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# The Sepoy Rebellion

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THE SELOY REBELLION

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## INTRODUCTION

A survey of works on the Sepoy Rebellion indicates that most writers are primarily concerned with the military aspects of that event and usually confine themselves to that specific area. The few writers who do dwell on the causes usually restrict themselves to the cartridge incident and exclude any penetrating analysis of the protracted causes which were of much greater significance. The logical but inaccurate deduction to be made from such works is that the revolt had its inception in the few years immediately prior to that event and that the cartridge incident was the primary cause.

This paper is not concerned with the military aspects of the revolt. Rather it is the primary purpose of this paper to show that the causes of the Sepoy Rebellion, most complex and intricately intertwined, may be traced back to the inception of the English influence in India. This writer views the revolt as having its real causes in English social and economic reforms, land policy, expansion, deterioration of the native Sepoy army, and cultural conflict. This paper will examine these manifold and protracted causes of the revolt and show that the famous cartridge incident was significant only in that it was the necessary spark that ignited the



revolt.

Furthermore this paper purports to show that these events, encompassing a century, provided a solid base of discontent that existed long before the Sepoy Rebellion actually occurred.

## CHAPTER I

### ENGLISH EXPANSION IN INDIA

An important cause of the Sepoy Rebellion was the incessant territorial acquisitions and consolidation of English power in India which proceeded uninterrupted from 1757 to 1857.

In the sixteenth century, Baber (1482-1530) established a Moslem-Mogul Empire in India.<sup>1</sup> Successive rulers proved unusually capable and the Moguls succeeded in vastly extending the boundaries of their empire, the success of which must be attributed to their unusually tolerant and enlightened rule. These unique proponents of the Moslem faith respected the religious prejudices of their subjects and established a government held in singular respect by those in subjugation.<sup>2</sup> Consequently there arose a veneration for the emperor and the idea of imperial rule which manifested itself as late as 1857.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>G. D. Oswell, Sketches of Rulers of India (4 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908) Vol. IV, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>G. B. Malleson, Akbar and the Rise of the Mughal Empire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), p. 200.

<sup>3</sup>T. R. E. Holmes, A History of the Indian Mutiny (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1888), p. 2.

The spectacular accomplishments of this century of Moslem-Mogul rule culminated in the latter half of the seventeenth century during the reign of Aurangzib (1628-1707) whose rule ironically marked the height and decline of the Mogul Empire in India. Aurangzib's Mohammedan fanaticism, religious bigotry, and careless disregard of Hindu religious prejudice caused a gradual alienation of affection for Mohammedan rule.<sup>4</sup> The consequence of the disaffection was the ultimate precipitation of a rebellion by the Rajpoots and Marathas which gradually caused the empire to wane. Thus the difficult accomplishments of a century of progress and just rule were decimated by the infamous Aurangzib, whose death found the empire in complete decay and the King of Delhi only the titular head of a fictional empire.<sup>5</sup>

Thus the opportunity for European political expansion in India, heretofore mostly economic in nature, was greatly enhanced by the rapid disintegration of the Mogul Empire and the ensuing chaos of the seventeenth century. The resulting political vacuum created a situation of unlimited opportunity, immediately seized upon by the various European colonial powers and culminating in a struggle for supremacy in India, a struggle in which the English were ultimately victorious.

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<sup>4</sup> Edward Thornton, The History of the British Empire in India (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1858), p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole, Aurangzib and the Decay of the Mughal Empire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), p. 206.

The French governor of Pondicherry was the first to realize the implications and potentialities of a situation characterized by mass disorder. Dupleix envisioned the idea of a vast French Empire in India and immediately seized on the opportunity afforded.

The subtle designs and genius of Dupleix were confronted with one major obstacle - - namely the English. Traditionally English and French settlements in India, by an understood mutual consent, pursued on enlightened policy of quarantining and isolating India from the wars of Europe. Thus the English and French settlements in India maintained peace among themselves while at the same moment these two arch-rivals might be engaged in a life-and-death struggle in Europe.

The first confrontation and clash of Anglo-French power in India occurred as a consequence of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48). This conflict, of European origin, soon spread to India where the French made initial gains by the conquest of the English settlement of Madras. However, French assets in India were voided by English gains in North America and in particular the English conquest of Fort Louisburg on the St. Lawrence. In the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle these two strategic fortifications were exchanged and the status quo restored in India. The consequences of the War of Austrian Succession were of utmost importance in India because the conflict terminated the Anglo-French policy

of isolating India from European quarrels. Secondly the conflict bred temptation on the part of both England and France which guaranteed that neither could rest in peace until one was the paramount power in India.<sup>6</sup>

Dupleix now pursued an active and aggressive policy of political intrigue designed to enhance the French position in India. The imaginative policy of Dupleix manifested immediate results as the French were able to install Chanda Sahib as puppet ruler of Carnatic in 1749 and in 1750 Mozaffar Jang as ruler of the Dekhan, in both cases by taking advantage of disputed succession. The cases of Carnatic and Dekhan were typical of the revolutions and counter-revolution, plots, and counter-plots and dynastic intrigues that plagued India for the next several years as the English and French vied for position.<sup>7</sup>

Victory for the French in India depended unconditionally on persistence in the policy of Dupleix and unqualified support from a French government dedicated to bringing the struggle to a victorious conclusion. Neither of these conditions for victory were pursued with vigor. France was either unwilling or unable to compete with William Pitt's aggressive naval

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<sup>6</sup> A.D. Innes, A Short History of the British in India (London: Methuen & Co., 1902), p. 65.

<sup>7</sup> James Mill, The History of British India (10 vols.; London: Piper, Stephenson & Spence, 1858), Vol. III, p. 76.

policy, and a further blow to French ascendancy in India was the removal of Duplex by the French East India Company in 1754. The French position in India, now precipitately hindered, was finally decimated with the inception of the Seven Years' War.

Victory for the English in the Seven Years' War was not without its price, for during the course of that conflict the English incurred the wrath of an important element in Indian political affairs. The Anglo-French rivalry in southern India in the years immediately prior to the Seven Years' War was not directed against any particular native state. The English and French simply lent support to rival factions within a state where the legitimate sovereignty was in dispute. Native political factions were used as pawns to the advantage of either the English or French with the primary purpose being the establishment of commercial supremacy and dominant political influence with the native states.

Significantly this was not the case in Bengal where the struggle manifested considerable import as apropos to the Sepoy Revolt because of the nature of the conflict and the English tactics. In Bengal the conflict was directly between the English and the native state. Friction soon arose between the English settlement at Calcutta and the Nawab of Bengal, Suraj-ud-dowlah. Unable to resolve the differences the Nawab decided to

march on the English position at Calcutta, and on June 21, 1756, the English surrendered after the treacherous betrayal of the incompetent Governor Drake who fled the scene on an English naval vessel. The garrison at Fort William was left to the mercy of the Nawab's forces, the result being that 146 English prisoners were confined in the infamous Black Hole of Calcutta from which only 23 survived.<sup>8</sup> News of the disaster reached Madras in August and Clive was charged with an expedition to relieve Calcutta and avenge the atrocity of the Black Hole. Clive's forces retook Calcutta on January 2, 1757, and concluded an alliance of restitution and compensation with the Nawab.

However, friction soon arose anew between the two antagonists as a result of the outbreak of the Seven Years' War. Fort William had fallen into disarray during the rule of Governor Drake. He had totally neglected the defenses and fortifications of the citadel apparently under the illusion that the Anglo-French conflict raging in Southern India would not engulf the English settlement at Fort William or the nearby French settlement at Chandernagar. The Seven Years' War caused the English to desire the withdrawal of regiments from Fort William for

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<sup>8</sup> Frederick E. Pierce and Samuel Thurber, Jr., (eds.), Macaulay's Essays on Clive and Hastings (New York: Holt & Co., 1911), p. 39.

use in the Dekhan, but how to do this and still maintain the proper defense at Fort William against the untrustworthy Nawab of Bengal was questionable. The only solution appeared to be the removal of the Nawab and his replacement by an English puppet, Mir Jafar, a minister in the Nawab's court. Clive now embarked upon a policy of deception to achieve his purpose. He unhesitatingly applied the low standards of oriental rather than occidental diplomacy freely using treachery, falsehood, deception, duplicity and political chicanery to achieve the objective.

The plot was executed at the famed Battle of Plassey on June 23, 1757, when Clive with a combined force of 900 English and 2,100 Sepoy soldiers defeated the Nawab's army of 68,000 men.<sup>9</sup> English losses were few and the Nawab's army was completely routed and demoralized. On June 27th Mir Jafar was enthroned as the English puppet of Bengal.<sup>10</sup>

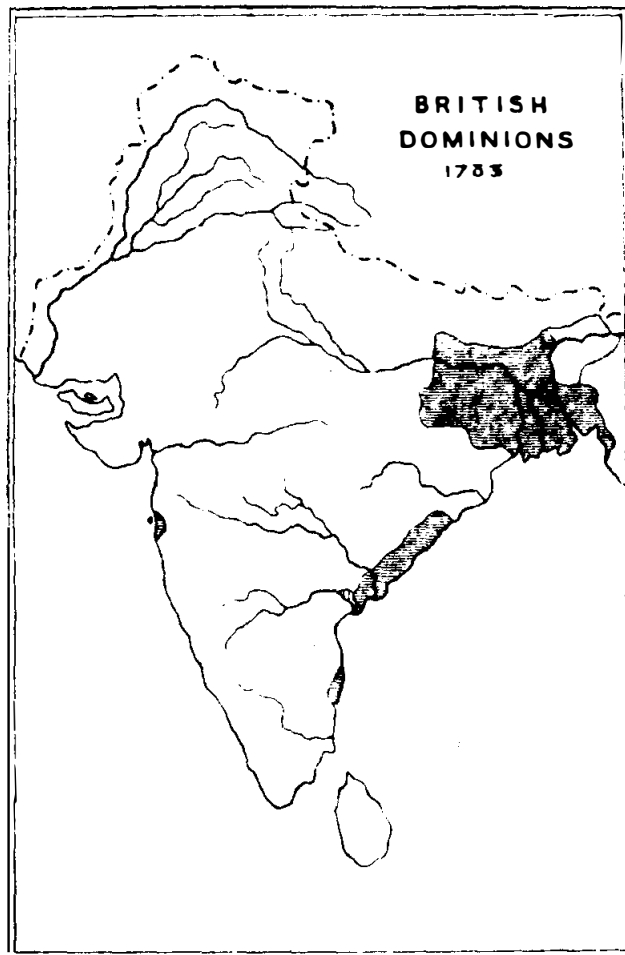
The final coup de grace to French power in India was delivered in January of 1761, when the French citadel of Pondicherry was overwhelmed. The Peace of Paris of 1763 returned some of the French possessions in India but

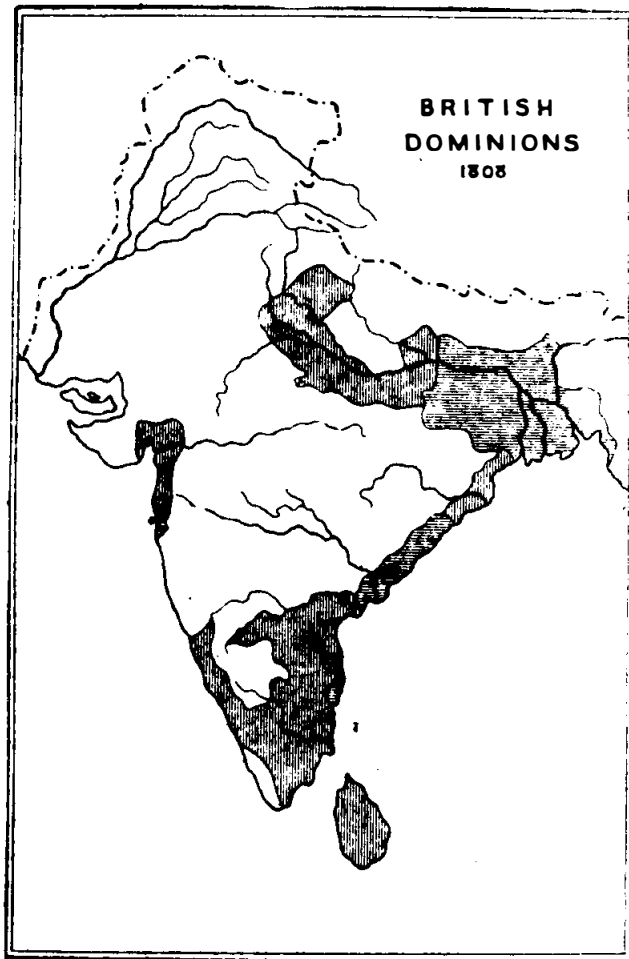
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<sup>9</sup>G. B. Malleson, (Lord Clive and the Establishment of the English in India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), pp. 95-96.

<sup>10</sup>A. D. Innes, op.cit., p.80.







provided so many restrictions and limitations as to make these possessions valueless.

Clive left India in February of 1760, having greatly enhanced the English position by adding considerable territory to the embryo English dominions, eliminating the French and Dutch as rivals, and establishing English supremacy in India. However, an indelible stain was embedded on the record of Clive as a consequence of the Bengal affair and as a result significant animosity, hostility and ill-feeling arose between the English and natives.

The conclusion of the Seven Years' War was the inception of English power in India for it provided a solid foundation for further influence and expansion. However, greater power demands more responsibility and it was now incumbent upon future English rulers in India to defend these possessions, the consequence of which was further expansion.

The tenure of Warren Hasting's rule (1772-85) was generally characterized by tranquillity and a policy of consolidation and conciliation. Expansion was completely abhorred. Notwithstanding this basic philosophy, Hastings was enticed into an expedition that resulted in ill-repute for the English in India. The Nawab of Oudh, Shuja Daulah, desired the territory of Rohilkhand which lay on the Northwest Frontier of India. The Nawab used in addition to moral, economic, and political arguments a

a pretended fear of a combined Rohilkhand-Maratha Alliance which would dangerously threaten his position.<sup>11</sup> Hastings, who was obviously influenced by the fact that the safety of English Bengal was directly related to that of Oudh, consented to the Nawab's persuasive arguments to garrison the Allahabad district with English troops for a subsidy and provide English troops to aid in the conquest of Rohilkhand. Hastings blundered by permitting the use of English troops and at the same time neglecting to secure the control of the expedition under an English commander. This English oversight was brought into focus by the Nawab's ruthless, superfluous, violent, and uncivilized suppression of the Rohilkhand. Thus the English, who seemed to give support to the conquest, were much discredited and their position was further made distasteful by failure to provide rectitude for the offense. Significantly Hastings had carried the frontier of an important ally to the Himalaya Mountains and by the same portion enhanced English power and influence in India. It seems that the English position can be explained and justified only on the grounds of political expediency. The Rohilla War created a dangerous precedent for the future.

Another incident that further discredited Hastings

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<sup>11</sup>G. R. Gleig, Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honorable Warren Hastings (3 vols.; London: Richard Bentley, 1841), Vol. I, p. 351.

and the English in India was the First Maratha War which was forced upon Hastings by the bungling interference of the governors of Bombay and Madras. The consequence of this conflict, which resulted in a territorial status quo, was to antagonize further Anglo-Indian relations and magnify Maratha apprehension and distrust of the English. A final source of friction was the addition of the territory of Benares to English dominions, the only such acquisition during the rule of Hastings. The Governor-General had demanded financial support from the Raja of Benares, Cheit Sengh, and in failing to gain such support deposed the Raja and exacted tribute from the Raja's successor. The methods used by Hastings were much to his discredit and caused considerable criticism in England.<sup>12</sup>

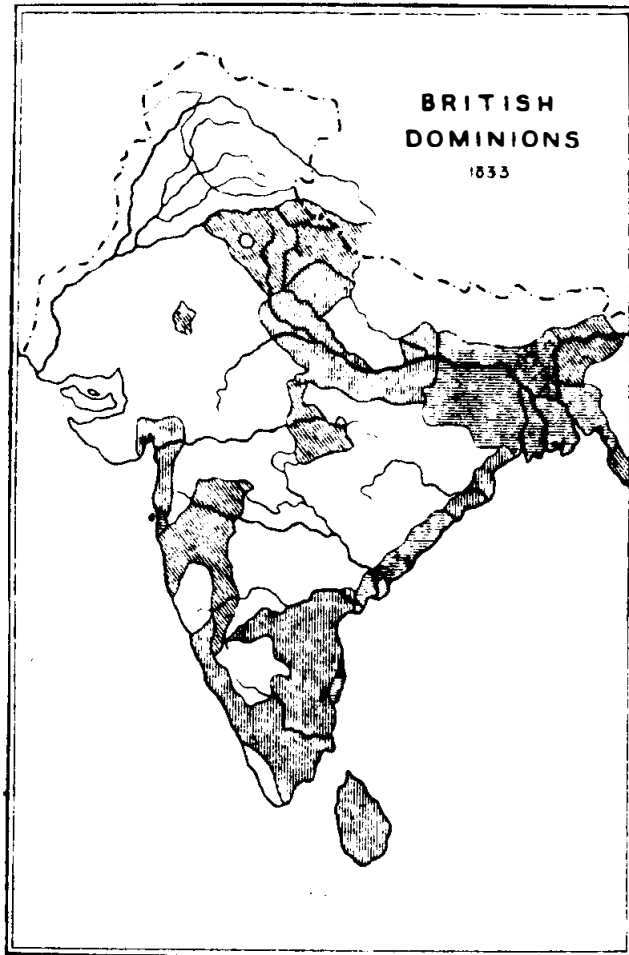
Lord Cornwallis (1786-93) arrived in India with the intention of pursuing a policy similar to that of his predecessor. Contrary to his hopes and much to his reluctance, Cornwallis was forced into a military conflict with the Tippu of Mysore, who, without provocation, attacked the English protectorate of Travancore with the purpose of exterminating the English from India.<sup>13</sup>

Cornwallis personally commanded an army which succeeded in gaining the submission of the Tippu. The terms of peace

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<sup>12</sup>Gleig, op. cit., p. 417.

