CHAPTER IV: END OF COMPANY RULE

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Lord Canning who succeeded the Marquis of Dalhousie in February, 1856, had won a reputation for scholarship at Oxford and for statesmanlike ability as Postmaster-General. He was capable and industrious but somewhat diffident of his own powers and not personally ambitious. Slow in making up his mind to any particular course of action and conscientious almost to a fault, when he had once chosen his ground he defended it skillfully and held it with tenacity. Seeing many sides to every question and an adept at weighing evidence, he possessed the judicial rather than the administrative temperament. He hid a warm heart under a reserved and cold manner. Had his lot been cast in peaceful times he would have been an ideal head for the Indian Government but he was called upon to deal with one of the most terrible crises that ever confronted a statesman. Some of his actions were open to criticism and have been freely criticized; but on the whole he emerged nobly from the appelling ordeal to which he was subjected. If he lacked the daring resolution imperious will and personal force of Dalhousie he displayed a splendid constancy under taunts and misrepresentation and he possessed a curious power of detaching himself from the influences and passions of the moment of solving intricate problems.[1]

There are two main views of the origin and meaning of the

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Indian Mutiny; one that it was a mere military rising; the other, that it was a widespread conspiracy carefully organized for the overthrow of British power. The men with the best opportunity of judging came to diametrically opposite view on this point. Sir John Lawrence held that the Mutiny had its origin in the army and that its proximate cause was the cartridge affair and nothing else. It was not attributable to any antecedent conspiracy whatever, although it was afterwards taken advantages of by disaffected person to compass their own ends. The view of Sir James Outram is almost the exact antithesis of this. He believed that it was the result of a Muhammadan conspiracy making capital of Hindu grievances. The cartridge incident merely precipitated the mutiny before it had been made for making the mutiny a first step to a popular insurrection.[2]

On the whole in spite of the fact that in some districts the people seem to have risen before the sepoys, Lawrences view seems most nearly to approximate to the truth. We may assume, therefore, that rising was mainly military in origin, but that it occurred at a time when for various reasons there was much social and political discontent and that the mutineers were promptly joined by interested adventurers who tried to give it a particular direction to suit their own schemes. Fortunately for British dominion in India there was no single national cause to which the agitators could appeal. The fabric

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of British Power was built over, the ashes of warring factories and race enmities. The Mutiny was exploited alike to revive the vanished glories of the Mughal Empire - the foe of all Hindu principalities and to re-establish the power of the Maratha Peshwa - the hereditary rebel against Mughal authority. The fact that the political direction of the Mutiny first fell into the hands of men who replaced Bahadur Shah upon his imperial throne was enough in itself to alienate the sympathies of all Hindu states. The attempt to summon back the ghost of Maratha supremacy was as it were only the political second thought of the mutiny and came too late for success when the back of the rebellion was broken and the cause of the insurgents was obviously waning.[3]

The Political Causes

There can be no doubt that Dalhousies' annexations and the doctrine of lapse had caused a thrill of uneasiness and suspicion throughout India. This fact does not necessarily involve any condemnation of the late Governor-General's policy. In all great reforms some vested interests must be alienated and it is arguable that but for the blunder of the greased cartridges the political discontent would have been allayed by time and never have passed beyond the stage of a vague unrest. But some Englishmen in India had uttered warnings of the dangers ahead. Colonel Sleeman in 1853 had written words

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that future events probetic: The native states I consider to be breakwaters and when they are all swept away we shall be left to the mercy of our native army, which may not always be sufficiently under our control. Since Lord Dalhousie entered upon office the great Sikh power had finally fallen; Oudh the premier Muhammadan state had been annexed; Satara the original seat of the Shivaji and Nagpur one of the greatest states of the Maratha pentarchy had been absorbed. Little indeed was left of the majesty of the Mughal Empire, but even that was dinished, for it had been ordained that on the death of the titular king of Delhi his successor was to leave his ancestral palace and eschew something of his royal splendour.[4]

Secondly, from the social aspect 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. In the pacification of conquered territories and in the land settlements carried out in recent years the claims of native aristocracies had been severely scrutinized by zealous officials, whose aim in many ways laudable was to protect the royat or peasant from exaction and deal with him directly instead of through hereditary revenue collectors and middlemen.

Thirdly, to the devout Hindu and especially to the priesthood the hated and iconoclastic power of the British seemed to have invated even the immaterial realms of faith and

caste. There was a widespread belief that Lord Canning had been commissioned to convert India to Christianity. Hindu mythology had been disparaged in a brilliant essay by Macaulay at one time member of the Governor-General's Council. Sati and infanticide had been prohibited. European science, astronomy and surgery were all opposed to the teaching of the Brahmans. The mysticism and symbolism of the East were fading before the cold light of Western materialism. The telegraph and railway were looked upon askance as magical and diabolical agencies. Recent laws had been passed that Hindu widows were free to marry a second time and that a change of religion should not debar the convert from inheriting property. It must be admitted says Sir William Lee-Warner that even the most ignorant and apathetic Hindu was brought into more conscious touch with the spirit of the West during the eight years preceding 1857 that at any other period in the history of India.

Lastly we must take into account the condition of the sepoy army. The disparity in numbers between European and Indian troops had lately been growing greater; when Lord Dalhousie left India the army consisted of 2,33,000 natives and 45,322 British soldiers. For this as we have seen Dalhousie was not to blame; he had in vain endeavoured to get drafts from home to replace the regiments taken away from India for service in the crimea. The disproportion was rendered more serious by the growing deficiency of officers and of

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officers of the best type who had been employed by Dalhousie in increasing number for administrative posts upon the frontier. The distribution of the troops was also very faulty. Delhi and Allahabad were wholly held by native levies and except for one regiment at Dinapore, there were no British soldiers between Allahabad and Calcutta.

The Bengal army as distinct from those of Madras and Bombay had always been more difficult to handle from the great number of high caste men Brahmans and Rajputs in its ranks. Their discipline had been lately impaired.[5]

The Mutiny

At Meerut on May, 1857 when the station was plunged in the calm of a Sunday evening three native regiments rose shot down their officers broke open the prisons released their Comrades and marched off to Delhi. Had they been vigorously pursued and cut down it is more than likely that the Mutiny would not have spread to further; but through the fatal inaction of the commanding officers of the Station they were allowed to escape undisturbed. On the morning of the next day the outposts of the Mutineers gathered into Delhi and called upon the troops there to revolt. Not a single British regiment was quartered at that time in Delhi and in a few hours the city was in the hands of the rebels. The British officers of the sepoy battalions

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were murdered. Every European found met the same fate and the telegraph operator had only time to flash his alarming messages to the Chief stations in the Punjab when he was cut down at his post. Finding resistance hopeless the British defenders of the great magazine with splendid gallantry blew it and a thousand mutineers into the air. The rebels bursting into the palace proclaimed Bahadur Shaha the old King of Delhi once more Mughal Emperor of India.

Fortunately a short respite was given to the British authorities reeling under this shattering blow. No further mutinies except in small and isolated stations occurred for about three weeks and though the space of time was all over too short for what had to be done it was something gained.[6]

The most vigorous action came from the Punjab in spite of the fact that a three fold perio had to be faced in that province - disaffection in the sepoy regiments the risk of an Afghan invasion and that of a rising of the Sikhs. Happily Dost Muhammad remained splendidly loyal to the treaties of 1855 and 1857 and the army of the Khalsa made no attempt to profit by the disasters of their recent conquerors. The sepoy regiments at Lahore were promptly disbanded and a movable column was formed under John Nicholson to attack and destroy any mutinous bodies.

The most pressing need for the restoration of British prestige was the recapture of Delhi. Both Canning and Sir John

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Lawrence vehemently urged this upon Anson the Commander-in-Chief who for the moment, however, found it impossible to advance for lack of transport and supplies. Before the expedition could start mutiny became general over Oudh, Rohilkhand and many parts of Central India. Between May 29 and June 5 the sepoys rose at Nasirabad in Rajputana at Mimach in the Gwalior state at Bareilly in Rohilkhand and at Lucknow, Benares and Cawnpore in Oudh while the Rani of Jhansi headed the revolt in Bundelkhand and massacred every European that fell into her hands. In almost every case the Mutineers after the outbreak set their faces towards Delhi. Many murdered their officers before doing so some with a curious remnant of fidelity escorted them first to positions of safety and then after saluting them marched off to join their comrades. In Oudh alone was this movement checked. The Mutineers at Canpore had actually started along the Delhi road on June 5 when they were headed off by Nana Sahib the next day and brought back to besiege the British garrison weakly entrenched there. The rebels of Lucknow also remained to besiege the Residency well provisioned and fortified by Sir Henry Lawrence who alone of men in high positions seems to have realized from the beginning of the year the true nature of the peril that was approaching. For the moment, however, we must disregard the course of events in Oudh and return to the movements converging on Delhi.

