

## CHAPTER I

# HISTORY OF MODERN INDIA (1761-1947)

### 1. Establishment of British Rule (1761-1818)

As a result of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) in Europe, the French and English settlements in India also became involved in open hostilities. The French were defeated by Sir Eyre Coote at Wandiwāsh in January, 1760, and Pondicherry capitulated a year later. The work of Dupleix and Bussy in the South was thus destroyed in 1760-61; the French possessions in India were, however, restored by the Treaty of Paris (1763).

**Bengal and Avadh.** Mir J'afar, placed by Clive on the *masnad* of Murshidābād after the battle of Plassey, was deposed in 1760. The theory of Mir J'afar's conspiracy with the Dutch perhaps finds no support from the Dutch records. He would perhaps have gladly joined the Dutch if they had been victorious at Bidar, but the position on the eve of Plassey was altogether different. Mir Qāsim was placed on the throne by the British in the hope that he would be able to meet their financial demands. The new Nawāb assigned to them the districts of Burdwān, Midnapore and Chittagong for the expenses of the British army which was to help him. This alliance was of great use to the British in their campaign against the French in 1760-61—the money paid by Mir Qāsim helped the Calcutta Council to finance their war in the South. The Nawāb succeeded in establishing a better system of administration. But he came into conflict with the British in Bengal on the question of a privilege i.e. duty-free private trade of the Company's servants: a privilege which had been granted to the Company for its export and import trade by emperor Farrukhsiyar. According to this Imperial *farmān*, the Company had to pay Rs. 3,000 a year and in return could carry on trade duty-free in Bengal. The Company's servants extended this privilege to their own coastal trade, inter-Asian trade and finally the inland trade. This was an obvious usurpation. But Mir Qāsim and Vansittart, the Governor, proposed a plan which they thought would be a better one. The British private traders were to pay 9 per cent duty, while the Indian merchants, hampered by stoppages, were to pay 40 per cent. The Calcutta Council turned this proposal down. Mir Qāsim, in the circumstances, remitted all duties on Indians and the British alike for two years. This measure deprived the British private traders of the privileged position they had created for themselves: they could not compete with Indian traders on equal terms. Matters came to a head when Ellis, chief of the Company's factory at Patna, tried to seize the city. This precipitated war. Mir Qāsim, an excellent civil administrator, was no military leader.

His army was defeated. When he was forced to withdraw to Avadh, the Nawāb Wazīr and emperor Shāh 'Ālam II decided to come to the defence of the eastern *śūbas* of the empire. The confederates advanced to Patna, and a battle was fought at Buxar on October 22, 1764. With a decisive victory at Buxar, the British army overran Avadh. The Nawāb Wazīr fled to the Rohilla country, but Shāh 'Ālam II came to terms with the British. Clive also concluded a treaty with the Nawāb Wazīr of Avadh, who was to pay fifty lakhs of rupees for the expenses of the war and was given back his dominions. He entered into a defensive alliance with the Company. Avadh became for the British a buffer state. Shāh 'Ālam II was now a fugitive—Delhi had fallen into the hands of the Rohilla Chief Najību'd-daulah. The British gave Shāh 'Ālam II possession of Korā and Allahābād, while he granted them the *Dīwānī* of Bengal, Bihār and Orissa in return for a regular annual payment of twenty-six lakhs of rupees. Mīr J'afar's son and successor, Najmu'd-daulah, signed a treaty with the Company and became a titled pensioner on fifty-three lakhs of rupees per year, which was subsequently reduced.

Clive did not take over the administration of Bengal; it was left to the Nawāb's *Nā'ib Dīwān* and *Nā'ib Nāzīm*, Muḥammad RiḍāKhān. On him rested the entire responsibility for the civil and criminal administration. He was, however, placed under the superintendence, direction and control of the British Resident at the durbar. Francis Sykes was the first Resident in the new set-up and was succeeded by Edward Becher. In a similar manner Shitab Rai, *Nā'ib Nāzīm* and *Nā'ib Dīwān* in Bihār, worked under the supervision of these successive Residents at Murshidābād.

The Governor and Council at Calcutta had complete control over military and political matters, the Resident at the durbar exercising his functions under their guidance. This system, according to Clive, served to hide the true position from the Dutch, the French, the Danes and other European trading companies in Bengal. Complete control of finance was calculated to make any hostile action like that of Mīr Qāsim impossible. This system of government continued from 1765 to 1772.

Maladministration characterized British rule in Bengal. Divorce of power from responsibility led to grave abuses. There was a persistent attempt at maximizing the revenue. Under the Resident at the durbar the English supervisors were appointed in *Dīwānī* districts in 1769. Direct British administration was in force from 1760 in the ceded districts of Burdwān, Midnapore and Chittagong. A great famine struck Bengal and Bihār in 1770 and swept away one-third of the population. The newly appointed supervisors were accused of intensifying the rigour of the famine by their attempt to corner the grain market in the interest of their private trade. The Court of Directors felt that the assumption of direct responsibility would be an effective cure for misgovernment. Warren

Hastings, who was appointed Governor of Bengal, was asked to take over the administration from Riḍā Khān and Shitab Rai. He did this in 1772.

Under Clive's political system, Shāh 'Ālam II, with his high claims and feeble resources, was a British pensioner at Allahābād. The Marāṭhās reappeared in Northern India in 1769, recaptured Delhi in 1771 and brought the emperor back to that city. The British political system was to readjust itself to changed circumstances. The settlement of 1765 had made Avadh a buffer state, a possible barrier against a combination of northern powers as also against any Marāṭhā attack. The second article of the treaty of 1765 with Avadh had laid down that in case of the invasion of the dominion of any one of the parties the other should render help with a part or the whole of its forces. If the Company's forces were employed in the Nawāb Wazīr's service, the expense involved was to be defrayed by him. Nothing was stated about the expense of the Wazīr's troops in the service of the British.

The emperor and the Marāṭhās attacked Dābita Khān, son and successor of the Rohilla chief Najibu'd-daulah, and captured his strongholds. Other Rohilla chiefs, headed by Hāfiz Raḥmat Khān, had rallied to his cause. Marāṭhā light horse raided Rohilkhand. Hāfiz Raḥmat approached Shujā'u'd-daulah and requested him to bring about a settlement with the Marāṭhās, who demanded a payment of forty lakhs of rupees. An offensive and defensive alliance was concluded between the Rohillas and Shujā'u'd-daulah; this was approved by the British General, Sir Robert Barker. The Rohilla chiefs agreed to pay forty lakhs of rupees to Shujā'u'd-daulah if he could help them to get rid of the Marāṭhās, who withdrew for the time being on the approach of the rains. Growing Marāṭhā demands soon led to a struggle with the Mughal emperor. Defeated, he was forced to cede the districts of Korā and Allahābād, which he had obtained from the British in 1765. This new situation brought an appeal from Shujā'u'd-daulah to Warren Hastings. The Marāṭhās had crossed into the Doāb. As the British crossed the Ganga, the Marāṭhās withdrew from their post at Ramghat and sent their *wakils* to meet Shujā'u'd-daulah and the British commandant. Shujā' promised to make the Rohillas pay to the Marāṭhās and on this assurance they left for the Deccan in May, 1773. The murder of Peśwā Nārāyaṇa Rāo in the same year created such complications that they could not reappear in Northern India until 1784. Warren Hastings (1772-1785) now took Korā and Allahābād and sold these districts to Shujā'u'd-daulah for fifty lakhs of rupees. Hastings and the Nawāb Wazīr met at Vārānasi and concluded a treaty in September, 1773. Hastings agreed to help Shujā' in conquering Rohilkhand. The ruler of Avadh was to pay for the assistance and had to accept a British political Resident. But Hāfiz Raḥmat was not in a position to make the payment. Shujā' agreed to

pay forty lakhs of rupees to the Company and secured the help he wanted. The battle of Mirānpur Katra on April 23, 1774, was decisive. Rohilkhand was annexed to Avadh; and the dependence of the ruler of Avadh upon the Company was increased. The Yamuna now formed the British frontier.

This was the beginning of the rapid decay of Avadh. On the death of Shujā'u'd-daulah in 1775 a new treaty was concluded with his successor. A regular brigade of the Company's troops was stationed in Avadh after the annexation of Rohilkhand, the Nawāb bearing the expense. A second brigade was added on the same terms in 1777. The Resident's establishment also swelled to a large extent. The financial pressure was hard and the Nawāb's debt mounted to £1,400,000 in 1780. To get this settled, Warren Hastings seized the treasuries as also the *jāgirs* of the Begums. He justified this drastic action on the ground that he badly needed the money for the expenses of the war with Haidar 'Alī and the Marāṭhās. The expulsion of Chait Singh from Vārānasi was also justified by him on the same ground.

**First Maratha War (1775-82).** Warren Hastings sought also to intervene in the affairs of the Marāṭhā empire. His idea was to detach Berār and set up in the person of Mādhojī Bhonsle a new Marāṭhā line in the heart of India, a kingdom dependent on the British—another Avadh. With this view he sent Elliot to Nāgpur. But in the meantime the Company's government at Bombay had openly taken up the cause of Raghunātha Rāo (Rāghobā). Warren Hastings, accordingly, asked Elliot to negotiate the passage of a British army through Berār and an alliance in general terms. Elliot died and the negotiations lapsed. Raghunātha Rāo promised to cede Salsette and Bassein, and refrain from entering into alliance with the enemies of the Company. These were the main terms of the Treaty of Surat concluded in 1775. The British in Bombay agreed to help him with 2,500 men in his contest with the confederate Marāṭhā leaders who had taken up the cause of the posthumous son of Nārāyaṇa Rāo. Colonel Keating and Raghunātha Rāo with their troops succeeded in defeating the Poona troops in the plains of Arras in Gujarāt. But all this had been done by the Bombay Government without consulting the superior administration at Calcutta. The Calcutta Council in which the opponents of Warren Hastings were in the majority declared this treaty as "impolitic, dangerous, unauthorized and unjust". They sent Colonel Upton to Poona to negotiate with the Marāṭhā ministers who were headed by Nānā Fadnavīs. The Treaty of Purandhar was concluded on March 1, 1776. The English gave up the cause of Raghunātha Rāo who was to receive a pension from Poona, but they were to retain Salsette. The treaty was ineffective. The Bombay Government gave shelter to Raghunātha Rāo. The Court of Directors upheld the Surat Treaty. The war began again. A British army of about 4,000 men

marched to Poona. They were defeated at Talegaon and compelled to sign a convention at Wadgaon in January 1779, by which the British were to surrender all territories taken by the Bombay Government since 1773.

Warren Hastings disavowed the convention. He sent an army from Bengal across Central India under Goddard who captured Ahmadābād on February 15, 1780, and Bassein about the end of the year. But he failed in his attempt to advance to Poona and was compelled to retreat. Another army under Popham was sent by Hastings to help the Rāṇā of Gohad. The Rāṇā's men helped Popham to escalate the strong fort of Gwalior belonging to the Marāṭhā chief Mahādājī Sindia. The Marāṭhā chiefs now expressed their willingness to come to terms with the British. Mahādājī Sindia opened negotiations and a treaty was concluded on May 17, 1782. By this treaty, known as the Treaty of Salbai, the English acquired Salsette but renounced the cause of Rāghobā. Their attempt to create a puppet in Mahārāshtra was thus foiled.

**Mysore Wars.** In the history of the growth of British power in India the First Marāṭhā War was very closely connected with the Second Anglo-Mysore War. This can be explained only if we review the previous history of Anglo-Mysore relations.

Ḥaidar 'Alī, the ruler of Mysore, was known to be closely connected with the French. He was also in strong opposition to the Marāṭhās because he had taken advantage of their disaster at Pānīpat in 1761 to conquer Marāṭhā territories south of the Tungabhadra. There was enmity between Ḥaidar 'Alī and Muḥammad 'Alī of Arcot, who was even more dependent upon the British than the ruler of Avadh. Ḥaidar 'Alī and the Nizām (Nizām 'Alī) joined in an alliance against the British in 1767. The First Anglo-Mysore War lasted from August 1767 to April 1769. Ḥaidar and the Nizām carried the war into the territory of the Nawāb of Arcot. There was a fierce engagement with the British at Changama and then a battle at Trinomalai. Ḥaidar and Nizām 'Alī suffered a defeat. The Nizām withdrew and concluded a treaty with the Madras Government. Ḥaidar now followed a plan of perpetual harassment rather than hazard a battle. He was very strong in cavalry. He succeeded in placing himself between the British army and Madras, and before the British General Smith could reach Madras, he had forced its Government to accept his terms—mutual restitution of conquests and a defensive alliance.

Ḥaidar attached great importance to this defensive alliance which he intended to utilize if the Marāṭhās invaded his territory. The Marāṭhās, because of Ḥaidar's encroachment on what they regarded as their dependent territory, invaded Mysore and defeated him completely in the battle of Chinkurali (1771). This, however, did not mean a collapse of Ḥaidar's military power. A desolating war continued and in spite of Ḥaidar's repeated requests the Madras Government would not come to his aid:

they felt they could not alienate the Marāṭhās for the sake of Ḥaidar 'Alī. Subsequent developments in Mahārāshtra—the death of Peśwā Mādhava Rāo, the murder of Nārāyaṇa Rāo, the conflict between Raghunātha Rāo and the ministerialist party at Poona—placed Ḥaidar 'Alī in a very advantageous position, and he took advantage of it to push his conquests upto the Tungabhadra, the Marāṭhās could not prevent him even from annexing the Doāb.

War began between the British and the French in 1778. In spite of Ḥaidar 'Alī's protest a British expedition captured Mahe from where he drew his military supplies. There were frequent frontier disputes from Cuddapah to Dindigul. At this time the Poona Government, on the lookout for allies against the British, wanted to form an alliance with Ḥaidar 'Alī as also with the Nizām. They both agreed to join in a grand alliance. The Bhonsle Rājā of Nāgpur was to attack Bengal, the Nizām the Northern Circars, and Ḥaidar 'Alī Madras. The Marāṭhās had their own confrontation. This diplomatic revolution was a very remarkable event in the history of India. But the diplomacy of Hastings also was at work. He won over the Nizām and induced the Bhonsle Rājā of Nāgpur not to advance beyond safe limits. Ḥaidar 'Alī was left to fight it out in the east. He carried the war into the Carnatic and defeated Baillie at Pollilore (Polur) but his forces were routed by Coote at Porto Novo and Sholinghur (1781). In the South, however, he succeeded in defeating and capturing Braithwaite at Anegundi (February, 1782). The French under Suffren dominated the Indian Ocean and captured Trincomalee in Ceylon, but they were not in a position to help Ḥaidar 'Alī. His distrust of the Marāṭhās was so great that he had driven the bargain very hard, making them recognize his conquest of all Marāṭhā territories. The Marāṭhās could hardly be his faithful allies in these circumstances, and when they concluded the Treaty of Salbai with the British, Ḥaidar 'Alī was once again left alone. He died on December 7, 1782. His son Tipū Sultān carried on the war against the British and achieved success in Malabār. When news of peace between the French and the English reached India, Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras, concluded with Tipū the Treaty of Mangalore (March 1784) on the basis of mutual restitution of conquests and liberation of prisoners. Warren Hastings was very much opposed to these terms, but he had to accept them. The treaty, under these circumstances, could not but be a 'hollow truce'.

