

MUTINY, REVOLUTION OR MUSLIM REBELLION?  
BRITISH PUBLIC REACTIONS TOWARDS THE  
INDIAN CRISIS OF 1857

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## PREFACE

The year 1957, a year in which I obtained my Master's degree at the University of the Panjab, Lahore, Pakistan, was the centenary of the Indian uprising of 1857. In this year the peoples of India and Pakistan elaborately celebrated the 100th anniversary of what they considered to be the first war of Indo-Pakistan independence. Numerous articles were written, books published, public meetings held, processions arranged, and public monuments erected to mark the historic occasion. Almost every history examination, at all levels, contained one question in common and it was on the rebellion or the mutiny of 1857. This highly stimulating politico-intellectual atmosphere of the year was a significant factor in my decision to investigate at some future date the so far neglected subject of British public attitudes towards the Indian mutiny - an inspiration which today has taken the shape of reality.

From the start to the finish of this research I had to change its title no less than three times. Starting off with "British Public Opinions towards the Indian Mutiny", a year later I changed the word "Opinions" to "Attitudes". Still later I discovered that British opinions were neither opinions nor attitudes but reactions, and at that, very sharp reactions; now the word "Reactions" took

the place of "Attitudes". Finally, when I started to write I was overwhelmed by the immensity of material which I had gathered together over a period of more than two years. I was then compelled to trim down the scope of this dissertation to its present form.

Although a large variety of books and research papers have been written on this most interesting chapter of British Indian history, virtually none of them touched the present theme in detail. The nearest approach to the present work was Professor George D. Bearce's scholarly book, British Attitudes towards India, 1784-1858. This book touches on the year 1858, but because of the wide scope of Professor Bearce's inquiry, "the intellectual basis and ideological atmosphere which underlay British rule in India", the book naturally could not give more than ten pages to the inexhaustible subject of the Indian mutiny. This study is, therefore, designed to fill the gap left by researchers in comprehending the Great Indian Rebellion or Mutiny.

An investigation of British reactions towards the Indian uprising of 1857 offers an interesting field of research and provides a fascinating study of the British nation, British mind and British thinking in the mid-nineteenth century - a study of that nation's political, social, religious, moral, commercial and imperial mode of

thought. At the same time it also furnishes an illuminating picture of the inhabitants of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, both Hindū and Muslim, through the eyes of their British contemporaries. It is an inquiry into a multiform body of thought and attitudes towards India as caused by the Indian mutiny - an inquiry that probes into various intellectual, political and religious tendencies, i.e., Conservatism, Liberalism, imperialism, Evangelism, Chartism, mercantilism, and what we might call "moralism". The variety of attitudes shown by the adherents to each of these "isms" (towards the Indian mutiny) reveals the conflict and tension which existed in Britain's intellectual environment in the middle of the nineteenth century. In addition to this, the study also throws light, though indirectly, on the amazing amount of liberty of speech and expression enjoyed by the British. The freedom of expression and the intellectual conflict invariably provided an opportunity for an open debate on all important subjects. Such occasions enabled the British to pool their thought processes for nation building activity. As in other cases, the great response of the British to the uprising had a beneficial effect on future British policies towards India. The detailed analysis of the whole situation made it possible for the Government to diagnose the disease and to apply relevant remedies.

Generally, researchers have considered the insurrection to have been either a mutiny or a war of Indian independence. Surprisingly, one aspect of it never seems to have been touched by any recent research, namely that it could conceivably be called a Muslim revolt as well. A booklet appearing even as late as 1963, 1857 in India, Mutiny or War of Independence, edited by Professor Ainslee T. Embree, while it takes into account all different interpretations put upon the outbreak (including the mutiny as a "Brahmanical Protest"), fails to discuss this important possible interpretation. In contemporary Britain and for a long time after, however, if there was one point on which there was almost unanimous agreement, it was in calling the outbreak a Muslim rebellion; moreover, some sections even viewed it as a struggle between the Cross and the Crescent. This study, though it presents the picture as seen only by the British, attempts to throw some light on this so far neglected aspect of the rebellion and opens up an interesting field of research for those interested in the Muslim history of India: such as Anglo-Muslim relations in South Asia before and after the mutiny; widening of the already existing cleavage between Hindūs and Muslims following the failure of the revolt and the role of these events in the establishment of Pakistan.

This work also lays open some other aspects of

historical research into the Britain of the mid-nineteenth century, e.g., the exclusion of British missionaries and settlers from the Company's Indian empire until 1813, in particular, and 1833 in general, by the Governments of Britain and India as two factors which precipitated the outbreak; Ireland and India as seen through the Irish views towards the revolt of 1857; comparison of Irish and Scottish reactions towards the insurrection; the relationship between the Indian mutiny and the British Evangelical movement in India and, finally, the opinion the British had as to the degree to which they could control the events in India and the extent to which these events were in the hands of God.

Apart from all this, the competitive atrocities committed by the three peoples, Hindūs, Indian Muslims, and the British, the motives behind their uncivilized behaviour and the mixed reactions shown by all three towards these acts of oppression and repression, usually verging on barbarism, also offer a highly interesting subject for sociological and historical study.

This research has also made a definite contribution to the source material on the Indian mutiny by an accidental discovery of a large number of hitherto unknown pamphlets in the National Library of Scotland, and some in other libraries. In addition to these an abundant supply of sermons on the Indian mutiny discovered in various libraries,

especially church and missionary, (of which a real wealth must still be lying hidden), has brought to light, virtually for the first time, a new kind of material on this most controversial subject.

The chief purpose of this research is to describe certain aspects of British public reactions towards the Indian revolt as they took place. Thus the attempt is made to present public opinion in Britain faithfully. My own opinions I have tried to let obtrude as little as possible, and where they seemed necessary, I have indicated that they are mine.

Since I am dealing with public opinion only, I have used published accounts and have not consulted private papers, or other unpublished matter on the subject.

The terms mutiny, revolution, social revolt, uprising, insurrection and the like, have been used interchangeably. As the controversy on the character of the outbreak is still unresolved and since these were the terms used by contemporary Britons, I have retained them as such. My use of them, therefore, does not in any way reflect my opinion on the subject.

All foreign expressions have been underlined except the Urdū ones. In the case of Urdū expressions the accent marks under certain letters prohibited this practice. To bring Urdū words out, however, the first

letter has been capitalized except in the case of quotations.