<sup>13</sup>Mill, op. cit., Vol. V, p.237.



granted the English one-half of the Tippu's territory and a heavy indemnity. Considerable criticism arose as a result of the expedition, but from the viewpoint of self-defense Hasting's actions were totally justifiable. Significantly the English had won the eternal animosity of the Tippu and his followers.<sup>14</sup>

Sir John Shore (1793-98) replaced Cornwallis. Shore was not well qualified nor did he exhibit much ability for the position of Governor-General. He refused to accept responsibility, was extremely cautious and except for one rare occasion in the case of Oudh, totally lacked courage and aggressiveness. English prestige in India undoubtedly suffered as a consequence of Shore's inaction which created considerable disrespect for English power and the general feeling that the English were on the defensive.

The policy of refraining from territorial expansion that characterized the Hastings', Cornwallis' and Shore's regimes was terminated and reversed by the latter's successor, Lord Morington (1798-1805). Wellesley deliberately associated himself with a policy of expansion which was in part motivated by events in Europe where Napoleon's rise to power and an omnipresent France poised a dangerous threat to English possessions in India. The distinct possibility of a Franco-Indian Alliance would

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 323.

create an overwhelming threat to the English. Already many native armies contained French officers. Wellesley realized the impracticability of an Anglo-Indian Alliance because of the obvious unreliability of the native rulers; therefore, the only alternative remaining was to secure English de facto control over the native states.<sup>15</sup>

The first native state to succumb to the new English policy was Mysore whose ruler, the Tippu, was engaged in a conspiracy with the French from whom he had received aid. Wellesley decided to eliminate this potential danger to the English. In the brief Mysore campaign the English defeated Tippu, and Mysore was partitioned among the native states and England with the latter receiving the lion's share.<sup>16</sup> Only a small part of the Mysore state was permitted to retain symbolic independence. The English acquisition of Mysore left the Marathas as the only independent power in the Dekhan.

Further acquisitions were made when the questions of succession arose in the small states of Surat and Tanjur. The English granted recognition of certain claimants to the throne and in compensation received complete civil and military supremacy in these states.

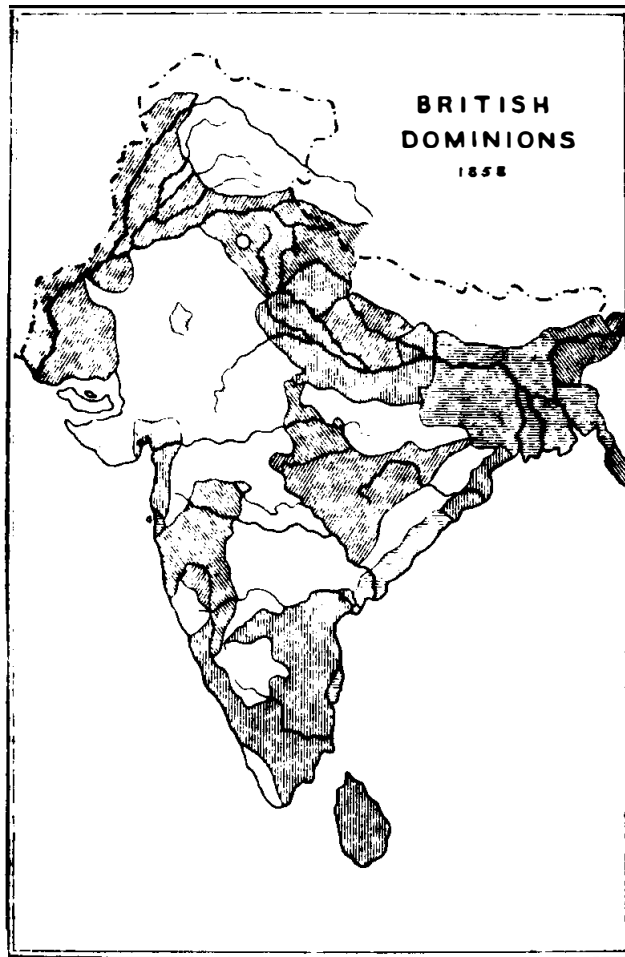
Wellesley terminated a policy of dual government

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<sup>15</sup> F. W. Buckler, "The Political Theory of the Indian Mutiny," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society Vol. V (January, 1922), p. 90.

<sup>16</sup> Oswell, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 67.





over the Carnatic in 1801, because of a conspiracy of the Nawab with the Mysore State.<sup>17</sup> The Nawab of the Carnatic was pensioned.

With most of Southern India securely under English control Wellesley riveted his attention on the important state of Oudh. The Governor-General concluded that it was necessary to reduce the military forces of the Nawab of Oudh and increase the English forces already stationed there. Such action would, of course, incur a great increase in expense which Wellesley proposed to defray by a subsidy; namely, the cession of Rohilkhand. The Nawab, Saadat Ali, vigorously protested; but powerless to resist, he acquiesced to the English demands.<sup>18</sup>

Lord Wellesley now channeled his efforts toward the Maratha States where incessant civil war had raged since the decline of Mogul influence. Imposition of the English system on the Maratha States would be quite advantageous in that it would bring peace to this area, guarantee security of English possessions, eliminate a future potential threat to English supremacy in India, and nullify a possible French alliance. An excellent opportunity to achieve these objectives manifested itself when, Baji, Rao, the nominal head of the Maratha Confederacy, was dethroned in a civil war, precipitated by a disputed

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>18</sup> Thornton, op. cit., p. 266.

succession. The Peshwa envisioned his political career as being terminated unless he could retrieve his former position by an alliance with the English, and so the English and Peshwa, for totally different motives, became allies on terms that the Peshwa would be restored as head of the Maratha Confederacy and in return accept an English subsidiary force. A brief war ensued, and as a result the English acquired numerous territories, among them Deab on the Northern Frontier and Kattak on the East coast of India. The consequences were significant in that the English now had a defensible frontier in Hindustan and unbroken territories from Bengal to the southern most part of India. The English also gained tremendous political advantage in the control and guardianship of the Mogul Emperor who exercised considerable latent political influence.<sup>19</sup>

Thus Wellesley vastly increased English political and military influence in India, but like his predecessors he multiplied the latent discontent, opposition, and desire for revenge against English usurpation of native power and position.

Opposition to Wellesley's policy in England caused his recall.<sup>20</sup> Lord Cornwallis (1805) temporarily resumed

<sup>19</sup> Oswell, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 72.

<sup>20</sup> Earl of Rosbery, The Wellesley Papers (2 vols.; London: Herbert Jenkins, 1914), Vol. I, p. 177.

the position but died after a few months of service. Sir George Barlow (1805-07) then succeeded to the position of Governor-General and in turn was succeeded by Lord Minto (1807-13). Wellesley's three immediate successors effected a reversal of the policy of expansion with one minor exception when in 1810, the Mauritius Islands were conquered.<sup>21</sup>

This brief period of retrenchment was terminated by the new Governor-General, Lord Hastings, (1813-23) who immediately faced the problem of Gurkha encroachments from Nepal.<sup>22</sup> This resulted in a conflict in which the English acquired considerable territory west of the Kali River. Hastings's most significant accomplishment was the subjugation of the Maratha Confederacy by bringing under English control the states of Sinchia, Nagpur, and Holkar.<sup>23</sup>

Lord Amherst (1823-28) was also forced into a conflict that resulted in a reluctant and expensive extension of English territory.<sup>24</sup> In the First Burmese War (1824-26) the English acquired Assam, Arakan, and Tenasserim. The English had now created on their eastern frontier a potential threat.

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<sup>21</sup> Mills, *op.cit.*, Vol.VII, p. 230.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VIII, p. 53.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>24</sup> Oswell, *op.cit.*, Vol.III, p. 113.

The administration of Governor-General Lord Bentinck (1828-35) manifested tremendous impact on the Sepoy Rebellion. Bentinck expounded a new principle to justify annexation of the states of Mysore and Coorg, namely that the existing governments were corrupt and inhumane. The justification proved to be most popular as a method and excuse for gaining control of native states. A second principle Bentinck applied to the state of Kachar was the "Doctrine of Lapse" which the future Governor-General Dalhousie used most ruthlessly.

Lord Bentinck's successor, Lord Auckland (1835-42) immediately became involved in the infamous Afghan War. Persia, because of active support and encouragement from Russia, had assumed an aggressive and belligerent attitude toward the English in India. In order to discourage potential Persian aggression Lord Auckland proposed to create a strong, stable, and reliable government in Afghanistan. The objective could be best accomplished by de facto control of the Afghan government which was precisely what Auckland proposed. Dost Mohamed, who headed the Afghanistan government, was considered by the English to be unreliable and fickle; hence, Auckland favored his replacement with an English protege, Shah Shuja.<sup>25</sup>

The English in 1839 effected the conquest of

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<sup>25</sup>Holmes, op. cit., p. 28.

Afghanistan, in a war that was almost prohibitively expensive in terms of manpower and money, and enthroned Shah Shuja as raja. The Governor-General now made a fatal blunder. His refusal to withdraw English troops even after the conquest put the entire country in a state of ferment and rebellion.<sup>26</sup> Disaster now plagued the English troops in their efforts to suppress the rebellion, and it appeared as if the English army would suffer complete defeat if not annihilation and suffer irreparable loss of prestige.

The situation brought about Auckland's replacement with Lord Ellenborough (1842-44). Ellenborough organized a relief expedition to regain Kabul and recoup lost English prestige. The English were successful in their efforts and succeeded in accomplishing an honorable withdrawal.<sup>27</sup> Despite the final success of English arms the primary objective of the Afghan War was abortive, and former ruler Dost Mohamed resumed power. The Afghan War is significant because it dealt a damaging blow to English prestige and arms and destroyed the legendary

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<sup>26</sup> Oswell, op. cit., p. 167.

<sup>27</sup> Albert H. Imah, Lord Ellenborough (London: Humphrey Milford, 1939), p. 120.

image of invincibility. One writer pictures the Afghan affair as the most unqualified blunder committed in the whole history of the English in India.<sup>28</sup>

A direct consequence of the Afghan War was the annexation of Sindh in 1843. The annexation, though defended as necessary to the welfare of the inhabitants<sup>29</sup> and because of the risk of an Afghan invasion, was probably due more to the desire to regain prestige lost by the Afghan affair. The case of Sindh exemplifies the one instance in which it is difficult to believe that the case for annexation was not more or less deliberately manufactured, in opposition to the declared sentiments of the most high-minded, capable, and well informed servants of the Government.<sup>30</sup>

Sir Henry Hardinge (1844-48) desired to bring peace and security to India and to terminate the long series of wars, but like most of his predecessors the Governor-General was plagued by war. The Hardinge administration differed significantly and appreciably from previous administrations in that the First Sikh War was forced upon him much to his reluctance. A Sikh attack on Ferozpur precipitated the conflict in

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<sup>28</sup> A. D. Innes, op. cit., p. 237.

<sup>29</sup> Inlah, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>30</sup> A. D. Innes, op. cit., p. 250.

which the English were victorious. Hardinge now manifested his sincere desire for peace by attempting to effect a just and stable government in the Punjab.<sup>31</sup> Certainly if Hardinge desired to annex the Punjab there was sufficient justification, but this path of expansion he ignored and allowed the Punjab to retain its independence with fair warning of the consequences of misrule and renewed opposition to the English.

Hardinge retired from India in January of 1848, confident that he had bequeathed to his successor, Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) an era of peace and security. Hardinge assured Dalhousie on his departure that it would be unnecessary to fire a shot in India for several years in the future.<sup>32</sup> Ironically peace lasted only three months after the departure of Hardinge. Revolution occurred at Kooltan in the Punjab in April of 1848, when two English officers, Lieutenant Anderson and Mr. Vans Agnew, were murdered.<sup>33</sup> English Commander-in-Chief, Lord Hugh Gough, suppressed the rebellion, known as the Second Sikh War. In March of 1849, after the failure of an effort to create

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<sup>31</sup> John W. Kaye, A History of the Sepoy War in India (3 vols.; London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1889-93), Vol 1, p.2.

<sup>32</sup> John A. R. Marriott, The English in India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 148.

<sup>33</sup> Kaye, op. cit., p. 20



a stable and reliable government in the Punjab, Dalhousie annexed the territory. Prior to the Second Sikh War, Dalhousie had been adverse to the policy of annexation, but after that event he realized that it was the only feasible policy and stated that:

While deeply sensible of the responsibility I have assumed, I have an undoubting conviction of the expediency, the justice, and the necessity of my act. What I have done, I have done with a clear conscience, and in the honest belief that it was imperatively demanded of me by my duty to the State.<sup>34</sup>

The Punjab was placed under the control of a triumvirate, composed of, Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, and Robert Montgomery with John Lawrence finally gaining complete power in the Punjab. The English under the enlightened, capable, and sympathetic rule of the Lawrence brothers introduced in the Punjab numerous reforms. "It was this successful administration that made the Punjab what it became in the troublesome days of the Mutiny: The Savior Province of India."<sup>35</sup> One important consequence of the Second Sikh War was Dost Mohamed's recognition of the permanent, dominant and invincible position of the English in India, and so he desired a treaty with the Dalhousie government which was signed in 1855. It was this treaty which prevented any disturbance on the frontier during the Sepoy Revolt.

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<sup>34</sup>Oswell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 10.

<sup>35</sup>Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 32.



The acquisition of the Punjab like many other extensions of English territory was forced upon a reluctant government; however, "It was the one step in his (Dalhousie) remorseless career of annexation that needed no apology."<sup>36</sup> Such cannot be acclaimed concerning the other acquisitions of Dalhousie which were of an entirely different nature, and excited more controversy than the actions of any Governor-General since Warren Hastings.

Dalhousie revived two principle policies, the "Doctrine of Lapse", and annexation because of mis-government. The former was more frequently used and created most disaffection. A cardinal cornerstone of Hindu religious faith teaches that a man can only escape punishment in the hereafter by having a son to offer sacrifice to his soul. Thus a ruler without natural heirs cherished the privilege of adopting a son who would perform such a sacred duty. However, it was the political aspect of this practice that caused much friction because many rulers adopted a son not only for religious reasons but also for the purpose of perpetuating their dynasties. Though it was an accepted custom that such an adopted son

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<sup>36</sup>Oswell, op. cit., p. 11.

could inherit private and personal property,<sup>37</sup> it was clearly understood that a son could not inherit a principality without the sanction of the paramount power.<sup>38</sup>

Dalhousie's predecessors had practiced this policy according to their individual desires, but it was under Dalhousie that the idea was used on an unprecedented scale. Dalhousie wrote on this subject:

I take this fitting occasion of recording my strong and deliberate opinion, that, in the exercise of a wise and sound policy, the British government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves; whether they arise from the lapse of subordinate states by the failure of all heirs of every description whatsoever, or from the failure of heirs natural, where the succession can be sustained only by the sanction of the government being given to the ceremony of adoption according to Hindoo law. The government is bound in duty, as well as policy, to act on every such occasion with the purest integrity, and in the most scrupulous observance of good faith. Whenever a shadow of doubt can be shown, the claim should at once be abandoned. But, where the right to territory by lapse is clear, the government is bound to take that which is justly and legally due, and to extend to that territory the benefits of our sovereignty, present and prospective. In like manner, while I would not seek to lay down any inflexible rule with respect to adoption, I hold that, on all occasions, where heirs natural shall fail, the territory should be made to lapse, and adoption should not be permitted, excepting in those cases in which some strong political reason may render it expedient to depart from this general rule.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Marriott, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>38</sup>McLeod Innes, The Senoy Revolt (London: A.D. Innes & Co., 1897), p. 12

<sup>39</sup>Holmes, op. cit., p. 34.

Previous Governor-Generals of India had been prone to maintain local native dynasties other than in exceptional cases and to judge each case on its own merits. Dalhousie's predecessors had acted on the general principle of avoiding annexation if possible, but Dalhousie acted on the contrary principle of annexation if it could be done legitimately. The English in inheriting the paramount power in India from the degenerate Mogul Empire also inherited a principle exercised by the Mogul Empire in which only the paramount power could sanction political inheritance.