Tipū attacked Travancore on December 29, 1789. The Rājā was an ally of the Company under the terms of the Treaty of Mangalore. Lord Cornwallis (1786-1793) was not a strict non-interventionist and he declared that the attack was an act of war. As the Nizām and the Marāṭhās were apprehensive of the growing power of Tipū Sultān, they allied themselves with the British. The Third Anglo-Mysore War lasted two years. Cornwallis himself led the campaign when he found that Medows, the British

commandant, had failed to make any headway. He captured Bangalore in March, 1791, but his first attempt to advance to Seringapatam failed. Tipu's scorched earth policy created a famine in the British camp and Cornwallis had to raise the siege. As he fell back the Marathas joined him with sufficient supplies. The next campaign was more successful. Cornwallis reached the outskirts of Seringapatam and compelled Tipu Sultan to sue for peace. By the Treaty of Seringapatam, concluded on March 19, 1792, Tipu Sultan surrendered half of his territory. The British took Dindigul, the Baramahal, Coorg and Malabar, while the Nizam and the Marathas extended their territories upto Cuddapah and Tungabhadra respectively. Sir John Shore (1793-1798) did not deviate from the policy of non-intervention. Like Cornwallis he believed that if the Marathas were left alone they would quarrel among themselves and their power would dis-integrate. So there was peace and retrenchment before the next phase of expansion began under Lord Wellesley. In the affairs of Avadh, however, Shore was in favour of active interference. When Asafud-Daulah of Avadh died in 1797, there were two claimants for succession—S'adat 'Ali and Wazir 'Ali. The deceased Nawab had been in favour of Wazir 'Ali, but Shore's nominee was S'adat 'Ali who was made to sign a treaty by which the subsidy paid to the English was increased and Allahabad fort was annexed to the Company's territories.

A series of conquests and annexations began under Wellesley (1798-1805). He formulated the policy of 'subsidiary alliances' and proceeded to make the British power supreme in India. Shore had not intervened when the Marathas attacked the Nizam in 1795. The Nizam had been defeated by the Maratha army at Kharda but Reswa Madhava Rao Narayana committed suicide which led to disorganization. In these circumstances, it was easy for Wellesley to take action. He persuaded the Nizam to dismiss the French force at Hyderabad and substitute it with a British detachment; a subsidy of twenty-four lakhs of rupees per annum was to be paid for the maintenance of these troops. Further, the Nizam was to conduct his foreign policy in accordance with British advice.

Wellesley then turned to Mysore. He wanted Tipu Sultan to give up his friendship with the French. Actually, Tipu's negotiations with the French could not be dangerous at all to the British with their sea-power. Tipu invaded the Punjab. With the Marathas and the Nizam to support him in the field of battle, and with his own forces from Madras and Bombay converging, Wellesley declared war on Tipu in February, 1799. Seringapatam was taken in May 1799. Tipu Sultan died fighting. Wellesley restored the kingdom to the old Hindu Wodeyar dynasty, after appropriating large tracts of it for distribution among the Marathas, the Nizam and the Company. The new dependant state of Mysore which was now governed by a subsidiary treaty was surrounded on all sides by British territory.

Wellesley continued territorial expansion and annexed the principality of Thanjāvūr by taking advantage of a disputed succession. He annexed the Carnatic in 1801, and concluded a second subsidiary treaty with the Nizām in 1800: the Nizām had to cede his territories south of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra by way of the payment for the subsidiary force. A new treaty was concluded with Avadh in 1801. Gorakhpur and Rohilkhand divisions and a portion of the Ganga-Yamuna Doāb were surrendered. These new territorial divisions were known as the 'ceded districts'. Commutation for the subsidy took the form of territorial cession in Avadh as in Hyderābād. Avadh was no longer a buffer state. The subsidiary treaties and territorial cessions served one good purpose. In the Second Anglo-Marāṭhā War the Company's territories escaped invasion, the ravages of war were kept at a distance from the sources of British wealth and power.

**Second Maratha War (1803-5).** The sequence of events that led to the war is very clear. The death of two shrewd Marāṭhā statesmen—Mahādāji Sindia in 1794 and Nānā Fadnavis in 1800—left a void difficult to fill. There was fierce rivalry for power between Daulat Rāo Sindia (successor of Mahādāji Sindia) and Jaswant Rāo Holkar (who succeeded Tukoji Holkar in 1797). Both tried to secure ascendancy at Poona. In 1802, Holkar succeeded in defeating the troops of the Peśwā and Sindia almost within sight of Poona. Thereupon Baji Rao II fled to Bassein and concluded a subsidiary alliance with the British on December 31, 1802. He was to receive a subsidiary force of not less than 6,000 and was to assign districts yielding twenty-six lakhs of rupees for its maintenance. The British were to control his foreign relations. He thus sacrificed his independence and received British protection. British troops restored him to Poona, and Holkar withdrew.

So the Marāṭhā Confederacy was threatened with dissolution. Sindia and the Bhonsle Rājā of Nāgpur decided to face this new situation while Holkar remained watchful. General Arthur Wellesley in the South and Lord Lake in the north fought the armies of the two Marāṭhā chiefs. General Wellesley defeated the combined armies of Sindia and Bhonsle at Assaye in September, 1803. The Bhonsle Rājā precipitately withdrew and was defeated again by General Wellesley at Argaon in November. The Treaty of Deogaon was signed in the following month. Bhonsle ceded the province of Cuttaek along with certain other territories and agreed to receive a subsidiary force. Sindia's French trained army was defeated by Lord Lake at Aligarh and at Delhi and finally at Laswāri. He concluded the Treaty of Surji Arjungaon ceding to the British the Ganga-Yamuna Doāb territories as also Ahmadnagar and Broach and giving up all his claims on the Mughal emperor, the Peśwā, the Nizām and Gāikwār. By another treaty concluded in 1804, Sindia agreed to have a subsidiary alliance under the Company's overlordship.



Holkar now declared war and almost succeeded in overwhelming Colonel Monson at the Mukandwara Pass. The Rājā of Bharatpur rallied to Holkar's support. But Holkar's army was defeated by Frazer at Dig and Lake at Farrukhābād in November, 1804. His capital Indore was captured. Lake next attacked Bharatpur, but four successive assaults failed and he had to make peace with the Jāṭ chief. Holkar fled to the Punjab. It should be noted here that when Lord Lake entered Delhi in September, 1803, Shāh 'Ālam II placed himself under British protection. Wellesley made no separate treaty with him, but provision in the form of a pension was made for him and his successor's maintenance.

**Non-Intervention (1803-1813).** But the pace of British expansion was perhaps too fast. The defeat of Monson and the failure at Bharatpur made the authorities in England feel that empire building was going too fast. Wellesley was recalled and Lord Cornwallis (1805) was sent for the second time to pursue the policy of non-intervention. While he could not undo the work of Wellesley with regard to the Nizām, Avadh, Mysore and the Peśwā, he tried to conciliate Sindia by restoring Gwalior, Gohad and territories to the west of the Yamuna with the exception of Āgra. Cornwallis died in 1805. Sir George Barlow who became his temporary successor (1805-1807) concluded a treaty with Sindia which recognized the Chambal as the British Indian frontier. Holkar was conciliated by the restoration of his territory and was given a free hand in Rājputānā.

Lord Minto came as Governor-General in 1807. His administration (1807-1813) coincided with the Napoleonic wars in Europe. He established friendly relations with Irān and Afghānistān. One noticeable act of Minto was the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809 with Ranjit Singh. It checked Ranjit Singh's advance eastward and put a stop to his attempts to bring cis-Sutlej Punjab under his control. Minto thus pushed the frontier of British India from the Yamuna to the Sutlej.

**Third Maratha War (1817-1819).** Lord Hastings succeeded Minto in 1813 and continued until 1823. The Peśwā was restless under the British yoke. He was compelled to sign a new treaty in June 1817, by which he had to give up the headship of the Marāṭhā Confederacy and he was to conduct relations with other states through the British Resident. He had also to cede the Konkan and his rights in Mālwa, Bundelkhand and in Northern India. However he was not ready to accept such a humiliating treaty as perpetually binding upon him. Appa Sahib, Regent at Nāgpur, likewise concluded a humiliating subsidiary treaty.

The Pindari chiefs, Karim Khan, Amir Khan, Chitu and others who had attended Marāṭhā armies, were devastating Mālwa and Rājputānā. They now entered into the British territories in search of fresh fields and pastures and provoked a war with them. Hastings collected an army of 1,13,000 and drove the Pindari chiefs out of their lairs in 1817-18. Karim Khan surrendered and was granted an estate. Amir Khan was

assigned Tonk in Rājputānā. Chitu took shelter in a jungle where he was killed by a tiger. The rest of them joined the standard of Peśwā Baji Rao.

The Pindari War of Hastings was consequently merged in the Third Anglo-Marāṭhā War. Daulat Rao Sindia was induced to conclude a new treaty with the British in 1817. He gave the British the right of entering into treaty relations with the Rājput states on the left bank of the Chambal. The Peśwā burnt down the British Residency. The British detachment was reinforced and Poona was occupied. Appa Sahib of Nāgpur organized resistance, but his troops were defeated at Sītābaldī Hills and Nāgpur. Malhar Rao Holkar II was defeated at Mehidpur. The Peśwā's army was finally defeated at Āshti. He surrendered to the British on June 18, 1818. Thus all Marāṭhā opposition to the British power ended. A new settlement was made with the Marāṭhā chiefs. The Peśwā surrendered his name and authority for ever, and in return was given eight lakhs of rupees as pension and made to retire to Bithūr near Kānpur. A small district was, however, reserved at Sātāra for the descendant of Śivāji as the Rājā of Sātāra. The remaining portions of the Peśwā's territory were annexed to the Presidency of Bombay. The Bhonsle state of Nāgpur disappeared. British supremacy was established in Rājputānā. Separate treaties were concluded with Mewār, Jaipur, Jodhpur, and other Rājput states. Central India also was thus brought under British control.

The Anglo-Nepalese War, which was caused largely by frontier incidents, lasted from 1814 to 1816. Ochterlony's victory at Makwanpur in February, 1816, led to the conclusion of the treaty of Sagauli. The Nepāl ruler gave up his claims to Sikkim, ceded the disputed Tarai tracts, and received a Resident at Kātmāndu. Thus the northern frontier was given settled limits.

Internal wars were over. British sovereignty was now established in India. Only the Punjab frontier remained open.

## 2. Consolidation of British Rule (1818-1858)

The year 1818 is an important landmark in the history of India, for the map of India, as drawn by Lord Hastings, remained substantially unchanged until the time of Lord Dalhousie. By 1818 the greater part of India, extending from the Sutlej to the Brahmaputra and from the Himālayas to Kanniyākumāri, had been brought under British control. There, however, remained the problem of securing effective control over the western and eastern frontiers of India. Control over the western frontier was secured by annexing Sind and the Punjab and by making Aghānistān a buffer state between the British and Russian empires. Control

over the eastern frontier was to be secured by annexing Lower Burma and by establishing British authority over Assam, Manipur, Cāchār and Jaintia. In addition, the process of political unification of the country was to be hastened by annexing some of the problem states. An attempt was also to be made to consolidate British power in India by carrying out far-reaching reforms, such as the encouragement of English language, the abolition of *Sati*, the suppression of thuggee etc. on the eastern frontier, war between Burma and British India lay in the logic of history, for it was of vital importance to both the countries to secure control over the frontier by annexing Assam, Manipur and other border states. Slowly but almost inevitably events moved to a crisis and led to the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-1826).

**Border Disputes.** The Burmese conquest of Arakan in 1785 had brought Burma for the first time into direct contact with Chittagong and led to border disputes. Thousands of Arakanese fled to Chittagong. Burmese forces sometimes entered British territory in pursuit of Arakanese rebels. The influx of refugees was great, especially in 1787, 1794 and 1798. The Burmese asked the British authorities to expel them, a demand which was difficult to concede. Attempts were made to arrive at a peaceful settlement of these border disputes. The British Government sent envoys to Burma—Captain Symes in 1795 and again in 1802; Captain Cox in 1797; and Captain Canning in 1803, 1809 and 1811. These missions proved unsuccessful—as the envoys were not treated well—but there was an easing of the tension. Unfortunately in 1811 the Arakanese refugees from Chittagong invaded Arakan in large numbers. The Burmese now became more aggressive and tried to bring Manipur and Assam under their control.

**Manipur.** In 1764 Burmese forces invaded Manipur and its ruler Jai Singh (1764-1788), fled to Assam. He regained his throne three years later but was driven out again in 1770. The see-saw struggle continued until the Burmese finally pushed into Manipur (1782) and compelled Jai Singh to submit. When Jai Singh abdicated in 1788 there were fierce disputes about the succession to the throne. The victory of Kaurajit led the rival Marjit, to seek Burmese help. He agreed to renounce Manipur's claim over the Kubo Valley and acknowledge Burma's suzerainty. He occupied Manipur in 1812-13 but he was driven out six years later, and the kingdom was annexed to Burma.

**Assam.** In 1817, taking advantage of internal dissensions in Assam, Burmese forces invaded the country and placed Chandrakanta on the throne. When he was deposed by some of the chiefs and replaced by Purandar, the Burmese invaded Assam again (1819) and Chandrakanta was reinstated. He soon tried to shake off Burmese control and that led to hostilities (1821). Next year Bandula, the Burmese general, conquered Assam and it became part of Burma.

