESLEY AND THE POLICY OF SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE

IMPERIALISM OF LORD WELLESLEY

Lord Wellesley succeeded Sir John Shore in April, 1798. 'With the exception of Lord Curzon no Governor-General had come out so well informed concerning all the problems of Indian government as the Marquess of Wellesley was'. He was 'a ripe and accomplished scholar', and as a member of the Board of Control he was in close contact with Indian affairs for several years. He was a strong Imperialist. His object was, to quote his own words, 'to establish a comprehensive system of alliance and political relation over every region of Hindustan and the Deccan'. In other words, he aimed at 'the elevation of the British Government to the position of paramount power in India'. It has been said that his administration was 'but a series of graduated upheavals from chaos to cosmos'. The oft-repeated statement that during his Governor-Generalship the British Empire in India became the British Empire of India is historically true.

JUSTIFICATION OF WELLESLEY'S POLICY TO MYSORE

The first important triumph of British policy and British arms that marks the beginning of this great transformation was the overthrow of the power of Mysore. Mill says that there was no reason for destroying Tipu in 1799 which had not existed at every moment since the commencement of the negotiations for the peace of 1792. He adds that the connection between Tipu and the French was trifling and their mode of intercourse childish and absurd. On the other hand Wilson, who has edited Mill's book, draws a very lurid picture in justification of the
policy of the Governor-General. Was the British Government to wait till Tipu should be strong, till the negotiations he was publicly carrying on with France should mature, or till he succeeded in securing the effective co-operation of the trained army of 14,000 men that was under the control of Raymond at Hyderabad? "The same chances that landed a large army in Egypt at this very period, inspite of the superiority and vigilance of the British fleets, might have operated in sending to Tipu Sultan a body of officers and men, by whose aid his resources would have been made powerfully to contribute to the annoyance and perils of British Indian Empire." Zaman Shah, grandson of Ahunad Shah Abdali, was in league with Tipu and was threatening to invade India from the north-west. Lord Wellesley's promptitude and determination is said to have thus saved the situation. In the words of the Governor-General himself, it was a 'critical, not alarming' state. Wellesley regarded the conquest of Mysore as his greatest triumph and again and again reverted to it 'as Cicero did to the suppression of Catiline's conspiracy'. The peril of French aggression from within and without has been perhaps exaggerated, but there is no denying the fact that the collapse of the power of Mysore strengthened British position in India vis-a-vis the Marathas more or less in the same way as the victory of Sadowa strengthened German position as against France, ensuring ultimate triumph.

SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE WITH THE NIZAM (1798)

Wellesley made serious attempts at negotiations with Tipu, who not unnaturally regarded them as endeavours to gain time. But negotiations at Hyderabad resulted in the substitution of a British force for a French force at the Nizam's capital. A treaty was concluded in September 1798. The Nizam had proposed to Sir John Shore that he would dismiss the French officers in his service as also the French-trained battalions, provided he got sufficient British support and was assured that he would be defended against the Marathas. Sir John Shore had not agreed. Wellesley was now prepared to give him a subsidiary force that would be 'at all times ready to execute services of importance'. The Nizam agreed to pay a subsidy of
Rs. 24,17,000 per annum for this force, to expel all European officers of non-British origin, and to conduct his foreign relations according to British advice. The French force was disarmed without bloodshed and the Nizam was thus restored to the British as an ally.

THE FOURTH ANGLO-MYSORE WAR (1799)

Negotiations between the Governor-General and Tipu Sultan ended in August, 1798, and both sides were ready for the contest at the beginning of 1799. Wellesley's object in beginning this war was to cut off Tipu's communications with the French by taking Kanara, to exact from him an indemnity and to compel him to receive an English Resident at his capital. The British plan was well-prepared and operations were well-combined. General Harris moved from Vellore, General Stewart from Cannanore. Arthur Wellesley, later famous in history as Duke of Wellington, commanded the Hyderabad contingent. Tipu was out-generalled. The ring was closed around Seringapatam. The siege of Seringapatam began on 17th April and it was captured on 4th May. Tipu was killed, his son surrendered. Thus ended the rule of the dynasty of Haidar Ali.

The principal and the central part of the territories of Tipu were given to a descendant of the ancient Rajas of Mysore. The East India Company annexed Kanara. The Nizam was given territory lying to the north-east. He later surrendered his share of the conquest to the British when he concluded his second treaty with the Company in 1800. The new state of Mysore thus came to be completely surrounded by British territory and was cut off from the sea. The new Raja was a minor. Purnia, minister of finance under Tipu, was placed in charge of the administration. Arthur Wellesley was for sometime the military guardian of the state.

CAUSES OF TIPU'S FALL

There is an observation almost proverbial in Mysore that "Haidar was born to create an empire, Tipu to lose one." Tipu’s military preparations in the last years of his life consisted in adding to the defences of Seringapatam and storing
it with provisions for a siege. His father had on more than one occasion triumphed over his enemies by defending his capital till the rains. But his strategy had never been entirely defensive. Tipu neglected his cavalry which had played such a prominent part in the campaigns of his father and had kept the effects of his defeats confined within narrow limits. Haidar often lost his battles but very seldom lost his campaigns and excelled, as Wilks says, in the political rather than in the military conduct of war.

Unlike Haidar, Tipu with his active mind devoted his energy too much to minute details and evinced little capacity of taking a marshalling view of a great whole. With his restless spirit at innovation and his passion for detail he was not successful as an administrator. As Wilks says, "Haidar was an improving monarch and exhibited few innovations. Tipu was an innovating monarch and made no improvements". Tipu's intolerant bigotry and his cruelty have been perhaps over-emphasised. It is relevant to quote Mill in this connection: "Of his cruelty we have heard the more because our own countrymen were among the victims of it. But it is to be observed that unless in certain instances, the proof of which cannot be regarded as better than doubtful, their sufferings, however intense, were only the sufferings of a very rigorous imprisonment".

ANNEXATION OF TANJORE AND THE CARNATIC

Lord Wellesley absorbed the principality of Tanjore taking advantage of a disputed succession (1799). The Raja of Tanjore accepted the position of a pensioned nobleman. Wellesley also annexed the Carnatic (1801). The papers found at Seripatam after Tipu's death are said to have incriminated Umdat-ul-Umra, son and successor of Muhammad Ali who had died in 1795. The Carnatic was a sink of iniquity. The Company gave protection to Muhammad Ali on condition of a regular monthly payment of a stipulated subsidy and it did not interfere in the internal concerns of his government. He borrowed money of Englishmen, some of them even members of the Madras Council, in order to be able to pay his subsidies regularly. These English creditors were assigned certain dis-
districts. The inhabitants were oppressed, maladministration was rampant, but English cupidity was so strong that there was always serious trouble. Wellesley took advantage of the evidence against Umdat-ul-Umra, took over the administration and selected a grandson of Muhammad Ali as the titular Nawab. Thus he put an end to the anomalous state of things that existed in the Carnatic.

SUBSIDIARY TREATY WITH THE NIZAM (1800)

With the Nizam a new treaty was concluded in 1800. It provided for the cession of his territories south of the Tunga-bhadra and the Krishna for the payment of the subsidiary British force. Wellesley was no doubt right in preferring this system of payment and the treaty of defensive alliance assured the Nizam protection against all external enemies including the Marathas.

TREATY WITH OUDH (1801)

By a new treaty with Oudh Lord Wellesley took from the Nawab a large part of his territory, consisting of the Gorakhpur and Rohilkhand Divisions and some portions of the Doab. This revised arrangement did not establish a better state of things in Oudh proper, though it led to an extension of British influence over the territory now ceded. These were known as the Ceded Districts. Under existing arrangements made by Warren Hastings, Cornwallis and Sir John Shore, Oudh was defended mainly by British troops, for whom the Nawab made a yearly cash payment. Under British protection corruption and maladministration flourished. Payments fell into arrear. "English adventurers infested the capital and ministered to the debauchery of the court". In view of the threatened invasion of Zaman Shah, Wellesley felt it necessary to strengthen the defences on that side. According to the new treaty the Nawab dismissed his 'rabble force' and filled its place by increasing the number of the Company's troops. He made the territorial cessions above referred to in commutation for the subsidy. What the Nawab retained was completely enclosed by British territory, and in these districts he engaged to introduce a better system of administration.
Oudh was no longer a buffer State. But it became very soon clear after this subsidiary treaty, as in the case of others that followed, that the Company made itself responsible for a Government which remained hopelessly incompetent with all the faults of idleness and luxury, disaffection and anarchy.

CRITICISM OF THE POLICY OF SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE

The treaty with the Nizam (1800) and the Oudh treaty of 1801 show Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliance system in its mature form. Mill gives us an estimate of the evils of dependence on the English: "The oppressions of the native government were limited by their weakness. When they received the use of English strength their oppressions were limited by nothing... Among the small sovereignties of India, misgovernment produced weakness and weakness invited conquest. The misgovernment, for example, of the Carnatic and Oudh, would infallibly have produced the conquest of the one by Tipu, of the other by the Marathas, and as a prince was commonly strong only because he governed well, to be conquered was among the happiest results which the people knew." "The native Prince guaranteed in the possession of his dominions under British protection became a roi fainéant, the higher classes lost their self-respect and the spirit of indigenous political life departed." Wellington described the state of the Nizam's country as late as January 10th, 1804, as 'chaos itself'. Annexation on the ground of chronic misrule, as in the case of Oudh later, was a natural consequence of Wellesley's system.