The many opportunities of annexation during the Dalhousie administration may be divided into cases involving: (a) lapse, (b) misgovernment, (c) aggression against English dominions. There were numerous applications of the "Doctrine of Lapse", the first being the principality of Satara in 1848, which had been created out of the Maratha Confederacy in the early nineteenth century. The ruler on his death-bed adopted an heir, a method not recognized by the English; hence, Dalhousie demanded that tradition be adhered to and so Satara lapsed to the English.<sup>40</sup>

A second case involved the state of Sambalpur where the ruler did not provide an heir on purpose knowing the territory would go to the English from which the people would benefit. Thus the question of adoption

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<sup>40</sup>McLeod Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

did not arise and the territory was practically bequeathed to the English.<sup>41</sup>

A third case arose in Jhansi in 1853, the ruler leaving only an adopted heir. The country had been ruled in such a negative fashion in the previous thirty years that Dalhousie decided to assume control. The raja's widow was pensioned, an act which filled her with bitter animosity toward the English.<sup>42</sup> The states of Irissa and Scinde met a similar fate for like reasons.

Another significant case was that of Nagpur, annexed in 1853, which was the most important of the states in terms of territory. The ruler left no natural or adopted heirs. The question of adoption arose when one of the ruler's widows desired to adopt a son who would succeed to the throne; however, Dalhousie opposed the artificial recreation of the state under this condition and Nagpur fell into lapse.<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps the most significant of the various cases involving the "Doctrine of Lapse" was the case of Danda Panth or the Nana Sahib. Nana Sahib was the adopted son of Baji Rao, formerly Peshwa, who had been dethroned by Lord Hastings for his treachery. The Peshwa was retired on a pension of 80,000 pounds per year and on his death in

<sup>41</sup>A. D. Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>43</sup>Kaye, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

1856 was quite wealthy. Nana Sahib inherited the wealth but also desired the pension which the English denied him. The Nana never forgave the English for what he considered a flagrant violation of justice, and when the opportunity arose he effected a ghastly revenge during the Sepoy Rebellion at the Massacre of Cawnpore.<sup>44</sup>

In the second category involving misgovernment the most important case was that of Oudh which had a repeated history of misrule and a equal number of English warnings of the consequences. Finally Colonel Outram, English resident in Oudh, submitted a report in 1854, regarding misrule in Oudh. Thus on February 13, 1856 the territory of Oudh was annexed by proclamation. Dalhousie wrote:

I respectfully submit that the time has come when inaction on the part of the British government in relation to the affairs of the Kingdom of Oudh can now no longer justified, and inaction is already converting our responsibility into guilt<sup>45</sup>

It was Oudh which was the seat of the Sepoy Rebellion and thus "most direct in its bearing upon the Mutiny was the annexation of the Mohammedan Kingdom of Oudh."<sup>46</sup>

In the third category of forced acquisitions was the territory gained as a consequence of the Second Burmese

<sup>44</sup> A. D. Innes, op. cit., p. 287.

<sup>45</sup> Oswell, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>46</sup> Marriott, op. cit., p. 154.

War. Anglo-Burmese relations had gradually deteriorated as a result of the Burmese failure to abide by the provisions of the Treaty of 1826, and the harassment of English merchants by the Burmese. The English, failing to get just compensation and satisfaction from Ava, went to war in 1852. Rangoon soon fell to the English in April and the November conquest of Pegu concluded the war. The territory of Pegu was annexed by Dalhousie, who had no alternative, by proclamation and without a formal treaty or acceptance by the Ava government.<sup>47</sup>

The 1856 annexation of Oudh was the last major English territorial acquisition in India immediately prior to the start of the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857. From 1757 to 1857 the English had vastly extended their Indian Empire. Each year expansion gained momentum and by the time of Dalhousie English possessions in India doubled.

The consequence of this century from Clive to Dalhousie was to create a latent deep-seated hostility toward the ubiquitous power of the English. The enhancement of English political power meant a proportionate and precipitant decline in the power of the native rulers. This English usurpation of native power created many enemies who sought revenge and desired to recoup their traditional powers. Pax Britannica was an unmixed

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<sup>47</sup> Holmes, op. cit., p. 37.



blessing to the weak and misruled; but to the dominate political class the benefits were less obvious. It was precisely this segment of Indian society that was alienated and potentially most dangerous.

The English attempted to cushion the shock of dethronement by a liberal pension. Immediately prior to the Sepoy Rebellion the King of Delhi was receiving 150,000 pounds per year; the Nawab of Calcutta, 160,000; of Madras, 116,000; the families of Hyder and Tippu, 63,000; the Peshwa of the Marathas, 80,000; and others 1,500,000 pounds per year.<sup>48</sup> Though many of the monarchs rendered politically impotent by the English were placed on liberal pensions, this did not pacify their thirst for political power. The pension also became a source of trouble as did the usurpation and denial of political power. The English alienated future generations--the Nana Sahib being an excellent case in point--and the affection of entire families. Thus was a broad and significant base of discontent provided.

The natives viewed the incessant English advance with alarm, fear and distrust. The English unwittingly created a popular image of having an insatiable appetite. It is aptly said that the "British government was unpopular precisely in proportion to its restraining

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<sup>48</sup> Alexander Heylin (ed.), "The Sepoy Rebellion" London Quarterly Review, Vol. XV III (October, 1857), p. 32.

force." <sup>49</sup> Thus was the political basis and foundation for the Sepoy Rebellion partially created.

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<sup>49</sup> A. D. Innes, op. cit., p. 300.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SEPOY ARMY

Closely connected with the rise of English dominion in India was the disaffection that gradually arose among the native Sepoy troops which constituted a large fraction of the total English forces in India.

Though the idea of a native army originated with the French, the English soon employed the idea. The first Sepoy troops were raised by the English in southern India near Madras and Bombay during the 1740's and 1750's.<sup>1</sup> Originally these were few in number, but when it was realized that the Sepoys could be potentially useful, their numbers were increased as were their responsibilities.

When Clive marched on Calcutta, there were fourteen native battalions stationed in Madras, numbering about 10,000 men, two battalions of which were used on the Calcutta mission. After the English conquest of Bengal and the Battle of Plassey, in which one battalion

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<sup>1</sup> There is considerable disagreement as to the original site at which Sepoy troops were first employed.

of Bengal Sepoys participated, native troops had grown to nineteen battalions or about 19,000 men.<sup>2</sup>

The first evidence of a mutinous spirit occurred in 1764 in Bengal when the Sepoys imagined they were being denied prize money justly deserved. The Sepoys were conceded their share of the prize money, but even then certain regiments manifested seditious conspiracy and the rebellion was eventually quelled by a court-martial which imposed death penalties on twenty-four men, the execution of which was forceably witnessed by the disarmed rebellious Sepoy troops.<sup>3</sup> This decisive and unhesitating action of the English heightened the Sepoy respect for power and authority.

A significant change in the Sepoy army was brought about by the Reorganization Act of 1796, which had the effect of increasing the number of English officers in the Sepoy Regiments and by the same portion decreasing the influence and position of the native officers which were now selected on the basis of seniority or commission rather than merit or experience. The act also caused positions of authority to be exercised by English officers unfit for responsibility. The close relationship between native troops and English officers disappeared and was replaced

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<sup>2</sup> Kaye, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

by discontent on the part of native officers, many of whom lost their positions.<sup>4</sup> The founders of the native army recruited the Sepoy soldiers from among those in subjugation. Officers were chosen from higher social position and high-caste Hindus. As the officer positions held by natives decreased and that of English increased, disaffection arose. The whole character of the native army was changed because opportunity for distinction ceased and the native officers became only nominal leaders.

Another degenerating influence was the period of protracted peace that followed the Mysore and Maratha Wars. The latter years of the eighteenth century and early years of the nineteenth century were characterized by successive military conflicts in which the English were victorious and in which the native Sepoy troops served with distinction and attained the height of their glory. However, in the post-Maratha War era, military stagnation and English demands on the native troops to adopt western innovations and military reforms, resulted in the deterioration of Sepoy morale and the growth of disaffection.

The Madras army, because of its composition, was particularly hostile to the innovation which included the abolition of the distinguishing marks of caste worn on

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<sup>4</sup> Kaye, op. cit. p. 215.

the forehead, elimination of ear-rings in which the Sepoys were fondly attached, and requirements to shave and wear a special head-dress. Change in head-dress was an explosive innovation in that it was not only symbolic of Christianity but was also an abomination in that it was made from either the skin of cattle or swine both of which were sacred to the Hindu and Mohammedan respectively.<sup>5</sup> Thus English reforms caused discontent among Hindu as well as Mohammedan and united otherwise irreconcilable enemies in common cause. It was not difficult for the Sepoys to imagine and suspect that these innovations were subtle methods of converting them to Christianity and assimilating them into western culture.

In July of 1806 these numerous grievances, greatly magnified and aggravated by agitators, exploded into violence at Fort Vellore. Thus was the second major Indian mutiny precipitated.<sup>6</sup> The English troops at Vellore numbered only four companies, the massacre of which was followed by plunder and destruction. The disaffection at Vellore soon spread to various other Sepoy detachments in the Carnatic and news arrived at Arcot from whence Colonel Gillespie led a rescue mission

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<sup>5</sup> Mill, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 92.

<sup>6</sup> Holmes, op. cit., p. 50.

of English and native troops against the mutineers. Though the rebellion was crushed, considerable disaffection remained among the Sepoy troops.

Discontent was not confined to Vellore, the Carnatic and Mysore but also spread to the Dekhan and Hyberabad, the capital of the Nizam's dominions. In Hyberabad the troops showed similar grievances as those at Vellore, and these were greatly magnified and made more intolerable by the recent arrival of a new commander, Colonel Montresor, whose ignorance of Indian customs only inflamed the situation. When Colonel Montresor heard of the events at Vellore, he rescinded recent obnoxious orders; but the arrogant Sepoys still manifested discontent and attempted to gain new concessions. Decisive English action prevented further disturbance and the situation continued to simmer.<sup>7</sup>

Fresh trouble arose at Nundydroog in Mysore in October of 1806, but a premature English knowledge of the proposed conspiracy and the rapid arrival of a squadron of English troops prevented violence. Further difficulty arose at Pallancottah in November and later at Wallajahabad, but the bold and courageous actions of the English commandant prevented overt insurrection.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Kaye, op. cit., p. 234.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

The numerous examples of disaffection manifested by the mutinies of 1806, may be explained by several factors. The Vellore Mutiny Commission credited the events of 1806, to the disposition of the family of the Tippee Sultan in Mysore and the consequential political intrigue, suspicion of Christian missionary activities as designed to destroy their caste, and new innovations of the English military. The commission especially emphasized the degenerating influence of a new class of English officers with little knowledge of India and its customs.<sup>9</sup> An additional factor in these events is indicated in "that the annexation of Lord Wellesley had beggared the old Mohammedan families and had shaken the belief of the people in British moderation and good faith. . ."<sup>10</sup> Thus it was a combination of political, military, religious and social factors that excited the numerous mutinies. The potentially explosive and dangerous events of 1806 were abortive. Success was "prevented only by repeated local failures from swelling into the dimensions of a general revolt of the Coast Army."<sup>11</sup> As the fear of rebellion spread throughout India,

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<sup>9</sup> Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, XLIII, (1860), p. 690.

<sup>10</sup> Kaye, op. cit., p. 251.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 248.



the English were placed in a precarious position, for the Sepoys now first began to recognize their own power and strength.

The situation at Vellore and other English outposts indicated serious weakness of the Sepoy troops, namely inclination to accept the most distorted and exaggerated story as fact. One such rumor claimed that the government had collected all newly manufactured salt and divided it into two parts one of which was sprinkled with the blood of swine and the other of cows for the purpose of desecration of Moslems and Hindus in an effort to destroy their caste. Another fallacious story maintained that the government had ordered the erection of a Christian Church in every village and the abolition of idol worship. Thus was religious prejudice and bigotry used to incite opposition to English rule.

Another outgrowth of the Vellore and associated mutinies was the disbandment of regiments which manifested serious consequences. The Sepoys looked eagerly forward to enlistment in the Company's service in India. Military service was considered a privilege, a desired position of prestige and opportunity for advancement. It was a primary method of subsistence for the soldier and his many dependents. Many generations of one family might have service in the army and thus the position tended to be hereditary. The Sepoy had the right to

pension, leave was granted quite frequently, and he also enjoyed special civil rights. Thus the army, from the Sepoy viewpoint, was quite the opposite of the occidental conception of the military. The Sepoy had a personal interest in the stability of the government because it served his self-interest and so dismissal from the service was severe punishment and a sore disgrace, the consequences of which could be quite dangerous for the English.

Further potential trouble was bred by the severance of traditional ties between native soldiers and their English officers. This was encouraged by reorganization and centralization of power in the English army. The powers of the English officers were curtailed and their influence declined. Regimental commanders were forbidden to promote, punish or discipline their men. The great powers of the English officer, formerly looked up to as a despot, gradually decreased; and the Sepoys began to view this puppet of higher authority with contempt. The consequence of this gradual upward spiral of power was insubordination, contempt, and disrespect.

As the British Empire continued its growth and expansion, there arose a need for more civil and military servants, many of which were drained from the service of the Company in India. These new positions were more lucrative and presented greater opportunity for advancement

and retirement. Thus the number of more able and ambitious officers in the ranks were diminished and those remaining were of less ability. Often those who remained lived in despair of advancement.

A latent friction appeared in March of 1822, when in Madras a plot to unseat English power was attempted by inciting the religious prejudice of the Moslems and Hindus. This plot came to naught because of the rapid and prompt action of the English officers. However, of great significance was a complaint set forth in a letter to Governor Monro of Madras stating that positions and wealth in the English Army went to the white officers after conquest while under Moslem practice had gone to the natives.<sup>12</sup>

The Reorganization Act of May 1824 widened the gulf between English officers and native soldiers. This act provided that every regiment of two battalions become two separate regiments and the officers of the original regiment be assigned to a different detachment thus separating them from men with whom they had served many years.<sup>13</sup> Though the potential ill-effect was recognized at the time, no effort was made to remedy the situation.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>13</sup> Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>14</sup> Keye, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

One of the most potentially serious threats arose in 1824 among the high-caste Bengal native Sepoy regiments as a consequence of the First Burmese War. The cosmopolitan Madras Sepoy was not affected by being transported across water to fight in Burma, but the Bengal Sepoy opposed the movement across the "Blackwater" or "Kalapawnee", even from Calcutta to Rangoon, which would have been a simple operation. The Bengal Sepoy enlisted only for service in countries to which he could march such as Hindostan or Dekahan, but he much opposed being transported across the sea because of caste violations.<sup>15</sup>

An incident now occurred which threatened en masse the loyalty and discipline of the Bengal native Sepoy army. The Forty-Seventh Regiment, which was stationed at Barrackpore and was making preparation to march overland to Burma, was suddenly excited by rumors that English troops had met disaster in their attack at Ramoo, had been driven into the sea, and that the Burmese army was enroute to Bengal.<sup>16</sup> It was further rumored that the entire English position in India was about to be decimated. Rumors of the difficulty of the territory to be transgressed and the hazards of the proposed march also created much opposition. The Sepoys now searched for a pretext

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<sup>15</sup> Thornton, op. cit., P. 478.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

to avoid the march and rejoiced on learning of the scarcity of available carriage-cattle for the movement of troops to Burma.<sup>17</sup> However, at this point a new rumor was circulated that because of the inability to raise transportation by land the Sepoys were going to be forceably shipped to Burma. Discontent now openly showed itself and the Forty-Seventh Regiment vowed not to cross the sea. Paraded in November 1824, the Forty-Seventh mutined and demanded extra compensation for the proposed overland march. Commander-in-Chief of English forces, Sir Deward Paget, now marched to Barrackpore with two English regiments and made an effort toward explanation and conciliation, but to no avail. Consequently the mutineers were ordered to lay down their arms and march, and refusing to do either, they were fired upon by the English Artillery.<sup>18</sup> The consequence for the Sepoys was total disaster because many were killed in the brief military action and many met death by court-martial. The Forty-Seventh Regiment was struck from the army list. Madras troops were shipped into action in Burma and the Bengal Sepoys took an overland route. Thus a conflict which should have increased the morale and enhanced the

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Holmes, op. cit., p. 53.

unity of the English-native troops tended to have an opposite effect.<sup>19</sup> The situation also reflected how naive and gullible the native Sepoy was. He willingly accepted without the slightest verification any fallacious idea or rumor. The gullibility of the Sepoy played a major role in creating discontent and trouble for the English.

Additional discontent arose as a result of the Half-Batta Order of 1825 by which the pay of many of the native officers was unjustly and unreasonably reduced. This caused considerable ferment and resulted in a decline of morale and dedication to the service of the Company.<sup>20</sup>

Disrespect was added to distrust and a decline in discipline when in 1832 Lord Bentinck abolished corporal punishment in the Company's Army. Thus was another method of maintaining discipline eliminated, and the concession was viewed by the Sepoys as an indication of English fear of them rather than devotion to their welfare. The consequence was to breed contempt for the English officers.<sup>21</sup>

Another event of great importance in the disintegration of the Sepoy army was the Afghan War. The

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<sup>19</sup> Kaye, op. cit., p. 270.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Heylin, loc. cit.

Sepoy for the first time suddenly realized that the English army was no invincible. In the debacle of Kabul ". . . he (the Sepoy) saw the proud colours of the British nation defiled in the bloody snows of Afghanistan, and he believed that our reign was hastening to a close. The charm of a century of conquest was then broke."<sup>22</sup> Though the Sepoys and English finally vindicated English arms in the re-conquest of Afghanistan, there yet remained the vivid tarnish on English arms that could not be removed.