**First Burmese War (1824-26).** The Government of India under Lord Amherst (1823-1828) was alarmed at the Burmese conquest of Assam and Manipur. In September, 1823, the Burmese attacked the island of Shāhpuri near Chittagong, belonging to the Company, and made hostile moves on the Company's territories in Bengal. Lord Amherst declared war on February 24, 1824. Great difficulty was experienced in conducting operations because of the pestilential nature of the terrain. One expedition with gunboats proceeded up the Brahmaputra into Assam. Another marched by land through Chittagong into Arakan, as the Bengal sepoys refused to go by sea. A third and the strongest sailed from Madras direct to the mouth of the Irrawaddy. The war dragged on for more than two years. Rangoon fell on May 11, 1824, and Prome (the capital of Lower Burma) on April 25, 1825. Hostilities were ended by the Treaty of Yandaboo concluded on February 24, 1826. By this treaty the King of Ava agreed to cede the provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim to the British, give up all claims to Assam, abstain from interference in Cāchār and Jaintia, recognize the independence of Manipur, enter into a commercial treaty, agree to the appointment of a British Resident at Ava, and pay an indemnity of a crore of rupees. The King of Ava still retained the whole valley of the Irrawaddy down to the sea at Rangoon.

**Second Burmese War (1852).** Under Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856) the Second Burmese War was fought in sharp contrast to the First. While the First had been provoked by military threats and the aggressive policy of the Burmese, the Second Burmese War was the result of ill-treatment of some European merchants at Rangoon and insults heaped on the captain of a British frigate who had been sent to remonstrate. Lord Dalhousie's thorough-going preparations for the campaign yielded good results. The lower valley of the Irrawaddy, from Rangoon to Prome, was occupied in a few months and as the King of Ava refused to enter into negotiations, it was annexed by proclamation on December 20, 1852, under the name of Pegu.

**North-West Frontier.** The British secured control over India's eastern border provinces in the two Burmese Wars. The defence of the territories in north-west, however, proved to be a more difficult problem. Beyond and to the west of the British frontier line along the Sutlej in 1809 lay, almost on parallel lines, one behind the other, the powerful Sikh kingdom of the Punjab, the principality of Sind and the unchartered country of Afghānistān.

Of all these Afghānistān was of great strategic importance. The Government of India, therefore, could not afford to have a hostile *Amir* in Afghānistān. It was, therefore, safe for India to convert Afghānistān into a buffer state. The Russian borders adjoined Irān's northern frontier, and, as a great land-power, Russia could create serious difficulties for Irān. On the other hand, Great Britain was a great sea-power and her navy

could land troops at any time in south Īrān, on the shores of the Persian Gulf. Thus Īrān was subjected to pressure from Russia in the north and Great Britain in the south. Great Britain tried to gain influence in Īrān by making the Treaty of Tehran in 1809 (revised in 1814); she agreed to help Īrān with men or money against any European invader. Unfortunately, however, no help came in the war which broke out between Russia and Īrān in 1826; Īrān was forced to accept a treaty on humiliating terms. Russia hoped to control Central Asia through Īrān. The British Government's fears of Russian designs on Afghānistān and Central Asia naturally increased. When Īrān laid siege to Herāt in 1837, Lord Auckland (1836-1842) was asked by Lord Palmerston to stop the impending danger to the British empire. Alexander Burnes was accordingly sent to negotiate with Dost Muhammad. But his mission failed as Peshāwar, claimed by the *Amīr* could not be given to him without offending Ranjit Singh.

It is necessary, for a clearer understanding of Auckland's awkward situation, to refer to the events in Turkey and their relation to the events narrated above.

In Turkey also Russia was able to gain a great deal of influence because of certain circumstances. Mehmet Ali, the ambitious ruler of Egypt, defeated Turkish forces in 1832. The Turks appealed to Russia for help. By the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (1833) Russia practically established a protectorate over Turkey. This was a great diplomatic triumph for Russia. It alarmed Great Britain and other European powers. Lord Palmerston's diplomatic counter-offensive led to the Treaty of London (1840-41), which sought the gradual replacement of Russian influence in Turkey by British. Henceforth, it was a primary aim of British foreign policy to support Turkey against Russia. "It is in the interaction of British policy towards Russia in the Near and Middle East that the explanation of much that happened in the two Afghān Wars is to be found." The two powers—one a great land-power and the other a great sea-power—were in a position to throw each other into a state of alarm.

This problem was further complicated by Afghānistān's border disputes on her east with the Punjab. Peshāwar was the bone of contention between them. Ranjit Singh had conquered Peshāwar in 1834, but the Afghāns were determined to recover it.

By the Tripartite Treaty of June 26, 1838, Dost Muhammad was to be overthrown and Shah Shuja, an Afghān prince living in exile, at Ludhiāna was to be placed on the throne of Afghānistān with the Sikh military and British financial support. When Lord Auckland found that Ranjit Singh was not keeping his promise, he decided that the British should undertake the military duty also. This decision was justified in a letter to the Court of Directors (August 13, 1838).

**First Afghan War.** The British army crossed the Bolan Pass and captured Kandahār, Ghazni and Kābul (1839). Shah Shuja was enthroned. His rule, however, proved to be unpopular. The Afghāns rose in revolt. The British envoy Sir Alexander Burnes and his predecessor Sir William Macnaghten were both murdered and the retreating British Indian army perished in the defiles of Afghānistān. Lord Ellenborough (1842-1844) took energetic steps to restore British authority in Afghānistān. Two forces converged on Kābul—one from Jalālābād and the other from Kandahār—and Kābul was captured. Then the British forces withdrew leaving Dost Muhammad to take possession of his throne. He proved to be a capable ruler and maintained friendly relations with the British Government.

**Repercussions of the Anglo-Afghan War.** “The conquest of Sind followed in the wake of the Afghān War and was morally and politically its sequel.” When the First Afghān War broke out in 1838, the British augmented their power in Sind. Since Ranjit Singh did not permit the British forces to pass through his kingdom, the only alternative for them was to move across Sind, but the Treaty of 1832 (renewed in 1834) forbade the passage of armed vessels or military stores. British decision was to violate those terms. The *Amirs* were informed that the prohibiting article of the treaty would remain suspended so long as the emergency lasted. That was not all. The British decided that the *Amirs* must also help them financially in the war effort, and a demand was made accordingly for a large sum of money in commutation of Shah Shuja’s claims for tribute. The plain fact that the *Amirs* had ceased to pay this tribute to Shah Shuja for the past thirty years was simply ignored. The *Amirs* even produced documents to prove that Shah Shuja had given up his claims in 1833. But the British compelled the *Amirs* to agree to their unreasonable demand. Further, the British insisted on a new treaty by which their hold on Sind would be strengthened. The reluctant *Amirs* were cowed down by the threat of military action and accepted the new terms (1839). Henceforth, they had to bear the obligation of paying three lakhs of rupees a year for a British subsidiary force to be kept in Sind.

**Conquest of Sind (1843).** In September, 1842, Sir Charles Napier was sent to Sind as commander of the British forces with full civil, political and military powers. He told the *Amirs* that he was convinced that the charges of disloyalty against them during the Afghān War were well founded. So the treaty with them must be revised, and that would mean cession of territory, provision of fuel for steamers on the Indus, and the loss of the right of coinage. Before the *Amirs* could indicate their assent to these terms, Napier acted as if they had refused them. He razed the fortress of Imamgarh to the ground. Under the threat of war, the *Amirs* hastened to accept the demands. But their patience was exhausted and they rose in revolt. Defeated at Miāni on February 17, 1843, they were exiled and

Sind was annexed. The British treatment of the *Amirs* was high-handed. Outram condemned it; so did the Court of Directors. Even Napier had frankly admitted: "We have no right to seize Sind, yet we shall do so and a very advantageous, useful humane piece of rascality it will be."

**Punjab.** Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab, was a capable ruler and a great statesman. He had seized Lahore in 1799 and made it his capital, and from that point he had extended his conquests to Multān in the south, Peshāwar in the west and Kashmīr in the north. On the east, however, he was hemmed in by the Sutlej: the authority of the British had already advanced upto that river. When he died on June 27, 1839, he left no successor capable of wielding his sceptre. Lahore was torn by dissensions. When the civil government was paralyzed, the army emerged triumphant with disastrous consequences. The process of disintegration of the kingdom started when Kharak Singh, the successor of Ranjit Singh and his only son Naunihal Singh were killed in 1840. There followed a disputed succession to the throne. Chand Kaur, widow of Kharak Singh, was helped by the Sandhanwalia chiefs, while prince Sher Singh, a reputed son of Ranjit Singh, was supported by the powerful minister, Dhyān Singh. Both parties sought the help of the British Government, promising in return cession of valuable territory. A compromise was, however, made by which an interim government was set up with Chand Kaur as the Regent assisted by a council of ministers. Dhyān Singh and Sher Singh did not like the arrangement, and secured the support of the army by lavish promises of reward. They regained power but at a terrible price: the army went out of control since the government was unable to meet its demands. Power passed into the hands of 'military *pañcāyats*' or elective committees. The civil government was weak and helpless. Then tragic events followed in quick succession. The Sandhanwalia chiefs staged a *coup d'état* and murdered Sher Singh and Dhyān Singh in 1843, but they in their turn were exterminated by Hira Singh, the son of Dhyān Singh. Hira Singh, who had seized power by lavish inducements to the army, failed to make good his promises. He lost his life on December 21, 1844, in a conspiracy organized by Jāwahar Singh, brother of Rānī Jindan, the widow of Ranjit Singh. The Rānī now ruled the Punjab with the help of her brother and her advisers, Lal Singh and Tej Singh. But the real ruling authority was the army. The army and the civil government were working at cross-purposes. The army favoured the claims of prince Peshawara Singh as against those of Dalip Singh, the infant son of Rānī Jindan. Jawahar Singh, her brother, brought about the murder of Peshawara Singh; the result was that he was tried by the 'military *pañcāyats*' and executed on September 21, 1845. Rānī Jindan became alarmed at the growing power of the army and thought that it would perhaps be expedient to declare a war against the British. The British Government, ever watchful and alert, was ready for the trial of strength with the Khālsā army.

**First Sikh War (1845-46).** A leaderless army went to its doom with undaunted courage and *elan*—such an example is rare in history. When the First Sikh War with the British began in December 1845, the Khālsā army under Tej Singh crossed the Sutlej and swung into position for an attack on the small, isolated British force under Littler at Ferozepore. The other British detachments were still far away, at Ludhiāna and Ambāla respectively. A vigorous offensive would have yielded good results. The Sikhs fought bravely but they lacked good leadership, and were defeated at Mudki (December 18, 1845), Ferozeshah (December 21, 1845), Aliwal (January 28, 1846), and Sobraon (February 10, 1846).

When Lahore surrendered to the British, Lord Hardinge (1844-1848), declined to annex the kingdom. By the Treaty of Lahore (March, 1846) Dalip Singh, the infant son of Ranjit Singh, was recognized as Rājā; the Jullundur Doāb, or tract between the Sutlej and the Beās, was added to British territory; the Sikh army was limited to a specified number; a British Resident was appointed to assist the Sikh 'Council of Regency' at Lahore with Rānī Jindan as Regent and Lal Singh as Wazīr; a British force was sent to garrison the Punjab on behalf of the child-Rājā; and a heavy war indemnity of one and half crores of rupees was imposed on the Lahore durbar. Half a crore of rupees was paid, and in lieu of the balance the Lahore durbar offered to cede Kashmīr. By a separate treaty, the territory forming the Jammu and Kashmīr state was handed over to Gulab Singh in return for 75 lakhs of rupees. The Governor of Kashmīr refused to surrender the territory, but the revolt was put down. Lal Singh was tried for complicity in the revolt, found guilty and exiled. A few months later by the Treaty of Bhirowal (December, 1846), Rānī Jindan was deprived of all power and the administration was to be carried on by a 'Council of Regency' composed of eight leading chiefs under the virtual dictatorship of the British Resident.

**Second Sikh War (1848-49).** The British now had a firm grip over the Punjab. It was only a question of time before even the semblance of independence of the Lahore durbar was wiped out. Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856) had been barely six months in India when the Second Sikh War broke out. Events had moved fast towards a crisis. Rānī Jindan had been removed from Lahore to Shekhūpura on a charge of conspiracy against the British Resident. The disbanded Sikh soldiers were restive. The leading chiefs, Chatar Singh, Governor of Hazāra and his son Sher Singh, became hostile: this was due to the Resident's reluctance to permit the marriage of Dalip Singh with the daughter of Chatar Singh. In 1848, the storm burst. Dīwān Mulraj, Governor of Multān, failed to comply with the financial demands of the Lahore durbar and resigned. Two British officers, who accompanied Kahan Singh, the successor of Mulraj, were assassinated at Multān. The British army was not ready to act in the hot season. During this interim period the revolt at Multān assumed formidable proportions,



especially after Sher Singh who had been sent by the Resident with a large army to Multān left the British camp on September 14, 1848. The Khālsā army again came together and once more fought on even terms with the British. At the battle of Chiliānwāla (January 13, 1849), the Sikh soldiers covered themselves with glory. It was a drawn battle. The British claimed victory, having stormed the batteries and captured the guns. The Sikhs also claimed victory; they had not only repulsed British attacks but compelled the enemy to abandon the battlefield. Before reinforcements could come over from England, with Sir Charles Napier as Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gough restored his reputation by the victory of Gujrāt (February 21, 1849), which destroyed the Sikh army. Multān had already been captured on January 22, 1849, and the Afghān cavalry under Dost Muhammad, an ally of the Sikhs, had been chased back to their native hills. The Punjab, annexed by proclamation (March 29, 1849), became a British province—a virgin field for the administrative talents of Dalhousie and the two Lawrences, Henry and John.

**Indian States:** Besides rounding off the territories and securing the frontiers of the Company's territories as far as practicable, steps were taken to consolidate the British power in India by either annexing the incorrigible states or placing British Commissioners over the erring ones. A disputed succession in Bharatpur led to British intervention. In January, 1826, Lord Amherst put down the pretender and restored the *status quo*. Lord William Bentinck placed Mysore under a British Commission in October, 1831, believing that it was being misgoverned. It was too late when he realized the mistake. Mysore continued under British administration till 1881 and emerged as a model state on rendition. Coorg was annexed in May, 1834 due to the misrule of the Rājā. The principality of Cāchār was annexed in 1832 and Jaintia in Assam was incorporated into the British empire in 1835 to save it from maladministration. Lord Ellenborough curbed the military strength of Sindia and placed the state under British protection during the Rājā's minority. In 1843, a dispute regarding the regency in Gwalior resulted in a war against the rebellious state army. Peace was restored after it was defeated in the battles of Mahārājpur and Panniar.