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I appreciate the financial assistance I received from McGill University during my studies here; in particular, I am thankful to Dr. Clifford Knowles, Student Aid Officer, for his attention at the time of my prolonged illness in the very first year of my arrival in Montreal, and the special McConnell grant he arranged for the payment of the large medical bills.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BC	British Controversialist
BM	Baptist Magazine
BMCPB	British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books
BQR	British Quarterly Review
c	Column
cc	Columns
CEM	Church of England Magazine
CEQR	Church of England Quarterly Review
CS	Christian Spectator, (Monthly)
DNB	Dictionary of National Biography
DUM	Dublin University Magazine
Ext	Extract
ER	Eclectic Review
Edin. Rev.	Edinburgh Review
HW	Household Words
LH	Leisure Hour
LQR	London Quarterly Review
MH	Missionary Herald
MMC	Missionary Magazine and Chronicle
NR	National Review
pt	Part
QR	Quarterly Review

UPM	United-Presbyterian Magazine
WMM	Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine
WR	Westminster Review

## GLOSSARY

Afghān	An inhabitant of Afghanistan or the North-Western regions of West Pakistan.
Banyā	A Hindū merchant, trader, shopkeeper, vendor of provisions; niggard; petty-minded man; timid man.
Chabūtrā	A terrace; a raised and levelled piece of ground; a platform.
Chapātī	A thin cake of unleavened bread.
Darbār	Royal court; hall of audience; royal audience; holding of court.
Devī	A female deity, a goddess, the wife of a deity.
Darwēsh	Poor, indigent; a religious mendicant; a beggar.
Doāb	The country between the Ganges and Jumna.
Farangī	A Frank; a European; an Englishman.
Fawj	An army.
Ghāzī	A warrior, a conqueror, a hero; one who fights against infidels.
Gurū	A Hindū or Sikh teacher or priest.
Ḥāfiẓ	One who has the whole Qur'ān by heart.
Ḥaram	Woman's apartment.
Ḥawāldār	A native military officer of inferior rank, equivalent to a head constable.
Jama'dār	A native officer of the army.
Jāmi' Masjid	A Friday congregational mosque.
Jihādān	A Muslim female warrior.
Kachahrī	A court of justice.

Kamarband	Sash.
Kōtwālī	The chief police station in a town.
Mahārājā	Mighty or illustrious king.
Masjid	Mosque.
Masnad	A place in or upon which one leans or rests; a throne; a large cushion.
Mawlawī	A Muslim doctor of law, a professor, a learned man; a Muslim priest.
Mullā	A doctor, a learned man; a Muslim priest.
Munshī	An author, a composer; a writer, scribe, secretary; a tutor, a teacher of Persian or Urdū; a title of respect.
Nā'ib	An assistant, lieutenant, deputy, viceroy.
Nawāb	A governor, a viceroy; a lord; a prince.
Pādshāh (Persian) Bādshāh (Urdū)	King.
Pūjā	Worship, respect, reverence, veneration, adoration; idol-worship.
Pūrbīyā	A native of the eastern parts of India (from Kanpur to Bihar).
Qāṣid	A messenger, a courier, letter carrier.
Qulī	A coolie, labourer, porter.
Rājā	King, sovereign, monarch, governor, lord.
Risālahdār Risāldār	A native commander of a troop of horse.
Ṣadar court	High court.
Ṣāhib	A word of respect like "sir", "Mr.".
Sanad	Order, royal ordinance, mandate or decree; any deed or grant etc. from one in authority.

Sā'īs	A groom, a horse-keeper.
Sawār	A rider, horseman, cavalier, horse-soldier, trooper.
Shāh	King, prince, monarch.
Sūbēdār	A native military officer (non-commissioned) whose rank corresponded to that of a captain.
Sunnī	An orthodox Muslim, one who receives the Sunnat or traditional portion of Islāmic law.
Ṣultān	King, monarch, sovereign.
Taḥṣīldār	An important officer of the revenue department.
ʿUlamā	Plural of ʿĀlīm, meaning learned or doctor of religion.
Wazīr	Minister.
Wahābī	Of or relating to Wahhāb; a follower of the doctrines of Shaikh ʿAbdul Wahhāb.
Wakīl	An attorney, a pleader, counsellor.
Zamīndār	Landlord, land-owner, landed proprietor; a farmer.

CHANGED SPELLINGS OF PLACE NAMES

<u>New Spellings</u>	<u>Old Spellings</u>
Agarpara	Agarparah
Aliganj	Aligong
Ambala	Umbala
Azamgarh	Azingurh
Bakarganj	Backergunj
Ballabgarh	Ballubgurh
Banaras	Benares
Bangalore	Banglore
Belgaum	Belgaun
Bhagalpur	Bhagulpur
Bharatpur	Bhurtpore
Bijnor	Bijnour
Bithur	Bithoor
Budaun	Badaun
Bulandshahr	Boolundsher
Bushire	Bushaire
Chhota Nagpur	Chotta Nagpore
Comilla	Comillah
Dinapore	Dinapur
Etawah	Etwah
Faizabad	Fyzabad
Farrukhabad	Faruckabad, Furruckabad
Fatehgarh	Futtehghur

FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE MUTINY.



A FAKIR OF BENGAL.



THE LOTUS FLOWER.



A CHOWKEYDAR PASSING THE CHUPATTIES.

An Englishman's View of the Indian Mutiny

Reproduced from page three of the Narrative of the Indian Revolt from its Outbreak to the Capture of Lucknow by Sir Colin Campbell.

Fatehpur	Futtehpur
Gonda	Ghond
Gorakhpur	Gorruckpore
Govindgarh	Gobindgurh
Haryana	Hurrianah
Hissar	Hisar
Hooghly	Hoogly
Hoshangabad	Hashungabad
Jaunpur	Jaunpore
Kanpur	Cawnpore
Kasauli	Kassoulie
Khurramshahr	Muhammerah, Mohammerah, Mohammareh, Mohamra
Kolapur	Kolapoor
Kulu	Kooloo
Ludhiana	Ludhianah
Mainpuri	Mynpoorie
Mathura	Muttra
Murshidabad	Moorshidabad
Muzaffarnagar	Moozuffernugger
Mymensingh	Mymensing
Nagina	Nugeenah
Najibabad	Nujeebabad
Nani Tal	Nynetal
Nargund	Noorgund
Nimach	Neemuch

Panjab

Patiala

Rampur

Ratnagiri

Rohilkhand

Sanaur

Satara

Sawantwadi

Sind

Sitapur

Udaipur

Vellore

Punjab

Puttiala, Pattiala, Putteela

Rampore

Rectnagherry

Rochilchund, Rochilkhund

Sunawur

Sattara

Sawuntwaree

Sindh, Scinde, Scindh

Seetapur

Oudeypore

Vellore

## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The following system has been used:

### Consonants:

a	ا	<u>z</u>	ذ	<u>gh</u>	غ
b	ب	<u>r</u>	ر	f	ف
p	پ	r	ر	q	ق
t	ت	z	ز	k	ك
<u>t</u>	ث	zh	ژ	g	گ
<u>s</u>	س	s	س	l	ل
j	ج	sh	ش	m	م
ch	چ	s	ص	n	ن
h	ح	<u>z</u>	ض	n	ن
<u>kh</u>	خ	<u>t</u>	ط	w	و
d	د	<u>z</u>	ظ	h	ه
<u>d</u>	ڈ	'	ع	'	ء
				y	ی

### Vowels, diphthongs, etc.:

<u>a</u>	آ	bh	بھ	ai	ای
<u>e</u>	ے	ph	پھ	au	او
<u>i</u>	ی	th	تھ		
<u>o</u>	و	<u>th</u>	ٹھ	a	ا
<u>u</u>	و	jh	جھ	i	ی
		chh	چھ	u	و

## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND OF BRITISH REACTIONS

British commercial relations with India had existed for some 250 years at the time of the outbreak in 1857. These relations had by degrees become political as well; then, in the first half of the 19th century religious issues arose between Britain and India. In addition to these three links, the civilian and military services of the East India Company combined with the Queen's regiments stationed in India, the arrival of a limited number of British settlers in the country<sup>1</sup> and the development of an Anglo-Indian press provided further connections between Britain and the South-Asian mainland. In the main, these links tended to provide conflict and tension. Apart from the traditional hostility between the civilian and military services of the Company, clashes also arose from imperial, commercial, religious and private interests which were difficult and in some cases impossible to reconcile. Moreover, the serious proportions which the outbreak in India assumed led to a search for the causes of and efforts to attach responsibility for the uprising. The very existence of the empire had been endangered; the lives and occupations of hundreds of thousands of Britons were jeopardized at home and in India. It is no wonder that corresponding echoes

1. The total number of European settlers in India in 1857 was reported to be at 10,006. Of these 9,689 resided in the three presidency cities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, and only 317 in the provinces - 275 in that of Bengal and the rest scattered over the other two presidencies. The Examiner, 24 Oct. 1857.

were heard in strife-torn India as well as in crisis-ridden Britain.