A direct result of the Afghanistan War was the annexation of Scinde in 1843. This had considerable effect because as the Sepoy army became more thinly dispersed the importance of the individual soldier diminished. The extension of territory made the English more dependent upon native troops and at the same time that dependence became more hazardous. The first dissatisfaction to remote stationing occurred in February of 1844 when the Thirty-Fourth Bengal Sepoy Regiment, which had been selected for occupation duty in Scinde, refused to cross the border into that territory unless considerable greater allowance was granted. The full import of this event made Governor-General Ellenborough realize the potentially dangerous consequences. Sepoy troops were actually in mutiny for more pay, and being

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<sup>22</sup> Kaye, op. cit., p. 274.

next to the restive Punjab border where disorderly Sikh troops were in domination, a formidable alliance was conceivable. The situation was further complicated by the arrival of new Bengal Regiments, the Sixty-Ninth and Fourth, which became contaminated by the tainted Thirty-Fourth and refused to cross into Scinde. It was rumored that English troops would refuse to quell the insurrection.<sup>23</sup>

These events spread to Madras and incited trouble at Jubbulpore where the English, failing in their effort to use Bengal troops to occupy the Scinde, decided to use the Madras Sixth Cavalry. Though the Madras troops were more cosmopolitan than the Bengal troops, they took their families on military expeditions and thus a heavier burden was placed upon them because of additional expense. This was especially true of the Cavalry because being made up mostly of Mohammedans they required their spouses' to be kept in seclusion.

The allowance to defray expenses of this expedition was not as great as expected by the Sepoys, and this caused much discontent and created a major grievance. The situation would have erupted into violence and mutiny in December of 1843 except that the grant of higher allowances ended the potential danger.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 278.



The Madras government now prepared to send two regiments to Bombay by ship and then on to occupy Scinde with the promise that the Forty-Seventh Regiment would receive extra allowance for the service. However, the Madras government was acting beyond its authority, and Lord Ellenborough ordered the troops detained at Bombay. The advantages of foreign services being denied them, the Forty-Seventh now indicated symptoms of mutiny which were suppressed by the English, and thus could not be used in the occupation of Scinde. The Madras army". . . . broke down at a critical time; but only under such weight of mismanagement as might have crushed out the fidelity of the best mercenaries in the world."<sup>24</sup>

Eventually Bombay troops were sent to garrison Scinde and the territory became a part of the Bombay presidency. The two mutinous Bengal regiments were marched from the scene of their mutiny and the Thirty-Fourth, because of its mass misconduct, was disbanded at Meerut. In the remaining mutinous regiments a few were punished and the remainder excused for their misconduct.

The results of these events were far-reaching. The rather mild attitude of the government, in view of the magnitude of the situation, must be accredited to the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

realization that the soldiers were actually subjected to injustice and injuries at the hands of the government, and therefore to punish them would be a severe miscarriage of justice. However, the lack of severe punishment created the feeling that the English were afraid to punish.

Another consequence was the Sepoy alarm concerning the security of their pay. The English failed to give a thorough explanation of all regulations and obligation of both the government and the troops concerning pay and allowances. Pay was often granted to encourage a Sepoy Regiment to go on an expedition, but after the conquest it was often rescinded. The absence of an explanation undoubtedly incurred much displeasure and misunderstanding between the government and native Sepoy troops because lack of pay or reduction of such precipitated an immediate crisis in a soldier's family.

The disbandment of mutinous troops also manifested serious consequences in that many of the innocent were punished as well as the guilty. There was further danger in this action because of its widespread effect on great numbers of people and in effect placing in enemy hands large numbers of well-trained men. Disbandment, to be effective, must be carried out promptly, but in the case of Scinde this was impossible without courting serious danger to the government. On the contrary to delay is to

condone such actions and to encourage further misconduct. Fortunately for the English peace was a short duration, and soon there was another conflict to pacify the Sepoy troops.

In the winter of 1845-46 there arose a conspiracy at Dinapore, proclaimed in the name of the King of Delhi, to incite the First Native Regiment to rebellion.<sup>25</sup> Such an enterprise was well timed because the First Sikh War attracted much of the government's attention and resources. However, the plot to debauch the troops was uncovered by English Major Rowcroft who rendered further efforts of the conspirators fruitless.

The annexation of the Punjab in 1848 brought consequences much more serious than the occupation of Scinde. The occupying troops, because the territory was part of the Presidency of Bengal, had their pay reduced. Potential rebellion was dangerous due to the fact that the Punjab was swarming with men from the recently disbanded Sikh army. Sir Charles Napier, in a tour of the various encampments, found general dissatisfaction and reluctance to participate in the occupation of the Punjab without higher pay. It seemed that rebellion was in a state of suspended animation and could occur at any moment.

The first incident occurred at Wuzzeergbad where

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 306.

General John Hearsey was in command. However, due to Hearsey's strong but just actions and the presence of one regiment of English troops, open rebellion was prevented. A second outbreak occurred at Govindghur where the Sixty-Sixth Native Regiment attempted unsuccessfully, due to the loyal aid of the First Native Cavalry, to seize the fort. The Sixty-Sixth was disbanded for its conduct. The English now alleviated the potentially dangerous Punjab situation by granting an increase in compensation for Native troops and the importation of Goorkhas from Nepal who posed a threat in that they could replace Bengal troops. The Goorkhas were not tainted by caste and religious prejudice and were superior soldiers.<sup>26</sup>

The major consequence of the Scinde and Punjab incidents was that both resulted in concessions to the native troops. The critical question was to determine the greater evil -- concession or resistance to Sepoy demands.

The annexation of Oudh also had considerable effect on the Sepoys in that many of the troops were drawn from that area. Prior to Oudh becoming an English province, the Sepoys derived certain special privileges from the Company and respect from the people because Oudh was a foreign province. However, when the English annexed

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<sup>26</sup>Holmes, op. cit., p. 57.

the territory and all people came under English protection, the Sepoy lost his special distinction and respect from the natives. Thus a privileged class was brought down to a common level. Oudh further added to the area that the Sepoys had to garrison.

The government of Dalhousie tended to look upon the Sepoy insurrections as manifestations of governmental injustice and therefore the troops were not to be condemned as untrustworthy. Judgement of the entire army on the basis of recent behavior was unwise and unjust because what they had done for the English in past times was notable and commendable. Even the recent outbreaks evinced" .... a disposition, indeed, rather to injure himself than to injure others; and it was not easy for those who knew him to believe that he was capable of any violent and sanguinary excesses."<sup>27</sup> His weaker qualities of character were those least dangerous. The Sepoy was inconsistent; he could defend a European soldier or officer and the next moment betray the cause of that same officer. However, " . . . he would sometimes brood over imaginary wrongs, and when a delusion once entered his soul it clung to it with the subtle malevolence of an ineradicable poison."<sup>28</sup>

The complexion of the Indian army immediately

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<sup>27</sup>Kayo, op. cit., p. 326.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 327.

preceeding the Sepoy Rebellion provides further insight into that event.<sup>29</sup> There was basically four armies; namely, the Bengal, Bombay, Madras and Royal (Queen's) Regiments. These four armies provide a marked contrast. There was much distinction among the native troops within the total army because of the caste system. The Bengal army in particular contained a preponderance of high-caste officers including Jats, Rajputs, and Brahmans. Thus the aristocratic influence in the Bengal army was very powerful. However, the armies of Bombay and Madras were much more heterogeneous in nature and the lower castes dominated these armies. Certainly the Bengal soldier superficially appeared to be the finest, but he was far less serviceable than his counterpart in the two other Presidencies. He was much more sensitive, aware of his superiority, arrogant and far less disciplined than the Madras and Bombay Sepoys. In the Bengal army, caste took precedent over discipline, and this became a constant source of trouble.

The nominal proportions of the various castes is typified in the Thirty-Fourth Regiment Native Infantry of the Bengal army which on disbandment contained these proportions:<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> See appendix.

<sup>30</sup> Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt (London: John Murray 187), p. 23.

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|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Brahmins . . . . .            | .335         |
| Chettyas . . . . .            | .237         |
| Lower Caste Hindoos . . . . . | .231         |
| Christians . . . . .          | 12           |
| Mussulmans . . . . .          | .200         |
| Sikhs . . . . .               | 24           |
| Total . . . . .               | <u>1,079</u> |

The Brahmins and Chettyas, both upper class, composed about sixty per cent of the Thirty-Fourth Regiment.

Considerable debate arose over caste in the Sepoy armies.<sup>31</sup> Some argued that Brahmins and Rajpoots should be enlisted because of their high caste which meant they had many superior qualities such as bolder spirit, professional pride, high moral standards, and superior physical structure. Opponents argued that a small number of Brahmins and Rajpoots was better for the sake of discipline and that enlistments should be made indiscriminately of caste.<sup>32</sup>

Arguments also arose over whether to group troops on the basis of race and nationality or mix them and whether to allow troops to do local garrison service or be moved about. In both cases the latter idea was practiced. There was also the question of whether to allow the Sepoys to keep their families with them or separate them. The latter system was used in the Bengal

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<sup>31</sup> Heylin, op. cit., pp. 13-19.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

army and the former used in Madras and Bombay because of religious affiliation. Additional debate revolved around the question of the quantity of English troops to be mixed with the Sepoys. Some argued to do so was an indication of distrust. Opponents said that failure to maintain a high proportion was to be over-confident and would lead to disaster. The attitude of the government was indicated in the fact that after the Vellore Mutiny there was a call for European troops, and this was denied by the Bengal Government on the theory that it would betray trust and confidence in the native troops.

In retrospect it appears that there was a much more serious question than the proportion of English to Sepoy troops in any particular regiment; namely, the overall total strength of the English and Sepoy armies in India. In determining the overall ratio it was generally accepted that a ratio of one English soldier to four native soldiers was the minimum point of toleration and that more than one to three was excessive. In 1856, one year prior to the Sepoy Rebellion the ratio was one to five.<sup>33</sup>

About one-third of the English troops were raised exclusively by the Company for Indian Service and the remainder were Royal Regiments used at the discretion of the Imperial Government and paid out of the revenue for India. Between 1851-56 the number of English Company

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troops was increased, but this was more than offset by a decrease in Royal Regiments. In 1852 there were twenty-nine Royal Regiments in the three Presidencies totaling about 28,000 men.<sup>34</sup> In 1853 English troops stationed in India numbered: Bengal 15,508, Madras 4,500, and Bombay 5,532. All totaled about 25,000 men,<sup>35</sup> and about 233,000 native troops as compared to 45,000 Royal and Company English troops.<sup>36</sup>

The ratio in each of the three Presidencies in 1856 was as follows: 1 to 9 and 2/3's, Madras 1 to 16 and 2/3's, and Bengal, the seat of the Sepoy Rebellion, 1 to 24 and 2/3's.<sup>37</sup> In 1857 native troops outnumbered the English by 7 to 1. The native army contained 310,000 men of which about one-half were stationed in the Bengal Presidency. The Presidency contained only about 23,000 English troops.<sup>38</sup> By way of contrast, in 1859 English troops were apportioned as follows: Bengal 53,306,

<sup>34</sup>Kays, op. cit., p. 341

<sup>35</sup>Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. L, (1860), p. 211.

<sup>36</sup>Paul S. Roberts, History of British India Under the Company and the Crown (London: Oxford University press, 1952), p. 355.

<sup>37</sup>Holmes, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>38</sup>John Marriott, The English in India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 161.

fact that the number of officers had declined to about one-half of the minimum ratio.

This tremendous preponderance of native military strength created temptation and encouraged the disaffected. The situation in Bengal was further magnified by the impropportionate distribution of English troops throughout the Presidency.<sup>40</sup> The Sepoy Rebellion was mostly confined to Bengal.

During these years a major drain on the troops stationed in India was brought about by the Crimean War. The Crimean War also effected India by the great number of rumors that circulated to the effect that the English had suffered a major disaster. One rumor stated that Russia had conquered and annexed England. These unfounded rumors were given greater import by the chronic belief that the Russians would someday wrest mastery of India from the English.<sup>41</sup> Rebellion in India, if it were to be successful, would have to occur when the English were engaged in a European war. Thus during a critical time of public disturbance, English forces in India were being decreased. Such action proclaimed to the native enemies of England the inadequacy of English resources and

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<sup>40</sup> A. D. Innes, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

<sup>41</sup> James Wallace, "The Revolt in India: Its Causes and its Lessons," *Collins Pamphlets*, Vol. IX (February, 1859), p. 17.

encouraged resistance to England. English request for native regiments to fight in the Crimean War only magnified the suspicion.

Thus England, while decreasing the size of her Indian Empire was decreasing the troops needed to defend it, not so much from external as from internal foes. The English were deceived in the conception that submission of native states meant contentment and loyalty. Hence, vast areas of India during this period lay unprotected by English soldiers, most of them being concentrated in the Punjab because of the belief that any invasion of India must come from that quarter. This simply made the English more dependent on the conspiratorial native forces. The danger of the disproportionate ratio between native and English troops was recognized by Dalhousie whose request for three regiments as replacements was of no avail.<sup>42</sup>

The history of the Sepoy army provides abundant manifestations of disaffection and discontent from its inception in the 1740's to the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857. There were a number of areas of contention between the natives and the English that exemplify misunderstanding and difficulty. Among these was the caste system and religious differences, racial differences, cultural differences, extension of English territories, pay and prize money, relationships between native soldiers and

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<sup>42</sup>Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XLII (1857-58), p. 517.

English officers, susceptibility of native troops to rumor, and the ratio of English to native soldiers. These and many other points of friction became more serious as time passed, and gradually the Sepoy army became more suspicious and fearful of English intentions.

Gradually the Sepoys began to realize their own significance and recognized the great reliance that the English placed upon them. It was the Sepoys upon whom the English relied to keep the 200,000,000 Indians in a peaceful state of affairs. Thus the Sepoys were the bulwark of English power in India, but as discontent and dissatisfaction spread the Sepoys became more a liability than an asset. In fact the Sepoy army poised a serious threat to English power in India.

Any revolt against the English in India had to receive the support of the native army and so the anti-English feeling was an important factor. The culmination of this era of misunderstanding and often imagined English injustice witnessed open military rebellion and it was the Sepoy troops, the unwitting pawns of Mohammedan politicians, that provided the necessary military support. Without such support any conspiracy to revolt would have been a joke.

## CHAPTER III

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM

A considerable amount of the latent hostility and discontent with English suzerainty in India had its inception in the many social and economic reforms that the English instituted during the first half of the nineteenth century. Such reforms were extremely difficult to effect because tradition was paramount and many of the customs were steeped in antiquity. Changes and new innovations were further complicated by the fact that within the confines of India were to be found "the adherents of nine great religions, some of which are in their turn split up into almost innumerable sects, ranging from an austere monotheism to a bewildering polytheism."<sup>1</sup>

Precipitant and rapid social and economic change created a distrust of the English and placed in suspicion their real motives for such changes. This suspicion, added to those of English expansion and military reforms, only magnified the native doubts of English intentions.

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<sup>1</sup>Marriott, op. cit., p. 15.

The concentration on social and economic reforms in India did not manifest itself until about the second decade of the nineteenth century during the regime of Lord Bentinck (1828-35) to whose administration the origin of most English reforms in India must be credited.

The institution of thuggee<sup>2</sup> had existed in India from time immemorial and was quite prevalent during the nineteenth century. Thuggee was an organized system of murder and robbery directed by professionals who accomplished their tasks systematically and artistically. The thugs, whose emblem of trade was the pick-axe and noose, were a hereditary association of murderers adhering to a particular caste. This association had its own goddess, ritual, observances, mythical origin and sacrificial rites. The thugs worked in small groups and when not engaged in their traditional occupation were innocent farmers or villagers. Though frequently known to their fellow villagers they were seldom revealed because of the superstition of divine protection. Furthermore the crime was often beneficial enough to individuals, other than those who committed the crime, that it enjoyed considerable popular protection.<sup>3</sup>

The systematic suppression of this abomination to

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<sup>2</sup>From which the modern term thug is derived.

<sup>3</sup>John W. Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company (London: Richard Bentley, 1853), p. 367.

society was not finally decided upon until about 1829, when the project was entrusted to Major Sleeman. During the next six years over 2,000 thugs were arrested of whom 1,500 were put to death or transported for life.<sup>4</sup> Lord Bentinck's vigorous prosecution of this crime soon manifested its effects, and within ten years thuggee was largely eliminated. This marked English success was due to the suspension of some of the traditional court procedurers such as giving every benefit to the accused and evading trial on some technical point.

The suppression of the related crime of dacoity proved more difficult. Dakoiti was similar to thuggee in that it had a hereditary caste and religious rites. Dakoits went in bands of thirty or forty, their favorite weapons being the lance and fire-brand. Less scientific about their occupation, than the thuggee; murder was merely incidental to the main purpose of robbery. This fraternity contained a great number of respectable members of society and because of their contribution to villages and landholders, it was difficult to bring them to justice because of perjury en masse.

