

## 11th History Lesson 12 Notes in English

### 12. Effects of British Rule

#### Introduction

- The general breakdown of the central authority, in **the wake of Mughal's fall**, resulted in a **English trading company** taking over India. Initially, the English East India Company's focus was not on administration.
- Its aim was ensuring **smooth trade**. However, after **the terrible Bengal famine of 1770**, they began to exercise power with some responsibility.
- Not with standing their exploitative economic policy, their professed objective was the safety of the people they governed and administration of justice.
- The justification for their **expansionist policy** was the **extermination of tyranny** of the **local rulers** and the harassment by robbers and marauders in the country.
- **Railways and telegraph**, introduced for easier **communication**, also served the purpose of curbing resistance and the control of the local population.
- However, their **agrarian and commercial policies** had a ruinous impact on the economy.
- India's **wealth was drained** in several forms.
- By the **1830s** there was **large scale emigration** of ruined peasants and weavers to plantations in the British Empire countries.

#### Establishment of British Raj

- **Buxar** was the real foundation **battle** for British dominion in India.
- Not only **the Nawab of Bengal and Oudh**, but the Mughal emperor **ShahAlam II** and his prime minister were also **opposed** to the **British**.
- As a result of the Battle of Buxar, **the Company** ceased to be a company of merchants and became a **formidable political force**.
- Under the pretext of corruption in **Bengal** administration **Clive** was appointed **Governor of Fort William**.



Robert Clive

- Clive did not like his predecessor Vansittart's decision **restoring Oudh** to Shah Alam. So he called for fresh negotiation with **Shuja-ud-daulah**.
- As a result of this, two treaties of Allahabad were signed. The emperor granted the **Diwani** (revenue administration) of **Bengal, Bihar and Orissa** to the Company.
- The emperor **Shah Alam II** was to get the districts of **Allahabad and Kora**, besides an annual allowance of **26 lakhs of rupees** from the **revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa**.
- The province of **Oudh was restored to Shuja-ud-daula** on the payment of war indemnity.
- **The treaties** held the Nawab of Bengal responsible for the governance of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.
- Before the emperor granted the Diwani to Clive, the Nawab of Bengal, successor of **Mir Jafar**, had practically transferred **the Nizamat** (civil administration) to the Company.

### The formation of Dyarchy system

- So the Company had to function as **Diwan and the Nizam**. The **Diwan's duty** included the **collection of revenue** and the control of civil justice.
- The **Nizam's function** was to exercise **military power** and to dispense criminal justice. Thus the Company acquired the real power, while the responsibility of administration was with the Nawab.
- This arrangement is called **Dual System** or Double government or **Dyarchy**. But soon the dual system began to **break down**.
- Governance without responsibility led to the outbreak of a terrible **famine in 1770**. Nearly one third of **Bengal's population perished**.
- The miseries of the province were intensified by the Company servants who had monopolized the sale of rice and realized huge profits.
- Finally, the Company realized its responsibility and passed **the Regulating Act of 1773**. **Warren Hastings** was appointed **the Governor General of Bengal**.



Warren Hastings

### Land Tenures: Permanent Settlement and Ryotwari Settlement

- **The Regulating Act of 1773** imposed on the court of Directors the legal obligation of informing all revenue transactions of the Company servants to the British Treasury.
- The Governor and Council consisting of **the Commander-in-Chief** and two **counsellors** sat as a **Board of Revenue** which discussed revenue matters.
- **The Pitt India Act of 1784** separated the civil and military establishments in India. **Governor-General Cornwallis**, himself a big landlord, wanted to create landlords after the British model in India.
- Cornwallis came to a settlement with the revenue farmers. This resulted in the creation of a new type of middlemen, called **zamindars**, reducing the cultivators to the position of mere tenants.
- This settlement that Cornwallis made with the **zamindars of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa** in **1793**, in pursuance of the instruction from the Directors, is called the Permanent Settlement.
- **'Settlement'** refers to the assessment and fixing of the quantum of **land revenue** to be **paid** by each **zamindar to the government**.
- For Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, this was fixed permanently. Thus the **zamindars** who were originally **tax collectors** acquired hereditary rights over the land assigned by the government.



Cornwallis

- **The zamindars pocketed** whatever they collected over and above the settlement. **The first quarter of the nineteenth century** was a formative period in **the land revenue history of the Madras Province**.
- First after a great deal of deliberations **Permanent Settlement** was adopted.
- The districts of **Chengalpattu, Salem and Dindigul** were divided into a number of **mittahs** and **sold to the highest bidders**.
- Most of the purchasers, after fleecing the peasants, failed in the course of a year or two. The experiment was therefore abandoned.
- Then the Board of Revenue tried **a system of village leases**.
- Under the Village Lease system the assessment of each village was to be fixed for a **period of three years** based on the actual **collections** over a **series of past years**.
- In districts where **mirasi** rights existed, the **mirasdar** was made responsible for the rent collections.