Wellesley's justification of his Subsidiary Policy lies in the more general or imperial aspect. Wellington, while fully aware that it sapped the spontaneous energy of the native State, creating a tendency to lawlessness, justified it on that ground. He wrote, "The consequences have been that in this war with the Marathas, which it is obvious must have occurred sooner or later, the Company's territories have not been invaded and the evils of war have been kept at a distance from the sources of our wealth and power." The Duke wrote to Canning in 1816 that the Subsidiary System as distinct from looser alliances should not be extended to other powers than the Peshwa and the Nizam. The great defect of the Subsidiary
System was that it failed to maintain a certain standard of internal administration. But in Wellesley’s time this policy formed the line of least resistance. It strengthened the position of the Company and relieved its finances ‘by making the native Princes themselves defray the expenses of the troops by which they were to be overawed’.

CONFUSION IN THE MARATHA EMPIRE

The great statesman Nana Fadnavis died in March, 1800. ‘With him departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government’. The Maratha Confederacy was now leaderless. Baji Rao II, weak, wily and treacherous, had succeeded Madhav Rao Narayan as Peshwa\(^1\) in 1796. The disputes that were going on among the Marathas came to a head. Fate had taken a malicious delight in removing all the great men and women who had played a dominant part in Maratha affairs in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Daulat Rao Sindhiya, a lad of fifteen, had inherited the resources of Mahadji, but he was unable to emerge triumphant in the complicated struggle for power that now ensued. Ahalya Bai, daughter-in-law of Malhar Rao Holkar, had died in 1795, having administered Holkar dominions with conspicuous success for about 30 years. Tukoji Holkar, who used to command her army, got the rank and power but died in 1797; after some confusion Jaswant Rao Holkar, an illegitimate son of Tukoji, seized power. Soon he became a rival of Daulat Rao for ascendancy at Poona. On the 25th October, 1802, he succeeded in defeating the troops of the Peshwa and Sindhiya almost within sight of the city of Poona.

SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE WITH THE PESHWA (1802)

Baji Rao II fled from Poona into the Konkan, arrived at Bassein, and concluded a treaty of Subsidiary Alliance with the British on 31st December, 1802. A subsidiary force of not less than 6,000 was to be permanently stationed in the Peshwa’s dominions. Districts yielding 26 lakhs of rupees were assigned for the payment of this force. The Peshwa submitted to British

\(^1\) See Genealogical Table, p. 444.
arbitration in the adjustment of his claims on the Nizam and Gaikwad, who were already under British protection. The British Government was to control his foreign relations. The Peshwa thus ‘sacrificed his independence as the price of protection’. He was restored to Poona by British troops in May, 1803, and Jaswant Rao Holkar withdrew from Poona to the north.

Sidney Owen says, “The line which Wellesley pursued in his Maratha negotiations was a bolder and more original one than had ever been adopted or probably conceived by any European statesman in India, Dupleix perhaps excepted.” Wellesley’s idea was to treat the Peshwa and other great chiefs of the Maratha Confederacy as separate and independent powers, to break up for ever this political confederacy, and to abolish the vague Maratha claims over Indian Princes. Circumstances helped him. The Peshwa acknowledged British paramount power. The Maratha Confederacy, whether we regard it as an institution like the Holy Roman Empire or as a mere family compact between the Peshwa and other members, stood practically dissolved. The treaty with the Peshwa completed the diplomatic cordon by which the Nizam was fenced off and the possession of the Peshwa’s territory facilitated British control over the military movements of the other Maratha chiefs.

If Wellesley expected that Sindhia would agree to this imposition of British power on the Marathas it merely shows that he was unable to understand his opponents’ standpoint. Wellesley perhaps hoped that the divisions and jealousies of the Maratha chiefs would avert war and he would be able to disarm them by degrees and establish the peaceful supremacy of the Company. But, as the thoroughness of British preparation showed, he did not shrink from the issue of a war.

THE SECOND ANGLO-MARATHA WAR (1803-5)

The three great Maratha chiefs—Raghuji Bhonsle of Berar, Daulat Rao Sindhia and Jaswant Rao Holkar—were not inclined to submit tamely to the dissolution of the Maratha Confederacy and the establishment of British paramount power. The Raja of Berar succeeded in patching up a peace between
Sindhia and Holkar, but Holkar, instead of immediately joining them against the British, decided to be guided by the issue of events. Sindhia and Bhonsle moved southward. Wellesley declared war. General Arthur Wellesley commanded

![Map of the Three Anglo-Maratha Wars](image)

[This map shows the principal places connected with the three Anglo-Maratha Wars.]

British operations in Southern India and Lord Lake in the North. General Wellesley captured Ahmadnagar and defeated the combined armies of Sindhia and Bhonsle at Assaye in September, 1803, compelled Sindhia temporarily to suspend
hostilities, and then defeated the Bhonsle Raja very decisively at Argaon in November, 1803. The Raja was forced to sign the treaty of Deogaon (December, 1803) under which he ceded Cuttack and agreed to accept a position similar to that which Sindhia accepted later.

Meanwhile Lord Lake, operating against Sindhia's possessions in the North, captured Aligarh; Perron, a French officer commanding Sindhia's trained battalions in the North, retired from Sindhia's service. His successor Louis Bourquin was defeated near Delhi (September, 1803). The Imperial capital was occupied; old blind Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II became a British pensioner. Sindhia's remaining forces were defeated in November, 1803, at Laswari in Alwar State. His regular army was completely destroyed and Sindhia had to conclude the subsidiary treaty of Surji Anjangaon (December, 1803). He ceded to the British his territory between the Jumna and the Ganges and all districts situated north of the Rajput principalities of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Gohad. The forts of Ahmadnagar and Broach, with their districts, and all claims on the Mughal Emperor, the Peshwa, the Nizam and Gaikwad were renounced. By another treaty concluded at Burhanpur in February, 1804, Sindhia agreed to receive a subsidiary force to be stationed near his boundary but within British territory.

Grant Duff writes, "The rapidity of the conquests and the speedy termination of the War surprised all India." Sir Thomas Munro thus described the causes of this collapse of Maratha military power, "I thought their cavalry could have shown a little more enterprise, but they ruined it and destroyed its spirit by teaching the troopers that they did not depend upon cavalry but upon infantry. By coming forward with regular infantry they gave us every advantage we could desire. They opposed to us men that could never be as good as our own, from the want of a national spirit among the officers." He had written earlier about the regular battalions in Maratha service, "Its discipline, its arms, and uniform clothing I regard merely as the means of dressing it out for the sacrifice."

But the old Maratha predatory system of warfare, of which the Holkar family was a great advocate, now came to have a fair trial in 1804-5. Jaswant Rao was being watched by Lake. After the surrender of Bhonsle and Sindhia he determined to
fight on his own account. The British plan of campaign was to press Holkar from all directions; but when Lake went into quarters at Kanpur for the rainy season, Monson, who was to keep Holkar in check, bungled. His forces were practically overwhelmed in the Mukund Dara pass in Rajputana, 30 miles south of Kotah, in August, 1804. With his remnants he reached Agra in utter disorder. It was the greatest humiliation which the British had experienced since the defeat of Baillie. The Raja of Bharatpur was emboldened to renounce alliance with the British and to support Holkar in his attack on Delhi which, however, failed. On November 13, 1804, Holkar's infantry was defeated with heavy loss at the battle of Dig. Lake was responsible for a breathless cavalry chase along the Doab and Holkar's cavalry was routed at Farrukhabad. Holkar's capital Indore was taken by a detachment of the Bombay army, while Holkar was wasting British provinces with fire and sword. Four vehement assaults by Lake's victorious army were, however, repulsed by the Jats at Bharatpur early in 1805. Lake was eventually obliged to make peace with the Raja. Holkar with his fortunes so low took the route to the Punjab, closely pursued by Lord Lake.

Maratha predatory warfare now stood almost as much discredited as the new model army of Sindia. But as a consequence of the failures of Monson and Lake the authorities in England, who had never really favoured Wellesley's aggressive policy, recalled him and sent Lord Cornwallis back to India. "The vehement tide of public opinion in England condemned the rash, ambitious and war-loving statesman and floated out the good old nobleman who had first broken Tipu's power".

ESTIMATE OF WELLESLEY

In spite of the hasty recall of Wellesley and a timid pacification under Cornwallis and Barlow, it cannot be denied that Maratha military prestige was gone, Maratha power was no longer a rival of the British, and the Company was now paramount in India. This was the greatest achievement of Lord Wellesley, the most successful Imperialist in British Indian history.

Smith says, "Lord Wellesley, like Lords Lytton and Dufferin in later times, looked upon the affairs of India as seen
by a British nobleman and politician from a Foreign Office point of view. He was a statesman, rather than an administrator, concerned chiefly with matters of high policy and little inclined to examine closely the details of departmental administration”. But Lord Wellesley was conscious of the importance of a strong and efficient system of administration. He observed, “The stability of that Empire . . . must be secured by the durable principles of internal order; by a pure, upright, and uniform administration of justice; by a prudent and temperate system of revenue.” He established the Fort William College for the training of young Civilians imported from England. His regime constitutes a landmark in the history of the development of the British Civil Service in India. He was an adept in the art of selecting promising youngmen for responsible posts. Munro, Malcolm, Metcalfe, Elphinstone—great names in British Indian history—practically began their careers under him, and from him they derived the inspiration which shaped them in their impressionable years. Malcolm says, “His great mind pervaded the whole; and a portion of his spirit was infused into every agent whom he employed”. If Lord Hastings completed the task of empire-building left unfinished by Lord Wellesley, he found in the civil and military officers trained under the latter able instruments and sagacious advisers.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Grant Duff, *History of the Mahrattas* (edited by S. M. Edwardes), Vol. II.
Owen. *A Selection from Wellington’s Despatches* (Introduction).
CHAPTER XXVII

THE COMPLETION OF BRITISH ASCENDANCY

SECTION I

THE ERA OF NON-INTERVENTION (1805-1813)

SECOND GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF CORNWALLIS (1805)

Lord Wellesley’s recall was followed by the appointment of Lord Cornwallis as his successor, for the authorities in England were convinced that that aged statesman would be the best instrument for giving effect to their policy of non-intervention, which was rendered imperative not only by the ill-informed clamour of the Company’s share-holders, but also by the acute financial distress of the Government of Bengal. Cornwallis came to India at the age of 66, and his first task was to conciliate Sindhia and to conclude the lingering war with Holkar. If he could not reverse Wellesley’s policy with regard to Mysore, Oudh, the Nizam, and the Peshwa, he hoped to be able to undo the effects of the war with Sindhia and Holkar. The former was to be conciliated by the restoration of Gwalior, Gohad, and all the territory west of the Jumna except Agra. Cornwallis was so anxious for peace that he did not hesitate to contemplate the return of Delhi to Sindhia and the removal of Shah Alam to some other place within British territory. Unable to discern the impending collapse of Holkar’s power, he was ready to buy peace at any price. His weak policy excited the distrust and alarm of the officers trained under Wellesley: and Lord Lake protested against the desertion of those Rajput Princes who had rendered loyal service in the late war in the hope of getting rid of Maratha control. But Cornwallis did not survive to put his plan in action; he died within three months of his arrival in India.