The English had early recognized the problem of dacoity but it was not until 1837 that the first effort at suppression was made with Colonel Sleeman again playing

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<sup>4</sup>Oswell, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 141.

the prominent role. Though dacoity was not totally suppressed even in the days of Lord Dalhousie, it had by the 1850's greatly decreased.<sup>5</sup> The slow eradication of dacoity was due in large measure to the failure of the English to apply similar restrictions on judicial procedurers as had been applied against the thugs.

Another civilizing measure instituted by the English was the abolition of sati.<sup>6</sup> The practice of sati was more prevalent in Hindostan but it was common throughout most of India, especially among the Hindus, and can be traced far back in Hindu history; however it had no foundation in the books of Hindu antiquity. When the husband died, it was a practice for the spouse to publicly burn herself as a symbol of her devotion and faithfulness to her husband. Many women dedicated themselves to the flames with an enthusiasm characteristic of the martyrs of the early Christian era. Sati was a popularly respected institution of divine self-sacrifice, but what made the crime such an abhorrence was than often the wife was unwilling to sacrifice herself. As practiced among the Mohammedans, the reluctant wife could not be compelled to meet this fate but such was not the case with the Hindus. It was quite difficult to determine those cases in which

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<sup>5</sup>Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company, p. 411.

<sup>6</sup>The word means dedicated.



the widow was willing or loath to sacrifice her life, and thus the relatives of the deceased husband often took advantage of the circumstances for proprietary and financial enhancement and urged the wife to burn herself. Often the widow selected death by flames rather than suffer alternatives consequences, and so for practical purposes she was actually being murdered by her relatives. Consequently sati was of such a nature that only complete prohibition was a just solution.<sup>7</sup>

The inception of an effort to suppress sati began in 1802 when Lord Wellesley instituted an enquiry into the prevalence of sati. Investigation revealed that between April 15 and October 15, 1804, no less than 116 widows had been burned alive within thirty miles of Calcutta.<sup>8</sup> In 1819 there were 650 cases in Bengal alone which was a considerable increase over the 1815 statistics.<sup>9</sup> Despite the widespread observation of this practice most of the governor-generals of India refused to take decisive action except to warn against the practice. Lord Amherst,

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<sup>7</sup> A. D. Innes, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>8</sup> W. Lee-Warner, "India and Afghanistan (1815-69)", Cambridge Modern History (Cambridge: University Press, 1934), Vol XI, p. 730.

<sup>9</sup> Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company, p. 531.

admonished by the Court of directors on the subject, refused to take action on the expedient theory that more active interference would excite the minds of the natives so greatly as to render the risks too serious. Lord Bentinck also recognized the problem in a letter of November 8, 1829 when he stated:

Whether the question be to continue or to discontinue the practice of sati, the decision is equally surrounded by an awful responsibility. To consent to the consignment year after year of hundreds of innocent victims to a cruel and untimely end when the power exists of preventing it is a predicament which no conscience can contemplate without horror. But, on the other hand, if heretofore received opinions are to be considered of any value, to put to hazard by a contrary course the very safety of the British Empire in India, and to extinguish at once all hopes of those great improvements affecting the condition, not of hundreds and thousands, but of millions; which can only be expected from the continuance of our supremacy, is an alternative which even in the light of humanity itself may be considered as a still greater evil.<sup>10</sup>

Ultimately it was Lord Bentinck who courageously promulgated a law in 1829 prohibiting sati in any form. On that occasion Bentinck remarked that all classes would "be secure in the observance of their religious usages, so long as that system can be adhered to without violation of the paramount dictates of justice and humanity."<sup>11</sup> By 1847 the practice of sati had largely dissipated.

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<sup>10</sup> Ramsay Muir, The Making of British India, 1756-1858 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1915), p. 293.

<sup>11</sup> Lee-Warner, loc. cit.

Another reform instituted by the English was the abolition of infanticide. This practice, which lacked foundation in the sacred books of the Hindus, was practiced mostly by the Rajpoots and was peculiar to the higher order or castes of people. Infanticide especially prevailed in central and western India. The motive for this practice was religious in nature and attached to the stigma and disgrace incurred by an unmarried Hindu woman. It was better that a female infant should die than reach maturity unwed.

The chances of marriage were limited by the necessity of finding a suitable mate in the proper caste and providing the prohibitively expensive dowry. It was a considerable advantage not to have daughters and thus avoid the high expense and difficulty of marrying them. The practice of infanticide was so strong that in certain tribes the males outnumbered females about six to one.<sup>12</sup>

The English recognized this detestable pox to society quite early but encountered considerable difficulty in eliminating it because of the difficulty of proving the actual cause of an infant's death. Thus in the early period of English ascendancy the practice was common and quite unabated despite English admonitions to the contrary and native reassurances that the practice would cease.

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<sup>12</sup> A. D. Innes, op. cit., p. 211.

The English sought to get at the source of the evil by eliminating the cause. Laws were passed limiting the expenditures on marriages and dowries. Though this evil did not totally disappear, it was greatly reduced and soon the natural proportion of the sexes began to resume a more normal state.

Bentinck also placed restrictions on the slave trade by a regulation promulgated in 1832 which made illegal the removal of slaves for traffic from one English district to another.<sup>13</sup>

Other than the abolition of evil customs and practices, Lord Bentinck's administration is most associated with the emphasis placed on education in India. An interest in education was manifested as early as the Charter Act of 1813 which states that:

. . . . a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature, and the encouragement of the learned Natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India. . . .<sup>14</sup>

The first serious interest appeared in 1823 during the Bentinck tenure. Education up to Bentinck's time had been primarily oriental in nature and the language in use either Sanskrit or Arabic. Bentinck recognized the

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<sup>13</sup> Lee-Warner, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Muir, op. cit., p. 296.

ineffectiveness of this and advocated the use of English in association with the various vernaculars.<sup>15</sup>

The stress on education was given further impetus by the Charter Act of 1833, which opened the Company's service to native and Englishman alike - - restrictions as to color and creed no longer withstanding. Section eighty-seven of that act declared that "no native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the Company."<sup>16</sup> The purpose of this act was important in the impetus "such recognition was calculated to give to the progress of native education."<sup>17</sup>

The progressive enlightenment of the Bentinck regime greatly enhanced the growth of educational institutions in India. Many new universities opened including the Medical College of Calcutta, 1837; the School of Industry of Jubbulpore, 1837; the Engineering College of Roorkee, 1846; and many others.<sup>18</sup> Thus

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<sup>15</sup>Persian was abolished as the language of the courts in 1837.

<sup>16</sup>Courtenay P. Ilbert, The Government of India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), p. 89.

<sup>17</sup>Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company, p. 421.

<sup>18</sup>Ilbert, op. cit., p. 87.

Bentinck established the foundation of an educational system in India and promulgated numerous social reforms. Superficially, at least, it seemed that he left India in "a condition of profound repose - - a repose which so far as alien observers can interpret Indian sentiment, appeared to be the fruit of social contentment."<sup>19</sup> However, the appearance was deceptive and superficial as a fresh coat of varnish!

The English also introduced into India a vast transportation and communications network, but progress in this area of public works was much slower than in the areas of moral and social reforms and did not reach its apogee until the Dalhousie administration.

The inception of public works began in India during the 1820's and 1830's with the building of a system of canals which grew out of the need for irrigation. In the early 1820's the Western Jumna Canal was built followed in the 1830's by the Eastern Jumna Canal. A great famine in 1838 gave further impetus to canal-making. In 1853 construction was begun on a Ganges canal which was described in its day as "the most magnificent work ever undertaken in India - - one of the most magnificent works in the world."<sup>20</sup> The building of the

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<sup>19</sup>Marriott, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>20</sup>Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company, p. 291.

Great Trunk Road, which connected Calcutta and Delhi and then on to Lahore and Peshawar, had a total length of 1,423 miles, and greatly facilitated the problem of transportation. Prior to 1852 the entire mileage of railways in India was only two-hundred miles. In 1852, Dalhousie took the initiative of urging the extension of this embryo network. The first postal service was instituted during the Dalhousie tenure and the half-penny post was created for all of India thus greatly enhancing and immensely facilitating communication and commerce.<sup>21</sup> The first telegraph also came into use and nearly four thousand miles of electric telegraph was laid. Dalhousie also took an interest in such public works as improved harbors, bridges, canals and roads. He reformed the prison system and in 1854 introduced the mess hall cafeteria system which caused many prisoners to fear loss of caste and consequently the English were accused of deliberately attempting to cause the prisoners to lose caste. Dalhousie also brought public education under control of the state, and for the first time the education of Hindu and Mohammedan females was introduced.

One writer summarizes the progress and consequences

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<sup>21</sup>Ironically if these events which aided in precipitating the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 had been instituted a decade or two prior to that event then the rebellion would never have reached such great magnitude.

of the Dalhousie education reforms thus:

A vast network of educational institutions has, under the system thus initiated, been spread over India. These institutions start from the indigenous hedgeschools of the Hindus and the old Mosque schools of the Musalmans, which have now been brought within Government inspection. They advance, by well-ordered upward steps, to the Vernacular and Anglo-vernacular schools, the High Schools, the affiliated Colleges, and the Universities. The whole forms a complete gradation of Public instructions under the direction and control of the state . . . . . It has set in motion new forces, intellectual and political, whose magnitude it is impossible to gage, but which the British Government now finds itself compelled to reckon with. Amid all the checks which occurred to Dalhousie's consolidating system in India, after his firm hand was withdrawn, this tremendous factor of unification has gone on working without break or intermission, gaining strength, and displaying its marvellous results on an ever-extending scale. Even the Mutiny did not interrupt the progress of Indian education. The year 1857, which saw us forced to fight for our existence, also saw the Acts passed to establish the three Indian Universities, since increased to five, which form the Copestone of Public Instruction in India. Every Viceroy, whatever his public policy or private idiosyncrasies, has sought to connect his name with the magnificent system of Indian State education introduced during Lord Dalhousie's rule. <sup>22</sup>

The program of Dalhousie in its entirety has been described as "one of the most comprehensive and far seeing which ever issued from a human brain."<sup>23</sup>

A major source of Anglo-Indian friction other than the social and economic reforms alluded to was that of an

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<sup>22</sup>Marriott, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 155.



equitable system of taxation. The English, in effecting a permanent settlement of this problem in Bengal, Madras, the Dekhan and other parts of India aroused considerable hostility and opposition among an influential group of the Indian citizenry.

The primary sources of English revenue in India were the taxes on land, salt, opium and customs. It was the former which most immediately effected the bulk of the people and also that which yielded the largest revenue. Though there were numerous other taxes, all of which fluctuated in the revenue yielded, the 1852 revenue on these four primary taxes indicates their relative importance.<sup>24</sup>

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Land -----    | \$14,250,000 |
| Opium -----   | 2,500,000    |
| Customs ----- | 2,000,000    |
| Salt -----    | 1,225,000    |

When the Mogul Empire was in the ascendancy in India, the "farming out" method of tax collection was used. The procedure was to divide the land into districts, determine the amount of tillable land in each district and the anticipated production. Determination of the yield provided the basis of what was to be paid to the government.<sup>25</sup> The government then appointed a tax

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<sup>24</sup> Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company, p. 148.

<sup>25</sup> It is interesting, in view of the events of the twentieth century, to observe the innumerable contradictions inherent in the political and economic

collector of the district who was responsible for collecting the amount due the government less that of his own allowance.<sup>26</sup> Frequently military officers were given districts as a reward for their services, that were exempt from the assessed tax.<sup>27</sup>

The government held control over such districts and could resume control at its discretion. The taxes collected by the zemindar were not necessarily from individuals; they could be from a village community or from a local chief in charge of a pseudo-feudal fief.

ideologies of the capitalist and communist writers in the mid-nineteenth century as apropos to India.

Karl Marx, in a series of letters entitled The First Indian War of Independence, 1858-59 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960), castigates the English unmercifully for the political and economic exploitation of India. Marx accuses the English of preserving and strengthening the feudal system in India and using the many social and economic reforms for the ulterior purpose of further enslaving and subjugating and unwitting populace.

It is further maintained that the English investment in India was not actually a paying proposition in terms of cost versus investment there being about 10,000 English parasites holding lucrative positions in India who actually accrued the profits.

Marx reflects the English system of taxation as unscrupulous in that the revenue derived was never returned to the people in the form of public works.

Marx contends that the Sepoy Revolt of 1857-59 was in reality a popular uprising incited by the suppressed people, not as most English writers contend, the discontent of the military. It is further contended that the exploited masses participated in the revolution en masse, directly or indirectly and that the revolt failed only because of the ethnic, religious, political and geographic diversity of India.

<sup>26</sup> The tax-collector was called a zemindar a term often synonymous with a wealthy or great land-owner.

<sup>27</sup> Such a district was called a jaghirdar.

Often the office of zemindar was conferred on some local chieftian who held proprietary right dating from remote antiquity. However, the zemindar held no such proprietary right and though he might presume that the position would be passed on to his heirs, the office was nevertheless filled at the will of the paramount power. The actual governmental tax assessment was liable to arbitrary change based on political expediency as necessary to enhance the financial welfare of the government.<sup>28</sup>

The taxation system was not subject to legislative enactment but only to tradition and local usage. Though this system varied throughout India and in some areas was non-existent, the example alluded to provide a basic outline of its general operation. In reality the land-holding system of India was far more chaotic than the feudal system of the Middle Ages. This traditional Mogul method of taxation, a system inherited by the English in the eighteenth century was a subject that often absorbed an unproportional share of a governor-general's attention.

The first governor-general to be plagued by this problem was Cornwallis, who in trying to create a more organized and uniform system out of mass chaos conceived of the fallacious idea that the great landlord families

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<sup>28</sup> Mills, op. cit., Vol. V, p. 338.

of England were analogous to the Indian zemindars. In England the progress of the rural community had depended largely on the landlord class who held great security; and so Cornwallis argued that if the zemindar were given similar security he would be a source of benefit and progress in India. The soil would be vested in a small group of great landowners, as in England, and cultivation conducted by the many tenants. The zemindar could be induced to look after the general welfare because this would result ultimately in the increased value of his property and he would be more closely tied to the central government to which he would owe his security.<sup>29</sup>

The key to the successful operation of this theory depended on establishing the security of the position and tenure of the zemindar and in a guarantee that the government would not at some future date increase his taxes and thereby destroy his gain. This was the basis of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, 1793, which established a fixed tax guaranteed in perpetuity, at the rate then in effect, and made the zemindars hereditary proprietors of the soil upon payment of the land-tax.<sup>30</sup>

The results of the Cornwallis Settlement did not manifest the desired results and proved seriously defective. The zemindars did not fulfill the expectation of introduct-

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 339.

<sup>30</sup> Mead, op. cit., p. 311.

ing agricultural improvements, and as a consequence no one profited from the Permanent Settlement except the zemindars who were now fortified in their positions by agreement of the central government and law. Thus the zemindar gained a fair rent, fixed tenure, and freedom of transfer without any sacrifice, and the only basis upon which he could be ejected was failure to pay the rent. The immediate consequence of the Bengal Settlement was to enhance the upper class at the expense of the government and the tenants. Sir Charles Metcalfe summarized the situation in a critical analysis as follows:

But what was the price of the Permanent Settlement in Bengal? We not only relinquished the right of the Government to any further revenue from land, which was undoubtedly a great sacrifice, but what was much worse, we destroyed all the existing property in land, by creating a class of proprietors to whom we recklessly made over the property of others.

. . . he (Cornwallis) was the creator of private property in the State revenue, and the great destroyer of the private property in land in India; destroying hundreds or thousands of proprietors for every one that he gratuitously created.<sup>31</sup>

The acquisition of territory in southern India as a result of the Mysore Wars necessitated some settlement there. Though southern India had a system similar to that of Bengal, it differed appreciably in that it was not the traditional system and that the zemindari was not an established institution. The settlement in Southern India was carried out by Sir Thomas Munro,

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<sup>31</sup>Muir, op. cit., pp. 191-92

guided by the principle of adaptation of the existing system in Bengal and having like motive. Monro, unlike Cornwallis, was not guided by western theories and analogies in the land settlement, and so he proposed a settlement based on prevalent customs that were understood. The Dekhan Settlement, similar to the Madras Settlement of 1802, provided that the ryot<sup>32</sup> was to hold the land directly from the government which recognized the ryot's proprietary right to the soil without the intermediary landlord class. The government's rent was fixed for a term of years rather than in perpetuity and the ryot was given freedom of transfer and fixity of tenure.<sup>33</sup>

However, a source of friction soon arose because, unlike the zamindar system, any change in land addition or subtraction resulted in a yearly assessment which fluctuated and gave the false impression to the ryot that the plots under annual cultivation were being revised also.

A third Permanent Settlement in 1833 occurred in the Northwest Provinces or Hindostan. This settlement was more practical than ideal in nature, and the traditional native system was largely retained without contamination by western doctrines and ideologies. However, the objective remained the same. The principle source of

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<sup>32</sup>The ryot is the peasant cultivator.

<sup>33</sup>Mills, op. cit., Vol. VII, p. 318.

friction arose over land ownership, as disputed between the ryot and the talukdar, the latter holding proprietary rights that dated to antiquity. Democratic ideals were followed in reaching a solution and so the ryot was favored over the talukdar. Though democratic ideals and economics were on the side of such action, political reason was not. The resulting consequences were that the talukdars were deprived of their land and power and thus lost much of their initiative and leadership. The settlement created considerable opposition toward the English and their policies and failed to gain for the English any appreciation from those who benefited.