**Doctrine of Lapse.** Lord Dalhousie followed vigorously the policy of annexing feudatory states by what is commonly known as the Doctrine of Lapse. He was convinced that British administration was better for the people than the rule of the Indian Rājās. Accordingly, he regarded them as anomalies, to be abolished by every possible means. He further believed that good faith must be kept with rulers on the throne and with their legitimate heirs while no sentiment should save the dynasties which had forfeited sympathy by generations of misrule nor preserve those that had no hereditary successor. The Doctrine of Lapse was the outcome of these principles, complicated by the Hindu law and practice of adoption.

Dalhousie held that the state of a ruler could not pass to a son adopted without the consent of the suzerain. Such consent, at the same time, would not be easily given. For in his mind the benefits to be conferred through British administration upon the state subjects weighed heavier in the scale of their happiness than the right of the adopted son to inherit and 'mis-rule' the state. The Doctrine of Lapse, which had been recognized as early as 1834, thus became a powerful instrument in Dalhousie's hands for hastening the process of political unification and administrative consolidation of the country under British rule.

Sātāra was the first of the important states that escheated to the British Government in 1848. Dalhousie claimed that it had been created by Lord Hastings on the downfall of the Peśwā in 1818, and, therefore, he declared that when the Rājā of Sātāra, the last lineal representative of Śivājī, died without a male heir in 1848, his death-bed adoption of a son without the consent of the British would not be accepted. The independence of the Rājput state of Karauli was continued by the Court of Directors and the Board of Control, who drew a clear distinction between a dependent principality and a protected ally and held that in Karauli ancient custom must continue. In 1853, Jhānsi and Nāgpur (1854) suffered the same fate as Sātāra and when Baji Rao, the ex-Peśwā, died his pension of Rs. 8,00,000 lapsed to the state. His adopted son, Nana Sahib, was not allowed to draw it. The Nawāb of Carnatic died in the same year; his rank and pension were abolished as in the case of Thanjāvūr. The same principle was applied to Jaitpur, Sambalpur, Bāghāt and Udaipur between 1849-1852. Dalhousie further notified that on the death of emperor Bahadur Shah, his heir must quit Delhi and retire from power with a pension and an honorary title. In 1853, British administration was extended to Berār which the Nizam of Hyderābād handed over temporarily to the British Government in lieu of the arrears of his subsidy as also for the expense of the Hyderābād subsidiary contingent. All these were extremely drastic measures and bound to recoil like a boomerang.

**Annexation of Avadh (1856).** The most conspicuous of all Dalhousie's annexations was that of the kingdom of Avadh on grounds of maladministration. Ever since the Nawāb Wazīr, Shujā'u'd-daulah received back his forfeited territories from the hands of Lord Clive in 1765, the existence of his dynasty had depended on the protection of British bayonets. Guarded alike from foreign invasion and from dynastic rebellion, the Nawābs had lost their grip over administration. Degeneration was inevitable under a system which conferred on the ruler power without responsibility. Lord William Bentinck in 1831 and Lord Hardinge in 1847 had warned the Nawābs (who had assumed the title of Shāh or King since 1819) that they must put their house in order. Colonel Sleeman in 1851 and Colonel Outram in 1855 reported on the deplorable conditions in Avadh. A strong case could, therefore, be made out for the annexation of Avadh on grounds

of misrule. But Dalhousie could not ignore the steadfast loyalty of the Nawābs to the British Government. Moreover, annexation would mean the repudiation of the treaty of 1837. By this treaty the British Government could not annex Avadh even if its ruler failed to carry out reforms; but they could take over the administration, allowing the king to retain nominal sovereignty, i.e., palace, rank and titles. This treaty gave rise to a great deal of misunderstanding. Even though the Court of Directors had not approved of it, Lord Auckland had informed the king of the disallowance of only one clause. Moreover, the treaty was included in a subsequent government publication and, what is more surprising, it was referred to as still in force by succeeding Governors-General. So the kings of Avadh regarded the treaty as extant. Dalhousie felt that in the circumstances it would not be advisable to annex Avadh. As an alternative, he was in favour of taking over the administration and leaving to the king his nominal sovereignty. But he was overruled by the Home authorities who decided on annexation. General Outram, Resident at the Court of Lucknow, failed in his effort to induce king Wajid Ali Shah to abdicate. Avadh was annexed in February, 1856. Wajid Ali was brought to Calcutta and was given a generous pension. The annexation of Avadh, involving as it did the repudiation of a solemn treaty, excited public feeling and was one of the main causes of the Great Revolt of 1857.

**Revolt of 1857.** Though some far-sighted Englishmen, notably Sir Henry Lawrence, had given warnings of the coming storm, the British Government was completely taken by surprise at the outbreak of the Great Revolt in May, 1857. The Revolt was due to many causes; of these the most important undoubtedly was the discontent of the sepoys of the Bengal army. A sepoy became a non-commissioned officer after twenty years of service and a commissioned officer at the age of about fifty-five. The highest post that he could reach was that of Subedar-Major or Risaldar-Major. Such unfavourable terms of service could neither evoke loyalty nor produce any sense of discipline in the sepoy army. Sir Henry Lawrence had the foresight to strike a note of warning against this system: "The question is only whether justice is to be gracefully conceded or violently seized."

**Caste Prejudices.** The high caste Brāhmaṇas and Rājput̄s of Avadh, North-Western Provinces and Bihār (present Uttar Pradesh and Bihār), who were recruited in large numbers to the Bengal army, were very particular in observing their caste rules and regulations. Even while camping they would have their own separate cooking pots and *loṭās*. When, during the Sikh Wars, Sir Harry Smith lost his baggage and the three regiments under his command lost their *loṭās* and cooking pots, the sepoys preferred to remain hungry for twenty-four hours rather than partake of the meals prepared by men of other castes. No wonder that the sepoys had a horror of *kālā pāni*, sea voyage, regarded as defilement. In 1824, the 47th Regiment refused to serve in Burma and was disbanded. Again, the 38th Regiment

refused to serve in Burma in 1852. That explains why the sepoys particularly resented the passing in 1856 of the General Service Enlistment Act by which every recruit had to serve wherever required and not in India alone. They also resented the government order which stopped the practice of sepoys being invalidated after fifteen years' service. According to the new rule a sepoy was not permitted to retire on invalid pension but was retained with the colours and employed on ordinary cantonment duty. The sepoy had thus to serve in the army for a longer period and, if necessary, outside India. These two fundamental changes in the rules of recruitment created sharp discontent.

*Faulty Disposition of Troops.* Some British historians have expressed the view that one of the causes of the Great Revolt of 1857 was the disparity in numbers between European and Indian troops (2,33,000 Indian and 45,322 British soldiers) and the faulty distribution of troops. They have pointed out that Delhi and Allahābād were held by sepoys and, except for some British troops at Dānāpur, there were no British soldiers between Allahābād and Calcutta. It is true that the disparity in numbers and the faulty deployment of troops facilitated the spread of the Revolt, but then this could hardly be regarded as one of its causes. The main impulse for the revolt sprang from the growing momentum of discontent.

*Dalhousie's Annexations.* More than anything else, it was the annexation policy of Lord Dalhousie which created widespread resentment. One by one the petty states as well as powerful independent kingdoms were swept away and absorbed into the British empire in India: the Punjab and Lower Burma by the right of conquest; Avadh on the plea of mal-administration; and Jhānsi, Sātāra, Nāgpur, etc., by the Doctrine of Lapse. Dalhousie refused to grant to Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the Peśwā, the pension of rupees 8 lakhs on the death of Peśwā Baji Rao. Perhaps Dalhousie aimed at the political unification of the country. Nevertheless, the pace of conquests and annexations was so rapid that it created uneasiness in the minds of Indians. Dalhousie raised a hornet's nest for he alienated powerful vested interests.

*Economic Factors.* It has been rightly stated that "every annexation of a native state not only deposed a reigning house but still further limited the rapidly narrowing field in which men of Indian race could display their political and administrative talents." Land-owners were antagonized by Lord Bentinck's resumption of rent-free tenures; due to this measure, the landlords who had lost their title-deeds were deprived of their estates. The proceedings of the Inam Commission at Bombay (set up to enquire into rent-free tenures), resulted in the confiscation of 20,000 estates. A further blow came from the strict enquiry made by Coverly Jackson, the Chief Commissioner of Avadh, into the titles of the *taluqdārs*, the hereditary revenue collectors of Avadh.

*Greased Cartridges.* In this critical state of affairs, a rumour ran

through the sepoy army that the cartridges served out to the Bengal Regiments had been greased with the fat of cows, the sacred animal of the Hindus, and the lard of pigs, regarded as unclean by the Muslims. There is evidence that a disastrous blunder had really been made in this regard. The blunder was quickly remedied, but it was already too late. The Hindus and Muslims alike were convinced that it was a deliberate attempt of the British Government to hurt their religious feelings.

On May 10, 1857, three native regiments mutinied at Meerut (the largest military station in Northern India) and marched to Delhi where more sepoys joined them. They proclaimed Bahadur Shah, the titular king of Delhi, as the emperor of India. Once more the Mughal flag fluttered on the ramparts of the Red Fort. A rallying centre and a traditional name were thus given to the Revolt, which now spread like wild fire through Avadh, the North-Western Provinces, and Bihār. Beginning as a revolt of the army the movement soon developed into a war to rid the country of its foreign rulers.

The main interest of the war centres on the cities of Kānpur, Lucknow, Delhi, Jhānsi and Gwalior. Kānpur contained one of the great native garrisons of India. At Bithūr, not far off (about 20 km.), was the palace of Nana Sahib, the heir of the last Peśwā. When the sepoys at Kānpur revolted on June 4, Nana Sahib came forward to assume the leadership. The Europeans shut themselves in an entrenchment which bore a siege for nineteen days. Tatyā Tope, the military adviser of Nana Sahib, showed skill and energy in launching attacks. On June 27, the Europeans surrendered and were permitted to leave for Allahābād under a safe conduct, but were treacherously murdered.

Sir Henry Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of Avadh, had foreseen the storm. He fortified and provisioned the Residency at Lucknow and retired there with all the European inhabitants and a weak British regiment. On July 2, he was wounded by a shell and died two days later. The garrison held out against enormous odds. The sepoys in large numbers rallied to the support of the Begum of Avadh, but they could not capture the Residency. Meanwhile a small British force had secured Allahābād enabling Major-General Havelock to advance at the head of a large force on July 7 for the recapture of Kānpur. After a series of engagements Kānpur was taken on July 17. On July 25, Havelock advanced from Kānpur for the relief of the Residency. The advance was checked by strong opposition at Unnāo and Bashirat Ganj; Tatyā Tope threatened Kānpur again; the three regiments at Dānāpur mutinied and tried to cut the British lines of communication. Havelock, however, overcame these difficulties. He defeated Tatyā Tope's troops at Bithūr on August 16. Tatyā Tope escaped to Kālpi, where he soon gathered many recruits. A large force led by Havelock and Outram stormed its way into the Residency at Lucknow on September 25. But this relieving force was itself invested by fresh swarms

of sepoys. Lucknow was not relieved, it was only strengthened.

Meanwhile, British troops had advanced from Ambāla and Meerut and taken up position on the Ridge on June 8 to begin the siege of Delhi. Sepoys, who had flocked to Delhi in large numbers, launched many fierce attacks, but failed to dislodge the British troops on the Ridge. The British had one great advantage in their firm grip over the Punjab, which became an admirable base of operations for the capture of Delhi. In the Punjab the revolt had been met by swift anticipated measures of repression and disarmament, carried out by Sir John Lawrence and his lieutenants—Herbert Edwardes and John Nicholson. In the middle of August, Nicholson arrived with reinforcements from the Punjab. On September 14, the assault was launched and after six days' desperate fighting Delhi was recaptured. Nicholson fell at the head of the storming party. The sons of Bahadur Shāh were shot dead by Major Hodson, while the old Mughal emperor, after a trial of doubtful legality, was sent as a state prisoner to Rangoon, where he lived till 1862.

The interest of the story now shifts to Lucknow. Sir Colin Campbell cut his way into Lucknow and effected the final deliverance of the garrison on November 17. Tatyā Tope then carried out his famous counter-offensive. At the head of a large force, composed mainly of the Gwalior contingent, he swooped down from Kālpi on Kānpur and routed the British troops commanded by Major-General Wyndham. He could not reap the fruits of victory: Sir Colin Campbell rushed down from Lucknow in time to save Kānpur and to defeat Tatyā Tope's troops on December 6. Sir Colin Campbell then regrouped his forces and finally reoccupied Lucknow in March, 1858.

Meanwhile, Sir Hugh Rose with an army from Bombay was conducting a vigorous campaign in Central India. His most formidable antagonists were the Rānī of Jhānsi and Tatyā Tope. Sir Hugh Rose laid siege to Jhānsi on March 22. A large force led by Tatyā Tope advanced from Charkhari for the relief of Jhānsi, but was defeated at the battle of the Betwa on April 1, 1858. After a desperate resistance, the Rānī left Jhānsi on April 4. She suffered further reverses at Kūnch (May 7) and Kālpi (May 22).

At a time when the Rānī's fortunes were at the lowest ebb there took place a dramatic turn of events. The soldiers of Sindia went over to her side and she entrenched herself in the strong fort of Gwalior. Her triumph was short lived. Sir Hugh Rose recaptured Gwalior on June 20. The Rānī gave her life, fighting bravely at the head of her troops.

All this time the struggle had been gaining in intensity in Avadh. The people of Avadh and Rohilkhand, stimulated by the presence of the Begum of Avadh, the Nawāb of Bareilly and Nana Sahib, had joined the sepoys *en masse*. In this region alone it was a revolt of the people rather than the mutiny of an army. Kunwar Singh rallying the sepoys and the people moved out of Bihār and made strenuous efforts to organize the forces of

opposition in several parts of Central India and Avadh; but he was forced to return to Bihār where he died in April, 1858. On May 5, 1858, the battle of Bareilly was lost by the Rohillas. The strong counter-offensive against Shāhjahānpur met with failure. In spite of this set-back the people of Avadh carried on the struggle for a long time. Sir Colin Campbell conducted the campaign in Avadh and it lasted through two cold seasons. It was not till January, 1859, that opposition was finally overcome.

The last phase of the war was marked by the exploits of Tatyā Tope. After the loss of Gwalior, Tatyā Tope commenced "the marvellous series of operations", which continued for ten months and which established his reputation as one of the greatest guerilla leaders. Tatyā Tope, after doubling backwards and forwards through Central India and Rājputānā, was at last betrayed, captured and executed on April 18, 1859.

### 3. India Under British Crown (1858-1947)

The British Crown took over the Indian administration in 1858 after the Great Revolt and relinquished its power in 1947. The period falls into two clear divisions: 1858-1905 and 1905-1947. In the first period the British empire in India reached its zenith; in the second the central event was the growth of the nationalist movement and the achievement of Independence in 1947.