SIR GEORGE BARLOW (1805-1807)

After the sudden death of Lord Cornwallis his place was assumed temporarily by Sir George Barlow, senior member of
Council, an experienced official of narrow political views and unpopular manners. He was determined to carry out the instructions of the authorities of the Company at all costs, and he displayed unnecessary zeal in pursuing the policy inaugurated by his predecessor. A new treaty with Sindhia (November, 1805) modified some of the terms of the treaty of Surji Anjangaon, renounced the defensive alliance, recognised the Chambal as the boundary between the territories of the Company and those of Sindhia, and guaranteed British non-interference in the affairs of Rajputana. This was followed by the conclusion of peace with Holkar (January, 1806). Lord Lake had compelled him to take refuge in the Punjab, where he appealed in vain for assistance to Ranjit Singh. Instead of taking advantage of his desperate position, Barlow concluded peace by restoring his territories and giving him a free hand in Rajputana. The treaty concluded by Wellesley with Jaipur in 1803 was cancelled on the alleged ground that the Raja had not loyalty fulfilled its terms. Grant Duff points out that the treaties with Sindhia, Holkar, and Bhonsle were "mere instruments of general amity; their intercourse was completely unrestrained, and no control, except in relation to the allies of the British Government, was to be exercised over them."

He continues, "Plausible reasons were not wanting for supposing that the whole pacification was wise and politic. The progress of conquest was at least impeded; a considerable territory, pretty equally balanced, remained to each of the chiefs; and it was expected that their domestic wars, the plunder of their neighbours and the fear of losing what they possessed, would deter them from hostile proceedings against the British Government."

**Lord Minto (1807-1813)**

Lord Minto, President of the Board of Control, came to India in 1807 as permanent Governor-General. He had been one of the managers for the impeachments of Warren Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey; he could, therefore, claim some acquaintance with Indian affairs. He was committed to the policy of non-intervention, and during his tenure of office he made an honest attempt to eschew the policy of conquest ushered
in by Wellesley. But it was becoming increasingly difficult to take no notice of the political obligations arising out of the Company's relations with the Indian powers since the days of Warren Hastings. As Malcolm, one of the shrewdest of contemporary political actors, observes, "The Government of Lord Minto had no result more important, than the impression it conveyed to the authorities at home, of the utter impracticability of perseverance in that neutral policy they had desired to pursue."

MARATHA AFFAIRS

Jaswant Rao Holkar's active career came to a tragic end soon after the conclusion of the treaty of 1806. In 1808 he became insane, and he had to be put under restraint. He died miserably three years later. Amir Khan, a turbulent Pathan Chief who commanded a large army consisting mainly of Pindaris, became the de facto ruler of the Holkar dominions, which were nominally controlled by a Council of Regency in the name of Malhar Rao Holkar, a minor son of Jaswant Rao. Amir Khan realised large sums of money from the Rajput Princes by violence and treachery and brought Bhopal under his control. Lord Minto's loyalty to the policy of non-intervention made it easy for him to pursue a steadily aggressive policy. The Governor-General could not, however, remain silent when Amir Khan invaded Berar (1809). Apprehending that troubles in Berar might endanger the safety of the Nizam's Dominions, he sent a force to help the Bhonsle Darbar against the Pathan Chief.

After the conclusion of the war with the British, Daulat Rao Sindhia continued to harass the Princes of Rajputana and the petty chiefs of Malwa. He established his head-quarters at Gwalior; "hence," say Grant Duff, "Sindhia's camp, as it is called, has become a great city." His military establishment far exceeded his financial means, and he followed the example of Holkar by sending his troops out to subsist upon the districts nominally under his rule.

On his restoration to power after the treaty of Bassein Peshwa Baji Rao II alienated his subjects, specially some powerful and influential chiefs, by systematic tyranny.
Mountstuart Elphinstone, who came to Poona as Resident in 1811, brought about a better understanding between the Peshwa and the Maratha jagirdars. The rulers of Kolhapur and Sawantwadi became, through Elphinstone’s diplomacy, practically independent of the Peshwa’s suzerainty.

THE FRENCH MENACE

The period of Lord Minto’s administration coincided with the Napoleonic War, and the dread of a Franco-Russian invasion of India through Persia and Afghanistan haunted the imagination of British statesmen and officers in those days. It is possible for us to take a more reasonable view about Napoleons’ motive regarding India, but “no one, in those days when ancient kingdoms in Europe were falling like ninepins, could set a limit to the power and ambition of Napoleon.” The traditional hostility between Russia and Persia, the fluctuating relations between France and Russia, the anarchy and confusion in Afghanistan, the difficulties of transport and communication—these factors were overlooked by terrified Britishers in their anxiety to preserve their Indian Empire.

Lord Wellesley had sent John Malcolm to Persia in 1799, and in the following year a treaty had been concluded with the Shah. In 1808 Lord Minto again sent him to that country; at the same time another envoy, Sir Harford Jones, was sent to Teheran by the British Government. The latter concluded a treaty with the Shah, which the Governor-General had to accept. The Shah promised to dismiss Napoleon’s ambassador and to resist the passage through Persia of a Franco-Russian army marching on India. During his stay in Persia Malcolm collected materials for his famous work entitled History of Persia.

In 1808 Mountstuart Elphinstone was sent to Kabul to counteract French intrigues in that country. Before his entry into Afghanistan he was met at Peshawar by the Amir, Shah Shuja, who gave him some vague assurances. Shortly afterwards Shah Shuja lost his throne as a result of internal troubles and fled to India. Thus Elphinstone’s mission to Kabul proved to be a barren political adventure. But he resembled Malcolm in his interest in history and literature. The information
collected by him regarding Afghanistan was incorporated in his An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul, an authoritative work on the history, geography, and manners and customs of the Afghans.

While trying to establish friendly relations with Persia and Afghanistan, Lord Minto did not forget the important frontier states of Sind and the Sikh Kingdom of the Punjab. Sind was ruled by several Muslim Amirs, who were practically independent, although they owed nominal allegiance to the Amir of Kabul. A treaty concluded with them secured their promise to exclude the French from their territory. An account of Lord Minto's relations with Ranjit Singh will be given below.

The rupture between France and Russia (1810) removed the nightmare of a Franco-Russian invasion of India. Gradually the British assumed the offensive against the French in the East. Goa was occupied when Portugal fell under French control. Bourbon and Mauritius were captured in 1810 by an expedition sent from India; in the same year Amboyna and the Spice Islands were conquered. Java was conquered in 1811; Lord Minto himself accompanied this expedition. In 1815 Bourbon was restored to the French and Java was restored to the Dutch.

SECTION II

FALL OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

LORD MOIRA OR LORD HASTINGS (1813-1823)

Lord Minto was succeeded in 1813 by Lord Moira, who was created Marquess of Hastings in 1817 as a reward for his success in the war with Nepal. After a not very distinguished military career he became an intimate friend of the Prince Regent, afterwards King George IV, to whom he owed his high appointment in India. He did not come to this country with any political reputation behind him. In the notorious case of William Palmer & Co. he was suspected by many contemporaries to be guilty of nepotism. Yet he is undoubtedly
one of the greatest Proconsuls sent by England to govern India. Although he was nearly 59 years of age when he assumed his high office, he showed surprising industry and energy in the discharge of his duties. In England he had spoken bitterly against Wellesley's policy of expansion and he came to India to continue the peaceful work of Cornwallis, Barlow, and Minto. But circumstances compelled him to change his views, and he left the British Empire in India larger than he had found it.

TREATIES WITH PESHWA AND BHONSLÉ

Peshwa Baji Rao II was restlessly waiting for an opportunity to shake off the intolerable burden of British control. His position became comparatively strong after the consolidation of his authority over his Jagirdars, and under the influence of an unscrupulous favourite named Trimbakji Danglia, he began anti-British negotiations with the courts of Sindhia, Holkar, and Bhonsle. In 1814 Gaikwad's Dewan, Gangadhar Sastri, came to Poona to settle some outstanding claims of the Peshwa on his master; he was treacherously murdered at the instigation of Trimbakji. The Peshwa refused to surrender Trimbakji at Elphinstone's request, and when the Resident confined him in a fort, Baji Rao connived at his escape. The Peshwa's hostile attitude did not escape the notice of the British Government. In June, 1817, he was compelled to sign a new treaty, by which he renounced the headship of the Maratha Empire, engaged not to conduct any negotiations with other Powers except through the British Resident, ceded to the Company territory worth 34 lakhs in lieu of furnishing troops according to previous arrangement, transferred to the Company his rights in Malwa, Bundelkhand and Hindustan, and surrendered his claims on Gaikwad in lieu of an annual payment of four lakhs. It is clear that this treaty was a deathblow to the Peshwa, and he could hardly be expected to accept it as the final settlement of his relations with the Company and his former subordinates.