With few exceptions the various land settlements of the latter decade of the eighteenth century and the early decades of the nineteenth century should be considered the Magna Charta of the privileged classes. During the following decades this pre-eminent and dominant class went undisturbed, secure in the thought that their titles were valid and their tenure secure.

The English had committed a serious error in the various land settlements by granting rent in perpetuity rather than for a limited term of several years. A short term settlement would have manifested the same effects desired by the government and further allowed the government to increase its tax as production, land values, and cultivation increased. Such was prohibited by the Permanent Settlements, and thus the government was deprived

of future sources of traditional and legitimate revenue.

Gradually the English began to awaken to the errors of the Permanent Settlements and to realize that vast amounts of revenue, past and future, were lost and that the landlords were living like parasites on the English government enjoying immense privileges and immunities. The English further realized the grave injustice and injury that had been done to the tenants, en masse.

The English decided to recoup their losses and for the next twenty years gradually resumed control and destroyed the power of the great landlords. The English commenced wholesale confiscation of property unless the incumbent could establish indisputable proof of ownership--most of which could not. The fraudulent usurper and the rightful possessor was deprived of his property by indiscriminate confiscation. In the North-West Provinces "the settlement officer swept up, without inquiry, every patch of unregistered land; even those exempted by a subsequent order, which did not come out until five-sixths of the tenures had been resumed."<sup>34</sup>

In 1852 the Inam Commission was established to investigate property titles and "each day, produced its list of victims; and the good fortune of those who escaped but added to the pangs of the crowd who came forth from the shearing-house, shorn to the skin, unable

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<sup>34</sup> Kaye, A History of the Sepoy War in India,  
p. 173.



to work, ashamed to beg, condemned to penury."<sup>35</sup> During the years 1852-57, the Inam Commission investigated the titles of thirty-five thousand estates, three-fifths of which were confiscated. The conduct of the commission caused particular dissatisfaction in Oudh which suffered especially from the investigation.<sup>36</sup>

The consequences of the land-settlements and resumption actions of the English were far-reaching. It greatly swelled the number of disaffected, who consisted mainly of the wealthy and influential classes, and who credited their desperation to the English and now hoped for the opportunity to recover lost power and prestige, at some future date, at the expense of the English. Among these were many nobles, military chiefs, ancient landholders, and the priestly castes. The English had permanently alienated the affection of the most powerful wealthy, and influential classes in India and these groups held tremendous influence which could be brought to bear against the English.

It does not take much imagination to realize the consequences of the five decades of English progress in India. In that period of time the English instituted numerous social and moral reforms as the elimination of infanticide, sati, dakoiti, and thugee. Laws were enacted

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>36</sup> Roberts, op. cit., p. 304.

to legalize the remarriage of native widows, education for the female was introduced, religious crusades were conducted, churches built, and superstition was superseded by reason. Many economic reforms were instituted including the land-settlements, canals, roads, railroads, and telegraphs.<sup>37</sup> New ideas in astronomy, science and surgery were introduced.

It is obvious, in view of these reforms, that a clash between Eastern and Western culture was inevitable. Furthermore the rapidity with which these reforms occurred seemed to lend credence to the native fear of reform. Nearly every new and novel English innovation caused native alarm and fear. Most innovations were viewed as diabolical instruments to destroy the caste of the natives and subjugate them to the will of the English.

It is undoubtedly true that these innovations would not have caused such great suspicion were it not for the wide gap in cultures.<sup>38</sup> The English and Indians were of different races, customs, prejudices, ideas, history, religion and social position. Thus to those who used religious and racial superstition and prejudice as instruments of opportunism, the opportunities were unlimited.

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<sup>37</sup>Native suspicion of new innovations is reflected in the names attached to them. The railroad was referred to as the "fire-carriage" and the telegraph as the "lightning posts".

<sup>38</sup>Heylin, op. cit., pp. 12-17

When these numerous reforms are added to the fear of territorial aggrandizement and military reform, it is obvious that the opportunity for rebellion was ripe.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SEPOY REVOLT

The centennial<sup>1</sup> of the Battle of Plassey witnessed English India basking in glory, gloating in unbounded success and secure in the belief of perpetual tranquility.

The English, with few exceptions,<sup>2</sup> seemed unaware of the stormclouds that had gathered during the past century. During this period the English had unrelentingly added to their domains so that in 1857 most of the Indian sub-continent was under English sway. One after another of the native princes and races had succumbed to English subjugation. The great mass of conquests had occurred by forcible conquest or annexation. Furthermore there was seldom a moment of pause and thus little opportunity to reduce the irritation. Thousands harbored in memory vivid humiliations and many were chafing at having to endure the yoke of an alien race and creed. Thus a mass

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<sup>1</sup> Ubiquitous rumors held that English rule in India would terminate in one-hundred years; hence, the year 1857 held special significance for the superstitious.

<sup>2</sup> It is a disturbing fact that no one in authority in the Indian government except Sir Henry Lawrence seemed to realize the imminence and immensity of the impending disaster.

of constant disaffection and entire hosts of malcontents existed.

Among these, most powerful and dangerous, were the Moslems with whom religious antagonisms and a desire to revive their ancient preponderance were sources of friction. Another major faction alienated by the English were the Marathas, a warlike and unscrupulous Hindu race, whose once pre-eminent empire had been split asunder by English expansion, however had it not been for the English the Marathas would have been the masters in India. A third group, extensive in number, were those who directly suffered from English annexation and the action of English land policy. This financially and politically potent group harbored special grudges against the English. A fourth body of malcontents, especially dangerous in view of their unbounded spirit and energy, were those whose outlets for ambition and opportunity for personal aggrandizement had been destroyed by the English. A final group was the native army which suffered from novel nineteenth century western military innovations. These five categories provided a basis of massive discontent. The abevant discontent manifested by these various groups was further aggravated by cultural, racial, religious and political differences.

There were four prominent features of the Dalhousie regime which served to incite this chronic and dormant unrest into active disaffection and which

culminated in the Mutiny of 1857. These were expansion, in particular the case of Oudh, the "Doctrine of Lapse", the disproportionate ratio of English to native troops, and finally the dominant personality of Lord Dalhousie. The governor-general was "able, energetic, and bold, and withal devotedly bent on fulfilling his duty to the country, . . . an autocrat, exceptionally imperious, self-willed and self-sufficient."<sup>3</sup> These personality characteristics caused Dalhousie to reject the traditional policy of reliance on native advice and suggestions and instead to rely on a select few officers.<sup>4</sup>

Dalhousie returned to England in 1856 to receive a hero's welcome and be eulogized for his brilliant successes and spectacular career of expansion and material prosperity. Undoubtedly spectacular and glamorous, the Dalhousie regime erred in that it catered to the moral and material needs of India and ignored the delicate feelings, wishes, and thoughts of the native community. It was this suppressed feeling that openly manifested itself in the Sepoy Revolt.<sup>5</sup>

The dye was cast and the destiny determined when the new governor-general, Lord Canning (1856-62) assumed

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<sup>3</sup>McLeod Innes, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>This at least partially explains the government's unpreparedness and surprise at the inception of the Sepoy Revolt.

<sup>5</sup>Kaye, A History of the Sepoy War in India, p. 470.

control on February 29, 1856. There was nothing that Canning could have done to reverse the irrepressible tide of conflict. Events of a century were against him and fate jettisoned him into the spotlight of disaster.

Canning further undermined his already precarious position when he promulgated the General Service Enlistment Act of July 25th, 1856. This act provided that all future enlistments in the company's service would be required to cross the "blackwater" despite caste and religious obligations. The inopportune issuance of this order further agitated and inflamed the already explosive situation and had a demoralizing effect on the native troops. Many viewed it as a direct and apparent manifestation of the government's attack on religious caste and thus the act coincided quite well with the current sinister rumors respecting the government's designs to destroy the Hindu religion. This situation was further magnified by the prevalent but erroneous belief that the act applied not only to future enlistments but to those presently in the service. The entire Sepoy army was affected by the act, and it now began to listen to the whispers of sedition and rebellion.<sup>6</sup>

The immediate cause of the Sepoy Rebellion

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 468.

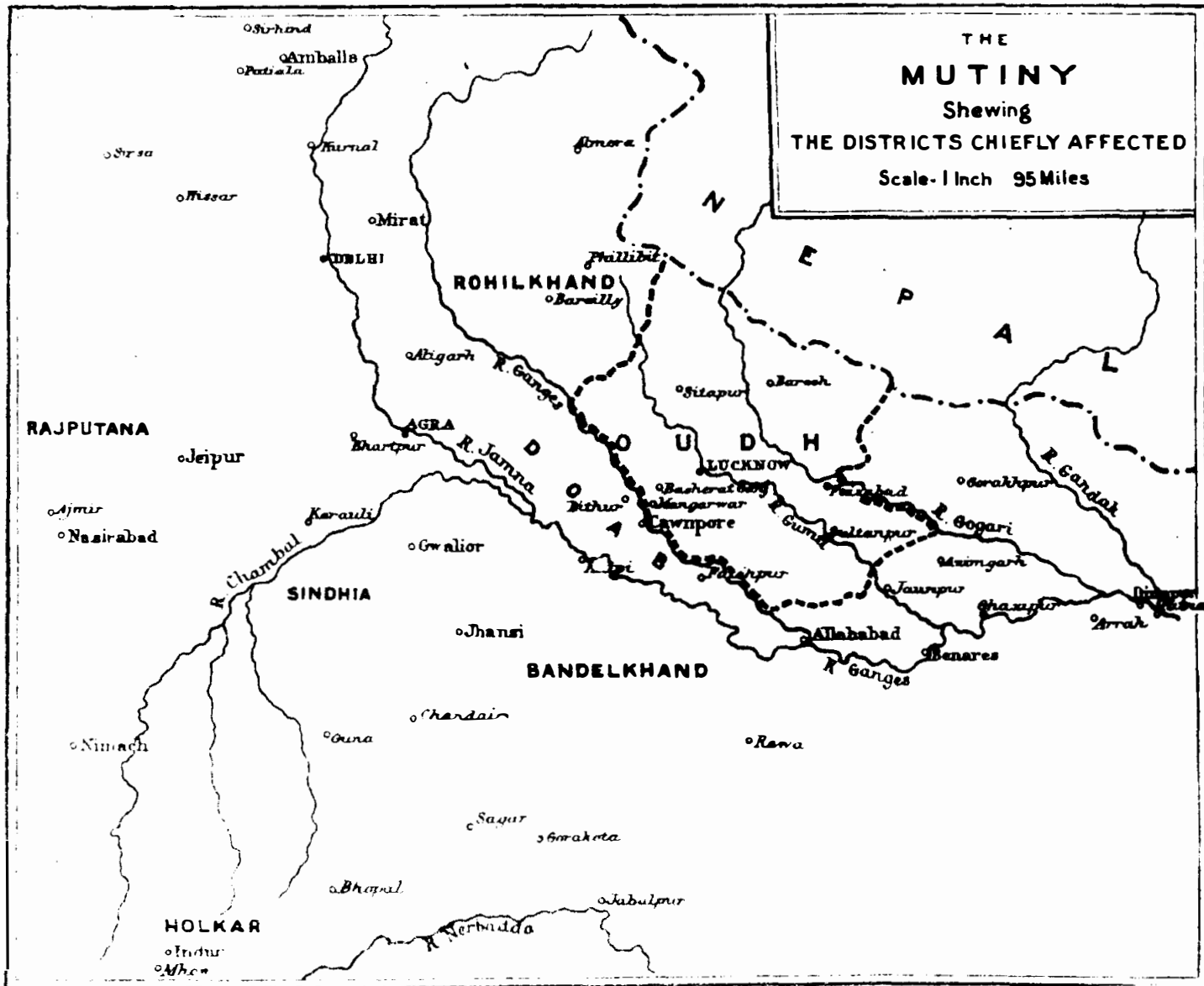
involved the seemingly innocent replacements of the Brown Bess musket, with which the natives were armed, by the more modern Enfield rifle. Depots and cartridge factories for the new rifle were established at various places including Dumdum, Amballa, and Meerut. The new rifle required cartridges of a new kind which were to be produced at the government factories near Calcutta. A lubricant was needed for this cartridge, into which the soldier had to bite prior to use, and it would appear that little caution was taken with regard to the animal fat used.<sup>7</sup>

In January of 1857, prior to the issuance of a single cartridge, at the government magazine at Dumdum near Calcutta a low-caste factory worker taunted a Sepoy soldier by saying that the Sepoy army was about to lose caste en masse because of the issuance of these new cartridges which were supposedly greased with the fat of swine and cattle. These two animals were respectively sacred to the Hindu and Mohammedan and both religions being affected by the same act now united in common defense of a sacred doctrine!

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<sup>7</sup> It is significant that the new cartridges were no novelty to India. As early as 1853 the new rifles and cartridges were tested in India, on order of the Court of Directors, to determine the effect of climate upon them. At that time Adjutant-General Colonel Tucker of the Bengal Army realized the potential danger involved in the use of the Enfield rifle and warned against the issuance of such weapons to the native troops. The warning went unheeded.





The story could neither be categorically proved or denied and so the Sepoy soldier, taken aghast at this supposedly intentional perversion of caste, spread the alarm among his comrades. One officer at Dumdum wrote on January 22nd that "there appears to be a very unpleasant feeling existing among the native soldiers who are here for instruction, regarding the grease used in preparing the cartridges . . . Some of the depot men in conversing with me on the subject last night said that the report spread throughout India."<sup>8</sup> Actually it is not clear whether it was an actual fear of the use of the cartridges themselves or fear of public reaction to their use that determined the Sepoy reaction.<sup>9</sup>

The conflagration soon spread from Dumdum to Barrackpore where the 34th Sepoy Regiment manifested considerable discontent. Certain detachments of the mutinous 34th were unwisely and naively permitted to march to Berhampore where they proceeded to contaminate the 19th Sepoy Regiment. On February 26th the 19th Regiment at Berhampore refused to receive their percussion caps and were ordered to parade by Commandant Mitchell. The commandant sensed the seriousness and danger of the situation, and without any English troops for support, and doubtful of the loyalty of the native artillery,

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<sup>8</sup>Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXX (1857), p. 37.

<sup>9</sup>Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XLIV (1857-58), p. 178.

capitulated to the 19th Regiment.

Meanwhile at Barrackpore the 34th Regiment had worked itself into a state of feverish excitement. Even when allowed to use their own grease the troops fancied that the cartridge paper contained objectionable grease. Hearing of the success of the 19th Regiment the 34th became even more arrogant and were not pacified by General Hearsey's admonition of the possible consequences of their behavior. On March 29th open rebellion occurred when Sepoy Mungul Pandey, a self-proclaimed mutineer and savior of the Hindu faith, began to incite others to rebellion and urged a general uprising. Pandey attacked Adjutant-General Baugh and a small detachment of Sepoy troops refused to come to Baugh's aid.<sup>10</sup> Several high ranking English officers were unsuccessful in ordering the native troops to seize Pandey. The troops finally obeyed only on the orders of General Hearsey who threatened their lives<sup>11</sup> and on the next day ordered the entire 19th Regiment disbanded.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Edward Gilliat, Heroes of the Indian Mutiny (London: Seeley, Service and Co., 1914), p. 57.

<sup>11</sup>Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXX (1857), p. 126.

<sup>12</sup>Mungul Pandey was executed on April 8, 1857.

It was not until May 6th that the 34th Regiment was disbanded after a period of indecision and procrastination by Lord Canning. Canning feared that hasty action would only confirm rather than allay the evil temper of the troops. The twofold dilemma of how rapidly to act and the nature of the punishment to be inflicted presented the English with a difficult problem. Indecision and laxity could produce as disastrous consequences as decisive and harsh punishment. Canning's conduct made him the target of considerable criticism to the effect that he did not react quickly enough and when he did it was with too much leniency. One young soldier wrote to his mother on May 2, 1857, with regard to this point: "Nothing by the harshest and most severe measures will put an effectual stop to this mutiny, and blood will flow in torrents before it is quelled."<sup>13</sup> The same soldier wrote again on June 16, 1857, that the "government is a great deal too lenient and seems afraid to act with proper severity."<sup>14</sup> This latter comment aptly reflects the Sepoy thought on the subject because under the circumstances delay created the serious misconception that the English recognized their position to be unjust, and therefore their hesitancy to punish, rather than the

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<sup>13</sup>George D. Barker, Letters From Persia and India 1857-59 (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1915), p. 38.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

more accurate opinion that English inaction was motivated by humanitarian principles.<sup>15</sup>

During this critical period in the spring of 1857 Northern India was visited by the nobleman, Nana Sahib, whose tortured and greedy mind envisioned an opportunity for revenge. Taking advantage of the circumstances, he passed through the cities of Calpee, Delhi, Lucknow and others and abetted in the instigation of rebellion among the native princes and troops. The English hardly noticed the passing of this nobleman whose presence in itself was enough to portend disaster.