There were several reactions to the catastrophe. To many it appeared to be a mere mutiny of the pampered sepoys; to a still larger number a revolutionary conspiracy which aimed at the restoration of native authority; to others, another highly important episode in a losing battle between the Crescent and the Cross; a few advanced the theory of a Russian intrigue designed to expand Russian influence in central and southern Asia; and there were even those who insisted that it was inspired by Brahman attempts to restore the influence which they had lost as a result of the modernization of India. These several explanations for the uprising were offered either by vested interests seeking to direct responsibility away from themselves, or by secular and religious schools of thought endeavouring to justify their convictions. In the case of vested interests, however, responsibility for the uprising became a subject of mutual accusations.

Apart from the above mentioned reactions which dealt with the character of the outbreak, it was also seen by the Evangelicals as an inevitable result of the policy of debarring Christians and Christianity from India and as such a divine chastisement. The Irish, however, looked at

it from their own point of view, through their own past history and experience; hurriedly drew parallels between the British rule in India and in their own country;<sup>2</sup> called the uprising a revolution<sup>3</sup> and at once compared it with the French Revolution and the American War of Independence.<sup>4</sup>

Even after excluding these highly interested elements, which tried to influence public opinion in the light of their own views, the fact remains that this diversity of reactions shown by the British public was also a natural phenomenon, and was to be expected. As in nature, the same object has a different appearance to those who behold it from different angles and from different positions, so was it true in regard to the immense object of India as well as the events which took place in that country during the fateful years of the outbreak. Even those individuals who tried to view the India of 1857 honestly, could not help doing so through their own personality, circumstances and environments, or through what they had themselves experienced, seen or heard. The result was that even the uninvolved sections of British society were likely to be influenced by their own pre-conceptions and surroundings. Placed as they were in different positions, in such perfectly different countries, among such perfectly different populations throughout the immense and vast sub-continent of India, they were sure to present a

2. The Nation, 18 July, 8 Aug., 5 and 26 Sept. and 10, 17, 24 and 31 Oct. 1857. In fact, the paper went on producing analogies between the two parts of the British empire until the revolt was over.

3. In addition to publishing a large number of articles and poems which described the outbreak in India as a revolution, The Nation always gave the news from India under the title: "The Indian Revolution."

4. The Nation, 26 Sept. 1857.

different account of the same object, the Indian mutiny.

The immediate impression in Britain, however, was that the outbreak was an army mutiny. The first official news which arrived in London on 26 June, 1857, reported a military uprising. Lord Canning either did not want to be an alarmist, or he really could not comprehend the gravity of the situation. Perhaps he failed to calculate the importance of Delhi in the hands of rebels. The people, quite naturally, reacted mildly. They were already used to receiving news of mutinies, disbandments and disarming. They knew about the mutiny at Vellore in 1805; the disbandment of the 47th Regiment in 1824 for refusing to serve in Burma; the refusal of four Bengal regiments in 1844 to serve in Sind till extra allowances were made to them; the mutiny of the 66th Native Infantry at Govindgarh in 1849, and the refusal of the 38th Bengal Native Infantry to go to Burma in 1852. In fact, the year 1857 had started with mutinies. Apparently there was nothing new in the news. This time the extent appeared to be a little wider, and for that the Government, the press and the people strongly chided the Indian sepoy for his wrong-headedness and advocated immediate and stern action.

As the Government in Britain decided not to become alarmed, the people and most of the press either followed its cue or adopted the wise policy of wait and

see. The Government denied that the empire was in danger and hoped that the outbreak would soon be effectually suppressed by the military forces already present in India. V. A. Smith, President of the Board of Control for India, speaking in the Commons on 29 June, 1857, ardently pinned his hopes on the gallantry and quick action of his friend General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief of India. He deplored the fact that since the mail left India on the 18th of May, he could not, therefore, inform the House that the insurgent headquarters at Delhi was already "razed to the ground." He however felt convinced that the next mail would bring the news of its reduction.<sup>5</sup> If The Scotsman,<sup>6</sup> the Manchester Guardian,<sup>7</sup> the Illustrated London News<sup>8</sup> and others entertained no doubts regarding the prompt and easy suppression of the Mutiny, The Times took it still more lightly.<sup>9</sup> Expressing its delight that the mutiny was confined to only a few regiments at Meerut and Delhi and that all other stations were reported quiet, the paper resolutely but cheerily advocated, as a safeguard for the future, the obliteration of everything that was Indian. In its editorial of 29 June, 1857, the paper observed:

Now that we have conquered India from the Indus to the frontiers of Siam it is our own interest to establish in it a homogeneity which it has never before possessed...Why, for instance, should there be a Mogul at Delhi, whose very existence, as we

5. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 542.

6. The Scotsman, 29 June and 1 July, 1857. In its issue of 29 June, the paper slighted the uprising and editorially observed:

The proclamation of the King, though indicating an unusual concord and purpose among the insurgents, is really of no very great significance - anything like popular attachment to the Mogul dynasty, or indeed to any of the native dynasties, scarcely exists. The only probable result of this part of the affair will be putting an end to the mock court of the Moguls maintained at Delhi.

Two days later the paper told its readers that no "doubts were entertained of the rebellion being promptly and easily suppressed."

7. 15 July, 1857.

8. 4 July, 1857.

9. 29 June and 4 and 16 July, 1857. In its issue of 4 July, The Times editorially chided the French newspaper Univers for attributing the outbreak to a general dislike of the English. Ascribing this attitude to the malignant spirit of the French paper, The Times forcefully argued: "This Indian Mutiny will be put down with a strong hand and in a few months will be forgotten, except as a guide for future policy."

see in the present case, preserves the memory of what we should endeavour to obliterate? We would even hope that the death of the Nizam may be the occasion of the Deccan being brought more completely under British sovereignty. We cannot now refuse our part or change our destiny. To retain power in India, we must sweep away every political establishment and every social usage which may prevent our influence from being universal and complete.<sup>10</sup>

Before long the news brought by the Indian mail had spread throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain. The first delivery alone brought 20,000 letters.<sup>11</sup> Though the letters gave elaborate details of the sanguinary happenings at Meerut and Delhi; though the participation of the people was reported; though it looked more than a mere military mutiny; though the views and thoughts of quite a few had started to change, still the majority was quite composed and unaffected. After all, the rising was confined to Delhi only, for the mutineers had already been driven out of Meerut. European troops would very soon march against Delhi and the city would fall prostrate at their feet. Many must have known that in 1803 General Lake had reduced the same city with only three thousand troops. The next mail, many thought, would bring cheerful news. Thus it was that the British public tried to soothe its fears.