#### (a) 1858-1905

Authority from the Company to the Crown was transferred under the Government of India Act of 1858. In England the President of the Board of Control was replaced by a Secretary of State for India under the British Cabinet who was to have final authority over Indian affairs. To assist him with local knowledge a Council of India with fifteen members was created. Of these, eight were to be nominated by the Crown and seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors. In India the Governor-General was to be the personal representative of the British Crown and to assume the title of Viceroy. All this change took place during the administration of Lord Canning (1856-1862), the last Governor-General of the Company who became the first Viceroy and Governor-General of India under the Crown.

The change was formally announced by the Queen's Proclamation of November 1, 1858, which set forth a new policy for India. The policy was born of a reappraisal of the Indian situation in the light of the Revolt of 1857. It was recognized that the quickening of the tempo of social reform legislation in partial disregard of the Indian tradition had been a mistake. The pace was faster than the country could bear. Dalhousie's uninhibited drive for territorial acquisition had caused serious alarm among the princes. The Queen's Proclamation, therefore, reversed the reformist trend by

committing the Government of India to a policy of greater respect for Indian usages and customs and of non-interference with religious beliefs and worship. The princes were assured that all the treaties and engagements made with them by the East India Company would be respected and that no further encroachment on their territories would be made. The policy of 'lapse' was discontinued.

Canning's first task after the Mutiny was to bring peace to the ravaged countryside. He did it effectively without yielding to the cry for vengeance from the British residents of Calcutta. The Revolt had brought in its trail a difficult financial problem. The Government was burdened with a heavy debt. Two British financial experts, James Wilson and Samuel Laing, cut down government expenditure and introduced an income tax, a paper currency and annual budgets. With these measures the deficit was converted into a surplus by 1864. The Government of India Act of 1858 did not radically alter the structure of government, but small changes began to accrue right from the beginning. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 added a fifth member to the Executive Council of the Governor-General. Canning introduced the portfolio system by which members of this council were given responsibility for specific departments. For the first time provision was made for the nomination of non-official members to the Imperial Legislative Council. At the same time, power of legislation was restored to the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. The judicial system was significantly altered by the enactment of the Indian Penal Code (1860), the Code of Criminal Procedure (1861) and the High Courts Act (1861).

Before he left for England in 1862 Canning had reconstructed the Government of India according to the needs of the time and had launched it on a new career in a world changing under the impact of the Industrial Revolution of the West.

Between Canning (1856-1862) and Curzon (1899-1905) India was governed by nine Viceroys: Lord Elgin I (1862-1863); Sir John Lawrence (1864-1869); Lord Mayo (1869-1872); Lord Northbrook (1872-1876); Lord Lytton (1876-1880); Lord Ripon (1880-1884); Lord Dufferin (1884-1888); Lord Lansdowne (1888-1894); and Lord Elgin II (1894-1899). It was a period of completion and consolidation of British imperial rule in India which reached its high point under Curzon. The frontiers were rounded off, the relations with the Indian states were straightened out and placed on a permanent footing, and a highly bureaucratized imperial administrative machinery came into being. Moreover, economic development and modernized communications unified the country as never before, and the very same forces of the modern world drew India into a closer integration with all parts of the British empire. The establishment of direct telegraphic line between England and India enabled the Secretary of State to exercise direct effective control over Indian affairs from London and thereby to subordinate the 'policy' of the Governor-General-in-Council



in India to that of the British Cabinet. The Government of India lost its virtual autonomy and henceforth the policy for India came to be dictated more and more by the larger considerations of the empire.

**The Frontier : Afghanistan.** By 1858 the whole of the Indian sub-continent had passed under British domination but a settled frontier was yet to emerge. In the north-west the stability of the frontier depended on a good understanding between British India and Afghānistān. This in its turn depended upon the policies of the two neighbours of Afghānistān—Persia and Russia. In 1855, Dalhousie had concluded a treaty of friendship with Dost Muhammad, the *Amīr* of Afghānistān and had helped him to foil a Persian attack on Herāt (1856-57). The death of Dost Muhammad in 1863, touched off a struggle for succession in Afghānistān. The Government of India stuck to its policy of non-interference. In 1868, Sher Ali one of the claimants defeated all his rivals and was promptly recognized as the new *Amīr*. The situation became more complicated by the steady advance of Russia into Central Asia. Bukhara had been reduced in 1866; the province of Russian Turkistān had been created in 1867; Samarqand fell in 1868; and in 1873 Khiva too was taken. The British were shaken out of their policy of 'masterly inactivity' and the Gladstone ministry sought Russia's recognition of Sher Ali's rights in Central Asia. But the succeeding Disraeli ministry took an alarmist view of Russian activities in Europe and the Near East and favoured stronger action in Afghānistān. In 1876, as the Russians once more intervened in the Balkans, the British occupied Quetta (1877) and Lytton proposed to send an envoy to Kābul. The *Amīr's* refusal to accept the envoy led to the British invasion of his country in 1878. The treaty of Gandamak (1879) converted Afghānistān into an almost protected state of India, but popular rising prevented its enforcement. In 1880 Lord Ripon recognized Abdur Rahman, the nephew of Sher Ali, as the *Amīr* of Kābul on condition that he should have no political relations with any foreign power except the British. The cession of Kurram, Pishīn and Sibi made to them in 1879 was confirmed. In 1881, Abdur Rahman became the master of the whole of Afghānistān after eliminating his rivals with British help. In the eighties there was a fresh scare caused by the Russian occupation of Merv in 1884 and Panjdeh in 1885. The Zulfikār Pass was threatened. In 1887 Britain, Russia and Afghānistān concluded an agreement which fixed the boundary between Russia and Afghānistān. A line of demarcation between Afghānistān and India known as the Durand Line was drawn in 1893-1895. It divided the sphere of influence equally between Afghānistān and India. Dealing with the tribals on the eastern side of the new line, however, became a major frontier problem for India. This was adequately solved by Lord Curzon by the creation of the North-West Frontier Province in 1901 and by making its administration an imperial responsibility.

**Burma.** The two Burmese Wars had given the British the possession of the coastal provinces of Arakan, Pegu and Tenasserim, thus shutting out upper Burma from the sea. English traders were, however, admitted to upper Burma and their rights were secured by the treaties of 1862 and 1867. The English were very keen on opening overland trade with China through Burma. Exploratory moves were permitted by King Mindon and his successor Thibaw in spite of strained relations with the Government of India. In 1884, the emergence of a French empire in Indo-China precipitated a crisis by upsetting the balance of power in South-East Asia. In 1885, the French concluded a treaty with Burma and sent a Consul to Mandalay. They started negotiations with Thibaw for commercial and railway concessions and promised to supply arms through Tonkin. The French activities threatened British interest in Burma and it seemed certain that Thibaw was out to seize this opportunity to oust the British with French help. The imposition of a heavy fine on the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation by the Burmese Government provided the *casus belli* and Lord Dufferin in 1886 lost no time in annexing upper Burma. Beyond eastern Burma lay the kingdom of Siam which came to be recognized, in 1893, as a buffer state between the British and the French spheres of influence.

**Princely States.** Dalhousie's policy of annexation is held to be partly responsible for the outbreak of the Great Revolt of 1857. Yet the princes, with a few exceptions, stood aloof from the Revolt to the great relief of the British rulers. Canning gratefully described the Indian states as 'breakwaters' in a storm that could have swept the British out of India. The experience of the Great Revolt brought a new appreciation of the role of the subsidiary and subordinate states, and the changed attitude was reflected in a new policy towards them. The Queen's Proclamation explicitly abandoned the policy of annexation. The princes were assured continued enjoyment of their treaty rights. The Doctrine of Lapse was repudiated and the right of adoption was conceded on condition of loyalty to the Crown. All this was done to conciliate the princes. At the same time the Crown stood forth as 'the unquestioned Ruler and Paramount Power in all India'. The theory of 'one charge' enunciated by Canning meant that India constituted one political unit comprising both the British possessions and the Indian states. The open assumption of paramountcy by the British Government weakened the position of these states and reduced them to the status of protected princes.

In the period following the Great Revolt there was a great deal of interference, as before, in the internal affairs of the states by the Paramount Power. On the one hand, there was constant British pressure on the states to modernize; on the other, there was direct political intervention in case of misgovernment. The agency through which the British Government operated was the Resident who usually exercised great influence over the

internal administration of the state. The programme of modernization had enduring results. Lord Mayo founded the Chief's Colleges at Ajmer, Lahore, Rājkot and other places with a view to encouraging the education of the princes along modern lines. Among other features of modernization were the laying of railroads, introduction of post and telegraph services, and the creation of a modern army. The Imperial Service Corps formed by Dufferin built up a close association of the states with the Indian armed forces, and this lasted well into the 20th century. Through the service of a number of distinguished Indian *Dīwāns* the administration of the states was improved and in the same period popular representative institutions were introduced.

Cases of disputed succession called for British interference in Alwar (1870), Gwalior (1875) and Kashmīr (1885). In 1876 the British Government went so far as to depose the Gāikwār of Baroda for misgovernment. This high-handed action outraged Indian sentiment and produced a sense of uncertainty in the minds of the princes. Partly to conciliate the temper of the princes a durbar was held in Delhi in 1877, when Queen Victoria assumed the title of 'Empress of India'. Mysore was restored to its legitimate sovereign in 1881. The British, however, continued to assert their right of interference in the internal affairs of the states, and in 1891, in order to quell an armed rebellion, they took the drastic measure of deposing and executing the Rājā of Manipur. All through this period the overriding authority of the Paramount Power steadily grew, reducing the Indian states to absolute political impotence. The claims of imperialism were at their highest under Curzon, reducing the princes to tools of the Crown in the administration of the empire in India.

**Administrative Structure.** The framework of a unified administrative system for British India had emerged before the Great Revolt. In the period after 1858 new features appeared. The Secretary of State for India was endowed with great powers by the Government of India Act of 1858. The Viceroy was for the first time subordinated to the centralized control of the Home Government. Formerly, the East India Company's administration in India used to be subjected to periodic scrutiny through enquiries instituted by the British Parliament. Now, although the Secretary of State was responsible to the Parliament, the general apathy of its members towards Indian affairs left him free to pursue his own policy without much interference.

The supreme government in India underwent a great change in the second half of the 19th century. Canning had introduced an Indian element in the central administration by nominating the Mahārājā of Patiala, the Rājā of Vārānasi and Sir Dinkar Rao to the Imperial Legislative Council. Other changes brought about by the Act of 1861 have already been noted. The Indian Councils Act of 1870 empowered the Governor-General to override the decisions of the majority of his Council and to pass

regulations without referring to the Legislative Council. His Council was further enlarged in 1874, by the addition of a sixth member for public works. The Indian Councils Act of 1892, passed in response to nationalist demand, added ten more members to the Legislative Council out of which four were to be elected by the provincial legislatures. The provincial legislatures in their turn were enlarged by the addition of fifteen to twenty members representing municipalities, district boards, chambers of commerce and universities. The Act thus took the significant step of recognizing the principle of representation through election. The powers of the Legislative Council were enlarged to include the right to discuss the annual budget.

Another notable feature of the Indian administration of this period is the growth of an all-powerful imperialist bureaucracy. The Indian Civil Service had already attained some degree of efficiency. After 1858, the service grew into a tightly organized corporation, the members of which became 'immovable, irresponsible and amenable to no other authority but their fellow members'. The civil servants were responsible only to the Secretary of State and became the chief agency through which the authority of the Home Government was exercised in India. Closer integration with the Home Government coincided with the growing exclusiveness of the British elements in the civil service as a caste in India. The Great Revolt had snapped the ties that had grown up between the English administrators and the Indian people in the days of the Company. Distrust of the Indians tended to widen the gulf between the ruler and the ruled. Steam navigation and the opening of the Suez Canal (1869) kept the British officials in India in close touch with their home, making it unnecessary for them to develop homely feelings towards Indians. British administration after the Great Revolt was fast assuming an alien character.

The decision to throw open a few responsible, high ranking posts of the administration to Indians had been taken under the Charter Act of 1833. Open competitive examinations were started in England in 1853, but it was not until 1864, that the first Indian entered the civil service. The successive lowering-down of the qualifying age for the examination showed the persistent resistance of vested interests to admit Indians to the civil service. Indian demand for holding simultaneous examinations in England and India was not accepted. On the recommendation of a Public Service Commission in 1886, the services were reorganized into imperial, provincial and subordinate cadres. Indians were to be appointed by promotion or direct recruitment to the provincial and subordinate services. The arrangement continued till the end of British rule.

Steps were, however, taken to allow Indian participation in administration. In 1871, acts were passed in the different provinces to set up district committees to administer funds for education, sanitation and other local needs such as the maintenance of roads. These committees

were nominated by the Government. Lord Ripon extended the system further in 1882 by setting up local committees for the sub-divisions of districts and for municipalities. These local boards were to have non-official chairmen and half to two-thirds of their members were to be elected.

That Indian participation in the administration had a limit beyond which it could not be pushed was shown by the agitation over the Ilbert Bill. Under an Act of 1873 British subjects in the districts could be tried only by European magistrates. In 1883, the Ilbert Bill sought to empower Indian sessions judges to try Europeans. Vigorous agitation by the Europeans forced the Government to amend the bill, giving the Europeans the right to claim a jury half of which were to be Europeans.

**Finance and Economic Policy.** The reforms of Wilson and Laing had, as shown already, enabled the Government to tide over the difficulties which followed the Great Revolt. The Government, however, needed funds to undertake public works such as irrigation and communications for prevention of famine and protection against its horrors. As the revenue from trade proved inadequate, the Government raised loans in 1867, to finance irrigation projects and the construction of railways. Financial decentralization began in 1870, when the provinces were given fixed yearly grants and in addition permitted to raise funds through local cesses. By the middle of the 19th century India had been fully woven into the web of world trade. In accordance with the avowed government policy of *laissez-faire* customs cactus line was wiped out. There was a noticeable expansion of trade in this period, stimulated in a large measure by the introduction of railways and the opening of roads and canals. Under the pressure of Lancashire the import duties levied on coarse cotton cloth were abolished in 1879. In 1894, a currency crisis made it necessary for the Government to reimpose a general import duty of 5 per cent. Strong protest from Lancashire led to the imposition of a countervailing excise duty of 5 per cent on cotton goods manufactured in Indian mills. Even the Governor-General's Council protested against such a clear case of discrimination against India but had to yield ultimately to the British mill-owners' pressure upon the British Cabinet.