About the same time the Bhonsle State was suffering from the evils of disputed succession and factious intrigue. Raghuji Bhonsle II died in March, 1816, and was succeeded by his
imbecile son Parsoji. Parsoji’s ambitious cousin, Appa Saheb, secured the Regency. The British Government took advantage of this opportunity to compel Appa Saheb to conclude a subsidiary treaty (May, 1816). This treaty not only deprived Nagpur of its independence, but also hastened the break up of the Maratha Confederacy. Malcolm says that “in the actual condition of India, no event could be more fortunate than the subsidiary alliance with Nagpur.”

THE PINDARI WAR (1817-18)

The Pindaris, ‘a class of the lowest free-booters,’ were associated with the Maratha armies for a long time. In the early years of the last century they were grouped under different leaders, of whom Karim Khan, Chitu, Dost Muhammad, Namdar Khan, and Shaikh Dullo became the most conspicuous. All of them were, at different times, under the general control of the Pathan Chief, Amir Khan. Grant Duff says, “When the Marathas ceased to spread themselves, the Pindaris, who had attended their armies, were obliged to plunder the territories of their former protectors for subsistence, . . . . and their numbers were very soon augmented. To the unemployed soldiery of India, particularly to the Muhammadans, the life of a Pindari had many allurements . . . . The awful consequences of a visitation from the Pindaris can scarcely be imagined by those who have not witnessed them. For some time, until the districts in Malwa, Marwar, Mewar, and the whole of Rajputana were exhausted and the Pindaris were encouraged and excited to venture on more fertile fields, their ravages were chiefly confined to those countries and Berar; a few of them, however, ventured almost every year into the dominions of the Nizam and the Peshwa, though little notice was taken of them by the British Government whilst they refrained from molesting its own subjects and territory.”

In 1816 the Pindaris devastated British territory in the Northern Sarkars, and Lord Hastings decided to crush them. A large army, consisting of about 120,000 men and 300 guns, rooted out the Pindaris from their haunts. The operations covered the closing months of 1817 and the early months of 1818. Karim Khan surrendered and was granted an estate in
P. Chitu took refuge in a jungle near Asirgarh, where he was killed by a tiger. Amir Khan had concluded peace before the outbreak of war, and he was conciliated by the grant of the principality of Tonk in Rajputana.

THE THIRD ANGLO-MARATHA WAR (1817-18)

Lord Hastings knew that the war against the Pindaris might merge into a general war with the Maratha Powers, for the Pindaris were closely connected with Sindha and Holkar, and the area ravaged by them lay within the sphere of Maratha influence. So he tried to strengthen the diplomatic position of the Company by special treaties with the Marathas and the Rajputs. The treaties with Poona and Nagpur have been referred to above. In November, 1817, a treaty was concluded with Daulat Rao Sindha, who engaged to assist the operations against the Pindaris, and gave full liberty to the Company to enter into treaty relations with the Rajput States on the left bank of the river Chambal.

But diplomacy failed to conciliate the Marathas. In November, 1817, the Peshwa burnt the British Residency at Poona and attacked the British camp at Kirki, four miles to the north-west of that city. A small British force repulsed this attack. Later on reinforcements arrived and the British occupied Poona. The Peshwa's revolt was a signal to the other Maratha Chiefs. The troops of Appa Saheb of Nagpur were defeated in the battle of Sitabaldi (near Nagpur) towards the close of November, 1817. A further defeat was inflicted on them in the battle of Nagpur (December, 1817). Appa Saheb fled to the Punjab and some time later took refuge in Jodhpur, where he died in 1840. The army of Malhar Rao Holkar II was completely routed in the battle of Mahidpur in December, 1817. This fierce battle has been described as 'the only general action of primary order in India since 1804'. The Peshwa's army, driven from Poona, failed to capture Koregaon (January, 1818) and was again defeated in the battle of Ashti (Sholapur district) in February, 1818. Bapu Gokhale, or Gokla, Baji Rao's faithful and able general, was killed. Baji Rao surrendered to Sir John Malcolm in June, 1818. The fortress of Asirgarh was not captured till April, 1819.
POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF MARATHA TERRITORIES (1818)

The Marathas were not slow to accept the political results of their military defeats. Holkar did not resist after the decisive battle of Mahidpur. Malcolm negotiated with Tantia Jog, minor Holkar’s able minister, and a treaty was concluded in January, 1818. Holkar renounced his claims on the Rajput States, on the territories of the Pathan Chief Amir Khan, and also on his own territories ‘within or south of the Satpura range of hills’. He bound himself to maintain a British force within his own territory and to have no communication with any other state except through the British Resident.

With regard to the Peshwa, Lord Hastings decided ‘in favour of . . . the perpetual exclusion of his family from any share of influence or dominion, and the annihilation of the Peshwa’s name and authority for ever’. No symbol of Maratha unity was to be left; no further opportunity was to be given to the Marathas to rally round their traditional chief. Baji Rao was confined at Bithur (near Kanpur); he was granted a pension of eight lakhis a year. He died in 1853. His favourite, Trimbakji Danglia, was imprisoned for life in the fort of Chunar. A small principality carved out of the Peshwa’s dominions was given to Pratap Singh, a lineal descendant of Shivaji, who established his capital at Satara. A contemporary writer observes that “the re-establishment of the Satara Raja, in the very seat of the ancient power and splendour of his race was well adapted to reconcile the older Marhatta families to the annihilation of the more recent title and authority of Peshwa.” The remaining portions of the Peshwa’s territory were brought under British rule and incorporated within the Bombay Presidency. The civil administration of the conquered tracts was organised by Elphinstone, who was ably assisted by Great Duke, the well-known historian of the Marathas.

Appa Saheb’s revolt was punished by the annexation of a portion of the Bhonsle State (the Saugar and Narbada Territories); the remaining districts were placed under a vassal Raja.

1 See Genealogical Table, p. 436.
In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries most of the principalities of Rajputana suffered terribly from the depredations of the Marathas, whom they were too weak to resist. A combined movement on the part of all Rajput Princes might have checked the Marathas, but bitter rivalry separated one Rajput ruler from another, and even the pressing necessity of self-defence did not teach them the lesson of unity. Moreover, almost every State was torn by internal factions; the rivalry of the Chundawats and the Saktawats in Mewar had its counterpart in the neighbouring States.

A defensive alliance with the British might have rescued the Rajput Princes from ruin, but, although they were anxious for such an alliance, no response came from the British Government. Lord Wellesley refused to extend British protection to Mewar, but he concluded alliances with Jaipur and Jodhpur. The treaty with Jodhpur was subsequently left unratified by the ruler of that State; the treaty with Jaipur was cancelled by Barlow. Lord Minto steadily pursued the policy of non-intervention with regard to Rajputana. A long war between Jaipur and Jodhpur devastated Rajputana, the ostensible object being the marriage of Krishnakumari, daughter of Rana Bhim Singh of Mewar. While Lord Minto remained a silent spectator, Daulat Rao Sindhia and Amir Khan squeezed blood out of the desert.

Soon after his arrival in India Lord Hastings initiated a new policy towards the Rajput Princes. He was not prepared to hand them over to Sindhia or Amir Khan. Metcalfe began negotiations with Jaipur in 1816. The Pindari War made it necessary to take all Rajput States under British protection, for without their political and military assistance it was very difficult to crush the predatory forces. By the treaty of November, 1817, Sindhia renounced his claims on the Rajput Princes, and Lord Hastings got a free hand in dealing with them. In January, 1818, Metcalfe concluded treaties with Udaipur and Jodhpur. A treaty with Jaipur was concluded in April, 1818. With the minor States of Rajputana treaties were concluded between November, 1817, and September, 1823. The Rajput States recognised the suzerainty of the Company,
agreed to pay tribute and to render military assistance whenever called upon to do so, and engaged not to enter into communication with any other Power except through the British Resident. The British Government guaranteed that the Princes would remain "absolute rulers of their territory."

PACIFICATION OF CENTRAL INDIA

The Pindari War extended and consolidated British influence in Central India. In February, 1818, the Nawab of Bhopal concluded a "defensive and subordinate" alliance with the Company. The smaller states of Malwa, including Dhar and Dewas, acknowledged British supremacy. Malcolm concluded agreements with a large number of chieftains. After the Peshwa's defeats all the smaller states in Bundelkhand came under British protection. Writing in 1825, Prinsep observed, "The struggle which has thus ended in the universal establishment of the British influence is particularly important and worthy of attention, as it promises to be the last we shall have to maintain with the native powers of India."

FALL OF BHARATPUR (1826)

A reference may be made here to the revolt of Bharatpur (1825-26) during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Amherst. Durjan Sal, cousin of the minor Raja of Bharatpur, tried to seize the throne; the British Government had to take up arms to protect the minor prince. Lord Combermere reduced the fort of Bharatpur, and "the failures of Lord Lake twenty years earlier were amply avenged."

SECTION III

BRITISH EXPANSION ON THE NORTH-EAST (1814-52)

BRITISH RELATIONS WITH NEPAL

A Gurkha Chief named Prithvi Narayan conquered Nepal in 1768. In 1792 the British Government concluded a commercial treaty with the Gurkhas and sent Colonel Kirkpatrick on a mission to Katmandu, but no tangible result was secured.
Another commercial treaty was concluded some years later, and Captain Knox served as Resident at Katmandu for two years (1802-4). Lord Wellesley recalled him and cancelled the alliance with Nepal.

The Gurkhas controlled the entire belt of Himalayan territory from the Tista in the east to the Sutlej in the west. After the occupation of the Gorakhpur district by the British in 1801, the northern frontier of the British Empire ran side by side with the southern frontier of the Gurkha Kingdom. The ill-defined condition of the frontier and the aggressive attitude of the Gurkhas made ‘frontier incidents’ inevitable. In 1814 a Gurkha attack on some British police stations led to war.