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Anson marching from Ambala died of cholera on May 27 at Karnal less than half-way on the road to Delhi, He was succeeded by Sir Henry Barnad who on June 4 was joined by Archdale Wilson from Meerut. Their combined forces defeated a rebel army at Badli Saria overlooking the city of Delhi and made their camp there. Nominally the besieging force they were themselves in reality besieged. Their number at first was under 5,000. That of the enemy was about 30,000 and reinforcements were constantly thronging into Delhi by the Southern and Eastern roads which were completely open. All through June and July the English force maintained its position on the Ridge with difficulty having constantly to beat back fierce attacks from the Mutineers in the city.[7]

Two events the fall of Delhi and the relief of Lucknow, mark the end of the first desperate fight for very existence that had to be waged by men standing despairingly at bay without help from England. The back of the mutiny was broken. From henceforward begins the second stage, Lucknow itself had to be relieved a second time, for Havelock and Outram were not strong enough to remove the garrison and were themselves besieged but the tension of the situation was lessened there was time to draw breath, reinforcements were steadily pouring in from England and two Generals of great experience, Sir Colin Campbell, Commander-in-Chief and Sir Hugh Rose were the one on

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his way and the other already landed in India. The operations that remained were briefly the reconquest of Oudh and Rohilkhand by Sir Colin Campbell the brilliant campaign of Sir Hugh Rose in Central India starting from Bombay through districts where the rebels and hitherto been left almost undisturbed and the final breaking up and pursuit of furgitive bands.[8]

Meanwhile Sir Hugh Rose had conducted a brilliant and decisive campaign in Bundelkhand the Southernmost theatre of the Mutiny. Advancing from Mhow, his base of operations, on January 8, 1858 he captured Ratgarh and relieved Saugor in February. In March, he invested Jhansi and after utterly defeating a great relieving army under Tatia Topi at the battle of the Betwa he carried the fortress by storm. In May, he routed a large army at Kunch. The campaign seemed over and he had just laid aside his command when he was startled by news of the deepest import.

The Rani of Jhansi and Tatia Topi round whom the pursures were closing had conceived the brilliant design of marching to Gwalior on the desperate chance that Shindhia's army would come over to them. The Gwalior contingent or subsidiary force as we have seen had long joined the rebels but Sindhia had hitherto kept his own army loyal. The daring scheme succeeded. When Sindhis marched forth to encounter the enemy his whole

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army deserted him, he himself barely escaped with his personal bodyguard to Agra. The rebels occupied Gwalior, seized the arsenal and the treasury and proclaimed Nanasahēb as Peshwa. Rose recognized at once the terrible danger that Tatia Topi might now strike southwards into the Deccan and with all the prestige that the possession of Sindhias capital gave him blew into flame the disaffection which though as yet kept under was known to exist south of the Narbada. With a supreme effort he flung his wearied troops on Gwalior and defeated the rebels in two battles in one of which the Rani of Jhansi clad in male attire met a soldier's death. He recaptured the city on June, 20.

Though it still smouldered in outlying districts, the great conflagration of the mutiny had now been stamped out and Canning felt himself justified in proclaiming peace on July 8. Some of the leaders still eluded their pursuers. But Nanasahib was eventually driven into the pestilential jungles of the Taria on the borders of Nepal and probably perished there miserably for he was never seen again. Tatia Topi escaped southwards and was hunted up and down Bundelkhand and Malwa till he was betrayed into the hands of the British in April, 1859 and hanged for complicity in the Massacre of Cawnpore.[9]

The Mutiny was over. Some reasons for the final English victory may be considered.

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First widespread and formidable though the revolt was it was yet to some extent localized. The area affected was the Panjab the united provinces, Rohilkhand, Oudh, the territory between the Narbada and the Chambal and the Western part of Bihar and Bengal. On the North-West Afghanistan remained friendly under Dost Muhammad, Sind was quiet, Rajaputana was loyal under the tactful guidance of George Lawrence a third member of that family the value of whose services to England in the mutiny was incalculable. India, South of the Narbada made no movement of importance though a native regiment mutinied and Kolhapur in the Southern Maratha country, and there were very dangerous ebullitions of feeling at Hyderabad the Nizam's capital. Central and Eastern Bengal were undisturbed and Nepal rendered the British valuable assistance in putting down the revolt.

Secondly, with the exception of the Rani of Jhansi the Begam of Oudh and some minor chiefs none of the feudatory princes threw in their lot with the rebels. Sindhia and Holkar remained loyal though their armies rose. The Chieftains of Sirhind prominent among whom were the Rajas of Patiala and Jind repaid with a splendid devotion the protection granted to their ancestors against the aggression of Ranjit Singh. It would not be easy to estimate how much Great Britain owes to two great Indian statesmen Sir Dinkar Rao of Gwalior and Sir Salar Jang of Hyderabad, for the retention of her Indian Empire. Sir Dinkar Rao, the Minister of the young Shindhia did much to

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keep his master loyal and the importance of this can hardly be overstated. Had Sindhia raised the standard of revolt every Maratha state would have joined him. His loyalty, says General Innes, saved India for the British. Again the peril of an outbreak at Hyderabad with its large and turbulent Muhammadan population was at one time very great and it was only warded off by the extraordinarily prompt and energetic conduct of Sir Salar Jang 'a man', says Mr. Rice Holmes, 'whose name deserves to be very mentioned by Englishmen with gratitude and admiration'.

Thirdly, it may be said that the mutiny which so called forth so much ability on the British side produced no leader amongst the rebels; perhaps the most capable was a woman the Rani of Jhansi. Sir John Lawrence used to dwell on the many errors of judgement committed by the Mutineers and to declare that after they had revolted they seemed to become demented in their manner of conducting the rebellion and often took the one course that was foredoomed to failure.

Fourthly, there were the exceptional characters of the men who were called upon to grapple with the mutiny of the outset - the Lawrences, Outram, Havelock, Nicholson, Neill, Edwardes. Had they proved weak or even men of ordinary ability, none could have foretold the issue. The hardest fighting fell to their share. It is noticeable that the Mutineers were for

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more formidable as a fighting force in the earlier months. The battles were more stubbornly contested and the losses inflicted on the British far greater in the fighting round Delhi and in Havelock's and Outram's campaigns than they were in the operations of Sir Colin Campbell and Sir Huge Rose. After the fall of Delhi and the first relief of Lucknow the resistance of the Mutineers sensibly weakened. Sir Hugh Rose conducted a brilliant campaign but he had the advantage of leisurely preparation and a good and efficient cavalry force, while the armies he met were dispirited and badly led.[10]

Fifthly, there were the noble efforts of Lord Canning and Sir John Lawrence at an early stage to check the outcry both in England and India for a ruthless and indiscriminate policy of vengeance. That outcry was natural enough for the provocation had been terrible. Many excesses could be forgiven to the men who had gazed with starting eyes and quivering lips on the horrors of the shambles of Cawnpore. Even Nicholson clamoured that the flying alive impalement or burning of the murderers of the women and children at Delhi should be legalized. But Canning though ready to exact the sternest penalties from the guilty insisted that no mistake should be made as to their guilt. He passed regulations to check the excesses of self-appointed tribunals and to ensure proper trial and inquiry in all cases. He was loudly and bitterly assailed at the time but

maintained his view with a noble disdain of popular clamour. He was nicknamed clemency Canning in derision but it was afterwards recognized that his clemency was not only morally splendid but politically expedient for nothing could have been more dangerous than to embitter irretrievably our relations with the subject peoples.

The suppression of the mutiny was deemed a fitting time for the crown finally to take over the control of the Indian Government. Against this decision the Company protested in a dignified and weighty petition drawn up by John Stuart Mill. They proudly claimed that the foundations of the Indian Empire had been laid by themselves at the same period at which a succession of administrations under the control of Parliament were losing to the crown of Great Britain another great empire on the opposite side of the Atlantic.[11]

They challenged the most searching investigation into the causes of the mutiny and pointed out with much more force that in Indian affairs the government of the crown had long possessed the deciding voice and was thus in the fullest sense accountable for all that has been done and for all that has been forborne or omitted to be done. It was unreasonable to seek a remedy by annihilating the branch of the ruling authority which could not be the one principally in fault and might be altogether blameless in order to concentrate all powers in the branch

which had necessarily the decisive share in every error real or supposed. But the Company did not seek to vindicate themselves at the expense of any other authority. They claim their full share of the responsibility of the manner in which India has practically been governed. That responsibility is to them not a subject of humiliation but of pride. They are conscious that their advice and initiative have been and have deserved to be great and potent element in the conduct of affairs in India and they fell complete assurance that the more attention is bestowed and the more light thrown upon India and its administration the more evident it will become that the government in which they have borne a part has been not only one of the purest in intention but one of the most beneficient in act even known among manking and they are satisfied that whatever further improvements t may be hereafter effected in India can only consist in the development of germs already planted and in building on foundations already laid under their authority and in great measure by their express instructions. In a further paper the Company pointed out the essential difference between the Government of India and that of other colonies of the Empire the Government of dependencies by a Minister and his subordinates under the sole control of Parliament is not a new experiment in England. That form of colonial Government lost the united states and had nearly lost all the colonies of any considerable population and importance. The colonial administration

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of this country has only ceased to be a subject of general condemnation since the principle has been adopted of leaving all the important colonies to manage their own affairs a course which cannot be followed with the people of India. All governments require constitutional checks and in the case of India since representative institutions were at the time at any rate impracticable the constitutional security must lie in the construction of the administrative system itself 'the forms of business are the real constitution of India'.