The most outstanding economic achievement of the period was the expansion of the railways. By 1900, about 40,234 km. of railroad had been built. The construction work was actually carried out mostly by private companies but the whole programme was sponsored by the Indian Government. The railways undoubtedly provided the foundations on which the structure of modern India was later on built. Industrialization which had begun in the middle of the 19th century, made rapid progress after the introduction of railways.

Periodic recurrence of famines was one of the toughest rural problems of the time. Severe famines occurred in Orissa in 1866-67, in the u.p., the Punjab and Rājputāna in 1868-69, and in Bihār in 1873.

The railways helped a great deal in fighting famines by facilitating quick transport of food from the surplus areas. The Government was seriously concerned with the famine problem and after years of experimentation evolved a policy which was embodied in the Famine Code of 1883. It recommended the creation of a special fund for providing relief and employment in the famine affected areas. It also urged the full utilization of railway facilities for the transportation of grain from unaffected areas.

**Educational Policy and National Awakening.** Introduction of western education after Macaulay's Minute on education (1835) had come as a corollary to the policy of admitting Indians to the administration under the Charter Act of 1833. The law courts too needed trained personnel for proper functioning. In 1857, the three universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were founded. Schools and colleges multiplied rapidly thereafter. In 1882, the Hunter Commission studied the educational system and recommended the reorganization of the educational services. English education brought to India political ideas of the West along with a knowledge of western science. These ideas produced the great intellectual ferment of the 19th century, which had begun much earlier than 1857. They ultimately found political expression in the national awakening of the eighties. By that time a sizeable educated middle class had appeared on the scene which spoke the common English language and had a common stock of western liberal ideas. The railways, the telegraph and the press, besides the industries employing skilled labour, enabled them to act on an all India basis, and in due course these scattered activities crystallized into forums of national feelings and ideas.

In 1876, Surendranath Banerjea founded the Indian Association in Calcutta. This organization was primarily concerned with a plea for the admission of Indians to the civil service. It also carried on a campaign against the Arms Act and the Vernacular Press Act (1878) of Lord Lytton. In 1883, the Ilbert Bill agitation led to the foundation of the Indian National Conference in Calcutta with representatives from all over India. In 1885, the Indian National Congress was formed in Bombay and the Indian National Conference merged into it without any difficulty. It began with seventy-two members but soon grew into a significant national body with representatives from all parts of the country and all sections of the people. The Muslims, however, under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan held aloof from the nationalist agitations of the 19th century. In the first twenty years of its existence the Congress confined itself to the passing of resolutions which criticized various government policies and urged reforms. It also opened a branch in London in order to present its views before the British public. Although Dufferin described the Congress Party as a 'microscopic minority', his government could not altogether ignore its existence and passed the Indian Councils Act of 1892 partly to meet the situation created by Congress campaigning

in England. In 1899 when Curzon arrived in India the Indian nationalist movement had taken roots and was well under way.

**Curzon's Administration.** Lord Curzon (1899-1905) came to India with strong preconceived ideas. He was totally blind to the influence of the educated middle class and to the existence of a strong national movement. He was an imperialist to the bone with his eyes fixed on India as a country where he would fulfil his destiny. In total disregard of the dynamics of new India he proceeded to set the crowning stone on the imposing edifice of the British empire in India. For indeed his term of office at the turn of the century marked the high noon of British imperialism in India.

In his frontier policy he combined caution with characteristic imperialist bluster. In the north-west, the occupation of territories right up to the Durand Line had provoked a revolt in 1897. Curzon settled the problem by vacating Chitrāl, the Khyber and the Kurram valleys, raising tribal levies to police the tribes, concentrating British troops in bases a little away from the frontier, and improving communications between the bases to facilitate the quick movement of troops. Finally, the North-West Frontier Province was created to keep a permanent watch on the frontier. In Afghānistān Habibullah succeeded his father Abdur Rahman in 1901. Curzon renewed the existing treaty with him and established amicable relations by addressing the new *Amir* as 'His Majesty'.

In the Himālayas, Curzon found it difficult to enforce the Anglo-Chinese agreements of 1890 and 1893. By the former agreement Sikkim had become a British protectate and its boundary with Tibet had been defined. Russian designs in Tibet forced Curzon to depart from the traditional British policy. The frequent visits of Dorjief, a Buriat Mongol, between Russia and Tibet led him to send a mission to Lhasa under Sir Francis Younghusband. A treaty was concluded in 1904, which confirmed the earlier agreements of 1890 and 1893, and gave the British certain trading and residential rights in Tibet. This was the first treaty signed directly between British India and Tibet. This policy pointed to the strategic importance of Tibet as a buffer region between India on the one hand and China and Russia on the other.

Under Curzon the administrative machinery was overhauled and economic development actively promoted. The Indian police was reformed and reorganized. Curzon had insisted that famines were caused by the failure of rains rather than by high taxes. Yet he implemented the Land Resolution of 1902 to lighten the burden of taxes on the peasants. The Punjab Land Alienation Act sought to protect the peasants against eviction by the money-lenders. Curzon showed his concern for agricultural development by encouraging co-operative credit societies and agricultural banks and by opening a Department of Agriculture and an Agricultural Research Institute. The works relating to irrigation were pushed on with

great vigour. A Department was created for Commerce and Industry. Another 9,651 km. of new railroad was added. To preserve the ancient monuments of India, a Director-General of Archaeology was appointed, and the Archaeological Department made good progress under Sir John Marshall. The Imperial Library was founded in Calcutta.

Curzon next turned to reform the university education. He appointed in 1902, an Education Commission which, characteristically enough, did not include any Indian member. The Commission recommended introduction of post-graduate studies and residential system. The official element in the university senates was to be strengthened and the Vice-Chancellors were to be appointed by the Government. Greater government control over the affiliated colleges was to be established. These were sweeping reforms and were looked upon by the educated middle class as interference with their autonomous institutions, particularly in the internal affairs of the affiliated colleges, and raised a storm of protest against the Universities Act of 1904.

The agitation against the Universities Act was but a prelude to the massive *Swadeshi* movement which followed another administrative measure of Curzon, viz., the partition of Bengal. The province of Bengal was considered by the Government to be too big for a Lieutenant-Governor to manage. Curzon split Bengal into two, creating a new province out of Assam and Eastern Bengal with Dacca as its capital. The measure aroused strong nationalist sentiment in Bengal. Led by Surendranath Banerjea, the anti-partition protest led to the *Swadeshi* movement and the boycott of foreign goods, and this political and economic campaign in Bengal made a tremendous impact on India as a whole. But Curzon carried out the partition with determination.

A difference with the Home authorities over the appointment of Lord Kitchener who was the Commander-in-Chief, as military member of his Executive Council led Curzon to resign in 1905 when he had just begun his second term of office. He, therefore, left India hardly aware of the fact that almost unwittingly he had offended the Indians and called forth a national movement against British authority which was destined, in due course, to free India from British imperial rule.

#### (b) 1905-1947

The events of 1905 brought out in the open the deeper conflicts and tensions of the Indian national movement and revealed all the major traits that were to characterize the movement henceforth. There was in the first place the clash between moderates and extremists within the Indian National Congress. The moderates led by Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendranath Banerjea and Gopal Krishna Gokhale greatly admired British politi-



cal institutions and trusted British rulers. They relied a great deal on British public opinion for setting things right even if the Indian Government took a wrong step. They confined themselves to constitutional agitation in India and England for progressive reforms within the framework of the British empire. The victory of the Liberals in British elections raised hopes of fresh concessions and the moderates did not want to do anything that might alienate the sympathy of the new government in England. The extremists, on the other hand, had no faith in the British and were impatient of the lawyer-dominated politics of petition and prayer. Their leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak was convinced that the British would not yield to anything but pressure and he strongly advocated active resistance. He was bent upon doing something 'to make government angry'. The *Swadeshi* movement gave the extremists the long-sought opportunity to act. Tilak, Lajpat Rai and Bepinchandra Pal made a determined bid to get the national movement out of the hands of the lawyers' 'ring'. In the Congress sessions at Vārānasi (1905), Calcutta (1906) and Surat (1907) the extremists fought for a wider national objective and more militant means to attain it. Gokhale joined the extremists in condemning the partition of Bengal. A resolution was passed endorsing the boycott of British goods. That was as far as the moderates were prepared to go. As the extremists tried to widen the boycott movement, the two groups fell out and there was an open split in the Surat session. The moderates under the leadership of Mehta, Banerjea and Gokhale held their own. Their opponents suffered a temporary eclipse after the arrest of Tilak in 1908—this left the field free for the moderates till 1916.

The second notable feature of the developments of 1905 was the emergence of terrorism. It was active in western India, Bengal and the Punjab. The movement was an index of popular desperation and heightened national consciousness. Though confined to a limited area, terrorism had nevertheless a significant impact on the political life of India. The bombs were a blast against British authority in the country. Though not openly supported by the people, the terrorists won silent admiration by their example of personal fearlessness. Their activities worried the British rulers a great deal and impressed upon them the urgency of reforms, thus making things easier for the moderates. On the whole, terrorism quickened the pace of political change in India.

A third interesting development was an attempt to widen the *Swadeshi* movement from a mere boycott of British goods to a boycott of everything British. In anticipation of Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghose developed the concept of the four-fold boycott: economic, educational, judicial and executive. This led to constructive, nation-building efforts like the national education movement. But at the same time, it produced a revivalist attitude which deprecated everything western and glorified the eastern, especially Hindu heritage.

Another notable trend was Muslim separatism. At first the Muslims along with the Hindus condemned the partition of Bengal. As the anti-partition movement gathered momentum and British deliberations for the grant of further reforms became known, Muslim politics took a distinctly separatist turn. The Muslim League was founded in 1906. It endorsed the partition of Bengal and opposed anti-British boycott. A demand was put forward for separate electorates for the Muslims in any system of representation that might be introduced.

Finally, it is to be noted that in 1905 the Indian national movement was no longer progressing in isolation within the sheltered preserve of the British empire. More and more it stood exposed to the interplay of world forces. While the moderates and the extremists still looked to England for political counsel, the terrorists turned for inspiration to the anarchists and nihilists of Europe and similar groups in Ireland and the United States of America. Dramatic events like Japan's victory over Russia, the Young Turk revolution and the fall of the Manchus in China made a deep impression upon the Indian nationalists' imagination and gave them an international outlook. They became increasingly aware of international forces at work which could be utilized to their advantage in the political struggle. Lord Minto (1905-1910) began in the old-fashioned way by trying to rally the princes through a 'Council of Chiefs'. This idea was soon dropped as the princes could hardly prove effective 'breakwaters' in the new storm. Helped by the Liberal Secretary of State, Morley, Minto ended up by rallying the moderates and the Muslims. In their anxiety the British officials refused to make distinction between the terrorists and the extremists. They found it convenient to lump them together and give them a severe treatment. Two Acts were passed by which incitement to murder and the making of bombs became felonious. The Government was empowered to deal firmly with seditious meetings and the press. Lajpat Rai was deported along with the terrorist Ajit Singh. Tilak was sentenced to six years' imprisonment at Mandalay. The British Government thus cracked down on the extremists and the terrorists before it came forward with further reforms.

The Indian Councils Act, known as the Morley-Minto Reforms, was passed in 1909. Constitutionally, it was an advance on the Act of 1892. The number of members in the Legislative Council was raised to 60 of whom 27 were to be elected. The size of the provincial legislative councils was also enlarged. The official majority was retained in the Central Legislature but was given up in the provinces. Except in Bengal, which had an elected majority, the official and the nominated non-official members together still outnumbered the elected members in the provinces. The scope of discussion in the legislative councils included the asking of supplementary questions and the tabling of resolutions.

There was strong opposition in the services to the appointment of an

Indian to the Viceroy's Executive Council and the Secretary of State's Council of India, although there was no legal bar to such an appointment. In 1907, Morley had appointed two Indians to the India Council in London and in 1909, after the passage of the Act, Satyendra Prasanna Sinha (later Lord Sinha) was appointed a member of the Governor-General's Council. The powers of the executive at the Centre and in the provinces were in no way restrained by the new legislatures.

The principle of election was recognized. But two things may be noticed here. First, the elections were mostly indirect. The members of the Central Legislature were chosen by those of the provincial legislatures and the latter by such public bodies as municipalities, district boards, chambers of commerce, universities, landholders and other groups. Secondly, the reforms of 1909 introduced a communal electorate and gave a special position to the Muslims by creating a number of Muslim constituencies for the Centre as well as the provinces.

Minto left it to Hardinge (1910-1916) to work the reforms. The task did not prove to be difficult. By 1910 the emotions stirred by the partition agitation had disappeared. Extremism too had been suppressed. The moderates and the Muslims accepted the reforms and extended their co-operation to Hardinge. Politics returned to the constitutional channel and moved along the course laid down by the Act of 1909. In the Delhi durbar of 1911, three important announcements were made. The partition of Bengal was annulled. Bengal was raised to the status of a Governor's province. The capital of India was transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. It was during Hardinge's administration that public opinion in India reacted strongly against the anti-Indian policy of the Union Government of South Africa. Hardinge earned great popularity by his open sympathy with the Indians suffering abroad.

As a dependency of the British, India was automatically drawn into the first World War which began in 1914. There were three different responses to the war. There was, in the first place, a marked willingness to help Britain and to stand by her in the hour of need. The princes placed their troops at the disposal of the Imperial Government. The moderate political leaders sympathized with the Allied cause and supported the British war efforts. In all 12,00,000 soldiers were recruited in India and a generous sum of money was contributed to the war fund. Indian soldiers distinguished themselves in France, the Middle East and Africa and earned a good name for their country. The moderates felt that India legitimately deserved a reward for her services and expected the British Government to grant it after the war.

The extremists' attitude to the war was different. In their minds sympathy for the Allied cause was mixed with a secret satisfaction at the humbling of Britain at the hands of her enemies. The war was changing the political climate in India and the extremists saw in it a new opportunity to press

their demands. Gokhale died in 1915. Tilak, freed from prison in 1914, returned to politics. The Home Rule Leagues founded by Tilak and Mrs. Annie Besant in 1916 started a spirited campaign for self-government.

Lord Chelmsford (1916-1921), the new Governor-General, had to reckon with the Home Rule agitation. The extremists led by Tilak captured the Congress at Lucknow. Tilak rounded off this victory by rallying the Muslims to the nationalist cause. Already in 1913 the Muslim League had declared self-government within the empire as its goal. The war between Britain and Turkey threw the Muslims into great agitation and made them anti-British. Tilak showed his genius by seizing this moment to strike an agreement with the Muslim League known as the Lucknow Pact (1916). The Congress accepted the idea of a separate Muslim electorate and the Muslim League agreed to join the national movement. It was decided that the two organizations should jointly draw up proposals for constitutional reforms. Jinnah hailed this event as marking the birth of a united Indian nation.