### The Ryotwari system was introduced

- In districts where the mirasi rights did not exist, an arrangement was made with the **village headman**.
- This **system failed** due to various reasons such as **bad monsoons**, low price of grains and the short period of lease.
- When crops failed entire villages defaulted and fled without paying the revenue. **The government** had to **seek the help** of the **district collectors** to bring back the peasants to the village.
- By **1814 the Court of Directors** had decided to introduce **the ryotwari system**. This was a system formulated by **Governor Thomas Munro**.
- Under this system the ryot an Anglicization by the British in India of the **Arabic word ra'iyah**, meaning a peasant or cultivator, was the proprietor and tax payer of the land.
- The **government dealt** with him **directly** without the intervention of any middlemen. **The peasant was entitled to possession of land** so long as he paid the land revenue.
- Apart from eviction, default could result in attachment of livestock, household property and personal belongings.
- The government **assessed the revenue** of each cultivated field.
- The revenue assessment was reviewed **once in thirty years**, taking into account the changes in grain prices, marketing opportunities, irrigation facilities and the like.
- The ryotwari system introduced **the concept of private property in land**. The individual holders were registered and issued **pattas**.
- They were **permitted to sell, lease, mortgage** or transfer the right over land.

### Subsidiary Alliance and Doctrine of Lapse

- **Governor General Wellesley (1798-1805)** pursued a forward policy to establish British supremacy in India.
- His **annexation of territories** was not a result of **victory in war**. It was by assumption of the **entire administration of an Indian State**, with its rulers retaining his title and receiving a **fixed allowance**.



Wellesley

- Before **Wellesley, the Company** concluded **alliances** with **Indian princes**. **The Nizam and the Nawab of Oudh** received subsidies for the maintenance of British contingents.
- Such forces were generally stationed outside the State concerned. **Payment** was made in **cash**.
- **Difficulties** arose when **the payments** were not promptly paid.
- **Wellesley** broadened the scope of this arrangement by his **Subsidiary Alliance System**, bringing under it **Hyderabad, Mysore, Lucknow, the Maratha Peshwa, the Bhonsle (Kolhapur) and Sindhia (Gwalior)**.
- The provisions of **the Subsidiary Treaty** are:
  - (a) **An Indian ruler** entering into **Subsidiary Alliance with the British** had to dissolve his own armed forces and accept British forces and a British Resident in his territory.
  - (b) He had to **pay** for the **British army's maintenance**. **If he failed**, a portion of his **territory** would be taken away and **ceded to the British**.
  - (c) The protected **prince** was to **sever** all connections with **European powers** other than **the British**, especially **the French**.
  - (d) No European should be **employed** without the **permission of the British**.
  - (e) **No negotiation** with any **Indian power** should be held without the Company's permission and
  - (f) **No other Indian power** to **interfere** in its **internal affairs**.
- Thus the states brought under the system became dependent on the Company in political and military matters, sacrificing their own sovereignty and status.
- The Subsidiary System **increased the military resources and efficiency of the Company government**.
- The immediate result of this system was the **discharge** of thousands of professional **soldiers** by the political powers.
- **The disbanded soldiers** indulged in freebooting activities.
- **Pindaris** (marauders) began to **swell** on account of the Subsidiary System.
- In view of the **guaranteed support** to the **Princes** by the **Company**, the protective States mal-administered and paved the way for the annexation.

### Doctrine of Lapse

- Traditionally **Hindu custom** allowed the **adoption of a son** in the absence of male heirs. The adopted son had the right to **inherit property**.

- In this context the question raised was whether such an adopted prince holding the state subordinate to **the Paramount Power** (England) could succeed without the consent of the latter.
- Before Dalhousie's arrival, the custom was to obtain **the sanction of the Company government** before or after adoption.



Dalhousie

- **Governor General Dalhousie** held that the paramount power could **legally refuse to sanction adoption** in the case of rulers of States dependent on it.
- This meant that dependent States could be regarded as lapsed to the paramount power, by its refusal to sanction the succession of adopted sons.
- By applying this **policy known as Doctrine of Lapse**, the **first state to fall was Satara**.
- **Shahji of Satara died (1848)** and the **son he adopted** on the eve of his death was not **recognized by Dalhousie**.
- **Gangadhar Rao, Raja of Jhansi died in November 1853** and **Dalhousie annexed that state immediately**.
- (His widow, **Rani Lakshmi Bai**, played a prominent role in **the Great Rebellion of 1857**.) **Raghuji Bhonsle III died in 1853** without a child.
- **Nagpur** was immediately **annexed**. In 1851, the last **Peshwa died**. He had been a pensioner of the Company for thirty-three years, but Dalhousie **refused** to continue **paying the pension** to his son, **the Nana Sahib**.
- The Doctrine of Lapse, thus, served as an instrument for the pursuit of its annexation policy.
- When **the Crown** took over **India in 1858** Doctrine of Lapse was withdrawn.