But the fears were not to be calmed so easily. The next mail, and the mail for quite some time after, brought news only of killings and massacres. As a

10. The Times, 29 June, 1857. Cf., George D. Bearce, British Attitudes towards India, 1784-1858 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.235.

11. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1431-32; Illustrated London News, 18 July, 1857.

result, the stream of public opinion began to take a different turn. Many analysts were no longer prepared to dismiss the uprising as a simple mutiny. It looked like a serious affair -- in fact more like the most formidable danger that had ever threatened the British empire in India. The seriousness of the situation naturally caused criticism of the British Indian administration, both civil and military; of the missionary "crusade"<sup>12</sup> which had been launched by the British Evangelicals at the start of the 18th century and of blindfold territorial expansion. It was this criticism of the various bonds linking Britain with India that brought all the interested parties into the field in an attempt to safeguard their own names and put the blame upon others before public opinion could reach boiling point. The public was soon deluged with pamphlets and articles, statements and letters, speeches and sermons, works of poetry and fiction and tracts -- military, religious and political, largely written anonymously, by officers and officers' wives, civilians, and missionaries, enthusiasts in theology and aspirants in politics. Public meetings began to be held on an unprecedented scale; lectures were delivered and speeches made in an attempt to bring public opinion in tune with their interests.

The anxiety of the Britons was so great that

12. Expression borrowed from Ian W. Brown,  
The Anglican Evangelicals in British Politics, 1780-1833  
(Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1959), p.138.

even the Commons, which earlier could hardly produce a quorum for debates on India, not only attracted virtually the entire House but also started to have crisis sittings. Prolonged and late night debates became a common feature with the British Parliament.<sup>13</sup> Whatever be the topic for discussion, references to India became frequent. Parliamentary sessions on the war with Persia<sup>14</sup> and later on the country's monetary crisis, when the Commons had to be reconvened on 3 December, 1857, around a fortnight ahead of the schedule,<sup>15</sup> virtually became Indian debates. The Manchester Guardian, a paper which on 29 September, 1857, was highly critical of the large mass of matter published on India and had described it as rubbish, soon itself felt so anxious about the empire that it did not hesitate to contradict its three day old stand. It observed:

It is not strange to find at the present juncture that the minds of the politicians, of every class and party, are filled with one topic - the state of our Indian Empire. Every eye is turned towards India, every ear is intent to catch the last fragment of information from thence, or to anticipate the least whispers of the approaching news. The newspapers are filled with every detail which can be obtained throughout the length and breadth of Hindostan. There is no room for any speech or thought of other or less urgent matters. The empire, the prestige, the honour of England are felt to be at stake.<sup>16</sup>

It appears as if everybody tried to say or write something irrespective of his knowledge of India and all

13. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 1360, 1458 and 1718;  
CXLlX, 2097 and 2206 and CL, 1690.

14. Ibid., CXLVl, 1577-1654.

15. Ibid., CXLVlll, 1-131.

16. Manchester Guardian, 2 Oct. 1857.

seemed to be nervous. The Government of the time did not lag behind in this respect. Outwardly trying to belittle the outbreak, it played a major role in contributing to this national nervousness by throwing an additional Sunday into the middle of the week when it appointed Wednesday, 7 October, 1857, as the Day of National Humiliation, Fasting and Prayers. The special services, in many cases three in the day, which were held in the churches all over Britain and attracted large congregations, the press publicity of the day and the publication of hundreds of sermons thus delivered on the mutiny acquainted even the most ignorant of Britons, if not with the people of India, their history, and their complex problems, then at least with the outbreak in that country, and the serious threats it posed to Britain's economy, and her growing political and military image all over the world.

Before dealing with the rising streams of thought in Britain, it will be necessary to say a few words on the sources of British information on India -- sources which eventually helped in shaping the public reactions. The first important thing to be noted here is the physical and time distance between Britain and India. If the physical distance between the two countries was from 6,000 to 11,160 miles via the Red Sea and Cape routes respectively, the time distance was from six to thirteen

weeks.<sup>17</sup> The length of time required and the high cost of transportation must have made a trip to India beyond the capacity of an average Englishman to undertake. The result was that with few exceptions only government servants, settlers, missionaries or a few businessmen could go to India -- all backed by certain collective or individual interests of varying nature.

My written inquiries from some of those newspapers and periodicals which have continued to our time have given me the impression that none of them had a professional reporter stationed in India at the time of the outbreak. The fact that several of the newspapers, at times, reported the news as originating from what they called "our own correspondent", reveals that these correspondents actually belonged to one of the interests discussed on page one of the introduction. Naturally, their reports were coloured by their own interests and opinion. As a result of this the people of Britain received a distorted and misleading picture of the contemporary Indian society. This situation was improved somewhat when The Times sent W. H. Russell, its one time Crimean War correspondent, to India to cover the outbreak, but he too arrived at the scene of insurrection only in 1858.

In addition to these difficulties, it should be borne in mind that it had been a general policy of the

17. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 360 and CXLV111, 71.

East India Company to discourage free movement of people to India. The obvious argument for such a policy was the fear of exciting the religious and social prejudices of the people of India. Yet it was also the Company's own fear of exciting criticism of its Indian policies at home which led it to follow this restrictive policy. The Court of Directors was so sensitive to any public criticism that the representatives of the press were barred from their meetings. As late as 3 February, 1858, the Manchester Guardian had this to complain, when it observed:

India as we have before observed was a sealed book. The directors by excluding the reporters of the press from their councils, had kept the public in the dark as to what was going on. It was only when something was wrong that we got the information.

What was the result of this failure of the East India Company to keep their countrymen informed on the affairs of India? A general indifference towards India was the natural outcome -- indifference caused by lack of interest and ignorance. A large number of Britons was actually conscious of this weakness, and they did not hesitate to point it out.<sup>18</sup> A writer in the British Controversialist went to the extent of saying that there were "not even ten men in the country who had such a knowledge of India so as to entitle them to speak even in the tone of ordinary confidence."<sup>19</sup> This apathy, however, was rudely broken by the outbreak in India. As already pointed out, there was

18. An Indian Missionary [Hargrave Jennings], The Indian Religions: or, Results of Mysterious Buddhism (London: Printed by Guildford, 1858), p.139; "The Coming Debate on the Indian Crisis," Saturday Review, 25 July, 1857; William Howard Russell, My Diary in India (7th. Thousand; Two vols.; London: Routledge, Warne, and Co., 1860), vol. 1, p.2; Manchester Guardian, 3 Sept. 1857; 4 Dec. 1857 (Letter from John Bright, M.P., to Thomas Lloyd of Birmingham), and 3 Feb. 1858; "The Christianization of India," London Journal and Weekly Record of Literature, Science and Arts (hereafter referred to as London Journal), XXVI, 1857, p.109.

19. "Has the Preservation of Caste Conduced to the Present Revolt in India - Affirmative Article 111," British Controversialist (hereafter referred to as BC.) 1858, p.119.

a sudden and intensely felt concern about Indian affairs among the people, but their position was perhaps no better than that of a man who is suddenly awakened from deep slumber.