The terrorists' response to the war was one of renewed activity. They wanted to take full advantage of Britain's difficulties during the war and became particularly active in Bengal and the Punjab. An attempt to procure a shipment of arms from Germany failed. The Ghadar Party, set up by Indian revolutionaries in the U.S.A., had a strong base in the Punjab.

To meet the situation in India the British Government took two significant steps. First, it announced its willingness to grant reforms. On August 20, 1917, E.S. Montagu, the Liberal Secretary of State for India, declared in the House of Commons that Britain stood for 'progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire'. The measures to be introduced were set forth in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report published on July 8, 1918. Secondly, the Government of India set up a committee headed by Justice Rowlatt to inquire into the extent of subversive activity in India. The Rowlatt Report, also released in 1918, recommended that the Government should assume special powers to deal effectively with terrorism. The publication of this Report robbed the gesture of 1917 of much of its value. The Government seemed to be arming itself with new powers at the very moment when it was committed to make political concessions. The distrust of British *bona fides* persisted. The quick enactment of the Rowlatt Bills in early 1919 and the long delay in implementing the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals convinced the Indian leaders that Britain was not prepared to part with power.

With the end of the first World War in November, 1918, events moved rapidly. The forced recruitment in a few cases, during the war had created some bitterness. The Government was held responsible for lack of civil supplies and the price rise. The U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's wartime pronouncements in favour of 'self-determination' had raised expectations which, it was later felt, were not likely to be fulfilled. In the post-war years,

Mahatma Gandhi emerged as the foremost leader of the nationalist movement. When the Rowlatt Bills were passed, he launched a protest movement by calling for a *hartāl* on April 6, 1919. This was the beginning of *satyāgraha*. The movement, at first peaceful, led to violence in some parts of the country. The British authorities were determined to put it down by force. On April 13, 1919, General Dyer broke up a peaceful meeting at Jallianwāla Bāgh in Amritsar, by firing upon the assembled people, killing 379 and wounding more than 1,200. The Punjab was cordoned off and strong punitive measures were taken to produce a 'moral effect' on the whole country. The 'Amritsar massacre' was the Government's answer to nationalist violence and terrorism. This incident and the subsequent justification of Dyer's action by the Conservatives in England and the British officials in India aroused intense racial feelings. It made clear to the Indians that Britain was speaking with two voices and those who wanted to hold on to power appeared at the time to be stronger than those who were willing to come to terms with the nationalist leaders.

In December, 1919, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were formally approved of by King George V. Under the Act of 1919, the Central Legislature was reconstituted and made bicameral. The upper chamber known as the Council of States was to have 60 members of whom 34 were to be elected. The Legislative Assembly, which was the former Imperial Legislative Council, was to function as the lower chamber. This body was to have 143 members of whom 103 were to be elected. The official majority in the Central Legislature was given up. The franchise was restricted but the principle of direct election was recognized. The Executive Council of the Governor-General was enlarged. Although the Act did not explicitly mention this, yet after 1921 it became a convention to appoint three Indian members to the Council. The Governor-General still remained directly responsible to the Secretary of State for India and his powers were in no way restricted by the new legislature. A bill rejected by the Legislative Assembly could still be certified and passed by the Governor-General, if he considered it essential for the peace and safety of the state.

The provincial legislatures were considerably enlarged and were to be unicameral. It was provided that 70 per cent of the members were to be elected. Separate electorates were maintained for Muslims, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, Sikhs and Christians, as also for non-Brāhamaṇas in Madras. In every province the executive was to be diarchical. The Governor with his Executive Council was to be in charge of the 'Reserved Subjects' and the ministers acting with the Governor were to be responsible for the 'Transferred Subjects'. The 'Reserved Subjects' were police, justice, press, prisons, irrigation, land revenue, famine relief, forests and mineral resources. The 'Transferred Subjects' were local self-government, education, public health, sanitation, medical administration, public works, agriculture, fisheries,

excise, co-operative societies, industries etc. Bills relating to 'Transferred Subjects' could not be passed without the assent of the Legislative Council. Bills relating to 'Reserved Subjects', however, could be passed by the Governor over the head of the Legislative Council. A Chamber of Princes was set up, to be presided over by the Viceroy. It was a consultative body formed of the representatives of Indian states to advise the Viceroy on matters relating only to the states. It was provided that after ten years a committee should be set up by the British Parliament to report on the working of these constitutional reforms and to recommend further changes if any.

Tilak wanted to work the reforms and advocated 'responsive co-operation'. Mahatma Gandhi too was at first in favour of giving the reforms a trial, and carried the Congress with him at Amritsar (December, 1919). This attitude changed in 1920 when the publication of the Hunter Committee's report on the Amritsar happenings and the open appreciation of Dyer's action in England by raising a fund came as a shock. The Muslims were agitated over British policy towards Turkey and a mass movement was taking shape to protest against the imposition of harsh peace terms on the Caliphate. In August 1920, the Congress, led by Mahatma Gandhi, rejected the reforms and took the momentous decision to launch a non-violent non-cooperation movement. The *Khilāfatists* led by the Ali brothers, Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali, now joined forces with the Congress in a national struggle against the British. Mahatma Gandhi promised *Swarāj* in a year, provided the people carried on non-cooperation peacefully.

The Non-cooperation Movement was essentially a revival of the *Swadeshi* movement on an all India scale. It urged people to resign from government offices, shun the British law-courts, withdraw from schools and colleges and boycott the elections. On the positive side, there was a campaign for using indigenous goods, especially *Khādi* or homespun cloth. Mahatma Gandhi carried *Swadeshi* a step further by addressing the people in Hindi instead of English. For the first time the peasants and workers were drawn in large numbers into the fold of the national movement, and this gave it a truly mass character.

Lord Reading (1921-1926), who replaced Chelmsford, refrained from taking any precipitate action. The crucial year of 1921 passed without bringing the promised *Swarāj*. Meanwhile the Government had gone ahead and implemented the reforms. Elections had been held (October, 1920) and the Central and Provincial Governments reconstituted (February, 1921). Whatever their worth, these measures had created a diversion in the people's minds. The Moplah rising (August, 1921) embittered communal relations and the *Khilāfat* movement was beginning to lose ground. Mahatma Gandhi launched the Non-cooperation Movement authorized by the All India Congress Committee on November 5, 1921, at Delhi. An outburst of violence at Chauri Chaura, a village in U. P,

led him to suspend the movement (February, 1922). He was arrested in March, 1922, and sent to prison for six years. With Mahatma Gandhi's arrest the Non-cooperation Movement came to a standstill. The *Khilāfat* agitation declined and collapsed finally after the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924.

In 1923, the Congress under the leadership of Motilal Nehru and Chittaranjan Das, decided to contest the elections with a view to wrecking the Councils from within. Nehru and Das formed the Swarāj Party which was to dominate the Congress for the next five years. In the elections of 1923, the Swarājists emerged as a powerful force, but they still had other political groups to reckon with. There were the Responsivists of Mahārāshtra following the Tilak line, the Justice Party of Madras and the Independents led by Jinnah. The cohesion of nationalist forces achieved by Tilak and Gandhi was gone. The Muslims drifted away from the Congress. Communal riots broke out in 1924. Terrorism reappeared after 1923. Mahatma Gandhi, released in 1924, retired to his *āśrama* at Sābar-mati to give shape to a constructive programme dedicated to communal harmony and upliftment of the Hindu untouchables.

Through the ups and downs of the nationalist movement the Government was able to continue its work of running the administration along the lines of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. The Press Act of 1910 and the Rowlatt Act of 1919 were repealed. Indianization of military and civil services was steadily pushed on. From 1923, the holding of simultaneous civil service examinations in London and Delhi was arranged. The death of Chittaranjan Das in 1925 was a blow to the Swarāj Party. In spite of the best efforts of Motilal Nehru, discipline could not be enforced in the party and it grew weaker through continuous desertion of individual members. Communal disturbances continued to disrupt national unity and in 1915 the Hindu Mahāsabhā was formed. The elections of that year were fought along communal lines. Nationalist politics lost its direction and failed to make any headway.

The deadlock was broken by the new Viceroy, Lord Irwin (1926-1931). In 1927, at Irwin's initiative the British Government appointed a Parliamentary Commission to inquire into the working of the reforms of 1919 with a view to consider the next step. This Commission, headed by Sir John Simon, did not include any Indian. Its appointment was an affront to the Indian nation and the news of its coming visit to India touched off a new phase of nationalist agitation. Ranks were closed and all the political groups threw themselves vigorously into the task of organizing a nation-wide boycott of the Commission. The Simon Commission visited India twice in 1928-29 and was greeted with black flags, strikes and mass demonstrations. It was on this occasion that Jawaharlal Nehru stepped forward as an important national leader. At his initiative the Congress at Madras (1927) declared complete independence as its goal. In 1928,

an All-Parties Conference produced a draft constitution for India, better known as the Nehru Report, having been drawn up by Motilal Nehru and Tej Bahadur Sapru. This report opposed separate electorates upon which Jinnah broke with the Convention and joined ranks with communal Muslim leaders to issue a manifesto stating the special demands of the Muslims. The Nehru Report accepted Dominion Status and the Congress agreed (1928) to accept the scheme if it were implemented by the end of 1929.

Irwin persuaded the British Government to declare Dominion Status as India's political goal and to hold a Round Table Conference of all parties to discuss the recommendations of the Simon Commission. The Congress wanted the proposed Round Table Conference to draw up a Dominion Constitution, but the British Government refused. Consequently, the Congress at Lahore (1929) reiterated complete independence as India's goal. Decision was also taken to boycott the Round Table Conference and to launch a civil disobedience movement. On January 26, 1930, the Congress observed the 'Independence Day'. On March 12, 1930, Mahatma Gandhi set out on a march from his *āśrama* at Sābarmati towards the seashore at Dāndī to make salt in defiance of the salt law. He reached Dāndī on April 6, and prepared salt from the sea-water. A countrywide civil disobedience movement followed. Laws were broken deliberately to court imprisonment. Boycott of the British goods and labour strikes gave a new character to the movement in 1930. The Muslims did not throw in their full support, yet a big section was drawn into the movement. Women also joined the national struggle in large numbers. The Government took vigorous action. Gandhi was arrested. Over 60,000 people were sent to jail. There were a few deaths among the agitators.

The first Round Table Conference (November, 1930—January, 1931) took place without any Congress representation but with the participation of the princes and other political parties and groups. At the second and third Round Table Conferences the British Government brought the non-Congress Indian political parties as a counterweight to the Congress. The Simon Commission had proposed self-government in the provinces and federation of British India and the princes at the Centre. At the first Round Table Conference, the princes offered to join the federation. No progress was, however, possible without an agreement with the Congress. Early in 1931, Mahatma Gandhi was released and the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded on March 4. The Government released the prisoners and the Congress called off the Civil Disobedience Movement and joined the second Round Table Conference (September-December, 1931). Meanwhile, the fall of the Labour Government in England gave the Conservatives a chance to press their viewpoint at the conference table. The communal issue was successfully played up. An agreed scheme of electoral representation could not emerge. The second session broke up without yielding anything con-



crete. The Civil Disobedience Movement was renewed in 1932. Mahatma Gandhi was arrested again shortly after his return from England.

Lord Willingdon (1931-1936), the successor of Irwin, was hostile to the Congress. The organization was banned and over 1,20,000 persons were arrested. In August, 1932, British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald made a communal award on electoral seats. Mahatma Gandhi opposed the separate electorate for 'Depressed Classes' with a fast and had it withdrawn. The award was modified by the Poona Pact of September, 1932. In the third Round Table Conference (November-December 1932) certain new reform proposals took shape. They were finally announced in March, 1933. These proposals were embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935.

The Act of 1935 represented a major reorganization of the constitution of India. It proposed to create a federation of India out of British India and the Indian states which were willing to join such a federation. Burma, hitherto a part of British India, was now separated. Sind was separated from Bombay to become a separate province. A new province of Orissa was also formed. The Central Executive was to be a diarchy having a division of subjects between the Viceroy and the ministers. The Viceroy was to have responsibility for the 'Reserved Subjects'. The ministers, who would be in charge of the 'Transferred Subjects', were to be responsible to the legislature. The Central Legislature was to be bicameral, consisting of a Council of State and a House of Assembly. Both the chambers were to have representatives from British India and the federating princes. A federal bank and a federal court were to be set up. The federal part of the constitution, however, could not be put into operation because the princes refused to join it.

The Act of 1935 introduced autonomy in the Governor's provinces, now eleven in number. The Governor was to be assisted by a Council of Ministers responsible to the legislature. Certain reserved powers, such as those relating to law and order, were still retained in the hands of the Governor. The provincial legislature was to have two chambers: the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. The members of both houses were to be elected on the basis of communal voting. The Governor could issue ordinances and refuse to give his assent to bills passed by the legislature. In certain circumstances, the Governor could issue also permanent acts known as the Governor's Acts with or without the assent of the legislature.

The diversification of national politics had begun in the twenties. Upto 1922 the principal parties in the political struggle were the Congress and the British Government. After 1922, with the collapse of the Non-Cooperation Movement, other political parties secured a place in national politics with the opportunities offered by the recurring general elections. The Round Table talks too brought these diverse groups into limelight.

The purpose of the Government which connived at these developments was to break the monopoly of the Congress. In this the Government was successful. Besides, Mahatma Gandhi's claim to represent the whole of India was not accepted. In the thirties the Congress, which still remained the dominant political force, had to face serious rivalry from other parties, especially the Muslim League.

The idea of a separate national destiny had begun to stir the minds of the Muslim leaders. In 1930, Muhammad Iqbal first broached the idea of a union of the North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistān, Sind and Kashmīr as a Muslim state within an Indian confederation. In 1933, the term 'Pākistān' came into circulation, but the scheme was rejected by everybody concerned as immature, not deserving serious consideration. As prospects of fresh reforms became brighter, the Muslim League reorganized itself under Jinnah. In the provincial elections of 1937 the Muslim League did not do well. So it offered to form coalition ministries with the Congress in each province, but the Congress did not accept the proposal. From this point onward the League stepped up its campaign for the special minority rights and carried the movement to the Muslim masses.