### Native States and British Paramountcy

- In the aftermath of the **Battle of Plassey (Palashi) (1757)**, when the Company embarked on its career of expansion, it established **the system of dual government**.
- Under this system, everything was sought to be done by **the Company's servants** in the **name of some powerless** and dependent **prince**.
- In theory **the Company** was only **the diwan** (the collector of revenue), but in practice it exercised full authority.

- This authority was asserted by the refusal to continue the payment of annual tribute to **the Mughal emperor Shah Alam promised by Clive**.
- **Cornwallis even stopped affirming** obedience in letters to **the emperor**. **Wellesley** carried matters further with his objective of establishing British predominance through his **Subsidiary Alliance System**.
- Wellesley made **subsidiary alliances** with the three of the major States of India: **Hyderabad, Poona and Mysore**.
- **Hastings (Moir)** who became **Governor General in 1813** ordered the removal of the phrase denoting the imperial supremacy from his seal.
- He **refused** to meet **Emperor Akbar II**, unless he waived all authority over the Company's possessions.
- But **Hastings laid down a policy** that the **Company** was in **no way responsible** for the **administration of the Indian States**.

#### The Company's territories were increased

- Thus, under the **Subsidiary System**, each **Prince** was **secure** on his **throne**, not withstanding the discontent of his people or by his jealous neighbours.
- In regions such as **Kathiawar and Central India**, **divided** among a great number of **petty chiefs**, the **Company's** close **supervision** became indispensable for prompt action.
- **The Company army helped the Indian rulers** under the Subsidiary system to quell any rebellion or disturbance within the State.
- In **Hyderabad**, the authority of **the Nizam** did **not prevail** in certain areas, as the **Arab troops lived without any control**.
- The assistance of **British** troops helped **reduce the Arabs** to obedience.
- In **Mysore** state the financial management of **the raja** provoked a **rebellion in 1830** and the **treaty of Wellesley** only provided authority for **the Company to interfere**.
- **William Bentinck**, as Governor General, **relieved the raja** of all his powers and **appointed Mark Cubbon** to administer **Mysore**.
- In **Gwalior**, during a minority, the parties at the **darbar quarrelled bitterly** among **themselves**. The army of the State passed **out of control**.
- **Ellenborough** moved with a strong army, but the **State army resisted**.
- At the **battle of Maharajpur**, the **State army was defeated** and new terms of conditions including the limitation of the military forces maintained by it were **imposed in 1843**.
- **Dalhousie's** new method of annexing territories, **Doctrine of Lapse**, as we have seen, **increased the territories under British domain**.
- Every accession of territory also increased the influence of **the Company over the governments of the Indian princes**.

#### Reforms in Civil and Judicial Administration

- **Cornwallis** organized company administration securing the services of **William Jones**, a judge and an Orientalist.
- He set up a **machinery** for the detection and punishment of crime, thereby **ending the dual system of government** established by Clive.
- **The collection of revenue** was **separated** from administration and justice.
- He deprived **the collectors of their judicial function** and confined them to revenue collection.
- **Civil and criminal courts** were thoroughly **reorganized**.
- At the top of the judicial system were **the Sadar Diwani Adalat** and **the Sadar Nizamat Adalat**.
- These **two highest civil and criminal courts** of appeal at **Calcutta** were presided over by **the Governor General and his Council**.
- Under them were four **provincial courts** of appeal at **Calcutta, Deccan, Murshidabad and Patna**.
- Each was to function under **three European judges**, aided by **Indian advisers**.
- Next came the **District and City courts**, each presided over by a **European judge assisted by Indians**.
- Every **district and important city** was provided with a **court**.
- At the bottom of the judicial system were courts under **Indian judges**, called **munsifs**.
- In civil cases, **Muslim law** was **imposed** and followed. In criminal cases, **Hindu** and Muslim laws were applied according to **the religion of the litigants**.

### The Civil Services on Merit

- The biggest contribution of Cornwallis was **the reform of the civil services**.
- **Cornwallis** provided scope for **employing capable and honest public servants**.
- He put an **end to the old tradition** of the civil service wherein the Company's servants were given a small salary but were permitted to trade.
- Cornwallis **appointed** people solely on **merit** but considered that efficiency required the exclusion of Indians from **the Company's service**.
- Every **district** was divided **into thanas** (police circles). Each **thana** was under a **daroga, an Indian officer**.
- **Cornwallis' police system** was further improved under **Warren Hastings**. The rigid separation of **judicial and revenue powers** was given up.
- **The Collector** began to function as **Magistrate** as well.
- Cornwallis, who toned up the civil and criminal administration, however, **did not pay adequate attention to the education of Company servants**.