The threat to the English position spread during April and May and many other encampments manifested open defiance of the English, most notable among these being Umballah, Lucknow and Meerut. It was the latter of these that created an irrevocable chain reaction that precipitated the Sepoy Revolt.

Stationed at Meerut were the 11th and 20th Native Infantry Regiments and the 3rd Native Cavalry. Violence was precipitated when Colonel Smyth ordered a parade of ninety men of the 3rd Cavalry and all but five refused to accept the new cartridges. An ensuing court-martial found some of the men guilty, and on May 9th the punishment was publically witnessed. Rebellion occurred on

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<sup>15</sup>The popular viewpoint that Canning was too lenient won for him the dubious title of "Clemency Canning."

Sunday, May 10th, led by the enraged 3rd Cavalry, which feared disbandment. There now occurred massive plundering, pillaging, and murder as the Sepoys took revenge on every European unfortunate enough to be discovered.<sup>16</sup> Convicts were released and the native police joined in the melee.

Commandant Hewitt was so stupified by these events that he remained totally passive. Unable to assume the initiative himself, he passed on his authority to Brigadier Wilson who made a meager and abortive effort to thwart the revolt. The mutineers now fearful of English reprisals decided to march to Delhi, and that night left for the ancient Indian capitol where, after a forty mile march, they arrived the next morning. Brigadier Wilson made absolutely no effort, despite the admonitions of inferior officers, to delay or thwart the march to Delhi though it would have been simple enough to have done so and so the final opportunity to prevent a successful rebellion was blindly and ignorantly ignored.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore the failure of the English to give pursuit or make any effort to warn the English at Delhi resulted in disastrous consequences and caused the natives to suspect the English of lethargy.

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<sup>16</sup> Holmes, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Idid., p. 101.

Had the uprising been elaborately and thoroughly planned the mutineers could easily have made themselves masters in Northern India without much difficulty. On the contrary, if the English had been prepared for the revolt it could just as easily have been paralyzed in its infancy.<sup>13</sup> Neither happened to be the case; hence the insurgents were given an opportunity to gain support for their cause and the English an opportunity to prepare the counterattack. The deployment of English troops at the outbreak of the rebellion was a serious disadvantage and reserves were almost non-existent. At Meerut there

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<sup>13</sup>It was primarily the question of the extent of the India government's knowledge of the imminence of the mutiny that interested members of parliament. Viscount Melville on December 10, 1857 speaking to the House of Lords commented on the subject as follows: "It was extraordinary that the local government should have had no information of an organized mutiny such as that which had broken out in India. He believed it was perfectly well known that the revolt was to commence all over the country on a certain day; but owing to some misunderstanding it broke out a day or two too early at Meerut, otherwise the disasters we had now to deplore would have been far greater." Melville "found fault with the local Government for not attaching due weight to the information which was communicated to them." . . . Great Britain, 3 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. CXLVIII (1857-58), pp. 449-50.

Mr. Disraeli speaking to the House of Commons on July 27, 1857 said: "The noble Lord (Earl Granville) there ingeniously informed the country that the Government were utterly taken by surprise both here and in India-- that twentyfour hours before these events occurred they did not even suspect that anything was wrong." . . . Great Britain, 3 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. CXLVII (1857), p. 441.

were two English regiments and some artillery; at Lucknow, one regiment and some artillery; at Dinapur, one regiment; at Cawnpore, a detachment of the Lucknow regiment. The native regiments at these stations were as follows: Meerut, three; Lucknow, four; Dinapur, four; and Cawnpore, four.<sup>19</sup>

At the strategically important stations of Benares, Allahabad and Delhi there were practically no English troops. Between the Jamma and Nerbadda Rivers English troops were almost non-existent and thus in the area most seriously affected the English were least prepared. The mutiny was primarily confined to the stations generally described and Pax Britannica ceased to exist in these areas. The only secure English position in all India, except for the Madras and Bombay presidencies, was the Punjab. The Punjab was made secure by the existence of ten English regiments, artillery and cavalry and the decisive foresighted action of such men as John Lawrence, John Nicholson, J. D. Macpherson and others who secured the district for the English.<sup>20</sup> It was necessary to disarm some native regiments but because many regiments were composed of Punjabis and Sikhs who were naturally hostile toward the Mohammedans, an exceptionally high

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<sup>19</sup>S. H. Cunningham, Earl Canning (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), pp. 95-98.

<sup>20</sup>Kaye, A History of the Sepoy War in India, p. 472.



proportion remained loyal.

The English reaction to the various mutinies was to recall troops from Persia, Burma, Ceylon, the Mauritius and to intercept the expeditionary force enroute to China and send for reinforcements from England.<sup>21</sup>

No new outbreaks occurred for three weeks after the Meerut incident which adds credence to the argument that the mutiny was not especially well planned nor organized for that particular moment. However toward the end of May the revolt began to spread rapidly and erupt into general rebellion, and between the latter part of May and the middle of June nearly every regiment from Delhi to Benares had mutined.<sup>22</sup> Most of the mutineers murdered their officers and march off to either Delhi,

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<sup>21</sup>Two events prior to those alluded to had precipitous influence on the Sepoy Revolt. Toward the end of 1856 heretofore latent English difficulties with Persia erupted and finally culminated in the Anglo-Persian War of 1856-57. A considerable force of English troops were dispatched to retake Herat, which had fallen to Persia, and thus at a critical moment an already small number of English troops was further diminished. This incident further alienated Indian Mohammedans toward the English.

At about the same time England became involved in a war with China whereby the English were able to intercept China-bound troops for use in India.

<sup>22</sup>Sir De Lacy Evans in an address to the House of Commons on August 11, 1857 estimated that "not less than 100,000 of the native troops in India has been either disbanded or were in arms against us; . . ." Great Britain, 3 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. CXLVII (1857), p. 1397. The Earl of Ellenborough speaking to the House of Lords on February 15, 1858 lended credence to Sir De Lacy Evans estimate. Great Britain, 3 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. CXVII (1857-58), p. 1362.

Lucknow, or Cawnpore.

The ancient city of Delhi became the focal point of action during the early part of the Sepoy Rebellion. Delhi was important in that it was the ancient capitol of the Mohammedan Empire where the aged Behaudur Shah of the Timor dynasty still retained a symbolic and titular throne. The city was important not only by reason of a traditional nostalgia but because of its strategic and psychological value. Furthermore it contained a vast powder magazine that was practically inexhaustible and for practical purposes unguarded by any English troops.

The Meerut mutineers easily gained the support of the native regiments in Delhi and on the morning of May 11th began unimaginable pillaging and plundering of the city. Europeans were murdered en masse and public buildings were burned. The English telegraph operator was murdered while relating the circumstances then occurring in Delhi to the English stations at Lahore and Umballah.<sup>23</sup> The mutineers then led a mass assault on the magazine which had been courageously defended for several hours by Lieutenant Willoughby and eight English soldiers. Willoughby finally realized that aid from Meerut would not be forthcoming and ordered the magazine destroyed. The

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<sup>23</sup> Holmes, op. cit., p. 105.

massive explosion killed most of the nine English defenders and 1,000 Sepoy troops.<sup>24</sup>

The conquest of Delhi struck a serious blow to the English in India and immediately the mutineers proclaimed a restoration of the ancient Mogul Empire in India.<sup>25</sup>

Because of the great importance of Delhi the primary task of the English was to reconquer the city from the insurgents. During the period from May to September they laid siege to the city and waited until reinforcements would make an attack plausible. During these months thousands of English and loyal native regiments converged on Delhi. John Nicholson's arrival with 3,000 troops from the Punjab greatly enhanced the English position and toward the early part of September the English forces totaled about 3,000 effective men.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> James Leasor, The Red Fort (London: Werner Laurie 1939), pp. 4-25.

<sup>25</sup> This proclamation created a major schism among the insurgents and caused the Hindus to lose enthusiasm for the cause. This was undoubtedly the first and most serious political blunder of the mutineers.

<sup>26</sup> The tranquility of the Punjab permitted the English to practically denude that area of troops to be used at Delhi.

About half of these were English, the remnant being Sikh and Gurkhas raised in the Punjab. The Delhi defenders numbered in the vicinity of 30,000 to 50,000 men.

During the seige a number of bloody skirmishes occurred as the native defenders attacked English positions but each was successfully repulsed. The English were more seriously plagued by the cholera and sunstroke than by enemy troops. George Anson, the English Commander-in-Chief who ordered the concentration on Delhi, soon died of the plague and was replaced by Henry Barnard. Barnard met a like fate on July 5th and was succeeded by Thomas Reed who in turn gave way to Archdale Wilson on the 17th of June. In early September no less than 2,800 English troops were hospitalized for various causes other than by those of a military nature.

On September 11th the effort to storm Delhi began, and during the 12th and 13th the English batteries pounded away at the city. On the 14th Duncan Home and Philip Salkheld were successful in blowing up the Kashmir gate which allowed Colonel Campbell to enter the city and John Nicholson to form troops within the wall of the city. Though Nicholson was mortally wounded in the attack, the English had gained a foothold within the city.<sup>27</sup> During

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<sup>27</sup>D. W. Bartlett, The Heroes of the Indian Rebellion (Columbus, Ohio: Follett, Foster and Co., 1859), p. 310.

the next week, due to the stubborn resistance of the Sepoys, the English advanced inch by inch until by the 21st General Wilson occupied the imperial palace. The King of Delhi was taken prisoner and the three princes captured and shot by William H. Hodson the next day.<sup>28</sup> Immediately following the fall of Delhi, English and native troops were detached and sent to aid Cawnpore, and the mutineer army of Delhi fled to join the army of Oudh.

The second major center of military operations was at Cawnpore. When news arrived at Cawnpore of the mutinies at Meerut and Delhi, Commandant Hugh Wheeler immediately realized the seriousness of the circumstances but with only fifty English artillerymen he dared not attempt to disarm the four Sepoy regiments.<sup>29</sup> He decided to prepare for the defense and security of the 330 women and children, and on the 21st of May these non-combatants took refuge in an improvised entrenchment. However Wheeler's actions betrayed his own thoughts and aroused the suspicions of the Sepoys. During the course of these events the Nana Sahib, concealing his hate and grudge because of Dalhousie's denial of a life time pension paid to his adoptive father, Baji Rao, offered his Maratha

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<sup>28</sup> Leasor, op. cit., pp. 342-49.

<sup>29</sup> G. O. Trevelyan, Cawnpore (London: Macmillan and Co., 1865), p. 84.

troops to guard the treasury.<sup>30</sup> On June 8th the Nana Sahib treacherously ordered the powder magazine seized and the four native regiments mutined. Thus began the seige of Cawnpore which lasted until June 27th.

By this time Wheeler had at his command 240 English troops with which he had to protect nearly 870 non-combatants and resist the enroachments of 4,000 native troops. During the seige the Cawnpore garrison manifested extraordinary resolution and courage and poured so fierce a musketry and artillery fire at the besiegers that they were constantly forced to retreat. However insurmountable odds eventually began to gain sway as the beseiged could not replace those who fell.<sup>31</sup> Though the garrison could have held out considerably longer, the misery, suffering, casualties, and the welfare of the women and children caused Wheeler to decide to surrender the fortifications. The Nana Sahib gave his sworn guarantee for the safety of the defenders and promised that boats would be provided for their departure, under safe conduct, via the Ganges River to Allahabad. On the 27th of June as the surrendered and demoralized garrison was about to depart, a withering

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 81

<sup>31</sup> Bartlett, op. cit., pp. 208-10.

and murderous fire was opened upon them by the Nana's native troops. One young soldier, in a letter to his mother dated August 2, 1857, describes the massacre as follows:

Not half the details of the horrible massacres at Cawnpore are known, and many never will be known. I was speaking to a native this morning who was present at one dreadful scene; when the boats were fired into from the banks, one of them was cut adrift, and floated down the river unharmed; but a party of Sepoys were sent after them the next morning and brought them back. They were all brought on shore, the gentlemen all tied with ropes, and their wives and children clinging to them. Two companies of Sepoys were drawn up to fire upon the men, and the ladies were told they were to be saved, but some of them clung to their husbands and begged to be shot with them. The Sepoys had to drag them away by force, and the order was given to fire. One of the party was a clergyman, who begged that a short time might be allowed them for prayer, which was granted. They then all shook hands, and took their places in front of the soldiers. The firing commenced and they fell wounded and killed on the ground. The Sepoys then took up their swords, and finished the work by hacking them to pieces.<sup>32</sup>

The remaining women and children, numbering about 125, were taken back to Cawnpore. Three weeks later as General Henry Havelock's forces converged on Cawnpore and defeated the Nana Sahib's forces, the women and children were butchered and mutilated and their bodies thrown into a well. The young soldier alluded to was among the relief expedition to Cawnpore and in

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<sup>32</sup> Barker, op. cit., pp. 61-62.

a letter to his mother dated July 19, 1857 he wrote a description of the massacre and English reaction as follows:

But I must tell you the sad news which had made even our victories painful. The stories which we had heard of all the Europeans having been cruelly massacred had proved true, but the women and children, amongst whom were many ladies of the station and of our 32nd Regiment, were kept alive, though in a wretched state of destitution, all huddled together in a small dark room to the number, I believe, of nearly 100, fed upon flour and water, and subjected to insult. We had heard of their being alive, and everyone had been most cheerfully enduring all fatigues in pursuing the enemy and fighting our way up with all speed in hopes of being able to rescue and save these unfortunate helpless ones, but what was our rage and indignation to find on our arrival that the day before the action they had all been most horribly murdered, and their bodies stripped of everything, all thrown down a well. Can you believe that these devils ( I can call them nothing else) threw down the innocent babes alive into a well to die on the massacred bodies of their mothers. The scene of this tragedy is the most painful sight that ever was witnessed and if ever reverent feeling against one's enemies were allowable I should think they were so now. Every British soldier in this place is fired with indignation and longing to avenge the slain.<sup>33</sup>

The Nana Sabhi had reeked a horrible vengeance upon the British.

The fall of Cawnpore made the seige of Lucknow a certainty. Sir Henry Lawrence, sure that a struggle was imminent, had carefully prepared the defense of the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-58.



Lucknow residency for the seige which began June 30th.<sup>34</sup>  
 The military situation at Lucknow was as precarious as that of Cawnpore because of the endless flow of refugees including many women and children. In June, Lawrence could depend on about 700 loyal Sepoys and 1,000 English troops for defense of the residency but by September this had dwindled to 1,200 effectives. The Lucknow garrison suffered miserably during the seige as wounds and disease disposed of many non-combatants.<sup>35</sup> Communications with the outside world were severed and rumors of impending disaster were rife. The garrison was being continually depleted of manpower and provisions.<sup>36</sup>

After Havelock defeated the Nana Sahib's forces at Cawnpore, he prepared to march on to Lucknow. However he was twice forced to retreat to Cawnpore and the latter retreat from Oudh seemed to the local chieftains a symbol of the abandonment of the Lucknow garrison and many of these chieftains now contributed troops to besiege the city. In September reinforcements arrived at Cawnpore and a third effort, under the combined forces

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<sup>34</sup> McLeod Innes, Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny (London: A. D. Innes and Co., 1895), pp. 69-70.

<sup>35</sup> Lawrence was killed on July 2nd and was thus the first casualty of the seige.

<sup>36</sup> L. E. Rees, Siege of Lucknow (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858), pp. 131-43.

of Generals Outram and Havelock, was made to relieve Lucknow. On the 25th of September the 2,000 man army fought its way into the Lucknow residency which was now temporarily relieved.<sup>37</sup> The additional manpower was welcome but it also caused a manifold increase in the problem of providing proper provisions.

The second relief of Lucknow occurred in November when Sir Colin Campbell with 4,000 Delhi reinforcements crossed the Ganges River. On the 12th Campbell's forces reached the residency and after overcoming the determined resistance of 30,000 rebel troops, entered the residency on the 17th. On March 21st the city of Lucknow fell to the English and gradually the entire province of Oudh was recovered.<sup>38</sup>

In central India during March and April of 1858 Sir Hugh Rose conquered Jhansi and Gwalior from the insurgent leaders Tantia Topi and Jhansi Tani.<sup>39</sup> The conquest of these two cities, for all practical purposes, marked an end of the Sepoy Rebellion. During the next year the English were primarily engaged in subduing a guerrilla type warfare, the last flames of which, were

<sup>37</sup> McLeod Innes, Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny, p. 225.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 298.

<sup>39</sup> G. B. Malleson, History of the Indian Mutiny, 1857-59 (3 vols., London: W. H. Allen and Co. 1878), Vol. III, p. 165.

extinguished by April of 1859 when the Tantia Topi was  
betrayed and captured.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>  
The Nana Sahib fled to Nepal and was never  
heard of again.

## CONCLUSION

A century of rapid political military, social and economic innovations were the major contributing factors to the Sepoy Rebellion. These changes created massive and widespread discontent which culminated in revolution.

Actually the revolt effected only the Bengal presidency which may be explained by the contrasting nature and composition of the Sepoy armies in the three presidencies and by the fact that most of the reforms alluded to manifested greater consequences in that presidency.