The time distance combined with past indifference, vast dissimilarity between the people of Britain and India in almost all fields -- social, political, religious, educational and economic, and absence of unbiased news media from India, one and all must have proved a major handicap in both receiving accurate information from India and in evaluating it. As is evident from the duration of journey given above, it is easy to see that it took more than three months to exchange information, or else to verify a certain piece of report. The Britons, therefore, had to depend upon their own critical faculty to sift out the truth by comparing different pieces of information, by making some allowance for reporters' own affiliations, or else entirely to depend upon what they were told. It cannot, however, be doubted that almost the entire countryside as well as a sizeable section of Britons living in the cities must have behaved as docile and credulous beings, unfamiliar as they were with the history and the people of India.

That there was enough room for fabrication and concoction is proven by some of the widely circulated but

unfounded rumours and stories. One such most important and frequently accepted report was that a serious rift had arisen between Lord Canning, the Governor-General of India and Lord Clyde (then Sir Colin Campbell), the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of India. The Scotsman repeatedly tried in October, 1857, albeit in vain, to discredit all such rumours.<sup>20</sup> Next month the Saturday Review similarly censured the wide currency which this story had gained.<sup>21</sup> Finally, in an attempt to root out the falsehood, Lord Panmure, Secretary for War, had to quote on 12 December an extract of a letter from Lord Clyde himself to the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief of Britain. The letter was dated 26 October, 1857. In it the Indian Commander-in-Chief had recorded his deep sense of obligation to Lord Canning for the confidence, support and kindness shown to him by the latter.<sup>22</sup>

The Nation took the wind out of an atrocity story which had no foundation at all. Under the title "The Atrocity Press", this paper drew attention to the two versions of a fabricated tale of the killing of a certain Mrs. Farquharson. According to one version published by The Freeman, the lady in question was burnt alive by the rebels after they had committed with her most frightful and revolting atrocities. The other version, said to be the "truer" one, describing the fate of the "hapless lady" was published by the Dublin Evening Post. Reporting its

20. 17 and 21 Oct. 1857.

21. "English Assertions and Indian Facts,"  
Saturday Review, 7 Nov. 1857.

22. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 671-72.

source in a private letter, this paper informed its readers that "after suffering a series of indescribable brutalities, she [Mrs. Farquharson] was placed alive between two boards and cut through with a saw." The Nation reported that this story was at once taken up by those whom the English papers called "our own correspondent" and reproduced in England. The fact of the matter in this case, however, was that Mrs. Farquharson was still alive and was then residing in Europe.<sup>23</sup>

The Illustrated London News successfully passed the picture of Jōtī Prasād, a native Indian banker, for that of Nānā Ṣāhib, the "hero" of the Kanpur massacre. William Forbes-Mitchell, late sergeant of the 93rd Highlanders, in his reminiscences of the "Great Mutiny", published in 1894, was just as successful in exposing the proxy nature of the portrait. Jōtī Prasād, who was earlier involved in a case with the Government of India, had in 1851 hired the services of John Lang, a London barrister, to go out to India and defend his client before a special court at Meerut. After Jōtī's honourable acquittal through the successful pleading of Lang, the former was so grateful to his defendent that he presented him with an honorarium of £30,000 in addition to the fees on his brief. Lang happening to have asked for a portrait of his generous client, was presented with one, which the barrister took with him to London. After the news of

23. The Nation, 3 Oct. 1857.

Kanpur massacre had arrived in England, the artists of the Illustrated London News started to call on Britons of Indian experience residing in London in order to get a portrait of The Nānā. Failing in that, they were finally able to secure the portrait of Jōtī Prasād. To the protests of Lang that "the picture no more resembled the Nana of Bithoor than it did her Gracious Majesty the Queen of England; that neither the dress nor the position of the person represented in the picture could pass in India for a Mahratta chief", the artist had contended that "he did not care for people in India; he required the picture for the people of England." In this way the picture of poor Jōtī was passed "as that of the arch-assassin of the Indian Mutiny." Although the picture in question was at once recognized in India as being not that of the Nānā but that of Jōtī, the mystery behind it could come to light only after thirty-seven years.<sup>24</sup>

This spirit of sensationalism was not confined to the British press or less important individuals. Highly responsible persons like Lord Shaftesbury were also carried away by their sympathy for their fellow countrymen in India and their excessive zeal for evangelical activity. In his speech at Wimborne, delivered on 30 October, 1857, he reported to his audience in these words:

Hundreds, thousands have been massacred in the onslaughts of towns, provinces have been ravaged, thousands have been put to death...but where have

24. William Forbes-Mitchell, Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny, 1857-59, Including the Relief, Siege, and Capture of Lucknow, and the Campaigns in Rohilcund and Oude (London: Macmillan and Co., 1894), pp.153-59.

you heard of such cruelties perpetrated in cold blood when I tell you that I myself saw a letter from the highest lady now in India stating that day by day ladies were coming to Calcutta with their ears and noses cut off and their eyes put out - When I tell you that children of the tenderest years have been reserved to be put to death under circumstances of the most exquisite torture, not in moments of excitement as you read of in history when the town of Magdeburg was sacked by the imperialists...<sup>25</sup>

In the subtitle of the published version of the "Great Speech", it was described as a "most fearful but faithful exposure" of the scene in India. The speech, published as a "penny-dreadful", must have attracted country-wide readers. However, when later on challenged for his statement, the noble lord changed his stand from "he had seen" to "he had heard of", with a further addition that his informant was perhaps in error.<sup>26</sup> Ninety-nine days after the speech was delivered, the Manchester Guardian, a paper that had earlier endorsed Shaftesbury's speech in tota on 3 November, 1857, and had then done it without journalistic evidence or investigation, decided to censure Shaftesbury for the mischief -- a mischief that had already done its job. The paper regretfully observed:

Whether all people who had made similar statements have also been in error, or have wilfully endeavoured to mislead the public mind in regard to the moral complexion of the Indian mutiny we will not pretend to determine.<sup>27</sup>

Censuring this particular instance and other similar fabrications and reporting that the amount of

25. The Earl of Shaftesbury, England's Apostasy in India and the Earl of Shaftesbury's Great Speech on Indian Cruelties, delivered at Wimborne (London: Published by Patridge and Co., [1857], pp.5-6; The Times, 2 Nov. 1857. Cf. Puran Chandra Joshi (ed. by), Rebellion 1857, a Symposium (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1957), p.295.

26. Manchester Guardian, 6 Feb. 1858. Cf. Joshi, loc. cit.

27. 6 Feb. 1858.

deliberate lying in England, both by the press and the people had touched frightful heights, The Nation itself was carried away by its sentiments, when it went on to observe:

There is an atmosphere of untruth all over England. Lords lie and Commoners lie, merchants lie and forge, banks and companies of all kinds are founded on lies (unlimited), the leading journal is the greatest liar in the world and the little journals try to lie as much as the great one. The war with India has given a powerful stimulus to the lie manufacture and at the same time increased the popular demand for the article.<sup>28</sup>

These were not the only instances of story mongering. In fact, a large number of such concoctions seem to have been current at that time.<sup>29</sup> The fact remains that the majority of the European residents in India, especially those at Calcutta, as well as the European press in the country had turned hostile to Canning because of his Press and Arms Acts. They bitterly resented the equal treatment which Lord Canning had afforded to the two communities, the rulers and the ruled, in these two matters.<sup>30</sup> It was reported that only one out of ten residents in Bengal liked the Governor-General.<sup>31</sup> A large number of the European residents of Calcutta had even petitioned the Commons for the recall of Canning.<sup>32</sup> The effort of these people seems to have been to present the Indians in the worst colours and show the Governor-General as a mild person for the situation. All this, naturally, resulted in misrepresentations, which in turn contributed towards

28. 17 April, 1858. Earlier on 26 September 1857, the paper had raised serious objection to the publication of anonymous "horror letters" in the London newspapers. The Nation argued:

It will be seen that not one 'letter' in ten bears the name of the writer - or supposed writer. Why is this? Why any real witness of such scenes should have reluctance to attest the truth of these narratives by their names? Is it not rather far more likely that such persons would be anxious to give their names.