### Colleges were built for educating Company's servants

- It was **Wellesley** who emphasized the need for **educating and training** them.
- Wellesley thought **the civilians should have a knowledge** of the languages, laws, customs and manners and history of India, in addition to their liberal education in England.

- With this object, **the College of Fort William** was founded at **Calcutta in 1800**. A **three year course of study** was provided for the Company's civil servants.
- The college was staffed by **European professors** and **eighty Indian pundits**.
- This became the **Oriental School for Bengal civilians**. In **1806 the East India College** was established in **England**.
- In **Madras, the College of Fort St George** was set up by **F.W. Ellis in 1812** on the lines of **College of Fort William**.
- It was here that the theory that **the South Indian languages** belonged to a separate family of **languages independent of Sanskrit** was formulated.

## Education and Development under Company Rule

### Education

- The establishment of a **Madrasa** by a **learned maulvi** with the **support of Warren Hastings** was the beginning of initiatives of **British government to promote education**.
- This Madrasa started with **forty stipendiary students**. What **Warren Hastings** had **done for the Muslims**, his **successor** was prepared to **do for the Hindus**.
- **Cornwallis** established a **Sanskrit college (1791) in Benares**. The successive governors in the next twenty years, however, did nothing to follow it up.
- **The Company** held the view that it was **not desirable** in its own interests to **encourage education in India**.
- In **1813, when the Company Charter** was **renewed**, it contained a clause intended to force on the Company the initiative for a regular educational policy.
- **Hastings** encouraged the foundation of **vernacular schools by missionaries**.
- He was **the patron of the Hindu College**, established at **Calcutta in 1817**, supported by **the Indian public** for the teaching of **English and of Western science**.

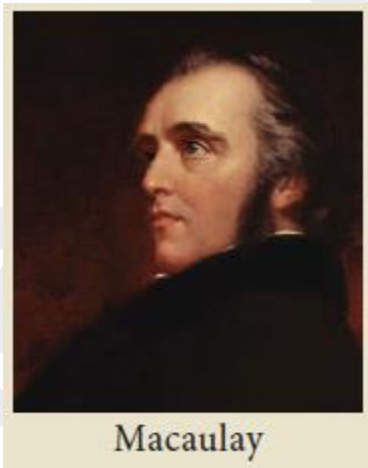
### Many Colleges and Schools were established

- The cause of **education** was further **promoted** by missionaries like **Alexander Duff**.
- Thanks to Hastings' liberal outlook, **press censorship instituted in 1799** was **abolished**.
- It was in such an atmosphere that **the Bengali Weekly, the Samachar Darpan** was started in **1818**.
- **The Charter of 1833** emphasized the development of the country primarily in the interest of its inhabitants.
- **William Bentinck**, appointed **the first Governor General** of united India reformed the society by **suppressing thuggee** (robbery and murder committed by the thugs in accordance with their ritual), **abolishing sati** and **introducing English** as the **medium** of instruction in schools and colleges.
- This he thought would facilitate **Indianization of the services**. **Bentinck** founded the **Calcutta Medical College in March 1835**.

- The **students** of this college were **sent to London in 1844** to **complete** their **studies**.
- Ten years after the establishment of the **Calcutta Medical College**, the **Grant Medical College in Bombay** was founded in **1845**.
- In **1847** the **Thomason Engineering College at Roorkee** (now IIT Roorkee) came into existence. In **1849** a school for girls was founded in **Calcutta**.

### Macaulay the President of the Board of Education

- **Macaulay** came to **India** as a **law member** in **1835**.
- He was appointed **President of the Board of Education**. He had a poor opinion of indigenous learning.
- **Macaulay** recommended and government **accepted** to make **English** the **literary** and **official language** of **India**.
- **Dalhousie** showed keen **interest in education**. He approved of the **system of vernacular education** designed by **James Thomason**, Lieutenant Governor of the **North-Western Provinces (1843- 53)**.



Macaulay

- The Educational Dispatch of **Charles Wood (1854)** outlined a **comprehensive scheme of education-primary, secondary, collegiate**.
- **Departments of Public Instruction** and a **university** for each of the **three Presidencies** were organized for the purpose.
- **University of Madras** was established under this **plan (1857)**, along with **universities** in **Bombay and Calcutta**.
- **Dalhousie** **modified the policy of Macaulay** by encouraging educational institutions in vernaculars too.
- He also agreed to the **principle of grants-in-aid** to **private effort, irrespective of caste or creed**.

### Efforts at Safety and Developmental Measures

#### Pindari War

- **Pindaris** were **freebooters** composed of both **Muslim and Hindu bands**.
- The **Subsidiary Alliance** of the Company had led to the **disbandment** of thousands of **soldiers** and most of them **joined** them and **swelled** their numbers in **central India**.
- The **British** proclaimed **Pindari War**.