The primary participants in the revolt were the Hindu Sepoys of Bengal; the Moslems of the Ganges provinces; the talukdars in Oudh; the titular leaders of the defunct Maratha Empire; and the Moslems who desired a restoration of the ancient Mogul Empire. The reasons for the Hindu uprising are clear, but as Disraeli concluded the Sepoy army was "not so much the avengers of professional grievances as the exponents of general discontent."<sup>41</sup> Though it was the Hindu Sepoys that arose

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<sup>41</sup> Great Britain, 3 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. CXLVII (1857), p. 444.

it was the Moslems that seized control of the revolt for political purposes. In reality the Moslems were attempting to make the Hindu Sepoy army a puppet for their own political motives.

It appears abundantly clear that there was no Hindu conspiracy or effort to foment rebellion, but it is equally clear that there was a Moslem plot to incite rebellion as a means to Mogul restoration. Obviously the plot was not well calculated or organized and it was only accidental that the cartridge incident provided the disaffected Moslems with the desired opportunity.

It would be a major miscalculation to term the Sepoy Revolt a nationalistic movement in any connotation of the term.<sup>42</sup> It was simply a revolt that grew out of a protracted period of transgression and grievances. The revolt was not characterized by a unified spirit or nationalistic goal and except for the Nana Sahib, Tantia Topi, Jhansi Tani and a few lesser chiefs the revolt was totally void of leadership.

The peculiar and inevitable observation concerning the revolt is the naive amateur unawareness of the India government of the imminence of the crisis. Only Henry Lawrence seemed to sense the threat and its potential proportions.

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<sup>42</sup> Disraeli maintained in an address to the House of Commons in July 27, 1857 that it was a nationalistic revolt. Great Britain, 3 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. XLVII (1857), p. 475.

The immediate consequences of the revolt were profound. Most important among these was the change in authority as India passed from the century old grasp of the East India Company to the English Crown. On November 1, 1858 India came under the direct control of the English Crown and Lord Canning became the first Viceroy of India.

Another result was the reorganization of the military both native and English. The English increased the ratio of English to native troops and reorganized the native army so as to give it a greater proportion of English officers with greater powers. Canning also reversed Dalhousies' "Doctrine of Lapse" policy and guaranteed the right of adoption and succession to the native thrones.

Thus the events between May of 1857 and April 1858 manifested profound consequences for India and the English and ushered in a new era.

## APPENDIX

**Extract** from the Official Return showing the Number, Caste, and Country of the Native Officers and Soldiers of each Regiment, Regular and Irregular, of each Presidency, confined to Regiments borne on the Returns of each Army respectively; so far as can be stated from the Returns in this House.—East India House, Sept. 1858.

### BENGAL.

**NATIVE INFANTRY, 7 Regiments, viz.:** 21st, 31st, 47th, 65th, 66th, 70th, and 73rd.

| NATIVE OFFICERS.                     |     | NON-COMMISSIONED, RANK AND FILE.     |       |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|-------|
| <i>Caste.</i>                        |     | <i>Caste.</i>                        |       |
| Mahomedans .....                     | 25  | Mahomedans .....                     | 1,170 |
| Brahmins .....                       | 52  | Brahmins .....                       | 1,878 |
| Rajpoots .....                       | 39  | Rajpoots .....                       | 2,637 |
| Hindus of inferior description ..... | 23  | Hindus of inferior description ..... | 2,057 |
|                                      | 139 | Sikhs and Punjaubees .....           | 54    |
|                                      |     |                                      | 7,796 |

**IRREGULAR AND LOCAL INFANTRY, 12 Regiments, viz.:** Regiment of Khelat-i-Ghikha, Regiment of Ferozepore, Regiment of Loodianah, Simoor Battalion, Kemson Battalion, Nusseree Battalion, Hill Rangers, Assam Light Infantry Battalion, Mhairwarrah Battalion, Sylhet Light Infantry Battalion, Arrah Battalion, and Shekhawattee Battalion.

| NATIVE OFFICERS.                     |     | NON-COMMISSIONED, RANK AND FILE.     |        |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|--------|
| <i>Caste.</i>                        |     | <i>Caste.</i>                        |        |
| Mahomedans .....                     | 38  | Mahomedans .....                     | 1,185  |
| Brahmins .....                       | 23  | Brahmins .....                       | 849    |
| Rajpoots .....                       | 59  | Rajpoots .....                       | 2,711  |
| Hindus of inferior description ..... | 43  | Hindus of inferior description ..... | 2,247  |
| Sikhs .....                          | 17  | Sikhs .....                          | 1,309  |
| Hill men .....                       | 16  | Hill men .....                       | 1,112  |
| Mughls .....                         | 6   | Mughls .....                         | 705    |
| Burmese .....                        | 1   | Burmese .....                        | 6      |
| Munniporees .....                    | 1   | Munniporees .....                    | 167    |
|                                      | 204 | Jhats .....                          | 48     |
|                                      |     |                                      | 10,339 |

## MADRAS.

## NATIVE CAVALRY, 7 Regiments.

| NATIVE OFFICERS.                               |       | NON-COMMISSIONED RANK AND FILE.                |       |
|--|-------|--|-------|
| <i>Caste.</i>                                  |       | <i>Caste.</i>                                  |       |
| Mahomedans .....                               | 68    | Christians .....                               | 33    |
| Mahrattas .....                                | 6     | Mahomedans .....                               | 1,984 |
| Rajpoots .....                                 | 3     | Rajpoots .....                                 | 90    |
| Indo-Britons .....                             | 0     | Mahrattas .....                                | 300   |
|  |       | Other castes .....                             | 8     |
|  |       | Indo-Britons .....                             | 149   |
|  | <hr/> |  | <hr/> |
|  | 77    |  | 2,499 |
|  |       |  | <hr/> |
| <i>Country.</i>                                |       | <i>Country.</i>                                |       |
| Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 64    | Hindoostan .....                               | 30    |
| Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 7     | Northern Circars .....                         | 67    |
| Mysore .....                                   | 3     | Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 1,841 |
| Tanjore, Madura, and Tinne-<br>velly .....     | 1     | Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 384   |
| Ceded districts .....                          | 9     | Baramahal .....                                | 48    |
|  |       | Ceded districts .....                          | 84    |
|  |       | Mysore .....                                   | 319   |
|  |       | Tanjore, Madura, and Tin-<br>nevelly .....     | 60    |
|  | <hr/> |  | <hr/> |
|  | 77    |  | 2,190 |

## NATIVE INFANTRY, 53 Regiments.

| NATIVE OFFICERS.                               |       | NON-COMMISSIONED RANK AND FILE.                |        |
|--|-------|--|--------|
| <i>Caste.</i>                                  |       | <i>Caste.</i>                                  |        |
| Christians .....                               | 4     | Christians .....                               | 1,933  |
| Mahomedans .....                               | 584   | Mahomedans .....                               | 16,978 |
| Brahmins and Rajpoots .....                    | 83    | Brahmins and Rajpoots .....                    | 1,922  |
| Mahrattas .....                                | 19    | Mahrattas .....                                | 985    |
| Telingas (Gentoo) .....                        | 242   | Telingas (Gentoo) .....                        | 16,371 |
| Tamil .....                                    | 97    | Tamil .....                                    | 4,576  |
| Other castes .....                             | 8     | Other castes .....                             | 1,616  |
| Indo-Britons .....                             | 0     | Indo-Britons .....                             | 1,011  |
|  | <hr/> |  | <hr/>  |
|  | 1,030 |  | 41,706 |
|  |       |  | <hr/>  |
| <i>Country.</i>                                |       | <i>Country.</i>                                |        |
| Hindoostan .....                               | 51    | Hindoostan .....                               | 1,933  |
| Northern Circars .....                         | 317   | Northern Circars .....                         | 16,938 |
| Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 239   | Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 3,841  |
| Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 177   | Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 4,760  |
| Carried forward .....                          | 784   | Carried forward .....                          | 33,477 |



|   |                        |   |                           |
|---|------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <i>Country.</i>                           | Brought forward... 784 | <i>Country.</i>                                   | Brought forward... 32,477 |
| Baramahal .....                           | 29                     | Baramahal .....                                   | 1,622                     |
| Ceded districts .....                     | 32                     | Ceded districts .....                             | 1,705                     |
| Mysore .....                              | 59                     | Mysore .....                                      | 2,698                     |
| Tanjore, Madura, and Tin-<br>nevely ..... | 119                    | Tanjore, Madura, and Tin-<br>nevely .....         | 3,617                     |
| Deccan and Mahratta .....                 | 7                      | Canara, Noulmeim, Jaul-<br>nah, and Belgaum ..... | 28                        |
|   |                        | Deccan and Mahratta .....                         | 99                        |
|   |                        | Portugal .....                                    | 1                         |
|   |                        | Other parts .....                                 | 58                        |
|   | 1,030                  |   | 41,705                    |

**BOMBAY.**

**NATIVE CAVALRY, 3 Regiments.**

|                             |    |   |       |
|-----------------------------|----|---|-------|
| <b>NATIVE OFFICERS.</b>     |    | <b>NON-COMMISSIONED, RANK AND<br/>FILE.</b> |       |
| <i>Caste.</i>               |    | <i>Caste.</i>                               |       |
| Christians .....            | 1  | Christians .....                            | 66    |
| Mahomedans .....            | 12 | Mahomedans .....                            | 459   |
| Brahmins and Rajpoots ..... | 9  | Brahmins and Rajpoots .....                 | 252   |
| Mahrattas .....             | 1  | Mahrattas .....                             | 118   |
| Telingas (Gentoo) .....     | 0  | Telingas (Gentoo) .....                     | 0     |
| Tamil .....                 | 0  | Tamil .....                                 | 0     |
| Other castes .....          | 12 | Other castes .....                          | 508   |
| Indo-Britons .....          | 1  | Indo-Britons .....                          | 22    |
|                             | 36 |   | 1,425 |

|  |    |   |       |
|--|----|---|-------|
| <i>Country.</i>                                |    | <i>Country.</i>                                 |       |
| Hindoostan .....                               | 99 | Hindoostan .....                                | 1,073 |
| Northern Circars .....                         | 1  | Northern Circars .....                          | 21    |
| Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 2  | Central, Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 30    |
| Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 0  | Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....      | 0     |
| Deccan .....                                   | 2  | Deccan .....                                    | 125   |
| Concan .....                                   | 1  | Concan .....                                    | 114   |
| Mysore .....                                   | 0  | Mysore .....                                    | 0     |
| Tanjore, Madura, and Tinne-<br>velly .....     | 0  | Tanjore, Madura, and Tin-<br>nevely .....       | 0     |
| Bombay .....                                   | 1  | Guzerat .....                                   | 14    |
|  |    | Persia .....                                    | 1     |
|  |    | Lisbon .....                                    | 4     |
|  |    | Africa .....                                    | 2     |
|  |    | Bombay .....                                    | 4     |
|  |    | Punjab and Scinde .....                         | 21    |
|  |    | Cabool and Afghanistan ...                      | 15    |
|  |    | Europe .....                                    | 1     |
|  | 36 |   | 1,425 |

NATIVE INFANTRY, 99 Regiments.

| NATIVE OFFICERS.            |            | NON-COMMISSIONED, RANK AND FILE. |               |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| <i>Caste.</i>               |            | <i>Caste.</i>                    |               |
| Christians .....            | 5          | Christians .....                 | 270           |
| Mahomedans .....            | 111        | Mahomedans .....                 | 2,043         |
| Brahmins and Rajpoots ..... | 188        | Brahmins and Rajpoots...         | 5,621         |
| Mahrattas .....             | 116        | Mahrattas .....                  | 7,550         |
| Telingas (Gentoo) .....     | 6          | Telingas (Gentoo) .....          | 100           |
| Tamil .....                 | 1          | Tamil .....                      | 55            |
| Jews .....                  | 3          | Jews .....                       | 13            |
| Other castes .....          | 130        | Other castes .....               | 7,724         |
| Indo-Britons .....          | 0          | Indo-Britons .....               | 29            |
| Purwarrees .....            | 3          | Purwarrees .....                 | 170           |
|                             |            | Mochees .....                    | 20            |
|                             |            | Sikhs .....                      | 24            |
|                             | <b>563</b> |                                  | <b>94,670</b> |

| <i>Country.</i>                                |            | <i>Country.</i>                                |               |
|--|------------|--|---------------|
| Hindoostan .....                               | 263        | Hindoostan .....                               | 11,080        |
| Northern Circars .....                         | 7          | Northern Circars .....                         | 200           |
| Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 37         | Central Carnatic, Madras,<br>Vellore, &c. .... | 412           |
| Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 13         | Southern Carnatic, Trichi-<br>nopoly .....     | 500           |
| Deccan .....                                   | 57         | Deccan .....                                   | 1,800         |
| Coconad .....                                  | 173        | Coconad .....                                  | 10,500        |
| Mysore .....                                   | 4          | Mysore .....                                   | 30            |
| Tanjore, Malabar, and Thane-<br>velly .....    | 0          | Tanjore, Malabar, and Thane-<br>velly .....    | 38            |
| Guzerat .....                                  | 4          | Mysore and Rajput .....                        | 89            |
|  |            | Guzerat .....                                  | 20            |
|  |            | Banda, Puarah, and Tan-<br>jore .....          | 155           |
|  |            | Europe .....                                   | 1             |
|  | <b>563</b> |  | <b>94,670</b> |

**GENERAL RETURN showing the Races and Castes of which the Native Army was composed on April 1, 1858.**

| CORPS.                         | European Commissioned Officers.     |   | Native Commissioned & Non-Commissioned Officers, and Rank & File. | NUMBERS of each RACE and CASTE. |            |           |           |                                  |         |            |              |             |  |                          |                |          |           |           |         | Total. |           |        |  |        |        |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------|---------|------------|--------------|-------------|--|--------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|--------|--|--------|--------|
|                                | European Non-Commissioned Officers. | Native Commissioned & Non-Commissioned Officers, and Rank & File. |   | Christians.                     | Muslimans. | Brahmins. | Rajpoots. | Hindoo of inferior descriptions. | Sethis. | Punjabees. | Hindostanee. | Chandabads. | Princ-Bahadys.   | Hill Residents of Nepal. | Hussar Tribes. | Afghans. | Goorkhas. | Hill Men. | Misirs. |        | Misnairs. | Boohs. | Keerach, Gonds, and other castes and other predatory tribes. |        |        |
| Artillery .....                | 6                                   | 4   | 2,241   | ..                              | 552        | 77        | 88        | 445                              | ..      | ..         | ..           | ..          | ..   | ..                       | ..             | ..       | ..        | ..        | ..      | ..     | ..        | ..     | ..   | 1,162  |        |
| Light Cavalry .....            | 26                                  | 3   | 1,259   | 25                              | 624        | 344       | 231       | 35                               | ..      | ..         | ..           | ..          | ..   | ..                       | ..             | ..       | ..        | ..        | ..      | ..     | ..        | ..     | ..   | 1,259  |        |
| Infantry, Regular .....        | 242                                 | 47  | 21,922  | 486                             | 3,690      | 6,206     | 6,404     | 4,326                            | 135     | 193        | ..           | ..          | ..   | ..                       | ..             | ..       | 590       | ..        | ..      | ..     | ..        | ..     | ..   | 21,922 |        |
| Infantry, Irregular .....      | 240                                 | 22  | 42,715  | 20                              | 1,853      | 1,532     | 2,911     | 3,821                            | 3,504   | 15,286     | 896          | 2,270       | 2,867  | 358                      | 23             | 22       | 271       | 3,677     | 566     | 915    | 803       | 223    | ..   | 41,828 |        |
| Cavalry, Irregular .....       | 94                                  | ..  | 10,703  | 41                              | 3,831      | 350       | 549       | 181                              | 833     | 2,461      | 1,219        | 167         | 467  | 19                       | ..             | 106      | 29        | 2         | ..      | ..     | ..        | ..     | ..   | ..     | 10,194 |
| Artillery, Irregular .....     | 10                                  | 6   | 998   | ..                              | ..         | ..        | ..        | ..                               | ..      | 495        | 38           | 15          | 5  | ..                       | ..             | ..       | ..        | ..        | ..      | ..     | ..        | ..     | ..   | ..     | 553    |
| Secondy Sappers & Miners ..... | 1                                   | 2   | 209   | ..                              | 2          | 18        | 179       | 10                               | ..      | ..         | ..           | ..          | ..   | ..                       | ..             | ..       | ..        | ..        | ..      | ..     | ..        | ..     | ..   | ..     | 209    |
| Total .....                    | 625                                 | 91  | 80,053  | 572                             | 10,452     | 9,526     | 10,362    | 8,818                            | 4,472   | 18,374     | 2,153        | 2,452       | 3,339  | 377                      | 23             | 137      | 890       | 3,670     | 566     | 915    | 803       | 223    | ..   | 77,133 |        |
|                                |                                     |   |   |                                 |            |           |           |                                  |         |            |              |             | N.B.—Aggregate of Corps the Races of which are not shown in this Return..... |                          |                |          |           |           |         |        |           |        | 2,920  |        |        |
|                                |                                     |   |   |                                 |            |           |           |                                  |         |            |              |             | Grand Total.....   |                          |                |          |           |           |         |        |           |        | 80,053   |        |        |

Adjutant-General's Office, Head-Quarters,  
Allahabad, August 13, 1858.

(Signed)

W. MANNING, Lieut.-Col.,  
Adjutant-General of the Army.



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