These dignified protests did not avail to avert the change though as the court of Directors acknowledged the clamour which represented the Government of India by the Company as characterised by nearly every fault of which a civilized government can be accused was succeeded by an almost universal acknowledgement that the rule of the company has been honourable to themselves and beneficial to India.

The assumption of the Government of India by the crown was indeed as Sir H.S. Cunningham wrote 'rather a formal than a substantial change. All real power had long passed to the President of the Board of Control and the Directors had been for some time in the position of an advisory council though with considerable powers of initiative. The last charter Act of 1853 by throwing open the civil service to competition had deprived the Directors of their most valued privilege the

patronage of India; it had also reduced their numbers from twenty-four to eighteen and made six of them nominees of the crown. This enabled the Government to appoint to the Court retired servants of the Company, men who had little chance of being elected under the old system and thus to leave the directorate with first hand Indian experience.[12]

The Act was obviously preparing the way for the assumption by the Crown of the Government of India in name as well as in fact for it gave no definite renewal of the charter for a term of years as former measures had done, but merely proved that the Indian territories should remain under the Administration of the Company in trust for the Crown until Parliament should determine otherwise. The Act of 1858 completed the process thus begun. A Secretary of State for India was to take place of the President of the Board of Control. He was to be advised by a Council of fifteen appointed in the first instance for life afterwards for ten to fifteen years; eight members were selected by the crown, seven by the Court of Directors passed to the Secretary of State its influence mainly lingered on in the Council. One of the chief advantages of the transfer of Government from the Company to the Crown though it caused at the time serious disaffection among the officers lay in the end of the awkward dualism of the Company's and the Queen's army, the Indian and the Royal Navy.

On November 1, 1858 the new Government was proclaimed by Lord Canning at Allahabad as first Viceroy and Governor-General for the Crown. The Queen who had rejected the first proclamation submitted to her and requested that the revised draft should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence and religious toleration disclaimed as the Company had so often done all desire for an extension of territory promised to respect the rights dignity and honour of native prince and to uphold religious toleration and declared it to be her will that so far as may be our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge. Pardon and amnesty were offered to all those still in arms against the British Government who had not been guilty of the murder of British subject. The proclamation ended with a promise of measures for the material and moral improvement of the Indian peoples in whose prosperity will be our strength in their contemtment our security and in their gratitude our best reward.

The Government now deliberately and openly renounced the policy of lapse and the feudatory chiefs were granted sunnads or charters empowering them to adopt heirs. Hence-ward the continual existence of native states was guaranteed but their rights were limited and defined. They could have no relations with foreign powers nor with each other except through British

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Mediation. Their military forces were to be strictly limited. Over internal affairs they had full control except that in his Minute of April 30, 1860 Lord Canning affirmed the principle that the Government right such serious abuses in a native Government as may threaten any part of the country with anarchy of disturbance nor from assuming temporary charge of a native state when there shall be sufficient reason to do so.

The change from company to crown, Government made few changes in Indian administration. The charter Act of 1853 had already enlarged the Governor-General's Executive Council for legislative purposes to twelve members, namely, the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. The four ordinary members nominated by the Government of Bengal, Madras, Bombay and the North-Western provinces. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 which completed the change added a fifth member to the Executive Council and to the legislative council not less than six or more than twelve additional members at least one-half non-official to be nominated by the Governor-General. Legislative councils were also established in the other provinces and Lieutenant-Governorships.[13]

Thus ended the Honourable East India Company not so much from any special responsibility for the mutiny for in political matters it had been for many years absolutely controlled by the State but because it was felt to be an anachronism that a private

corporation should even though it were only in name administer so vast a dominion. It was created by the Crown two hundred and fifty years before says Marshman, for the purpose of extending British commerce to the East and it transferred to the Crown on relinquishing its functions an empire more magnificent than that of Rome. This great work was not accomplished as we have seen, without some blunders and political crimes. To disguise them and to maintain that British administrators were always swayed by impeccable motives and unerring statesmanship is to produce an unreal and impossible picture for we are dealing after all with human agency. But when all necessary qualifications are made and annals of the company from one of the most fascinating and illustrious pages in History. There were grave mistakes but they were rectified great abuses but they were swept away. If territories were sometimes questionably acquired they were honestly and capably administered. Of the Company's servants Clive Warren, Hastings, Wellesley and Dalhousie were amongst the greatest Englishmen of their day as conquerors or statesmen; others, such as Cornwallis, Bentinck, Munro, Thompson, and Metcalfe evolved in an uncogenial atmosphere a high standard of humanitarian administration.

The closer India was brought to Great Britain by improvements in communication the steamship, the railway and the telegraph, the more possible and the more expedient became the control of the Imperial Government. In spite of his vice-regal

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title the hand of the Indian administration after 1858 was more dependent on the Secretary of State than his predecessors had been on the Board of Control and the Court of Directors whom an adroit Governor-General could often play off one against the other. No Governor-General under the Crown has defied the home authorities like Warren Hastings or overridden them like Wellesley. Though it might be undoubtedly better that the state in the nineteenth century should take over the government of the Indian Empire, it is certain that only an association based on individual effort and drawing its profits from commerce could in the beginning have acquired it from so distant a base and have toiled so patiently for results so long deferred. Gradually the political and economic character of the Company, Leadenhall street gave place to Whitehall. The East India Company, founded by a little body of pioneer traders in the reign of Queen Elizabeth under whom our colonial dominions had their small beginnings ended its career in the time of Queen Victoria under whom grew up the British Empire of today.[14]

The most powerful monopolist company of British Merchant capital thus died a natural death. Dominating the Government in their mother country British industrial bourgeoisie had now full sway over India. The first Architects of the "new civilization" in England disappeared completely from the scene.[15]

The Charter Act of 1813 made the East India Company

mainly a political organization in India. The twenty years that followed saw the Company function in India as a non-commercial body. The expansion of British territories in India during this period was very large. The British had succeeded the Marathas as the imperial power in India. This had added the whole of Maharashtra central India and Rajputana to the domains of the East India Company. The provinces of Bombay and Madras were completed the foundation of the central provinces had been laid and the central India Agency was emerging. The East India Company thus stood forth unchallenged as the imperial power in India.

Parliamentary Legislation Between 1813 and 1833

The imperial legislation of the years between 1813 and 1833 concerns minor matters and mostly follows the lines already laid down. Acts passed in 1814, 1815, 1818, 1825 and 1826 defined and added to the powers of the East India Company in India. They gave the Indian Government the authority to levy customs, validated Christian marriages contracted in India and performed by Scotch Clergymen, allowed the Company to extend the boundaries of presidency towns, set up a supreme court in Bombay (1823) and burdened India not only with the additional salaries of the European troops and members of the ecclesiastical department in India but their pensions as well. The Indian Mutiny Act was amended in 1823 and extended to cover the Bombay

Marines in 1832.[16]

The growing British power in India was reflected in the new attitude towards Indians and Indian institutions that became typical during this period. As the years rolled by British Civil and Military servants developed an attitude of overbearing self-confidence. At first they had been willing to learn about Indian law and custom usages and practices. But now they seemed to assert that anything which they did not know, or that was not recorded and pigeonholed somewhere in their secretariat was either not worth knowing or did not exist at all.[17]

Parliamentary legislation of the period was directed towards two aims liquidating the East India Company and centralizing British administration in India.

End of Company's Trading Activities

The Charter Act of 1833 abolished the commercial monopoly of the Company's trade in tea and with China. It was to wind up its commercial affairs preparatory to final disappearance. India was saddled with all the Company's debts - commercial and territorial. The stockholders were assured a dividend of 10 per cent now frankly coming from the Indian revenues. The purchase price of the stock was fixed at double the issue price and was to be paid out of the Indian revenues.

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Board of Directors

The proprietors continued electing directors who had nothing to direct in their own right. The Act contemplated that the exercise of patronage by the directors would be very much restricted. It provided that their nominations to places at Haileybury College would be double the number of vacancies in the services. Those nominated would enter that college. After receiving instruction there all the candidates would then be selected to fill the vacancies.