The growth of leftism posed another challenge to the Congress. The left wing built up pressure within the Congress for a radical policy and militant action. It played an important part in the Madras session of the Congress (1927), the boycott of the Simon Commission and the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-32. In the thirties Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose emerged as the outstanding left-wing leaders of the Congress. Nehru, though socialistically inclined, accepted Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and his non-violent technique. Bose, on the contrary, had little faith in non-violence and preferred an armed struggle with the British. A socialist group emerged within the Congress, of which the most distinguished member was Jayaprakash. Besides the Congress left wing, there were the workers' and peasants' organizations and the communists. The All-India Trade Union Congress was founded in 1920. Activities among the peasants had begun approximately in 1923, but it was not before 1936 that the All-India Kisān Sabhā was formed. From 1921 individual communists had been active both inside and outside the Congress. The Kānpur Conspiracy Case (1924) and the Meerut Trial (1929) revealed the existence of a small but powerful communist group in India which was in touch with the Communist International dominated by Soviet Russia. Terrorism in its old form declined in the thirties and was in large part transmuted into a revolutionary leftism.

In 1937, the Congress contested the provincial elections and formed ministries in seven out of the eleven provinces. In the North-West Frontier Province the Red Shirts, led by the 'Frontier Gandhi' Abdul Ghaffar Khan, won a majority. This meant that the Congress came to control eight provinces in all. The governments it formed were highly

successful and won the confidence of the people. The Congress, however, had still to solve the communal question and also meet the leftist challenge. Supported by the 'nationalist' Muslims, the Congress still hoped to rally the whole nation behind its secular programme. Consequently it refused to accept the two-nation theory put forward by the Muslim League. The Muslim League made a rapprochement with the Congress difficult by claiming to be the sole representative of all the Muslims in India, thus virtually denying the right of individual Muslims to opt for the secular programme of the Congress. The communal question could not be solved.

In the thirties the Congress had begun to develop its own 'foreign policy'. Nehru played an important part in shaping this policy. Sympathy was expressed for China and later for the victims of the Nazi and Fascist aggression in Europe and Africa. When the second World War began in Europe in September, 1939, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow (1936-1943), declared India to be at war without prior assent of the Central Legislature. No effort was made to consult the representatives of the people. The Act of 1935 was amended by the Parliament to confer on the Central Government special powers to deal with the emergency. Provincial autonomy was also restricted at the same time. The Congress demanded that the Government should state its 'war aims' having due regard to the conflict of democracy and imperialism and clarify how they applied to India. It further declared that India could not co-operate in the war without the status of an equal partner, but would help Britain if her freedom was recognized. The Viceroy could promise such constitutional advance only after the war. In October-November, 1939, the Congress ministries resigned from office.

After the capitulation of France the Congress again offered to co-operate, provided that India's equal partnership and independence was recognized and a national government was set up at the Centre. In response to this offer the British Government proposed on August 8, 1940, to appoint more Indians to the Viceroy's Executive Council and set up immediately a War Advisory Council with representatives from British India and the states. India was to have Dominion Status after the war, but transfer of power was to depend upon communal accord. The Congress rejected the proposal and started an 'individual civil disobedience' movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Communal relations deteriorated steadily thereafter. Jinnah had hailed the Congress resignation from the ministries in Congress provinces as deliverance from the tyranny of majority rule. In 1940, the Muslim League declared Pākistān to be its ultimate goal. It further demanded that in any national government that might be created the Muslims must have equal share with the Hindus. The League made it clear that no further constitutional advance could be made without its consent.

The entry of Japan and the U.S.A. into the war in 1941 created a new

situation. The spectacular collapse of British defence in Malaya and Burma made a settlement with the Congress necessary. In March 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the British Cabinet, brought a new proposal. A Dominion of India was to be set up after the war with freedom to secede from the Commonwealth. The new constitution of India was to be drawn up by a constituent assembly elected by the provincial legislatures. The provinces could opt out of the union if they so wanted. The Indian states would be free to join the union or to stay out. The states would be represented in the constituent assembly by the nominees of their rulers. During the war the Viceroy's Council was to be reconstituted into an Interim Government of the party leaders. Negotiations broke down as the Cripps offer was rejected by both the Congress as well as the League.

Cripps returned to England a disappointed man. The nationalist leaders too felt equally disappointed. Meanwhile, Burma had passed into Japanese hands. The Japanese invasion of Bengal and eastern India was imminent. The Congress was desperately eager to work for India's defence at this crisis. Even Mahatma Gandhi withdrew his insistence on non-violence and permitted the Congress to go its own way in the matter of national defence. On August 8, 1942, the Congress passed a resolution calling upon the British to relinquish power and to quit India. The Congress had no desire to disrupt war efforts and would allow the Allied forces to operate from Indian bases. On August 9, the Government arrested all the Congress leaders and banned the Congress organization. A mass movement followed, which led to violent clashes between the people and the police. Railway stations were attacked and railway lines were torn up in several places. A split occurred among the leftists. The Congress socialists fully endorsed the movement and actually went underground to lead it. The Communist Party of India, attaching great importance to Soviet Russia's involvement in the war on the Allied side, refused to hamper war efforts and stood aloof from the August movement of 1942. The Quit India Movement was violently suppressed.

Subhas Chandra Bose had escaped from India in 1941, and had established contact with Japan and Germany. In 1942, the captured Indian troops and the local civilian Indian population in Japanese occupied Malaya and Burma revived the Indian Independence League and formed the Indian National Army. Singapore was at first the headquarters of this movement. Bose assumed the leadership of these organizations in 1943, and established a provisional *Āzād Hind Government*. The headquarters of the *Āzād Hind Government* were shifted to Rangoon in January, 1944. In that year the I.N.A. moved upto the Indian frontier with the invading Japanese army. But the attempt to invade India through Manipur and Assam failed. Burma was eventually reconquered by the Allied forces, and the I.N.A. finally surrendered to the British in May, 1945.

In 1944, the tide had turned in favour of the Allies. Lord Wavell (1943-1947) broke the political deadlock by releasing Mahatma Gandhi in May, 1944. Subsequently, Gandhi held long discussions with Jinnah in an attempt to solve the communal question but failed to arrive at an agreement. In March, 1945, Wavell received authorization from Home to convert his Executive Council into an Interim Government. It was to be composed of the British Viceroy, the British Commander-in-Chief and the representatives of the political parties of India. A constituent assembly was to draw up a constitution at the end of the war. In May, 1945, the war ended in Europe with the surrender of Germany. The congress leaders were released and in June, 1945, Wavell convened a Conference at Simla with a view to forming an Interim Government. At the Simla Conference the Muslim League claimed itself to be the sole representative of the Muslims in India and as such wanted to appoint all the Muslim members of the Executive Council. The Congress, in order to assert its national character, wanted to appoint at least one Muslim member which the League would not allow. The Simla talks, therefore, failed.

The Labour Party came to power in England in 1945. The new government proposed to hold general elections in India to test the relative strength of the parties. In the elections of 1946 the Congress and the Muslim League emerged as the two outstanding organizations, indicating once again that a settlement between the two was imperative.

Japan surrendered in August, 1945. There followed a large scale withdrawal of Allied troops from India. Indian opinion was greatly vexed over the trial of a number of I.N.A. officials at a time when the country was highly excited over the news of open revolt of the ratings of the Royal Indian Navy in February, 1946.

The Labour Government announced on February 19, 1946, that three members of the British Cabinet, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, would visit India to offer new proposals. The Cabinet Mission arrived in India in March, 1946. It proposed a Federal Union of British India which the states might join later. The Central Government was to deal with Foreign affairs, Defence and Communications. The provinces were to be grouped under three divisions: (i) North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistān; (ii) Bengal and Assam; and (iii) the rest of India. A constituent assembly, to draw up the constitution of the Federal Union, was to be elected by the provincial legislative assemblies by communal voting. Each division was to have a constitution of its own drawn up by representatives of its constituent units. At the same time every province would have a right to opt out of the Federal Union after the first elections under this plan. The Mission also proposed the formation of an Interim Government by complete Indianization of the Viceroy's Council.

At first, both the Congress and the League agreed to work the plan.

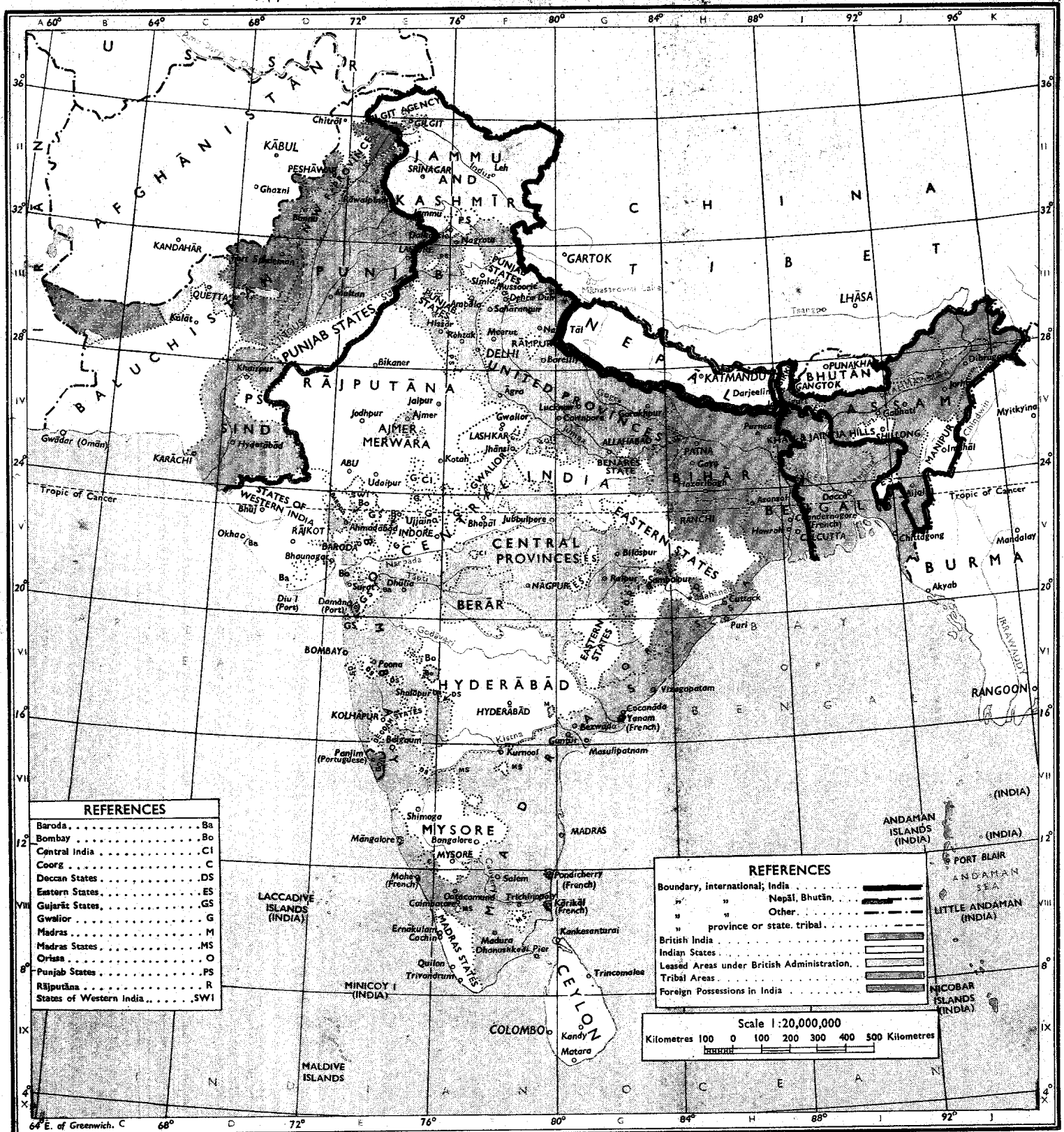
They, however, disagreed on the question of appointment of Muslim members to the proposed Interim Government. The League would not allow the Congress to nominate any Muslim, while the Congress insisted on appointing at least one against one of the five seats offered to it. The Congress then refused to join the Interim Government, but agreed to accept the long-term plan of drawing up a constitution. The Muslim League accepted the whole plan, but the Viceroy refused to form the Interim Government with Muslim League members only. The Muslim League then turned away and rejected the entire plan. A few weeks later, the Congress agreed to join the Executive Council and the Viceroy decided to reconstitute it with Nehru as its Vice-President. This action infuriated the League and Jinnah launched 'Direct Action' on August 16, 1946. On that day violent Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Calcutta. A chain reaction set in and the riots spread to Noākhāli district of Bengal, Bihār and U. P. In October, the Muslim League joined the Executive Council but only with the purpose of preventing the monopoly of power which would be enjoyed by the Congress. In December, the constituent assembly met, but the League refused to join it.

The deadlock was broken by Prime Minister Attlee's announcement on February 20, 1947, that the British Government proposed to leave India at a date not later than June, 1948. Lord Mountbatten (March-August, 1947) was appointed the new Viceroy to steer through the final transfer of power. Serious riots broke out in the Punjab, making it plain that a partition of India was unavoidable. On June 3, 1947, Mountbatten announced his plan.

The British Government accepted the principle of partition and agreed to the creation of Pākistān if the Muslim majority areas so desired. It was further agreed that in case of partition, power would be transferred to the two dominions of India and Pākistān on August 14, 1947. British Paramountcy over the Indian states would lapse and these states would be urged to join either of the two dominions. The plan was accepted by the Congress, the Muslim League and the Sikhs. It was implemented according to the procedure laid down by Mountbatten. Pākistān emerged with two wings: the western and the eastern on both sides of India. This was brought about by the partition of the Punjab and Bengal, the final decisions having been taken by their respective legislatures. The North-Western Frontier Province and the district of Sylhet too joined Pākistān by a plebiscite. Each dominion had its own constituent assembly. A Boundary Commission fixed the frontiers between the two dominions. The Indian Independence Act was passed on July 18, 1947, conferring Dominion Status on India and Pākistān as from August 15, 1947. Mountbatten was chosen by India as her first Governor-General. Jinnah became the first Governor-General of Pākistān. Power was actually transferred to India on the midnight of August 14-15, 1947.

# POLITICAL MAP OF INDIA BEFORE 15th. AUGUST 1947

Based on the map "INDIA showing Provinces, States & Districts, Prior to 15th. August 1947". Scale 1 inch to 70 miles.  
Appendix I to the Government of India White Paper on the Indian States.



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Projection: Lambert Conical Orthomorphic.

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The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

Boundaries of states lower than provincial status are not shown.