29. Free Press, 20 Jan. 1858; Maj. W. S. R. Hodson, Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India, ed. The Rev. Geo. H. Hodson (2nd. ed.; London: John W. Parker, 1859), p.218; The Examiner, 5 Sept. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 2 Jan. 1858.

30. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 902-903.

31. Ibid., 929.

32. The Examiner, 21 Nov. 1857. 837 British inhabitants of Calcutta had signed this petition; of these 193 were merchants, forty-five barristers and solicitors, twenty-four planters, thirty-six brokers and ten doctors.

the formation of public opinion in Britain.

Thus it was in this atmosphere of national nervousness, tension, gossiping, fabrication, absence of sound familiarity with the people of India and, above all, claimed racial superiority that the British attitudes towards the Indian mutiny were formed.

Before embarking upon the actual discussion of the British reactions towards the Indian uprising, I consider it advisable to investigate the motivations which impelled those interested to throw themselves so ardently into the task of instructing the public. These factions included all those who might conceivably be held responsible for the catastrophe in India as well as those East Indian groups who had something at stake in the rebel country, and who feared that an adverse public opinion would materially endanger their vested interest. If in one case the reactions were dictated by the desire to defend their Indian policies in England, in the other, the natural instinct of self-preservation in India shaped them.

The first most important element which made a substantial contribution in moulding public opinion was the Government of India. The outbreak, be it a "mutiny", a "revolution", "first war of Indian independence", or a "Muslim rebellion" was essentially a revolt against Government policies -- civil and military, social and

administrative and political and religious, justified or unjustified. Naturally the Government had to be cautious against falling under heavy criticism in Britain. The caution and fear were justified and were later on fully supported by a vigorous demand for the recall of Lord Canning. In addition to this it was not in the interest of the Indian administration to appear alarmed. In India it not only needed to maintain the confidence of European inhabitants for their own safety, it also needed to suppress bad news in order to retain the wavering confidence and loyalty of loyal Indians. The result was what seems to have been a planned effort at suppressing the news or belittling the outbreak. There is no lack of evidence in this regard. The Government of Canning tried to hold back the news of the uprising from the people of Calcutta until the following Thursday. When, however, a rumour of the uprising did arrive in Calcutta on the 14th and as a result The Harkaru published it in its issue of the 15th, the next morning The Englishman was instructed, complained Henry Mead, to publish a contradiction of The Harkaru.<sup>33</sup>

Canning was so cautious that he declined even the offer of Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, who had offered to convey the news to London by sending a special steamer, then luckily available at Bombay.<sup>34</sup> H. Baillie

33. Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and Consequences (London: John Murray, 1857), pp.77-85.

34. Dr. Edward Henry Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the Earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859 (Two vols.; London: publisher not given, n.d.), Vol. II, p.719.

later on criticised Canning and others at Calcutta with suppressing the news of the uprising and minimizing the extent of it for around two months.<sup>35</sup> In fact, it was this cautious attitude which had led the Governor-General to turn down the offer of voluntary service made by a loyal deputation of European residents of Calcutta. The offer first made on the 21st of May was repeated four days later. This discourtesy was later on to prove a serious handicap to Lord Canning. In addition to this Canning had also turned down the offer of help made by the Prime Minister of Nepal.<sup>36</sup> It is of interest, however, to note that later on Canning had willy nilly to accept all these offers. To crown it all, still later he made a vigorous endeavour to control the news by gagging the press in India, both native and Anglo-Indian. The shot, however, misfired. Instead of suppressing the news, Canning's action magnified it. A tide of rumours issued forth, and the wrath of the European community for Canning's lack of confidence in them fell heavily upon the Governor-General. In the future, while the Government as usual kept under-estimating the situation, the European residents of Calcutta decided to sift the Government policies and expose its acts of omission and commission.

Another element responsible in helping to shape public opinion in Britain was the Government of Viscount

35. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 1485.

36. Ibid., 896-99.

Palmerston. Unlike the Tories, the Whigs had all along advocated a forward policy in India. They wanted to usher into India an era of reform in social, religious, educational and administrative reforms. As they wanted to carry the blessings of the British rule to every corner of India, extension of territories and modernization of India were also included in their programme. By the passage of Pitt's India Act in 1784, a Board of Control for India, presided over by a responsible cabinet minister, was set up. After all that, policies of the East India Company in India were subject to the scrutiny of the British Government. All correspondence with India, commercial, political, financial and military, had to pass through a close examination by the Board. Many a time even the contents of the outgoing letters were changed. The result of all this was that the British Government was always heavily involved in the policies pursued in India, especially in the field of territorial expansion.

These policies reached their nadir during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie -- a Whig nominee. Naturally, Palmerston's Government came for a major share in the matter of responsibility for the outbreak. The Tory Party and its Press started a virulent criticism of the Whig policies. The Press made a call for ministerial responsibility.<sup>37</sup> V. A. Smith, President of the Board of Control for India, found it difficult to contend for the

37. See Chapter II, pp.32-33.

Whig policies, except that he feebly maintained that the outbreak in India was not caused by either territorial expansion or disturbance of landed property in the country.<sup>38</sup> To prove to the people that Palmerston's cabinet was not at all worried by the situation in India, the Government decided to send reinforcements to India neither in steamships nor by the shorter route, Mediterranean-overland-Red Sea to India. The Palmerstonian logic was that England ought to extinguish the flames of revolt by herself without being indebted to any other country. For this additional error of judgment the Government was taken to serious task by the press, the Commons and the Lords of Britain. Naturally, the Whigs and their press started a powerful campaign to justify their past policies by insisting that the outbreak in India was a mere military mutiny and that there was nothing to be worried about.

A majority of the shareholders of the East India Company, their courts of Proprietors and Directors and other allied shipping, mercantile and financial interests were another group who had their interests to safeguard. The allied interests of the Company enjoyed a privileged position with regard to India, and were in the same position vis-à-vis the Company as an Awadh sepoy was to his state. Just as the Awadh sepoy did not wish the

38. For Smith's defence, see: Hansard 3,  
CXLV11, 485-88.

Company to annex Awadh, similarly these allied interests did not want the abolition of the Company. In both cases their extinction meant the abolition of privileges. As to the shareholders of the Company, it was certainly far from their interest to speak of popular disaffection in India and thereby renounce their right to rule. They, therefore, tried their utmost to convince the people of Britain of the military nature of the revolt. The Nation editorially pointed out that the Company was trying to corrupt the press and even intimidate it.<sup>39</sup>

In spite of the fact that public opinion in England had overwhelmingly turned against the anomaly of the dual government in India, and stood for a quick transfer of power from the Company to the Crown, the former did not lose heart. As late as 11 February, 1858, the Company in an attempt to prove its innocence petitioned the Crown and vigorously endeavoured to transfer the responsibility for the uprising to the Crown. Disavowing all responsibility for internal as well as external wars, for all territorial extensions in India, the petitioners argued that the army was that part of the Indian administration most directly under the administration of the Crown. It was contended that if the Governor-General was virtually appointed by the British Government, the Company had no say whatever in the