This would have raised the standard of the entrants to public services but it would have severely curtailed the patronage of the directors. The directors fought hard against this provision with the result that their patronage was continued for another twenty years by an amending Act of 1834.

A. Minister for Indian Affairs

The president of the Board of Control now became Minister for Indian Affairs. The fiction of his having colleagues on the Board disappeared; he was now to have two Assistant Commissioners and as their new designation declared they were his assistants rather than his colleagues. His secretary - Macaulay at this time - occupied a position of great influence because he could sit in parliament and spoke for his chief when the latter sat in the lords. The way was being paved for

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the emergence of a secretaryship of state for India. The directors now occupied the position of expert advisers of the president expert because they had the assistance of expert permanent servants in the East India House.

The East India House continued as before. It housed all the records about India and the Far East. Its examiners worked as its secretaries and included such men of eminence as James Mill, the historian.

B. Government of India

The Indian possessions of the Company were now declared to be held by the Company in trust for the British Crown.

In India the main provisions of the Act centralized the administration of the country. The Governor-General of Bengal now gave place to the Governor-General of India. The Council also became an instrument of Indian administration and the style of the new government became the Governor-General of India in Council. In the new Indian Government was vested the power to control, superintend and direct the civil and military affairs of all the territories now under the East India Company or to be acquired hereafter. This placed Bombay, Madras and Bengal Completely under the authority of the Government of India. All the revenues were raised under the authority of the Central Government. All expenditure was henceforth authorized

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by it. There was only one budget for the whole country prepared under the authority of the Central Government. The Governments of Bombay and Madras were authorized to spend within the limits of the money allotted to them for purposes which the Government of India had approved. The creation of any new office which carried a pension required the sanction of the Government of India. The Governor-General in Council continued to enjoy the authority already granted in 1784 to suspend any member of the Governments of Bombay and Madras who disobeyed the new Government of India.

The immediate result of this policy was to centralize all power practically in the hands of the Central Government. In sanctioning the demands for expenditure it scrutinized every item submitted and could raise problems of administration as well as of administrative policy. All the subordinate governments kept the Government of India continuously informed of their progress in all departments of provincial administration. The Government of India when it acknowledged the receipt of such information exercised the right of commenting upon the work of the provincial governments.[18]

Company Rule Assessed

In the early days of its rule, the East India Company did not interest itself in much beyond keeping peace and order

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in its territories and collecting the land revenue and other taxes. It must, however, be admitted that keeping order was in itself a great boon to the people in those troubled days of insecurity and perpetual danger from plunderers and robbers. The attitude of the Government changed slowly in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The change was due firstly to the Company's more firm hold on the Indian soil and secondly to the benevolent like Lord William Bentinck and Lord Dalhousie. The company soon realized that it was not only the master of the Government of India but was also the greatest landlord of the country, and as such, it stood to gain if it provided facilities for the agricultural development and the improvement of the country. Therefore, the Government came to open canals, sink wells and dig tanks, construct the roads and bridges and maintain them, lay rails and undertake many other public welfare activities. In course of time, its functions increased greatly; the Government came to control and own large commercial undertakings like irrigation works, salt and opium monopolies, water-supply, railways and telegraphs and forests. The Government of the North-Western provinces had its due share - rather more - in these public welfare activities of the supreme Government. The administrators of this province who were greatly interested in the welfare of the people were Sir Charles Metcalfe, T.C. Robertson and James Thomason. They decided to start famine relief activities and to construct canals and roads; they

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provided medical facilities to the sick, introduced a cheap postal system and laid railway and telegraph lines for quick communication. All these helped the people tremendously and their life became more secure and comfortable than what it was a quarter of a century before.[19]

Famine Relief

Agriculture in our country depends mainly upon rainfall in a particular period of the year and so does the economic life of the people. Whenever the rains do not come at the proper time or are scanty, famine is sure to visit the country. Though the North-Western provinces formed an important part of the Indo-Gangetic plains, it was not immune from this inexorable law. Famines visited the Mughal province of Agra many a time. In the second year of the company's rule, the Upper provinces witnessed the famine of 1803-4 on account of the failure of the Monsoon in 1803. In this famine the Government made remissions of land revenue to the extent of about rupees three lakhs, besides the advances made to the cultivators and bounties given for the import of foodgrains into the province.[20]

Famine visited the province again in 1813-13. This time only a part of the province - the area west of the Yamuna - was affected. The effects of the bad crops of 1825, too, were severely felt by the people of the Upper provinces and there

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was a great scarcity of the food-grains. Statistics of death, however, were not maintained and nothing can be said of the mortality figure during the period of this scarcity. These early famines were due mainly to the excessive Land revenue demand made by the Government as a result of the farming system and new surveys and settlements and secondarily to the failure of the rains.[21]

The greatest famine that visited the North-Western provinces before 1860 was that of 1837-38. It enveloped a vast area of land and prevailed in a severe form almost throughout the South-Western parts of the province. Rains were unusually late and scanty in the year 1837 with the result that an absolute drought followed throughout the year. Not only did the Kharif crop failed entirely, but the grass and fodder were also lost. Famine conditions continued in 1838 also and misery and distress spread all over the province. Prices of food-grains had shot up and harrowing scenes of poverty, scarcity and death were witnessed all around. The area affected most was that between Allahabad to Delhi, especially the districts from Kanpur to Farrukhabad, Kalpi, Etawa, Agra, Mathura and Manipuri. The eastern parts of the North-Western provinces and the Rohilkhand Division, however, suffered comparatively less.[22]

Irrigation is the soul of agriculture in the North-Western provinces. The prosperity of the cultivator is not

possible without irrigation. The value of irrigation can be guessed from the 19th century observation that "it doubles the rent" of the land and, therefore, is useful both to the cultivator and the state and improves the economic position of both.

Cultivated land can be irrigated by three means - well, tank and canal. In the Rohilkhand and Tarai area of the province water is very near the surface of the earth and can be easily lifted in a bucket. In the Doab the depth of water is considerable, rising from fifteen feet below the surface to upwards, though the average is somewhere between twenty and twenty-five feet. Wells are very deep in Bundelkhand - in the Banada district water is found about sixty feet below the surface. Naturally, well-irrigation, is not possible in such cases. Tank irrigation, too, is not popular in the province. Flowing water is the usual means of irrigation in the major portion of the North-Western provinces. Such water may be had from streams, rivers and canals. Brindly's famous words "God meant rivers to feed the canals" and the famine of 1837-38 were greatly responsible for turning the attention of the Government of the East India Company to the canals of the Sultanate and Mughal period of Indian History.[25]

In the early years of the acquisition of the ceded and conquered Districts, Mr. Mercer surveyed the route of the old

and forgotten canals of Firoz Tughluq on the Western side of the Yamuna and invited the attention of the Government to the reopening of the Delhi canals, but the Government did not approve of his scheme. In 1810 a committee of survey was appointed during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Minto to enquire into the condition of the old canals both East and West of the Yamuna. The Chief Engineer and the Surveyor-General, however, were so much divided in their opinion that the real object of the committee was lost under the weight of their controversy and the project was abandoned.[24]

Lord Hastings was more practical than Minto. He toured the Upper provinces in 1815 and saw traces of the old canal, including a fine stone bridge near Karnal. He wrote his famous minute of September 21, 1815, on the restoration of the Yamuna canals. "I will only say", he wrote, "that my own inspection has fully convinced me of the facility and the policy of immediately restoring this noble work". He felt sure that the project would yield a lucrative revenue to the Company. The work was sanctioned by the Court of Directors and a survey was started by Lieutenant Blaine in 1817. Blaine's work could not go far due to the undue economy effected by the Government. However, he succeeded in this project partially and water was brought to Delhi on May 30, 1820. Baline was succeeded by Captain Tickle in 1821. Colonel John Colvin succeeded Tickle as the

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General-Superintendent of Irrigation in Delhi in 1823 and the work proceeded at a quick speed under his supervision. The success of the canal work was in a great measure due to his exertions. Completed in 1827 the Western Yamuna canal was 425 miles in length from the hills to Delhi and to Hissar; it spanned 159 bridges of Masonry. Fifty-four of wood work and one suspension bridge, while there were about seven hundred irrigation outlets from the main channel. The canal had the following eight water courses - main canal, Delhi branch, Bulla branch, Hansi branch, Bahadera branch, Durha branch, Rohtak branch and Sutana branch.