THE NEPAL WAR (1814-16)

Lord Hastings soon found that it was futile to expect an easy victory. The Gurkhas knew how to fight, and the difficult geography of the region of war was in their favour. After some reverses General Ochterlony compelled the Gurkha leader Amar Singh to surrender the strong fort of Malaon (May, 1815). The Gurkhas opened negotiations for peace; the treaty of Sagauli was concluded in November, 1815. But the treaty was not ratified by the Gurkhas. Ochterlony advanced into the interior of Nepal and secured a victory at Makwanpur (February, 1816). The treaty of Sagauli was then ratified by the Gurkhas. They ceded the districts of Garhwal and Kumaon and a large slice of the terai, renounced their claim on Sikim, and agreed to receive a British Resident at Katmandu. Some of the most important hill stations in India—Simla, Mussoorie, Almora, Landour, Naini Tal—are situated in the territory taken from the Gurkhas. Nepal never broke the terms of the treaty of 1816.

By a treaty with Sikim (February, 1817) a portion of the terai taken from the Gurkhas was given to the ruler of that State.

THE FIRST BURMESE WAR (1824-26)

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century a new era began in the history of Burma. A vigorous royal dynasty was
established by an adventurous local chief named Alaungpaya, who unified Upper and Lower Burma under his authority, and even carried his depredations to Manipur in the west and Siam in the south-east. (His relations with the British were not very friendly.) One of his successors, Bodawpaya (1782-1819), conquered Arakan in 1784-85; this marked a new era in the history of Anglo-Burmese relations. For many centuries Arakan had been an independent Kingdom, and its political and cultural relations with Bengal had been very intimate. The people of Arakan, who were known in Bengal as Mags, now became victims of Burmese cruelty. Some of them crossed the river Naf, the boundary between Arakan and the British district of Chittagong, and took refuge in the Company's territory. The Burmese naturally resented the emigration of their subjects, and during the period 1786-1824 there were numerous occasions when they threatened to violate British territory in pursuit of the fugitives. The troubles on the Chittagong-Arakan frontier reached their climax in 1823, when some Burmese troops occupied the small island of Shahpuri, which lay on the British side of the main channel of the Naf. Lord Amherst (1823-28), the then Governor-General, tried to reach an amicable settlement with the Burmese Government, but his patience was exhausted when two British officers were treacherously seized by the Burmese.

Meanwhile hostilities had broken out in Assam.

Upper Assam had for many centuries been an independent State ruled by Ahom Kings. The internal condition of this principality towards the close of the eighteenth century revealed many symptoms of disintegration. Gaurinath Singh (1780-94), a weak but tyrannical King, sought for the intervention of the Company. In 1792 Lord Cornwallis sent a force under Captain Welsh to restore peace and order in the Ahom State. Captain Welsh restored the King's authority; but as the British Government did not covet territorial expansion in those days, he left Assam in 1794. His departure was followed by the revival of anarchy, which gave the aggressive Burmese a good opportunity for occupying Assam. During the years 1817-22 the Burmese expelled two rival Princes who claimed the Ahom throne and devastated the Brahmaputra valley. Soon the northeastern frontier of Bengal felt the shock; the Burmese
plundered some British villages in 1821. Lord Amherst wrote, "There is nothing now to prevent them from sacking Dacca and plundering all the adjoining districts. . . ."

[This map shows the different theatres of the three British Wars against Burma.]

The first clash between the British and the Burmese took place near Sylhet (in East Bengal) in January, 1824. War was formally declared in March, 1824, and came to an end in
February, 1826. There were four theatres of war—Assam, Arakan, the lower valley of the Irrawaddy, and Tenasserim. In May, 1824, a British detachment suffered a serious defeat in the battle of Ramu (in the Chittagong district). Bandula, the leading Burmese general, was defeated and killed by Sir Archibald Campbell in the battle of Donabew (in Lower Burma). The British army advanced as far as Yandabo, a village within four days' march from Amarapura, the capital of Burma, where a treaty of peace was concluded in February 24, 1826. The Burmese King renounced all claims upon the Ahom Kingdom and the petty States of Cachar, Jaintia and Manipur (in Assam), ceded the provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim to the Company, promised to pay a crore of rupees as indemnity, and agreed to receive a British envoy in his court. A portion of the Brahmaputra valley was placed under the rule of an Ahom Prince, but it was annexed in 1838. Cachar was placed under the rule of its old Prince; as he died without heir, Cachar was annexed by Lord William Bentinck in 1832. Jaintia, placed under the rule of a vassal Prince for some years, was annexed in 1835. Manipur was restored to the old ruling family.

**COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH BURMA**

For many years the Company had been carrying on a flourishing commerce with Burma, but its progress was occasionally hampered by the vagaries of the Burmese and the peculiarities of local customs. In 1795 Sir John Shore sent Captain Symes on a commercial mission to Burma, but the concessions secured by him proved to be illusory. He was followed in 1797 by Captain Cox, who suggested that the steady growth of French influence in Burma should be counteracted by the conclusion of 'a firm and solid alliance' with that country. Lord Wellesley sent Colonel Symes and Lieutenant Canning to Burma (1802-3) with instructions, if possible, to bring Burma within the orbit of the Subsidiary Alliance; but the Burmese rulers and their ministers were too shrewd for the British envoys. Canning visited Burma again in connection with the question of the Arakan refugees.

According to the terms of the treaty of Yandabo, John Crawfurd was deputed to Burma as envoy in September, 1826.
He concluded a commercial treaty which gave some concessions to British subjects trading in Burma. The Burmese Government was, however, very reluctant to receive a permanent British envoy. No envoy was sent to Burma for three years after Crawfurd's departure (December, 1826). In 1830 Lord William Bentinck sent Major Henry Burney, who remained in Burma till 1837, and solved some of the outstanding political and financial questions arising out of the treaty of Yandabo. The experience of his successors was very unhappy, for King Tharrawaddy, who usurped the throne of Burma in 1837, adopted a decidedly unfriendly attitude to the British. The British Residency in Burma was finally withdrawn in 1840.

THE SECOND BURMESE WAR (1852)

During the administration of Lord Dalhousie commercial questions brought about the second war with Burma. In 1851 some British merchants in Burma complained against maltreatment by Burmese officials. Lord Dalhousie sent a haughty naval officer, Commodore Lambert, to demand redress from the Burmese Government. Some officers sent by the Commodore to negotiate with the Burmese Governor of Rangoon were insulted. War began. Probably a peaceful solution of the dispute might have been found if the Governor-General had entrusted the negotiations to a tactful political officer. Dalhousie himself observed, "These Commodores are too combustible for negotiations". But he accepted responsibility for the Commodore's act and decided that war was necessary for the preservation of British prestige in the East.

The war was brief (March—December, 1852) and decisive. The mistakes which had prolonged the First Burmese War were avoided, and with the cordial support of the Governor-General, General Godwin was able to capture the chief cities of the Delta within a few months. But though the war was at an end, there was no treaty. Pagan Min, King of Burma, was overthrown by his brother Mindon, who ascended the throne in February, 1853. Although the new King was not inclined to continue the hostilities, he did not recognise the annexation of the province of Pegu (which Dalhousie had incorporated in the British Empire by a Proclamation), nor did he conclude
any formal treaty. In 1854 some Burmese envoys came to Calcutta and requested the Governor-General to return Pegu. Dalhousie replied, "So long as the sun shines . . . . these territories will never be restored to the Kingdom of Ava".

SECTION IV

THE NORTH-WEST

DYNASTY OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI

When Timur Shah, son and successor of Ahmad Shah Abdali, died (1793), the Kabul Monarchy included, in addition to the Afghan provinces of Kabul, Bakh, Qandahar and Herat, the Indian provinces of Peshawar, Lahore, Kashmīr and Multan, and the Amirs of Sind as well as the Chiefs of Baluchistan were its vassals. He was succeeded by his fifth son, Zaman Shah (1793-1800), whose threatened invasion of Hindustan 'kept the British Indian Empire in a chronic state of unrest' in the days of Sir John Shore and Lord Wellesley. Under the latter's instructions the British Agent at Bushire 'induced the Court of Persia to keep Shah Zaman in perpetual check'. Zaman Shah was, moreover, kept busy by frequent internal revolts. He was finally dethroned by his elder brother Mahmud, blinded, and compelled to pass the remaining years of his life as a British pensioner at Ludhiana in the Punjab. Mahmud (1800-1803) was deposed by his brother Shah Shuja (1803-1809), whose reign was hardly less tragic than that of his predecessors. Kaye explains the causes of his failure in the following words: "He wanted vigour; he wanted activity; he wanted judgment; and above all, he wanted money". It is, however, doubtful whether his character contained so many elements of weakness. In 1809 he was deposed by the brother whom he had set aside—Mahmud. Shah Shuja remained Ranjit Singh's guest for some years; then he repaired to Ludhiana and became a British pensioner. Mahmud reigned for some years (1809-18) as a puppet in the hands of the powerful Barakzai Chiefs, who deposed him in 1818. His son Kamran continued to rule in Herat.
During this period the British authorities in India were interested in Afghan affairs for two reasons. In the days of Zaman Shah they were apprehensive of the repetition of Ahmad Shah Abdali’s exploits in India. Secondly, the dread of a Franco-Russian invasion through Persia naturally compelled them to seek friendly relations with the ruler of Afghanistan. The evaporation of the French menace and the creation of a Sikh Monarchy by Ranjit Singh, which made the trans-Sutlej portion of the Punjab a buffer State between Afghanistan and British India, altered the scene, and for the next few years the British rulers of India did not take much interest in Afghan affairs.