39. 17 Oct. 1857.

appointment of the Commander-in-Chief. And since the outbreak was a military uprising, it was the Government of Britain rather than the Company that was to be held accountable for it.<sup>40</sup>

Next to expound their views on the subject of the Indian mutiny were the missionaries and the clergymen of various denominations. Like the Company, they represented a special interest. The difficulties of William Carey, Josiah Marshman and William Ward, the pioneer British missionaries in India, were still fresh in their minds. They had not forgotten the great opposition which the East India Company had shown to the introduction of missionary activity in India. Even after the passage of the Charter Act of 1813, the Company in the eyes of the missionaries was lamentably tardy in recognizing India's great need for reforms.<sup>41</sup> Above all they were not prepared to forgive the Government of the Company for dismissing a sepoy from service for his acceptance of Christianity, simply because the Company feared that that might cause some stir among the Hindū soldiers.<sup>42</sup> Although of late the policies of the Company had considerably changed; several steps had been taken to eradicate the social evils of Satī, infanticide, the Hindū widow's disability to remarry; although the Religious Disabilities

40. Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 1132-34.

41. These were very widely held opinions.

42. In 1819, Mughal Pandey [sic], a Hindū sepoy at Meerut, had embraced Christianity. The Government, apprehending wild reactions among the Hindū civil and military populations of India, dismissed the new convert from his position in the army. The convert's testimony before the British officers that "you will allow me to serve your king, but you will not allow me to serve your God" (The Rev. Cadman, "Fast-day Sermons. No. XI," The Fast-day Sermons. The "Indian Mutiny" Twelve Sermons pp.134-35) had then caused deep concern in Britain. The missionaries and the Church of England could never forget this incident. After the outbreak at Meerut, it once again got into limelight and the Government of the East India Company was put into a tight corner de novo. The fact that the mutiny had started at Meerut was offered as evidence that the outbreak was a divine punishment which the Lord God in His great anger had sent down upon the people of Britain for this and for various other neglects of the ill-fated Company and the British nation. The Bishop of Carlisle, "Fast-day Sermons. No. V," The Fast-day Sermons. The "Indian Mutiny" Twelve Sermons delivered on Wednesday, 7 Oct. 1857, being the Day appointed by Royal Proclamation as a National Fast and Humiliation (London: J. A. Berger, [1857]), p.61; Cadman, loc. cit.; "Monthly Retrospect," Christian Spectator (hereafter referred to as CS.), VIII, 1858, p.126; The Rev. James Charles, The Lord's Voice to Britain from the Far East (Edinburgh: Paton and Ritchie. Glasgow: T. Murray and Son, 1857), pp.14-15. In fact, it was a very widely shared opinion.

Act had been passed, thus abolishing the disability of a Hindū convert to Christianity to inherit his ancestral property, the irrefutable fact remained that the army cantonments were still "off limit" places for the missionaries; their activities were still confined to settled areas, and the Bible had still not been introduced in government schools. The Evangelicals and the clergy of Britain held the Company's Government responsible for all this, and were not prepared to show that body any consideration.

To make matters worse many Britons regarded the excessive missionary activity to be largely responsible for the uprising in India. It was believed that the Indians had begun to identify the missionaries with the Government. As a result the natives of India feared that it was the Government that intended to impose Christianity on them by force, and the employment of missionaries was a means to that end. The Government of India felt so convinced of the missionary contribution in causing the uprising by exciting the religious prejudices of the Indians, that they applied censorship to the press and even considered suppressing the chief missionary paper, the Friend of India.<sup>43</sup>

When called upon to share the responsibility for

43. Bearce, op. cit., p.236.

the insurrection, the missionaries washed their hands of the blame. Joined by the clergymen of Britain, especially the Anglicans, they declared with one voice that Christian preaching was not at all responsible for the outbreak in India. It was rather the lack of sufficient missionary activity which, they thought, had led to it. The sepoy army was never allowed to be tamed by Christian love; on the contrary its caste and religious prejudices were pampered beyond limits. No wonder that, untaught, untamed and unenlightened as the sepoys were, they revolted. Moreover, the greater loyalty of the Madras and Bombay presidencies, where the Christian missionary activity was of much longer standing and much more wide spread, proved the fact that conversion and Christianity were a deterrent rather than a cause of the revolt. Instances of the loyalty of native converts to Christianity were profusely reported from all over India and emphasised. At places like Delhi and Lucknow, the missionaries argued, their programme was introduced only recently. Further to prove the sincerity of their point of view all the missionary societies launched a vigorous campaign for stepping up evangelistic activity in India. General and special meetings of the various missionary societies were held, lectures given, figures on insufficient missionary work quoted and huge amounts of funds raised.

To extricate themselves completely from all blame for the outbreak, the Evangelical party next successfully pointed to the Muslim hostility towards the followers of Christ. This enmity, they stressed, was not born of the missionary programme but had existed in spite of it. The followers of Islām, they maintained, had always remained deadly enemies of Christianity and would continue to be so in future. This hatred was alleged to be universal and was not confined to India. A Muslim was thought to be always obsessed with fear of the Christian truth. Whenever an opportunity presented itself to him to express his hatred and inimical posture towards Christianity, he amply availed himself of it. In India, however, the situation was presented as still worse.

⑧ There political enmity was believed to have been added to the existing religious hatred. The Muslims of India always felt ill at ease under the British rule. They were anxious to re-establish their past ascendancy in India, and were reported to have been indulging in ceaseless conspiracies for the overthrow of the British rule. The revolt of 1857, the missionaries emphasized, was simply another but more vigorous outburst of Muslim bigotry towards Christianity and the rule of the Christians. The Muslims were held responsible for every move in the uprising. In short, by presenting all these arguments, both against the Company and the Muslims, the Evangelicals

tried to absolve themselves of all responsibility in causing the outbreak.

In like manner, the civilian and military servants of the East India Company, with of course a few renegades on both sides, were at loggerheads with each other over the nature of the revolt. Just as it was not in the interest of the military servants to accept the mutiny view, similarly the civilian service had an equal dislike for the revolution theory. As the acceptance of either notion involved shouldering of responsibility, an implied admission of incompetence, and loss of prestige for the service, both tried to hide any facts damaging to them and bring to light only those which could possibly transfer all blame to the other party. To this end, news and information were tailored to the general interest of the services.

Among all these contending factions, the Conservatives enjoyed a much happier position. They had all along advocated a policy of caution and gradual advancement in India; quick changes were as noxious to them as the thought of a revolution itself. To them maintenance of native rule in the princely states of India was a source of strength to the British, because it presented a favourable contrast between the oppressive native despotism and enlightened British rule. Rapid

social and educational changes as well did not much appeal to them. They believed that Indian culture and civilization had much to offer to them and that its weaknesses should be overcome gradually. They thus enjoyed an upper hand in putting forward their opinions on the subject of the outbreak and an air of confidence pervaded their utterances. As they had always opposed the liberal Whig policies, virtually stood in opposition to the missionary "crusade" and had warned them of the serious consequences liable to follow in the wake of their laudable motives, they started to view the uprising through their past convictions.