The result of the opening of the Western Yamuna canal was very encouraging - in 1807 the Hissar district was barren and very sparsely populated, but with the coming of the canal it became a prosperous area inhabited by an active contented and prosperous peasantry. The Western Yamuna canal rendered great service to the province, specially the Delhi territory, during the famine of 1837-38. The Western Yamuna canal was an economic proposition for the Government also.[25]

The Eastern Yamuna Canal

The Eastern Yamuna Canal was a smaller project than the Western Yamuna canal. It had its course between the Ganga and the Yamuna i.e., it irrigated the land in the Doab. It was constructed by Zabita Khan, son of Najib-ud-Daulah Rohilla and

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was left neglected from that time. The Board of Commissioners reported on October 7, 1809, that, if restored, the Eastern Yamuna canal would be a very profitable concern. Captain Tod, appointed to survey the course of the canal and its potentialities, reported that the cost involved in restoration would be about rupees two lakhs. The Government, however, dropped the project there. In 1822 the line was again surveyed and the work of restoration started by Lieutenant De Bude. He was succeeded by Colonel Robert Smith under whose supervision the work was completed in 1829, and the canal opened for irrigation on January 3, 1830.[26]

During the famine of 1837-38 the value of crops grown on irrigated area, "the greater part of which would have been totally unproductive but for the canal water", was estimated at about half a million Sterling. From 1830-31 to 1846-47 the total water rent collected from the watersupply of the canal was Rs. 10,95,166.[27]

The Ganges Canal

The Ganges canal is a purely English contribution to the canal works of the province. In 1836 Colonel John Colvin was appointed to report on the project. During the famine of 1837-38 Lord Auckland realising the utility of canals sanctioned the survey of the land between Haridwar and Roorkee. Major Proby Cautley was asked to perform this duty. His report, dated

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May 12, 1840 was favourably received by Lieutenant-Governor Robertson and also by the Governmentt of India on whose recommendation the court of Directors sanctioned the project on September 1, 1841. The scheme was expected to cost above one million Sterling.[28]

The Ganges canal was the biggest canal of the province and also the biggest in the entire country those days. Up to the end of April, 1856 the expenditure on the canal had reached the vast sum of 15,60,000 pounds. The work was impeded by the Great Rebelion 1857-58. But after the change-over, it was resumed and carried to its completion. The full supply of water, however, was available in the province only after the famine of 1860-61.[29]

Starting from $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Haridwar, the canal proceeded its circular course to the south-east of Aligarh - 180 miles. At Aligarh the canal bifurcated, one going towards Kanpur - 170 miles - and the other towards Hamirpur - 180 miles. From Haridwar to Aligarh, three branch lines took water; to Fatehgarh - 170 miles; to Bulandeshayar - 60 miles; and to Koel - 50 miles, thus making a total of 810 miles for the whole canal. Including the distributaries and branches its total length, however, was 3,800 miles.[30]

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POSTAL COMMUNICATION

Warren Hastings carried out the first postal reforms in January, 1774. The only extension of routes was to establish a cross-dak at Dinajpur, which connected Rajmahal on the main route from Calcutta to Patna via Murshidabad. This was necessary since military operations required constant communication between Cooch Behar and Calcutta. Hastings innovation was to group the whole into four divisions placing them under a postmaster-General with powers to control the entire postal establishment to issue monthly payments and receive monthly accounts.

The four main postal divisions covered routes:

1) from Calcutta to Ganjam;
2) from Calcutta to Patna via Murshidabad;
3) from Patna to Benares and such farther distance as might be determined from time to time and
4) from Calcutta to Dacca.

Excepting Dinajpur, no post was established on the cross-roads connecting the districts or the seats of the provincial councils with the main divisional routes. The Collectors and the Chiefs of the Provincial Councils were directed to employ couries to convey their letters to the nearest stages of the daks and to submit their pay and other charges to the postmaster-

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General for approval.

For the sake of efficiency and speed all the four main routes were divided into distinct stages each stage being established at a distance of eight to nine miles. The division from Calcutta to Patna for instance covered 398 miles with 48 stages. To each stage were appointed three harcaras, one massalchi or lamphearer to show the way at night, and one drummer to scare away the wild beasts of the jungle through which the dak runners had often to pass. There were four capital stage between Calcutta and Patna. To each capital stage in a divisional route was appointed a Munshi or writer who had under him two timekeepers to record the arrival of each packet. The time of arrival was written on the outside of the packet. The Munshi was to maintain a regular account of each arrival and the time of the last despatch.

A European Deputy-Postmaster was appointed to each of the six stations namely Murshidabad, Patna, Benares, Ganjam, Dacca and Dinapur. His duties were to supervise the work of Munshis to pay the charges of subordinate establishments to take an account of all letters received and despatched to receive and send out letters and transmit monthly accounts and reports to the Postmaster-General. The Deputy-Postmaster of Patna and Murshidabad were each allowed to 10 peons. The rest of them had only two each.[31]

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Hastings' Government also adopted a number of bye-laws for the guidance of the postmaster-General and his department. These were:

1 Postage was to be paid on all letters except those on public service.

2 Postage on inland letters was to be paid on arrival at the office. A single letter weighing $2\frac{1}{2}$ tolas (one tola being equal to one sicca rupee weight) was to cost two annas for every hundred miles. Double letters were to pay in proportion to weight and distance.

3 Letters coming by sea or from foreign settlements were to be paid for on delivery.

4 A table of postage was to be drawn up accordingly and affixed at different offices for public inspection.

5 The Postmaster-General was to lay before the Government a monthly general abstract of all receipts and disbursements.

6 All letters were to be sorted and stamped with the day of the month on which they were delivered into any head office.[32]

Extension of Post Offices 1775-81

In the extension of postal establishments in the period between 1775-81 the Governor-General and Council were guided

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mainly by military consideration. Within the diwani provinces this extension was effected for both inland and overseas mail. Beyond Benares it was intended to establish communication with the army in the field.

Inland Mail

In pursuance of a representation from Colonel Ironside at Dinapur, the Governor-General and Council appointed a Deputy Postmaster there to receive and transmit letters to Patna. This appointment dispensed with the necessity for military officers to send their communications eight miles daily to the Patna Post Office. On a similar representation from Major Blair at Barhampur another post office was established at the cantonment there.

Overseas Mail

The usual practice followed before 1776 in the conveyance of overseas mail was that on their arrival from Europe or the other presidencies they were unloaded at Kedgree (Khijiri) and forwarded in what was known as Chauki-boats which carried them in relays from there to Calcutta. The reason was that it was considered unsafe for large vessels to proceed straight up the Hugli to Calcutta. So they lay at Kedgree which was situated on the right bank of the river near the sea about three miles from Ingelee (Hijili).

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Army Daks Beyond Benares

The necessity of extending postal communication to stations beyond Benares in 1778 was dictated by the exigencies of the Anglo-Maratha War. In the light of Brigadier-General Stibbert's recommendations, the Governor-General proposed a plan for a post office for the army in the field stationed in the Upper provinces. It was to be placed under the direction of a Postmaster answerable to the Commander-in-Chief in all matters excepting the collection of postage for which he was to be accountable to the General Post Office at Calcutta. He was to be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief and his office was to be located at the army headquarters with two deputies operating at field. The rates of postage were to conform to the general rules prescribed for the diwani provinces in 1774.[33]

The Reforms of 1781

The reforms of 1781 also affected the rules of postage on public letters. The Governor-General and Council ordered that all letters hitherto despatched 'on the service' and free should pay postage according to the rates prescribed for other letters. The heads of offices were asked to charge for these in their monthly establishment and the Postmaster-General was required to keep for checking a register of every letter sent by them at the presidency. At the close of every month the

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Government order required the Postmaster-General to send to the heads of offices at the presidency a bill for the amount of postage on letters despatched by each of them. The same rule was to operate in respect of the subordinate offices of the Government.[34]

The Main Postal Routes:

The number of postal divisions continued to be four, but the addition of certain new routes necessitated their constitution on a slightly different basis. The main routes were to be as follows:

A) The Southern Division from Calcutta to Ganjam through Balasore and Cuttak connecting the presidencies of Madras and Bombay.

B) The Eastern Division from Calcutta to Dacca.

C) The Western Division from Calcutta to Benares and beyond not through Murshidabad, Rajmahal and Patna but through the new route via Hazaribagh and Mughalsarai.

D) The Northern Division from Calcutta to Murshidabad only Patna now being connected with Murshidabad by a cross-dak.

Each of the four divisions was allowed a separate establishment of its own at the General post office. It

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contained provisions for certain munshis and consisting of three runners, a drummer and a lampbearer for the most part unaltered. The hardara continued to be paid at the rate of 7 rupees and the drummer and the lampbearer at 3 rupees as before. Each stage on the Southern and Western Divisions was provided with a stagekeeper called Addadar who was addition appointed at Chass on the Western route to Benares but for fear of robbers and wild animals he lived at Sherghati which connected with Patna through Gaya.[35]

THE RAILWAYS

India had a brilliant tradition of state activities for the promotion of public works, before the English East India Company established their political supremacy here. Different parts of the country were interconnected by roads and water-transport for commercial and other purposes. Records of the early surveys of the East India Company, such as those of Martin in 1750 of Major James Rennell (1763-66), and a Hamilton Buchanan during the yearly years of the 19th Century give us an idea of what had existed in the post in the shape of communications and facilities for travel and transport, especially in Northern India with its vast plains.