AMIR DOST MUHAMMAD KHAN (1826-63)

The Barakzai Chiefs who deposed Mahmud held independent authority in different districts of Afghanistan till 1826, when one of them, Dost Muhammad, made himself master of Kabul. He was recognised as Amir by all his rivals, and for more than twelve years his authority was unquestioned. "It is not to be questioned", says Kaye, "that there was, at this time, in the conduct of Dost Mahomed, as a ruler, much that may be regarded with admiration and respect even by Christian men." One of his brothers was expelled by Ranjit Singh from Peshawar in 1834; in the same year Dost Muhammad foiled an attempt of Shah Shuja to recover his throne.

THE RUSSIAN MENACE

Even before the downfall of Napoleon Russia and England had begun to compete for political influence in Persia. The treaty of Gulistan (1813) between Russia and Persia, which brought the Shah almost under the tutelage of the Czar, was counteracted by the treaty of Teheran (1814) between England and Persia, by which "all European armies were to be prevented from entering Persia, if hostile to Great Britain". In the thirties Russia began to emphasize her Asiatic designs and British foreign policy, guided by Lord Palmerston, assumed a definitely anti-Russian colour. The climax was reached when Persia attacked Herat (1837-38) at the instigation of Russia. Herat was the gate to India, and the occupation of this
strategic city by the Persians would amount to Russian control over the north-western passage to British India. But the heroic Afghans, aided substantially by the guidance of a young British officer named Pottinger, repulsed the Persians.

ORIGIN OF THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR

In 1836 Lord Auckland became Governor-General of India. He shared Palmerston's exaggerated dread of Russian designs in the East, and the Persian attack on Herat confirmed his suspicions. In June, 1836, the Court of Directeurs instructed him that decided interference in the affairs of Afghanistan 'would doubtless be requisite, either to prevent the extension of Persian dominion in that quarter, or to raise a timely barrier against the impending encroachments of Russian influence'. So Lord Auckland sent Alexander Burnes, an experienced diplomat, on a commercial mission to Kabul. But the real purpose of the mission was political: Burnes himself wrote that he wanted 'to see into affairs and judge of what was to be done hereafter'. Dost Muhammad was quite prepared to conclude an alliance with the British; the price he demanded was British help in re-occupying Peshawar. Lord Auckland swayed for sometime between Dost Muhammad and Ranjit Singh; then he decided that the Sikh ruler would be the better ally. So he refused to put pressure on Ranjit Singh for the restoration of Peshawar. Thus he lost the opportunity of bringing within the British sphere of influence a strong Government beyond the Khaibar.

Dost Muhammad was naturally disappointed. He now began to show more favour to the Russian agent at his court, Viktevitch, whom he had so long neglected. Burnes left Kabul in April, 1838. Lord Auckland was alarmed by the Amir's changed relations with the Russians. He made the fatal decision of overthrowing Dost Muhammad: Shah Shuja, the unfortunate exile at Ludhiana, was to be restored to the throne of Kabul with the help of Ranjit Singh. Macnaghten, Secretary to the Government, who played a decisive part in formulating Lord Auckland's Afghan policy, was sent to Lahore. A tripartite treaty was concluded between Shah Shuja, Ranjit Singh and the British Government in June, 1838. In October,
1838, Lord Auckland issued a manifesto from Simla justifying the impending Afghan War. According to Sir Herbert Edwardes, in this manifesto “the views and conduct of Dost Muhammad were misrepresented with a hardness which a Russian statesman might have envied”. The withdrawal of the Persians from Herat in September, 1838, removed the most important excuse for war, but in November, 1838, the Governor-General declared that hostilities would be commenced 'with a view to the substitution of a friendly for a hostile power in ... Afghanistan, and to the establishment of a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression upon our north-west frontier'.

Lord Auckland's policy was supported by his Council but opposed by the Commander-in-Chief; in England he was supported by the Cabinet but opposed by the Court of Directors. He had no moral right to claim that Dost Muhammad, an independent ruler, should not choose the Russians as his ally, specially after the uncERemonious rejection of the Amir's offer of alliance with the British. Afghanistan was then the scene of a bitter dynastic struggle between the Durrani and the Barakzais; the Barakzais had got the upper hand. Under the circumstances the attempt to replace a strong and popular Barakzai ruler like Dost Muhammad by a Durrani exile like Shah Shuja was, as subsequent events abundantly proved, a serious political mistake. Nor was there any real necessity for war; Herat had saved itself, and under pressure from London the Russian Government had recalled its agents. Innes has rightly described the First Afghan War as 'the most unqualified blunder committed in the whole history of the British in India'.

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR (1838-1842)

The supreme command of the expedition was entrusted to Sir John Keane; its political management was in the hands of Macnaghten, who was advised by Burnes. The main portion of the army marched from Ferozepur by way of Bahawalpur, Sind, and Baluchistan, and entered Afghanistan through the Bolan and Khojak passes. This long and circuitous route, which 'violated all the conditions of sound strategy', was forced upon the British authorities by Ranjit Singh's refusal to allow
the passage of British troops through his territory. The Sikh army advanced by way of Peshawar and the Khaibar pass. Qandahar was occupied in April, 1839. Shah Shuja entered Kabul in August, 1839. He was, however, looked upon by the Afghans as a puppet in the hands of the foreign invaders. His entry into Kabul was, says Kaye, 'more like a funeral procession than the entry of a King into the capital of his restored dominions'. Dost Muhammad surrendered to Macnaghten in November, 1839, and was sent down as a prisoner to Calcutta.

It is doubtful whether Shah Shuja could have secured the confidence of the Afghans and maintained himself on the throne without the support of British bayonets. But his British allies gave him no chance to rule in Afghanistan as an independent Afghan King; they openly made him a tool in their hands and thereby deprived him of Afghan sympathy. Lord Auckland decided to keep 10,000 troops in Afghanistan under the command of an old and incompetent officer, General Elphinstone. The presence of the British troops in Afghanistan was repugnant to the Afghans and imposed a heavy drain upon the financial resources of India. Towards the close of 1840 the Court of Directors suggested that the British army should either retreat from Afghanistan or be strengthened by reinforcements. Advised by Macnaghten, Lord Auckland refused to confess the failure of his policy by withdrawing the troops from Afghanistan.

Towards the close of 1841 the grievances of the Afghans burst out in a serious rebellion. The crisis was precipitated by the misconduct of the army of occupation, and among the officers who made themselves obnoxious to the Afghans was Burnes. Burnes and some other British officers were murdered. Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad, assumed the leadership of the Afghans. The British troops were defeated. Macnaghten promised to evacuate the country at once, but he was treacherously murdered. The humiliations suffered by the British officers and troops were largely due to the incompetence of their leaders. Kabul was evacuated in January, 1842; while on their way the British troops were destroyed by snow, storm and Afghan bullets. Only one man—Dr. Brydon—survived the catastrophe and conveyed his terrible story to Jalalabad. Qandahar and Jalalabad were, however, successfully defended by Nott and Sale.
Lord Auckland was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough in February, 1842. The new Governor-General decided in favour of the evacuation of Kabul and Qandahar. Shah Shuja was murdered at Kabul by a Barakzai Chief. In September, 1842, Pollock defeated Akbar Khan and hoisted the British flag at Kabul. Nott occupied Ghazni, where he seized some alleged gates of the famous temple of Somnath carried away by Sultan Mahmud many centuries ago. The triumphant British army blew up the great bazar at Kabul and evacuated the city in October, 1842. The Governor-General declared that 'to force a sovereign on a reluctant people would be . . . . inconsistent with the policy . . . . of the British Government.' Dost Muhammad was released. He returned to Kabul and re-established his authority.

LATER CAREER OF DOST MUHAMMAD

The main object of Lord Auckland's Afghan policy was to have a friendly ruler on the throne of Afghanistan. That object was not accomplished by the war. For some years after his restoration Dost Muhammad maintained an attitude of sullen resentment against the British. The renewal of the Persian threat to Herat led him to conclude treaties with the Company in 1855 and in 1857. The friendly relations thus established kept the Amir loyal to the British during the Sepoy Mutiny. Dost Muhammad died in 1863.

ANNEXATION OF SIND (1843)

During the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century Sind was ruled by the Talpur Amirs of Hyderabad, Khairpur and Mirpur. The suzerainty of the Kings of Afghanistan was nominal. In 1809 the Amirs concluded a treaty with the British, promising not to allow 'the establishment of the tribe of the French' in Sind. This treaty was renewed in 1820 with an additional clause stipulating the suppression of 'the predatory hordes who were continually disturbing the peace of the frontier'.

The opening of Sind was the result of the journey of Alexander Burnes up the Indus en route to Lahore in 1831. The political and commercial importance of the Lower Indus
valley was then brought to the notice of the British Government for the first time. "Alas", said a shrewd Sindhi, "Sind is now gone since the English have seen the river".

Ranjit Singh had his eyes on Sind. On the east the treaty of Amritsar (1809) had reduced the Sutlej to an insurmountable barrier; on the west the growing power of Dost Muhammad created difficulties. Sind provided a natural field for Sikh expansion. But the British were not prepared to tolerate any further increase in Ranjit Singh's power. It seemed that the most effective way to keep the Sikhs at a distance was to bring Sind within the sphere of British influence. In 1832 Lord William Bentinck concluded a treaty with the Amir of Hyderabad, which opened up the Indus to commercial navigation by British subjects. In 1838 Lord Auckland concluded a treaty with the Amirs, who now agreed to receive a British Resident at Hyderabad. By the tripartite treaty of 1838 Shah Shuja renounced his shadowy claim of suzerainty over Sind, Lord Auckland compelled the Amirs to pay a large sum in return for this concession of doubtful value. In 1839 the Amirs were compelled to accept a treaty by which they were virtually placed under British protection. Although the treaty of 1832 prohibited the use of the Indus for the conveyance of military force, the British army marched through Sind on its way to Afghanistan in 1839-40.