The villagers burning themselves to avoid Pindaris



William Bentinck

- But it **turned out** to be a **war against Marathas** and the outcome of this prolonged war (1811 to 1818) was that **the whole of Central India** came under **British rule**.

### Suppression of Thuggee

- The **Thugs** were **robbers** operating between **Delhi and Agra** from the **fourteenth century**.
- They were **bound together** by oaths and ritual and **murdered unsuspecting travellers** in the name of the goddess **Kali**.
- **Bentinck** placed **William Sleeman** in charge of the operation to **eliminate** the **Thuggee menace**.
- Between **1831 and 1837** more than **three thousand Thugs** were **convicted**.
- **Five hundred** became **approvers**. By **1860** the problem of **thuggee** had **ceased to exist**.



Thuggees

### Abolition of Sati

- **Bentinck** showed great **courage and humanity** by his decision to **abolish sati**, the practice of burning widows alive with the corpses of their husbands.
- Previous governors-general were reluctant to prohibit the custom as an interference in religion but **Bentinck enacted a law (Sati Abolition Act, 1829)** to put an **end** to this practice.
- **Raja Rammohan Roy's** campaigns and efforts played a decisive part in getting this **inhuman practice abolished**.

### Railways, Postal & Telegraph Systems

- The first serious proposal for **constructing railways** was made by the **European business community**.
- **The Directors** were **doubtful** whether railways could be successfully built in India.
- **Governor General Dalhousie** however persuaded them arguing that **the railways** would **bring** very considerable **economic advantage**.
- Yet before the Great Rebellion **less than three hundred miles of track had been laid**.
- Though several proposals for the laying of **telegraph communication** between **India** and **London** were put forward, the telegraph service was **inaugurated** only in **1854**.
- During **the Great Rebellion of 1857** its **importance** was **realised**.
- In the **aftermath of 1857**, it became an urgent necessity. The time of **communication** between **London and Calcutta** came down from several days to twenty eight minutes.
- With the opening of **Suez Canal in 1869**, the journey between **Europe and India** was **reduced** by some **4000 miles**.
- By **1870** the **government of British India** was in effective contact with **Secretary of State, India Office, London**.
- Subsequently, with the exception of **Curzon**, Governor Generals were reluctant to do anything without seeking the permission of **Whitehall, the headquarters of the East India Company**.

### Irrigation

- **The British neglected irrigation**. The irrigation **channels and tanks** built by **Indian rulers** fell **into disuse** and there was little effort on the part of **the Company** to undertake **repairs or renovation works**.
- In **Madras**, as we will see in the following section, a few irrigation works were carried out because of the personal enthusiasm of **Arthur Cotton**, an Engineering officer.
- Against much opposition, **Cotton** built a **dam** across **the Kollidam (Coleroon)** in **1836**.



Arthur Cotton

- In 1853, a **dam** across the **Krishna river** had also begun. In the north, before the takeover of India by the Crown, **Jumna canal** was completed in 1830 and by 1857 the **Ganges canal** had been extended to nearly 450 miles.
- In the **Punjab** area the **Bari Doab canal** had been excavated by 1856. But the canal water contributed to soil salinity and water logging causing great ecological distress.

### Forests

- **Land revenue** was the mainstay of the **British Indian government's** fiscal system. Therefore, in their **effort to extend the areas** of cultivable land, **forests were destroyed**.
- **Zamins** were created out of **Jungle Mahal forests** and auctioned off for regular cultivation.
- The original inhabitants of this region, the **Santhals** were evicted. Therefore it was the Santhals who were **the first tribal group to resist the British rule in India**.
- **Slope cultivation** was encouraged in the hilly and mountainous tracts. **Land was provided to European enterprises** at a throwaway price for slope cultivation.
- Further, in their **enthusiasm to try plantation crops**, zamindars and Indian rulers **destroyed the forests**. **Coffee**, for instance, did not grow in many places.
- Yet in the process of attempting **coffee cultivation** large tracts of **virgin forests were destroyed**.

### The forests were destroyed

- **Timber** came to be **exploited** with the massive construction of the **railway system**. In the 1870s, it was calculated that **every year one million sleepers** were needed to **build railway tracks**.
- Indian trees, particularly **sal, deodar, and teak**, were preferred for their **strength over other Indian timbers**.
- These three species were intensively exploited. Much **sal** was **extracted** from the forests of the **Jungle Mahals of West Bengal and Bihar**.
- **Timber** went to **England** too for the **building of railways**.
- The myth that India's forests were inexhaustible was exploded.

- It was in this background that the colonial state, in order to manage and control forest resources, started the **Forest Department** and passed the **Indian Forest Act, 1865**.
- This was a **draconian act** which **restricted the use of forest resources** by indigenous groups who resented it.
- In order to contain protest and resistance **the British enacted the dreaded Criminal Tribes Act, 1871**.
- During the entire colonial period there were frequent **insurrections by tribal people against the colonial state**.
- **The legacy of the colonial forest acts** continues to haunt contemporary times as well.