With the new political and economic changes in the West as well as in India there was naturally a demand for improved and extended means of communications about the middle

of the 19th century. It was in 1843-44 that the earliest proposals were made for construction of railways in India. These envisaged construction of railways by companies incorporated in England a minimum profit being guaranteed by the East India Company for a definite period. So contracts for definite period were made with the East India Railway Company and the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company formed in 1845 for construction of two small railway lines near Calcutta and Bombay respectively. In 1855 the total length opened was 121 miles from Calcutta to Ranigung by the former and 37 miles from Bombay to Kalyan by the latter. The Madras Railways completed 65 miles from Madras to Arcot in 1856. Five other Railway companies were formed but their lines were not open before 1858.

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

from the interior."[36]

R. Macdonald Stephenson was the pioneer who broched the idea of laying railroads in India as early as 1845 and advocated the construction of a railway line along the same route that the first railway line along the same route that the first railway of northern India. The East Indian Railway later traversed.[37]

The East Indian Railway Company was founded in England in May, 1845 and by April, 1846 the whole track from Calcutta to Delhi via Mirzapur was surveyed by Stephenson who collected important statistical information and submitted to the East Indian Railway Company an elaborate report on his findings.

The railway line between Calcutta and Allahabad was completed in 1856 and that year the revenue from traffic on the line from Calcutta to Allahabad amounted to Rs. 36,100-10-2. The Railway was so popular in the country that by 1857 the income from the sale of railway tickets etc. rose to Rs. 1,32,424-2-11.[38]

When the Directors of the East Indian Railway Company found that Railways were popular and that it would be profitable to extend the line to Delhi and open new ones, they decided to take up the matter. Towards the end of 1856 contracts were entered into for extending the line to Delhi. At the same time

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there were two new projects-proposals for opening up the lines between Mirzapur and Jabalpur and between Delhi and Lahore.[39]

The line between Allahabad and Kanpur was completed in 1858 and next year a contract for that between Delhi and Lahore was given to the Punjab Railway later renamed as the North-Western Railway. Calcutta was connected with Banaras in December, 1862 while work was already going on as far as Agra. in 1860, the East Indian Railway had 120 miles of railroad open for traffic in the North-Western provinces and the line had come as far as Etawa. On August 1, 1864 the East Indian Railway reached Delhi on the banks of the Yamuna covering a distance of 1020 miles between Calcutta and Delhi.

SOCIAL REFORMS

Sati

The horrible practice of burning of Hindu widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband had a semi-religious sanction and was inspired by the reasoning that it was better for a woman to burn herself along with her husband than to lead the miserable life of a widow. Originally, the practice was voluntary but later it was made obligatory by the guardians of religion and morals. The sati system was more popular in the presidency of Bengal and the Upper provinces than in any other part of India; it was more common in Bengal than in the

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North-Western provinces.

The Company's servants were aware of the evil but they refrained from interfering until the time of Lord William Bentinck. On December 4, 1829, this Governor-General placed before this council the draft of a Regulation on this vital subject, declaring that "the Government of which I am a part should have the credit of an act which is to wash out a foul stain on British rule and to stay a sacrifice of humanity and justice to a doubtful expediency. ..." The Regulation was passed and the evil practice of sati was declared illegal and punishable by the criminal courts. The persons aiding the performance of sati were to be charged with culpable homicide. Hindu community was thus purged of a general evil in the North-Western provinces as well as in the rest of the country.[40]

Infanticide

Another great social evil was the killing of female infants by their parents. This was prevalent among the high class Hindus, specially Brahmans and Rajputs. The reason for it was two-fold - the high cost of the marriage of girls and a false notion of prestige. Colonel James Tod felt that "although religion no where authorises his barbarity, the laws which regulate marriage among the Rajputs powerfully promote infanticide. Moreover, to marry his daughter was often to ruin a man. In the North-Western provinces the evil was noticeable among the

Rajputs especially the Chauhans. Jonathan Duncan the Resident at Banaras and later Governor of Bombay, noticed this evil in 1789 while he was touring on the frontiers of the Junpur district. On October 2, 1789 he wrote about it all Lord Cornwallis and on December 23, the same year he forwarded a translation of an agreement into which the Rajputs of Banaras had entered into with the Resident binding themselves to put and end to this evil practice.[41]

The step taken by R. Montgomery at Allahabad may be described in his own words:

> I appointed a chaprasi to reside in each village whose sole duty it was to report the birth of a female child in the family of any of the ... Rajputs. I also bound the gorait, chaukidar and the midwives under a heavy penalty to report separately each birth at the Thana, the four thus acting as a check on each other. I directed the thanadar on the death of any female infant being reported to hold an inquest on the body, and afterwards transit it to the civil surgeon for examination. I associated the tahsildar with the thanadar in order to ensure a more efficient superintendence.

This results were encouraging out of every four girls born three lived as a result of the Government's vigilance. Similar steps were taken throughout the province and infanticide declared illegal and a criminal offence.[42]

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EDUCATION

The Agra College was founded on these lines and started its life on November 7, 1823. As recommended by the General committee, its monthly expenditure was to be Rs. 870/-.

The Agra College became popular with the intelligentsia of the North-Western provinces immediately after its foundation. In 1826, there were 117 students in the college of whom 43 were in Hindi-Sanskrit group and 74 were in Persian-Arabic group. By next year the number had risen to 63 in Hindi-Sanskrit group and 121 in Persian-Arabic group. Hindi was popular with a majority of the students of the college. Out of 184 students in 1827 not less than 120 read Hindi, though all of them did not offer Sanskrit. The study of geography, astronomy and mathematics was started on European system from 1827.

An English class was attached to the Agra College at a cost of rupees 200 per month for a teacher and rupees 50 for books etc. The college building was erected from a grant of Rs. 42,501/15/9 made by the Government in 1829. In 1841 a contemporary writer described the Agra College building as follows:

> The most striking of all the public buildings is the college, situated on the civil lines and at a short distance from the town. It was built by Lieutenant

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Boileau. It is a noble quadrangle and in the Gothic style with jutting corners, having four turrets at each of the corners and two liftier ones flanking the two principal entrances. There are arched varandas on each side, four handsome entrances and four corner quadrangular rooms. A passage runs from north to south through the building and so on each side there are seven spacious rooms, including the central hall which is divided into two parts. The Southern side of the building is appropriated to the Vernacular department and the Northern to the English.[43]

The Delhi College

The Delhi Oriental College was founded in 1828 through the efforts of the General Committee of Public Instruction. A sum of Rs. 3,000/- to 35,000/- per annum was reported to be locally available for the purpose of an educational institution and to this the General Committee added rupees 600/- per month. M.D. Taylor was appointed superintendent of the College with an allowance of Rs. 150/- per month. The staff was to consist of one teacher on Rs. 100/- per month and five Maulvis on Rs. 50/- per month each. Eighty-nine students were given stipends of Rs. 3/- each per month. The main subjects taught were Persian and Arabic. Arithmetic, History and Jurisprudence were also taught.[44]

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Missionary and Other Schools

Besides the above institution run by the Government there was in the province many a school financed and run by the public and the Christian Mission. The missionaries at Meerut started a Vernacular school in 1811 with 30 boys on the rolls and by 1840 the number of schools in Meerut had risen to five. Mr. Corrie started a school at Agra in 1813 and supervised it for many years. In 1814 there were 84 students on the rolls and by 1842 the number of schools at Agra had gone up to ten with 300 boys. Mr. Corrie had set up a school at Serole the headquarters of the European at Banaras before he left for Agra and it continued to flourish after him.[45]

When Lord Hastings visited the Upper provinces in 1814 a wealthy philanthropist of Banaras, Jai Narain Ghoshal, presented him a petition and proposed to establish a school at Banaras. He offered to create an endowment of rupees 20,000 the interest of which together with the income from land was considered adequate to maintain the proposed school. The school was to impart instructions in Hindi, Bengali, Persian and English. Hastings approved of the plan. Jai Narain also made over a building for the school in which nearly 200 boys received education.[46]

At Kanpur a school, named Kanpur Free School, was founded

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in 1820 by some private individuals. Its finances being poor, Major-General Lewis Thomas, Commanding-Officer there appealed to the Government for aid and the governor-General in 1823 sanctioned a grant of rupees 400 per month. The Christian missionaries established five schools in Gorakhpur in 1823, and an English class was started by Wilkinson in 1825. An English school at Gorakhpur was set up only in 1835. Private efforts were successful in establishing a school at Allahabad in 1825 and later the General Committee aided in with a regular grant. In January, 1826 there were in this school 31 students in the Persian class and 17 in the Hindi class. A School at Etawa was founded in 1824 by the Collector of that district and financed from the town duties. A few schools were started by the people of Bareilly some of which had a long life.[47]

Medical Education

A Medical College was opened in Calcutta in 1835 and the first Indian to join it was Pandit Madhusudan, a Hindu of high caste who broke all the trammels of caste prejudices and dissected the human body in public. This medical college was based entirely on Western lines and introduced the study of Western medicine and surgery. For a long time prospective medical students all over Northern India including the North-Western provinces, had to go to Calcutta for their education.