Although the Amirs did not create any trouble even when the British army suffered annihilation in Afghanistan, they were accused of disloyalty, and Sir Charles Napier, a blunt soldier, was sent by Lord Ellenborough to deal with them. Napier 'conducted his operations on the theory that the annexation of Sind would be a very beneficent piece of rascality for which it was his business to find an excuse'. He exasperated the Amirs by interfering in a succession dispute at Khairpur and also by trying to impose upon them a new treaty which compelled them to cede territories and deprived them of their right of coining money. He destroyed the strong fort of Imamgarh with a view to create terror. An attack of the wild Baluchis was the signal for war. Napier secured a victory at Miani (near Hyderabad) in February, 1843; some of the Amirs at once submitted, and Hyderabad was occupied. The Amir of Mirpur was defeated at Daib (near Hyderabad) in March.
The war came to an end in June. In August Sind was annexed and the Amirs were exiled. For four years Napier governed Sind with autocratic authority.

The Court of Directors disapproved the proceedings of Ellenborough and Napier, but the accomplished fact had to be accepted. All British writers on Indian history are agreed that there was no moral justification or political necessity behind the high-handed policy which vanquished the Amirs. Napier himself observed, "We have no right to seize Sind, yet we shall do so. . . ."

SECTION V

RISE AND FALL OF THE SIKH MONARCHY

THE MISLS

Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India for the last time in 1767. After that date the Sikh Misls governed the Punjab. Their organisation has been described as 'theocratic confederate feudalism'. The Central Government was very weak and after some time it ceased to function. The link of a common enemy was gone and this became the signal for disorders within. The Bhangi Misl and the Kanheya Misl strove in succession to establish some sort of ascendancy over the rest, but it was reserved for Ranjit Singh, head of the Sukerchukia Misl, to 'display from the ruins of their commonwealth the standard of monarchy.'

EARLY CAREER OF RANJIT SINGH

Ranjit Singh was born in November, 1780. His father Maha Singh died in 1790. In his seventeenth year Ranjit asserted himself and began his career of petty warfare and systematic aggression. He joined Zaman Shah, grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdali, when the Kabul monarch invaded the Punjab in 1798. The Durrani project failed but Ranjit Singh seized Lahore from its Sikh rulers in 1799. His next important acquisition was Amritsar which he occupied in 1805. In alliance with his mother-in-law Sada Kaur, leader of the Kanheya Misl, and his friend Fateh Singh, chief of the Ahluwalia Misl; Ranjit pursued
with almost constant success this policy of absorption of the territory of the princes and princelings of the Punjab, and the process was completed by the year 1823. As all the trans-Sutlej Misls were one after another absorbed, Fateh Singh gradually sank into the position of a dependent ally but Sada Kaur with her masterful personality soon came to grief; she was put under restraint in 1821, her territory being annexed to the Lahore State. Local dynasticism thus disappeared, giving place to a consolidated Monarchy.

**RANJIT SINGH'S TREATY WITH THE BRITISH (1809)**

But Ranjit Singh failed in his attempts to absorb the Cis-Sutlej Misls and could not extend his sway over the country between the Sutlej and the Jumna. He led three expeditions into the Cis-Sutlej region. Success was within his grasp but the British Government intervened. Lord Minto through his ambassador Metcalfe demanded that Ranjit Singh should confine himself to the territory on the other side of the Sutlej. The serious attitude of the British Government, his own inability to meet the British power at this moment, his fear that the Sikh chiefs on his side of the Sutlej would try to take advantage of the impasse, led him finally to agree with the British demand and the treaty of Amritsar was concluded in April, 1809. The Sutlej was recognised as the boundary, Ranjit Singh retaining the territories he had possessed on the left side of the Sutlej before the coming of the British ambassador.

**EXPANSION OF RANJIT SINGH'S KINGDOM**

After the treaty of Amritsar Ranjit Singh conquered the hill states of the Punjab, annexed Multan, seized Kashmir from the Afghans, and also conquered Kohat, Tank, Bannu, Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan and Peshawar. There is no doubt that he would have annexed Sind as well but for British intervention. The British Government would not let his sway extend to the sea. Ranjit Singh’s Kingdom extended from the Sutlej to the defiles of the Khyber and from Little Tibet in the north to the confines of Sind in the south.

Ranjit Singh had to fight with the Afghans on several occasions. In 1813 a pitched battle was fought on the plain
of Chuch not far from Attock. The Durrani monarch's Wazir, Fateh Khan, wanted to seize from him the fort of Attock which Ranjit had recently taken. The Afghans were completely defeated. In 1823 a second pitched battle was fought at Nowshera, the Afghans attempting to prevent Ranjit Singh's sway being consolidated on the left bank of the Sutlej. The Afghans were defeated also on this occasion. In 1837 Dost Muhammad of Kabul strove to seize Jamrud and Shub Qudur, two important Sikh forts commanding the passes. The Afghans failed to seize the forts but in a skirmish succeeded in killing Hari Singh Nalwa, governor of Peshawar. Ranjit was more than able to hold his own on the north-western frontier and he was also successful in his management of the border tribes.

RANJIT SINGH'S ADMINISTRATION

Ranjit Singh set up a strong and efficient system of civil administration and his greatest merit was that he made an unprejudiced use of talented men of all religions. He disciplined his army on the western model and took Allard, Ventura and some other Frenchmen into his service to train his soldiers. He had a standing army of nearly 40,000, largely infantry, equipped and paid by the State. His park of artillery was efficient. "The rank and file of the Sikh army became, under the training of the skilled officers, the finest rank and file in world. They wanted but officers to be invincible."

ESTIMATE OF RANJIT SINGH

Ranjit Singh has been described as the very embodiment of practical sagacity despite unlettered ignorance. His memory was prodigious. In his military expeditions he was accustomed to issue instructions to his officers in such details that little or no initiative was left to them. The personal devotion and loyalty that he inspired in his commanders and soldiers smoothed their path of duty. Among his principal achievements we must count his very successful defence of his new-born Kingdom against the Afghans. An Indian chieftain who could secure the support of all sections of his people—Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims,—who could defend the north-western frontier against a powerful Afghanistan and unruly border tribes and administer
it successfully, who could train an army whose fighting qualities came as a revelation to their British opponents, who could to a certain extent furnish Indian nationalism with what it greatly needed—a tradition of strength—must always stand in the forefront of great men of Indian history.

SUCCESSORS OF RANJIT SINGH

During the last years of Ranjit, in view of his declining health and the weak character of the heir-apparent Kharak Singh, the crafty courtiers around him formed factions. Immediately after his death mutual dissensions, distrust and lawlessness began and precipitated the downfall of the Sikh Monarchy.

Ranjit Singh died on the 27th June, 1839. His eldest son Kharak Singh, who succeeded him, died in November, 1840, and Nao Nihal Singh, his son, who had inherited much of the ability of his grandfather, was killed by accident or design on the following day. Sher Singh, another son of Ranjit Singh, succeeded. He was assassinated in September, 1843. (The army was now the master of the State.) It looked upon itself as the representative body of the people as the Khalsa itself. Dalip Singh, youngest son of Ranjit Singh, who was only six years old, was proclaimed as the new ruler.) Events moved very fast. The factions that had come into existence during the last days of Ranjit Singh were now non-existent and the army dictated and made and unmade the Wazirs. The strength of the standing army of Lahore was almost doubled by the year 1845. It became self-dependent. Early in November, 1845, Raja Lal Singh was nominated as the Wazir and Sardar Tej Singh was confirmed as Commander-in-Chief.

LORD HARDINGE AND THE FIRST ANGLO-SIKH WAR (1845-46)

The English authorities, convinced that the machinery of government would break up in the Punjab, adopted measures for strengthening the frontier forts. The Sikh soldiers had their apprehensions of their growing neighbour and could not understand why ‘inefficiency of rule should be construed into hostility of purpose’. It seems that both the Sikh soldiery and the British Government regarded the ensuing war as purely defensive. The English advanced bodies of troops towards the Sutlej. Moreover, Major Broadfoot, British agent for Cis-Sutlej affairs.
was responsible for proceedings that ultimately denoted war and the Sikh army became convinced that war with the English was inevitable. The Lahore Chiefs made use of this feeling for their own ends and urged the army to proceed against the English in order that it might be destroyed.

The Sikhs crossed the Sutlej in December, 1845, and the English hastened to oppose them. The Sikh leaders, Lal Singh and Tej Singh, kept up an appearance of devotion to the interests of the State but were 'anxious to be upheld as the ministers of a dependent Kingdom by grateful conquerors'. The Sikhs were defeated in four successive engagements at Mudki (December, 1845), Ferozeshah (December, 1845), Aliwal (January, 1846) and Sobraon (February, 1846), but it was treachery more than bad leadership that was responsible for this failure. About the battle of Ferozeshah Malleson says, "The brave untutored warriors, led by generals who were betraying them, had, if they had only known it, won a victory." Lal Singh and Tej Singh, however, did not press forward but withdrew, making a gift of a victory to the English. In spite of their steadfastness and resolution the Sikh army lost the battle of Sobraon because of the 'discreet policy and shameless treason' of its leaders.

The English crossed the Sutlej and occupied Lahore in February, 1846, and finally after some negotiations a treaty was concluded in March, 1846. The Jalandhar Doab was to be ceded to the British and the Sikh treasury was to pay 1½ million sterling for the expenses of the war. The strength of the Sikh army was to be reduced. As the Sikh Durbar was not in a position to pay ½ of the indemnity, they surrendered the province of Kashmir, which was sold for one million to Gulab Singh, the Dogra Chief of Jammu. The Lahore State was thus reduced in size and Lal Singh, who retained his office of Wazir, was rewarded for his treachery by getting such a dreaded rival as Gulab Singh out of the way. A supplementary arrangement was made in December, 1846, placing Dalip Singh under British tutelage. The administration of the Kingdom was virtually handed over to the British Resident, Sir Henry Lawrence, who was supported by a British force stationed at Lahore. Thus the British Government assumed 'full authority to direct and control all matters in every department of the (Lahore) State'.

unworkable. There was a local rebellion at Multan headed by its governor, Mulraj, and two British officers were murdered in April, 1848. A British expedition was not sent out at once.
to Multan because of the hot weather. In the meantime Rani jindan, mother of the boy Maharaja, was exiled to the fort of Chunar in view of her hostile attitude. Events moved very fast. Chhattar Singh, governor of Hazara, revolted. His son Sher Singh, who was at the head of the Durbar troops, gave his adhesion to the movement, which became general. Thus a crisis was precipitated, and Lord Dalhousie decided that as the Sikh people wished war, "they should have it with a vengeance."