### Deindustrialization and Drain of Wealth

- **Europe** had always **imported** more from **the East** than was **exported** here.
- There was little that the East required from the West in return for **the spices, silks, calicos, jewels** and the like it sent there.
- **The industrial revolution in textile production** that took place in **England** reversed this relationship for the first time.
- **India** was **systematically deindustrialized**. Rather than being **the world's leading exporter of cloth and textiles**, **India** became a market for **Lancashire cottons**.
- **Cheap machine-made British goods** led to the **flooding** of Indian markets.
- **Indian cotton** piece goods began to **lose ground** gradually given that **machine-made** goods were **more durable and cost less**.
- The Company government, in the first three decades, followed a policy of allowing **unrestricted flow of imports of British goods** into India.
- Without any import duty **English goods** were much **cheaper than domestic products**.

### Indian manufactures were affected and pushed to pressure

- At the same time, **Indian manufactures** were **shut out from the British market** by high protective duties.
- This policy **ruined** the Indian weavers and traders.
- Large numbers of **weavers** were **thrown out of employment** and forced to **seek livelihood in agriculture**, which **increased the pressure** on the already **overcrowded land**.
- **Contrasting Muslim rule** with British governance **William Bentinck** himself acknowledged **the benevolent nature of the former**.
- 'In many respects', **Bentinck** wrote, '**the Muhammedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; they intermarried with the natives; they admitted them to all privileges, the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identical**.'
- Our policy on the contrary, has been the reverse of this – **cold, selfish and unfeeling.**'

- **Military and civil administrative** costs in British India consumed an average of **eighty per cent of the budget**, leaving twenty per cent to be divided among the various departments concerned.

### Forcible collections of land revenue was abolished

- **Agriculture** was left to its **deteriorating condition**. **Irrigation** was **neglected**. **Arthur Cotton** wanted the colonial state to give priority to irrigation rather than building railway network, but his **suggestion** was **turned down** by **the imperial government in England**.
- **Outbreak of successive famines** in the last quarter of the nineteenth century ultimately **prompted the government** under British Crown to initiate some steps for **the building of dams**.
- **The Ryotwari system** intended to create a large body of **independent peasants**, who would be **protected** from the **"corrupt and faithless zamindar,"** however, in reality achieved the contrary result of strengthening the position of the big landlords.
- **The government showed little interest** in protecting the interests of tenants in **ryotwari areas**.
- Since **land** was the **main source of revenue**, its **rigorous collection** became an **imperative policy of the British**.
- **The Torture Commission**, appointed by the Company government in Madras in its report presented in **1855** exposed the atrocities perpetrated by the Indian revenue and police officials in the process of **collecting land tax** from **the cultivators**.
- **The Torture Act** which justified forcible collections of **land revenue was abolished** only after **1858**.

### Famines and Indentured labour

- **Famine**, though no stranger to India, **increased** in frequency and deadliness with the **advent of British colonial rule**.
- Between **1800 and 1825**, there were only **four famines**. But in the **last quarter** of the **century** there were **22 famines**. It is estimated that over **five million** died.
- By **1901**, **Romesh Chunder Dutt**, a **former ICS officer** and a staunch nationalist, **enumerated 10 mass famines** since the **1860s**, putting the total **death toll at 15 million**.
- **The laissez faire** (non-intervention) principles to which the **colonial state was committed since 1833** was applied to famines also.
- For years, **western-educated Indians** had argued that British rule was grossly impoverishing India.



Famine in Madras



Famine in Orissa



Indentured labourers

- **The Orissa famine**, in which one third of the population died of starvation and disease, served as a **patent proof of this thesis**.
- It prompted nationalist **Dadabhai Naoroji**, to begin his lifelong investigations into Indian poverty.
- **Madras Famine of 1876-78**: The **failure of two successive monsoons** caused a severe famine in the Madras Presidency during 1876-78.
- **The viceroy Lytton adopted** an hands-off approach similar to that followed in **Orissa 3.5 million people died in the presidency**.

### The slavery established in India

- **The introduction of plantation crops and slope cultivation in Ceylon, Mauritius, Fiji, Malaya, the Caribbean islands, Natal and South Africa** required enormous labour.
- Initially **slave labour** was used for this purpose. But after **the Company government abolished slavery in India (1843)**, the system of indentured was used.
- Under this system, **labourers** were hired on **contract for a period of five years** (indenture) and they could return to their homeland with passage paid at the end.
- Many impoverished peasants and weavers went hoping to earn some money. But in effect it was worse than slave labour.
- **The colonial state allowed agents (kanganis) to trick or kidnap indigent landless labourers. 150 indenture labourers** "the innocent victims of a new system of slavery" were first taken from **Thanjavur in 1828 to the new British coffee plantations in Ceylon**.
- All of them **deserted**. Therefore, recruitment coupled with **criminal laws prohibiting desertion started in the 1830s**. People courted this new form of slavery to escape starvation deaths.
- In 1815, **the Governor of Madras** received a communication from **the Governor of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)** asking for **coolies** to work on the coffee plantations.
- **The Madras Governor** forwarded this **letter to the collector of Thanjavur**, who after enquiry reported back saying that the people were very much attached to the soil and hence unless some incentive was provided it was not easy to make them move out of their native soil.
- But **the outbreak of two famines (1833 and 1843) forced the people**, without any prompting from the government, to **leave for Ceylon** to work as **coolies** in coffee and tea plantations under **indentured labour system**.