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This entailed on them a huge expenditure and great inconvenience and hardship.[48] Therefore, in 1854 when the new building of the Thomason Hospital at Agra was ready, Lieutenant-Governor Colvin sought the permission of the Governor-General to allow the Hospital committee to make arrangements for giving instruction for the subordinate class of native doctors all of whom are now compelled to proceed for their education to Calcutta. Nothing however, resulted from this representation up to the Great Rebellion of 1857-58. The Hospital started a Medical class only in 1865.[49]

SALT TAX

A Salt tax was imposed upon the people of the province and of the country from very early times. In the time of Warren Hastings, salt which was a monopoly of the Government, was placed under a new scheme according to which the salt producing areas were divided into agencies. Each agency was placed under an agent who was a civil officer, while the whole salt administration was under the Superintendence of a comptroller with his headquarters at Calcutta.

Salt was prepared in Bengal by the Company's agents, and a duty of 5s per maund was added to the cost of production before the article was placed in the market. A duty of 4s. per maund was raised on salt obtained from mines in Panjab, while salt prepared in Native States had to pay a duty of 4s or 5s.

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before it passed into British territory.

Madras salt was formed by solar evaporation of the Margin of the sea and was cheaper than Bengal salt and the company derived a considerable revenue by selling it at 2s. the maund. In Bombay the Government permitted manufacturers to remove the salt from the pans on payment of a duty of 1s 6d. the maund. Salt imported into India from England or other countries paid a duty of 5s. or 6s. the maund so that the importers might not undersell the duty paying Indian salt.

The net revenue of the company derived from salt manufacture rose from Rs. 8,00,000/- in 1793 to nearly Rs. 13,00,000/- in 1844. The total quantity of salt manufactured by the East India Company in these fifty-two years is estimated at a little over two hundred million maunds, and the total revenue derived from the manufacture at sixty millions sterling.[50]

Opium Tax

Opium tax was grown in British territory- Benaras and Patna and in the native state of Malwa. The Benares and Patna opium was the monopoly of the Company and the Government of Bengal got a large revenue from this monopoly, selling the opium at a profit of more than 200 per cent. Malwa opium paid a heavy transit duty of Rs. 12, 10s. the chest of passing into British territory for exportation and the Government of Bombay

derived a substantial revenue from this transit duty. The two kings of opium met in the market of Canton for sale in China.

It was managed by the agents of the Government appointed for that purpose. The opium agents annually entered into contracts with the cultivators who were bound to deliver the whole of their produce to the Government Agent at a fixed price, which was normally Rs. 3/8/- per seer or about 3s.6d. per lb.[51]

In the North-Western provinces, a poppy was cultivated profitably in the Doab from the boarders of Awadh in the east to Agra in the West. The area was about five hundred miles in length and two hundred miles in breadth. The manufacture of opium, the poppy plants grown in the Doab was carried out in a separate agency, the agency of Banaras with its headquarters at Gazipur. After manufacture, opium was exported to China and other countries of the Far East.[52]

The Abkari

Abkari was excise duty on the manufacture and sale of intoxicants and alcoholic drinks. The duty on intoxicants and drinks was prevalent in the pre-British days as well, and the contract for its collection was normally given to the highest bidder. When the East India Company took over the administration

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of the ceded and conquered districts, it continued the same system of abkari which it had inherited. The chief intoxicants coming under abkari tax were toddy, arak, bhang and ganja. The Collectors of the various districts collected the tax at the place of sale and looked after its proper conduct. Licenses for the opening of shops for the sale of intoxicants were also issued by the Collectors.[53]

STAMP DUTY

Originally two reasons had prompted the Government of India to introduce stamp duty. Firstly, to discourage the unusually large number of law suits in the courts of the company, and secondly, to make up the loss of revenue resulting from the abolition of the old police tax. When the stamp tax was introduced, it was required to affix stamps in legal proceedings and in courts of law only. But later the use of stamps became necessary also for business transactions, like the receipts, hand-notes, bill of exchange, bonds, etc. Similarly, legal documents and deeds for the transfer of land and property also had to be written on stamped paper. Consequently the stamp duty yielded more and more income to the Government as trade and commerce, industry and crafts and the administration of justice expanded and the economic life of the people improved.[54]

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THE POST OFFICE

The post office was another source of income for the Government of the North-Western provinces. The post office administration of the upper provinces was separated from the post office administration of the Bengal presidency from May 20, 1835 as the result of a resolution of the Governor-General-in-Council. For the time being the Postmaster-General of Calcutta looked after the post office in this province also. A separate Post-Master General for the North-Western provinces was appointed in 1839. A remarkable change was effected in the postal charges when a uniform rate was fixed for the whole country.

The North-Western provinces was the only province in India where the post office showed a surplus; in older provinces like the Bengal, Bombay and Madras presidencies there was a deficit in the postal budget of the days before the Great Revolt of 1857-58.[55]

MISCELLANEOUS TAXES

A large number of other minor imposts and taxes were imposed on the people of the province in early days of the company's rule. These minor imposts were as unproductive as they were vaxatious. Most of them were uneconomical and their proceeds did not justify their continuation. A major portion

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of most of these minor imposts usually went into the pockets of the petty local officials who were entrusted with their collection. The randari imposts, the boat tax at the ferries, the chaukidari tax from the people, the pulbandi tax collected for the construction and repair of bridges over rivers and big canals, the pushtabandi tax collected for the construction and repair of embankments and the wheel tax or a levy on the carts were the common taxes throughout the province before 1858, of which no record is available. Though the Government officially abolished many of these imposts when the local officials were paid from the state treasury, they continued in the interior of the country unchecked undetected and uncared for by the Government.

Mention may also be made among the miscellaneous sources of the income of the state to the judicial fines and fees charged by the Government for various purposes. Judicial fines and other fees yielded a good amount of income. For instance in 1849-50 the income from this source was Rs. 3,03,237/-.[56]

The Magistrate-Collector in the districts of the most overworked officers of the Government of the East India Company. Up to the Revolt of 1857-58 he exercised power and undertook duties which, subject to his general supervision and direction, are now delegated to his subordinates. Besides the collection of the land revenue and other taxes and the administration of

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the district, he was the chief education officer, in charge of the construction of roads and bridges and the Chief Judicial Officer in some cases as also the Chief of the Police in his jurisdiction. Three police corps had been raised in the province during the time of Lord Ellenborough in order to relieve the military of the civil duties previously performed by it.[57]

But so far there was no separate head of the police though an urgent need for a special police assistant to the Magistrate was felt on all hands.[58]

The Police branch of Administration the Magistrate-Collector had under him a number of Indian revenue officials called Tahsildars who looked after the revenue and the police matters in the tahsil of which they were in charge. They could imprison an accused or a suspected though for a brief period of time only, and if empowered by the Magistrate, could try petty cases and impose small fines. Thus, they did quite a large amount of work which the Magistrate-Collector was expected to do. The Tahsildar had almost the same duties as the Darogha of the former days.[59]

He also advised the Magistrate in important matters relating to his tahsil. A good Tahsildar says a District Magistrate of the North-Western provinces, "is the most useful person and well earns his salary of Rs. 200/- per month." There were normally 219 tahsildars in the thirty-one districts of the

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province and their salary ranged between one hundred and three hundred rupees per month.[60]

The period 1813 to 1833 began with Lord Moiras Government which marked a distinct break from established traditions in politics and administration. While his military conquests extended the bounds of the company's dominions, his political settlements with the country powers heralded a new era of internal peace and security. Politically, India became virtually united and developed an Indian policy under his Government. In the field of administration too, he set in motion a new trend of liberal reforms reflected the principles of utilitarian through which dominated the contemporary politics of England. The administration of police and criminal justice was particularly influenced by its impact during this period.