Sher Singh commanded the Sikh army. Two battles were fought at Chilianwala (January, 1849) and at Gujarat (February, 1849). From the British point of view Chilianwala was 'a dangerous and difficult affair.' It was only technically a British victory. But at Gujarat Lord Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief, won a complete victory. It is only proper to note that "no troops could have fought better than the Sikhs, no army could have been worse led." Multan was stormed in January, 1849. (Chhattar Singh and Sher Singh surrendered in March, 1849.)

By the treaty of December, 1846, the British Government had full authority to direct and control all matters in the Punjab, and the Lahore State was paying 22 lakhs a year in respect of the expenses of the British force stationed at Lahore. So the British Government was naturally in the position of a guardian and protector of the young Maharaja. Against this British protection the Sikh army rose. The rising was suppressed, but there was no valid reason for depriving the guiltless minor Maharaja of his inheritance. The aggressive imperialism of Lord Dalhousie, however, surmounted every moral and legal obstacle and the Punjab was annexed by proclamation on 3rd March, 1849, the boy Maharaja being pensioned off.

**SECTION VI**

**ANNEXATIONS OF LORD DALHOUSIE**

The period of Lord Dalhousie's administration (1848-56) is one of the most memorable epochs in British Indian history. He came to India when he was only 35 years of age; he worked so hard that he ruined his health and did not long survive his
retirement. He was a very industrious administrator, and, on the whole, he was a ruler of benevolent intentions. But he is remembered to this day mainly as an annexationist. By war he annexed the Punjab and Pegu. Some of his annexations were, however, effected without taking up arms, by the application of the so-called 'Doctrine of Lapse' and on the flexible ground of misgovernment.

Doctrine of Lapse

The 'Doctrine of Lapse' meant that, in the absence of natural heirs, dependent States, or States created by the British, were to lapse to the paramount power (i.e., the Company); they were not to pass like mere private property to an adopted son. It was recognised that the succession of an adopted son was dependent upon the special permission of the British Government. In 1834 it was laid down by the Court of Directors that such permission 'should be the exception, not the rule, and should never be granted but as a special mark of favour and approbation'. In 1841 it was decided that 'no just and honourable accession of territory or revenue' was to be abandoned. Thus Lord Dalhousie was not the originator of this ill-fated 'Doctrine'. It was an accident that in his days some important cases arose in which the 'Doctrine' might be applied. But it is not unfair criticism to say that he showed too much zeal in enforcing a policy which had been theoretically enunciated some years before. "There was fully adequate precedent for every one of his annexations. But his predecessors had acted on the general principle of avoiding annexation if it could be avoided; Dalhousie acted on the general principle of annexing if he could do so legitimately". He did not examine the expediency of rigorously applying a ' Doctrine' which ran counter to the religious sentiments of the Hindus and the traditions of India.

The principality of Satara was the first victim of the 'Doctrine of Lapse'. The Raja of Satara died without any male issue in 1848; just before his death he adopted a son without the knowledge and consent of the British Government. As the principality was created by the British in 1818, the adoption was subject to their approval. It was disapproved. The Court of Directors observed, "... we are fully satisfied that, by the general law and custom of India, a dependent
principality, like that of Satara, cannot pass to an adopted heir without the consent of the Paramount Power’.

The Bhonsle State of Nagpur suffered a similar fate in 1853. The Raja died without leaving any male heir, nor did he leave any adopted son. But it is doubtful whether Nagpur could be regarded as a State created by the British, even if the circumstances connected with the settlement of 1818 are taken into consideration. Lee-Warner points out that in the cases of Satara and Nagpur ‘imperial considerations’ weighed with Lord Dalhousie: ‘... they were placed right across the main lines of communication between Bombay and Madras, and Bombay and Calcutta. Consolidation was therefore to be secured by their annexation’.

The ruler of Jhansi died childless in 1853; his adopted son was set aside and the State was annexed. The annexation of Baghat and Udaipur under similar circumstances was reversed later on by Lord Canning. Sambalpur in Orissa was annexed in 1850, when the ruler died without heir. The annexation of Karauli was reversed by the Court of Directors.

The confiscation of the titles and pensions of some Indian Princes was a logical corollary to the ‘Doctrine of Lapse’. On the death of the ex-Peshwa Baji Rao II his pension was not continued to his adopted son, Nana Saheb, who later on played a leading part in the Revolt of 1857. On the death of the titular Nawab of the Carnatic in 1853 no successor was recognised. On the death of the Maratha Raja of Tanjore in 1855 without any male issue the Rajaship was abolished.

OTHER ANNEXATIONS

A part of Sikim was annexed in 1850 because the ruler of that State had seized a British agent and ill-treated two British subjects. As the Nizam was unable to discharge his financial obligations to the Company, the fertile province of Berar was placed under British administration (1853).

MISGOVERNMENT

Lord Dalhousie annexed Oudh (1856) on the ground that its rulers had continuously misgoverned the State. Without examining the specific charges brought against the Nawabs,
it may be observed that maladministration in Indian States was the inevitable result of Lord Wellesley's system of Subsidiary Alliance. The evil did not escape the notice of responsible British administrators. Sir Thomas Munro observed, "Wherever the Subsidiary System is introduced, the country will soon bear the marks of it, in decaying villages and decreasing population." Sir Henry Lawrence wrote in 1848, "If ever there was a device for insuring malgovernment, it is that of Native Ruler and Minister both relying on foreign bayonets and directed by a British Resident." The people of Hyderabad suffered terribly for many years after the introduction of the Subsidiary Alliance. In 1831 Lord William Bentinck pensioned off the Raja of Mysore for incompetence and the State remained under British administration for half a century.

ANNEXATION OF OUDH (1856)

Since the treaty of 1801 the internal condition of Oudh had been getting worse, due partly to the incompetence of the Nawabs, but mainly to the operation of the Subsidiary Alliance. The Nawab had no real power to control the administration, for no important decision could be taken without the concurrence of the British Resident. He knew that as long as he obeyed the Resident's orders he was safe; British troops would protect him against internal rebellions. The sense of moral responsibility became dim; even the exhortations and threats of the Governors-General were of no avail. In 1831 Lord William Bentinck threatened to take over the administration of Oudh if there was no improvement. In 1837 Lord Auckland imposed upon the King of Oudh a new treaty, by which it was provided that either he should improve the administration or hand it over to the British Government, sinking to the position of a pension-holder like the ruler of Mysore. Although this treaty was disallowed by the Court of Directors, Lord Auckland and his successors acted as if it was valid. In 1847 Lord Hardinge repeated the warning.

In 1855 it became clear from the reports of Colonels-

1 Lord Hastings induced the Nawab of Oudh to assume the Royal title in defiance of the nominal authority of the Mughal Emperor. The Nizam was asked to take a similar course, but he refused.
Sleeman and Outram, Residents in Oudh, that the condition of Oudh was deplorable, and there was no chance of any improvement. Lord Dalhousie wanted to reduce Oudh to the position of Mysore: the ruler would retain his formal sovereignty, but the administration would be carried out by the British Government. But the Court of Directors decided in favour of annexation. So Oudh was annexed in February, 1856. Wazid Ali Shah was kept under surveillance in Calcutta and allowed a pension of 12 lakhs per year. Sleeman, a shrewd and experienced officer, considered the annexation of Oudh as a political blunder.

GOVERNORS-GENERAL UNDER THE COMPANY

Warren Hastings (October, 1774—February, 1785).
Sir John Macpherson (February, 1785—September, 1786).
Lord Cornwallis (September, 1786—October, 1793).
Sir John Shore (October, 1793—March, 1798).
Sir A. Clarke (March—May, 1798).
Lord Wellesley (May, 1798—July, 1805).
Lord Cornwallis (July—October, 1805).
Sir George Barlow (October, 1805—July, 1807).
Lord Minto I (July, 1807—October, 1813).
Lord Hastings (October, 1813—January, 1823).
John Adam (January—August, 1823).
Lord Amherst (August, 1823—March, 1828).
William B. Bayley (March—July, 1828).
Lord William Bentinck (July, 1828—March, 1835).
Sir Charles Metcalfe (March, 1835—March, 1836).
Lord Auckland (March, 1836—February, 1842).
Lord Ellenborough (February, 1842—June, 1844).
William W. Bird (June—July, 1844).
Lord Hardinge I (July, 1844—January, 1848).

1 The names of those who held the post temporarily are printed in italics.
2 Hastings became Governor of Bengal in April, 1772. He became Governor-General of Bengal in October, 1774, according to the Regulating Act.
3 Bentinck became the first Governor-General of India according to the Charter Act of 1833.
Lord Dalhousie (January, 1848—February, 1856).
Lord Canning (February, 1856—November, 1858).¹

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Cambridge History of India, Vol. V.
Mehta, Lord Hastings and the Indian States.
P. C. Gupta, Baji Rao II and the East India Company.
Cunningham, History of the Sikhs.
N. K. Sinha, Ranjit Singh.
Bell, Annexation of the Punjab.
Sykes, History of Afghanistan, Vol. II.
A. C. Banerjee, The Eastern Frontier of British India.
A. C. Banerjee, Annexation of Burma.

¹ Canning became Viceroy and Governor-General under the Crown after the transfer of India from the Company to the Crown in November, 1858.