- During 1843-1868, nearly 1.5 million people (1,444,407) had gone from Madras to Ceylon as indentured labourers.

### Drain of Wealth

- **Dadabhai Naoroji** in his *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* explained how the **English rulers** were **different from the earlier invaders**.
- He said, in the case of **former foreign invaders**, they **plundered** and **went back**. They made, no doubt, great wounds, but India, with her industry, revived and healed the wounds.
- When **the invaders became rulers** of the country they **settled down** in it; whatever was the condition of their rule, there was at least **no material or moral drain in the country**.
- But with **the English** the case was different. There are the great wounds of the first wars in the burden of the public debt and those wounds are kept perpetually open and **widening by draining away the lifeblood in a continuous stream**.
- The former rulers were like butchers hacking here and there, but the English with their scientific scalpel cut to the very heart, and yet, there is no wound to be seen, and soon the plaster of the high talk of civilization, progress and what not covers up the wound.



Dadabhai Naoroji

- **Naoroji argued** that a great deal of **wealth was drained** to **England** in the form of **Home Charges**.
- The following constituted the Home Charges:
  1. **Incentive** to the **shareholders** of the Company
  2. **Savings and the salaries of European officials**, European traders and Planters remitted to England.
  3. **Pensions** to those who **retired** from **civil** and **military services**.
  4. The salaries of the staff and the Secretary to Home Government, India Office at London Expenses on wars fought in India and interests for **the loans** obtained from **the banks** for **the conduct of wars** and for **the building of railroads**.

### The India's wealth was plundered

- **India's loan** to England was **130 million pounds in 1837**. It increased to **220 million pounds**, of this **18 percent** was for conducting wars waged against **Afghanistan and Burma**.
- A government report of **1908** informed that on **account of railways, India had incurred a debt of 177.5 million pounds**.
- In order to give outlet to the saturated capital the British secured the capital from private enterprise in England.
- In the form of guaranteed **interest of 5 percent**, the Colonial state promised to **repay the interest in sterling**.
- There was a **loss of 220 million pounds to India** on this score.
- Calling this as drain of wealth Dadabhai Naoroji lamented that had the money drained to England remained in the pockets of Indians, India would have economically progressed.
- Even **Gazni Mahmud's pillage stopped after eighteen times** but the **British** plunder seemed to be **unending**, he quipped.
- **R.C. Dutt** estimated that during the last decade of the reign of **Queen Victoria (1891-1901)**, of the total **income 647 pounds, 159 million pounds** drained to England.
- This worked to **44 percent of the total income** of the country.

#### More To Know:

1. The administrative **head** of East India Company was **Governor** (of Fort William or of Fort St. George) until **1772**. **Warren Hastings** who was **Governor of Fort William** was made **Governor-General of Bengal** according to the **Regulating Act of 1773**. The **Charter Act 1833** designated this post as Governor-General of India and **William Bentinck** was appointed the **first Governor-General of united British India**. The Governor-General was selected by the **Court of Directors** of the East India Company, to whom he was responsible. After the **great rebellion of 1857**, when the government of India was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown, the title "**Viceroy and Governor-General**" was first used in the **queen's proclamation of 1858**. **Canning** was the **first Viceroy and Governor-General of India** accountable to the British Parliament.

#### 2. Mahalwari

- **Mahalwari** was introduced in **1833** during the period of **William Bentinck**.
- Under the system the revenue settlement was made with the proprietor of the estate but the **land revenue** was **collected from individual cultivators**

#### 3. Thomas Munro:

- Munro arrived **Madras** in **1780**. In the **first 12 years** he was **engaged in Mysore War** as **soldier**.
- He worked in the **Baramahal** (Salem district) from **1792-1799** and **Kanara** from **1799-1800**.
- He was **collector of Ceded Districts: Kadapa, Kurnool, Chittoor, Anantapur**. It was during this period that he **conceived** the idea of **Ryotwari Settlement**.