Governor-General in Council to adopt it as a general plan of Chukidari police establishment. In all villages were chaukidars (Watchmen) supposed to keep guard at night, to notice the movements of bad characters, to apprehend felons caught flagrante delicto and to report all important matters at the thana headquarters. Chaukidars generally were appointed by the Zamindars of their villages and any appointment might be vetoed by the district Magistrate. But Regulation XIII of 1813, which was the first Municipal enactment in Bengal, provided for the appointment in large towns of Chaukidars who

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were to be paid by the residents. The preamble laying down the principal that the people for whose benefit and protection such an establishment might be entertained should defray the charge of their maintenance.[61]

Ordinary village chaukidars were remunerated by the State for watch-and-ward but in many respects were the private servants of the Zamindars from whom they held Chakran (service) lands upon which the Government possessed a limited lien. This arrangement worked badly. The Chaukidars were useless and corrupt the supple tools of the Zamindars. Although by regulations passed in 1808 and 1812 the latter were liable to heavy penalties and even to forfeiture of their lands if they failed to give early information of the commission of offences or afforded countenance to robbers they had only to establish friendly relations with the police darogas to reign as they pleased over weaker neighbours and reap ample profits from the villainies of banditti. The British Officers who alone could prevent such malpractices, were scanty in number, hampered by a faulty and unstable administrative system and served by corrupt and ill-trained subordinates. Moving about was often difficult and generally slow. Lawlessness and vilence were frequent and easy. In 1855 the first Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Frederick Halliday submitted to the Supreme Government specific proposals for improvement in the pay of

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the regular district police, admitting that the outlay though considerable could not be regarded as final as the police establishment was numerically weaker than it should be for the protection of property and the preservation of good order. In 1856 he further pressed the question urging the importance of raising the tone of the whole administration of criminal justice in Bengal. The police were bad and the tribunals were inefficient. These two circumstances acted and reacted upon each other.[62]

Re-orientation of the Official Police

Police Darogas

The duties and powers of police darogas were defined and specified by regulation 20 of 1817, which is regarded as the first police manual drawn up by the British Government in India. The several rules enacted from time to time for the guidance of police officers were revised and framed into one regulation. No important change was effected in the establishment of darogas and their subordinate officers until 1831, when the Tahsildars or Indian Revenue Collectors were again vested with the duties and powers of darogas in the Upper provinces. The daroga of the thana where this arrangement came into operation was to be designated as Naib Daroga.

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Magistrates

The main feature of reform in the office of the Magistrate was the increase of authority over police darogas and Kotwals whose appointment and transfer were now to proceed from him under Regulation 17 of 1816. In the exercise of his powers the Magistrate could also suspend or dismiss them without making any report to the Court of Circuit. His powers of appointment removal and transfer likewise extended to the jailers and the subordinate staff of criminal jails. To enable the Magistrate to keep order and discipline among prisoners, the Governor-General in council enacted into one regulation all the rules which had previously been established from time to time by the Government or the Nizamat Adalat. In his jail administration he acted under the superintendence of the court of circuit and on the abolition of that court of the Commissioner of circuit and Superintendent of Police.[63]

Superintendent of Police

The Superintendent of Police was likewise authorised to appoint and remove the subordinate ministerial officers of his own establishment. He could also fine police officers and suspend them for neglect, misconduct or incapacity. For special reasons he might bring under his exclusive charge and administration any of the thanas in the interest of law and order.

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In 1829, the duties and powers of the superintendent of Police were vested under Regulation I of that year in the Commissioners of Circuit. The centralisation of powers which proceeded mainly from motives of economy seriously affected the efficiency of criminal administration. But while sessions duties began slowly to be transferred to the district judges from 1831 onwards the duties of the police remained vested in these Commissioners until 1837, when Act 24 of that year authorised the Governors of Bengal and the North-West provinces to appoint a superintendent of Police for any part of their respective provinces. On any such appointment the duties and powers of the Superintendent of Police vested in the Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit by regulation I of 1829 were to cease and the Superintendent thus appointed was to exercise the powers under the regulation which first created that office in 1808.[64]

FUNCTIONS OF THE POLICE

The police were entrusted with many duties in the proper maintenance of peace and order. There were many irons in the fire for the police, and all problems had to be solved almost simultaneously.

Thagi

It was as early as 1810 that St. Lager, the Commissioner-

in-Chief cautioned his soldiers against "a description of murderers denominated Thags" who infested the districts of the Doab and other parts of the Upper provinces. The Government, however, took no notice of these bad characters. The result was disastrous for the peace and proper administration of not only these areas but of the whole of the North-Western provinces and the central India. Gang robberies and thagi became wide-spread all over and, therefore, at last Bentinck had to institute a new department for the suppression of Thagi under the supervision of Colonel Sleeman. The Colonel came into close contact with the thags apprehended some of them and holding out promises not only of pardon but also of employment under the Company, soon wormed their secrets of the thags with regard to their gangs and their method of work. An account of the discoveries made by Sleeman has been recounted by him in his 'Report on the Depredations committed by the Thag Gangs of upper and central India' which was published at Calcutta in 1840. Landon has referred to a famous thag leader Amir Ali who turned an informer and thus saved his life. Amir Ali confessed 789 murders and was in jail for twenty-four years.[65]

It is interesting to note, however, that "Bengal was far more subject to brigandage than more recent acquisitions and less civilized tracts.[66]

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In the North-Western Provinces the gangs of thags had been destroyed and scattered by 1852, in Bengal on the other hand, there were numerous river thags and road thags "and even in 1854 as many as 250 boats manned by these miscreants were infesting the Ganges between Calcutta and Banaras."[67]

Dacoity

The most useful work accomplished by the police of the North-Western provinces was the suppression of dacoity and robbery. Gangs of robbers and dacoits haunted the public highways and perpetrated crime of all sort, most frequently by violence attended with murder and death and committed at night. Treasures and other portable articles of value were the objects of their attack. Dacoity was followed as a profession by some influential persons and landlords of the pre-British days who had been uprooted and left without a living due to the new revenue system and the record of rights prepared by the British administrators of India, specially in North-Western provinces. J.W. Kaye recalled to memory that "Warren Hastings complained that the farming system had a tendency to extend and perpetuate this evil" and then he added: "And the same fact is insisted upon and demonstrated on the evidence of the decoits themselves by the present generation of British functionaries."[68]

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These dissatisfied and uprooted people were joined by the bad characters and professional thieves and robbers of the area. In course of time the combination of these people became very dangerous to the peace of the province as they spread all over and plundered and robbed the civil population wherever they happened to go. In order to suppress dacoity, therefore, it was decided to institute the office of a Superintendent for the suppression of Dacoity and Sir Charles Metcalfe the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western provinces made arrangements for it on receiving the permission of the supreme Government.[69]

In April, 1837 this first attempt to suppress dacoity was made when Hugh Fraser was appointed to the post and was given special magisterial powers throughout the province. The commission of Hugh Fraser was in operation for about a year and a half, but no improvement could be effected by it. Therefore, when Lord Auckland took over the North-Western provinces administration on January 1, 1838 he decided to unite the two offices for the suppression of Thagi and Dacoity under Colonel Sleeman who had shown unusual success in suppressing Thagi. This meant a saving to the tune of Rs. 18,000/- per year for the Government. Sleeman was successful in his assignment and the crimes of dacoity and robbery were suppressed through the agency and cooperation of 'informers' and 'approvers'. Sleeman started a vigorous

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and well-sustained pursuit of the dacoits in all parts of northern India and thus broke the gangs of robbers and decoits at the places of their origin. He gave detailed accounts of the lives and characters of these decoits in his voluminous reports in which Ajit Singh figures prominently. It should not, however, be supposed that all the gangs of robbers were broken up; Sleeman put an end of the dacoity of Budhuk tribe and other combinations, but some scattered groups of dacoits continued to exist. After Sleeman, the police did not act as efficiently as it should have done in rounding up the robbers. A big gang of robbers which plundered several districts of the provinces had its headquarters at Agra and "the police for a long time closed their eyes to its operation."[70]

And when ultimately the gang was caught and inquires held, it was found out records a French commentator on British Indian administration, that there were many criminals in the gang "who escaped arrest by periodical payments to the police."[71] These gangs were quite big and sometimes the number of dacoits in them rose to forty or fifty. There were a number of gangs under different leaders and some of them cooperated with one another in their depredations. The plan of operation of these gangs was always "to descend suddenly, in force and under cover if night on a town or village and pillage the house of some wealthy person". At times, "in

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order to avoid suspicion" they travelled "as a marriage procession, while their weapons were hidden in bundles of grass". As late as 1900, Mohan Lala, a gang leader revealed that he "often obtained information as to houses worth robbing from the police, and shared his profits with them.[72]

Indeed, this is a sad commentary on the history and achievement of the 19th century police.

Rohilkhand was a criminal area of the province and a large number of robbers and dacoits had their headquarters in that region. The jails here were full of criminals and the police was almost always busy in rounding up the culprits. The criminals record of the Kanpur district also was very bad and deplorable. In the early years of the North-Western provinces therefore, a special Magistrate had to be appointed for maintaining peace and order in Kanpur.[73]

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