- In 1820 he became **Governor of Madras Presidency** and served for **seven years**. In 1822 he officially enforced **the Ryotwari System in Madras**.
  - During his governorship, he gave **attention to education** and regarded any expenditure on it as an investment.
  - He also emphasized **the need for Indianization of the services**. He died of **Cholera at Pattikonda** (Karnool district) in **July 1827**.
  - A very popular governor, people constructed shrines in his honour, and named their children after him. His **statue** was erected at **Madras in 1839 by public** subscription.
4. Distinction between '**Presidency**' and '**Province**': The British called Presidency the place where the office of Chief Administrative Head was situated. **Madras, Bombay and Calcutta** were the three **Presidencies**. Later when the Presidency became unwieldy for governance, they created provinces like **Central and United Provinces**.
5. A charter is a grant by a country's sovereign power to start a company, university, or city with rights and privileges clearly stated. **The East India Company** was started with **Queen Elizabeth's Charter of 1600**. It came to be renewed every twenty years, after **Warren Hastings** took over as **Governor General since 1773**. The **Charter of 1853** was the last one before **the Company government was taken over by the Crown**.

#### 6. Macaulay

- **Macaulay** found nothing good in Indian literature, philosophy and medicine.
- Macaulay, in his minute of 1835 **wrote**: 'I have **no knowledge** of either **Sanskrit** or **Arabic**.'
- But I have **read translations** of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works.
- I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their **proficiency in the Eastern tongues**.
- I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good **European library** was **worth** the whole native **literature of India and Arabia**.
- The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to **teach** this language, we shall teach **languages** in which, by **universal confession**, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own.
- Whether, when we can teach **European science**, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe differ for the worse.
- And whether, when we can **patronize** sound **philosophy** and **true history**, we shall countenance, at the **public expense**, **medical doctrines** which would **disgrace an English barrier**
- **Astronomy** which would **move laughter in girls** at an English boarding school, **history** abounding with **kings thirty feet high** and **reigns thirty thousand years** long, and **geography** made of **seas of treacle and seas of butter**.

- It is said that **the Sanskrit and the Arabic** are the languages in which **the sacred books of a hundred millions of people** are written, and that they are on that account entitled to peculiar encouragement.
- Assuredly it is the duty of the British Government in India to be not only tolerant but neutral on all religious questions.
- We abstain, and I trust shall always abstain, from giving any **public encouragement** to those who are engaged in the work of **converting the natives to Christianity**.
- And while we act thus, can we reasonably or decently bribe men, out of the revenues of the State, to waste their youth in learning how they are to purify themselves after touching an ass or what texts of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat?
- We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.
- To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.

#### 6. First Train:

- **The railway line from Bombay to Thane** was opened in 1853; from **Howrah to Raniganj** in 1854-55.



First Train: Bombay to Thane

- **The first railway line in south India** ran from **Madras to Arakonam** in 1856.
- **Royapuram** was one of the railway stations **inaugurated** in that year.

#### 7. Charles Traveyan:

- **Charles Traveyan** to a Select Committee of **the House of Commons in 1840** made the following observation: The peculiar kind of silky cotton formerly grown in Bengal, from which the fine **Dacca muslins** used to be made, is hardly ever seen.
- The population of the town of **Dacca** has fallen from **150, 000 to 30, 000 or 40,000** and the **jungle and malaria** are fasten croaching upon the town.

- **Dacca**, which was **the Manchester of India** has fallen off from a very flourishing **town** to a **very poor** and small one; the distress there has been very great indeed.'
  - **Abbe Dubois**, a French Catholic missionary, before his return to Europe in 1823 wrote: 'misery and desolation prevailed everywhere and that thousands of weavers were dying of hunger in the different districts of the Presidency [Madras].'
  - 'The misery hardly finds parallel in the history of commerce. **The bones of cotton weavers are beaching the Gangetic plains of India,**' said the **Governor General William Bentinck**.
8. An eye witness (an Englishman) of the terrible famine in **the Guntur district of Madras Presidency in 1833** said: 'It is dreadful to see what revolting food human beings may be driven to partake of. Dead dogs and horses are greedily devoured by these surviving wretches; and the other day, an unfortunate donkey having strayed from the fort, they fell upon him like a pack of wolves, tore him limb from limb and devoured him on the spot.'

### 9. Indentured Labour System:

- It was a **penal contract system**, totally differing from the contractual labour system of the present day.
- According to **the Indentured Labour System**, the coolie (the term applied to an Indian indentured labourer) had to work in jail-like condition, was punishable by forfeiture of wages or imprisonment for
  - (a) **negligence of duty** or refusal to attend to work
  - (b) **insolence** or **disobedience of orders** or other misconduct
  - (c) **quitting service before the expiry** of the **contract**.
- By invoking one of these provisions the planters on the flimsiest pretexts invariably either deprived the labourers of their wages or put them behind bars.
- The contract prohibited **the formation of associations** by **coolies** either with the objective of claiming **increase in wages** or for termination of their contract.
- **The Plight of women** in plantations is described poignantly in **Bharati's** famous song '**Karumbu thottathile**'