The Conservatives patiently waited for a month and listened to the Government pronouncements, and finally refused to put any faith in the Whig version that the outbreak was not a people's protest against the recent government policies but a military mutiny caused chiefly by the introduction of greased cartridges. Describing the uprising as a national war, they predicted a prolonged struggle in India and called for adequate measures to meet the emergency -- measures like the calling up of the militia and rapid dispatch of adequate reinforcements. The Conservatives were soon joined by the Irish nationalists, the Chartists, the labour press and what I would like to call the "moralists" in the British society. Although at

variance with the Tories on the future British policy towards India, these three factions were one with Disraeli in describing the outbreak as a national revolt. Their persistence in this view; the fulfilment of their prediction of the prolongation of the struggle; the difficulties which the Government of India had to face in suppressing the insurrection; the British Government's earlier refusal to call the militia and its later decision to alter this stand; the extraordinarily large number of British troops sent to India<sup>44</sup> and finally the abolition of the East India Company produced a trend in public opinion to the Disraelian point of view.

44. For figures on the European and the native armies see Hansard 3, CL11, 359.

## CHAPTER II

### CAUSES OF THE MILITARY MUTINY

The military mutiny school of thought was composed of those liberal sections of British society, who, though liberal in their thinking at home and abroad, had a low opinion of the Indians and Indian society, and in consequence had a radical zeal to "purge" them; the Government of the time, that is the Whig Party and its press; the independent but (insofar as the mutiny was concerned) invariably pro-Government newspaper, The Times; the majority of the shareholders of the East India Company, its Courts of Proprietors and Directors; a large number of the civil servants in India, and ardent evangelicals like Lord Shaftesbury. As the majority of the components of the school reveal, it was not in their interest to accept, let alone describe, the outbreak as a national rebellion caused by politico-socio-economic discontent in India.

The years from 1830 to 1857 usually saw Whigs sitting as the majority in the Commons. During that fateful part of the nineteenth century they were invariably and deeply involved in the British imperial, colonial and foreign policies, and this was particularly true of policies pursued in India. To take

one important event closely connected with the outbreak of the Indian mutiny, the annexation of Awadh, one finds that all the directives contemplated or issued for the incorporation of the state into the British dominions in India proceeded from the Whig administration. When, in 1831, Lord William Bentinck was asked to occupy Awadh, the secret despatch emanated from Earl Grey's administration. Again in 1835, when Lord Auckland was reminded of the secret despatch of 1831, it was Viscount Melbourne who was in power. And finally when Lord Dalhousie occupied Awadh in 1856, it was Palmerston who was the Prime Minister. Palmerston's presence in the two aforementioned administrations as Foreign Secretary, and the absorption of the state while he held the office of the Prime Minister, sufficiently indicate a definite continuity in Whig policies. Lord Dalhousie, who though a conservative, embarked upon a career of vigorous imperial policy in India, was himself a Whig nominee. Under these circumstances, the fact of the outbreak and its intensity was no small reflection upon the British Indian administration. To have accepted the possibility of any grave political, social or economic discontent as the reason for the mutiny in India would have amounted to admitting the failure of the Government policies in the past decade or score of years and to invite public wrath; more so when the Conservatives were demanding the

application of the principle of ministerial responsibility over Awadh.<sup>1</sup>

So far as the liberal and independent press was concerned, i.e., The Times, the Manchester Guardian and the like, it had, in the past, always supported and endorsed a "forward" policy in India in fields both political and social. It is an admitted fact that the mutiny was also a reaction against the rapidity at which India was Anglicised, and modernized. Since this part of the press had always advocated such policies, it naturally tried to count out the idea of any popular disaffection in India and avoid sharing any responsibility for the outbreak. Similarly, it was not in the interest of the East India Company or its civilian servants to recognize the existence of a general antipathy or a popular alienation of public feelings towards their administration. Some of the evangelicals, however, wanted to prove that since the army was the only part of the Indian society not allowed to be penetrated by missionary activity, it had revolted -- uncivilized and untaught as it was.<sup>2</sup>

Obviously, the thinking of the adherents of this school ran counter to the views of the proponents of the socio-political rebellion school of thought. Although the majority of the former pin-pointed various defects in the organization of the army's administration and in its management, many of these people

1. The Press, 12 Sept. 1857.
2. "India's Idolatry and England's Connexion with it," Church of England Magazine (hereafter referred to as CEM), XLIII, 1857, p.408; The Rev. Baptist Wriothsesley Noel, England and India - An Essay on the Duty of Englishmen towards the Hindoos (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1859), p.V.

emphasized the grievances of the sepoys -- social, religious, military, political and financial. They explained the outbreak as a purely military uprising, which, it was argued, was taken advantage of by selfishly interested parties. Although it put forward strong and apparently convincing arguments, the school was marked by a lack of cohesion and unity which were quite often contradictory.

This school based its case upon a low evaluation of the Indian character and people. Its most strenuous advocates based their thesis upon the contention that Dalhousie's modernized India did not contain simply one nation, but that the Indians were comprised of a "good score of native populations, far more distinct from each other in language, customs and religion than the nations of Europe."<sup>3</sup> The stress was upon the nationalities of India rather than upon the Indians as a nation. Regarding India as a mere "geographical expression", the Saturday Review called the Indian subcontinent an "untempered assemblage of tribes, races, classes, and septs, bound into a whole by the solitary tie of obedience to some strong master. National adversities, far more hopelessly irreconcilable than can be guessed at even by looking at the standing quarrel between Italians and Germans, or between Saxon and Celt, are eclipsed by yet more trenchant

3. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (hereafter referred to as Blackwood's), LXXXII, 1857, p.374. For a similar opinion, see also: Manchester Guardian, 25 Sept, 1857. The paper reacted with extreme annoyance when Jones, a proprietor of the East India Company, attributed the Delhi mutiny and Kanpur massacre to the system of annexation lately followed by the Government. It asserted that to accept the annexations of the Panjab, Sind and Awadh as the inciting cause of mutiny was tantamount to regarding the inhabitants of India as a single nation, "one in blood, in language, in religion", animated by patriotism as warm as that of Italians in 1848, or of the Irish at the beginning of the 19th century. It concluded with the remark:

Such a theory does not deserve the labour of refutation. It is enough to state it and leave it to work its condemnation and that of its author in the minds of all who read it.

The paper, however, accepted that the annexation of Awadh might have alienated the feelings of the Muslims, who regarded the English as usurpers and that this might account for Muslim conspiracies but not at all for the sepoy revolt.

division in the society itself. Even if there were an India, there would be, we repeat, no people of India. The word is a foolish misnomer for a collection of stratified castes."<sup>4</sup> All nation-making ingredients, such as unity of feeling, of ideas, of blood, which could more or less harmonise Indian thinking and cause national unity, or could give the Indians a common purpose, were, it was asserted, completely nonexistent among the inhabitants of the Indian peninsula.<sup>5</sup>

To call the Indians a nation was, therefore, to this school as erroneous a usage as the expression "European", if the Europeans were to be thought of as one nation. India certainly was not to Indians, it was claimed, as England was to Englishmen or even Italy to Italians.<sup>6</sup> "From the Himalayas to Cape Camorin", so contended the writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, "the use of the term 'national' is in India a 'mockery, a delusion and a snare'." In fact, India was an expression used only for the sake of convenience. Otherwise India never was, argued the same writer, a nation, not even a confederacy of nations and for that reason the Indians had nothing "national within themselves."<sup>7</sup> It was believed that the Indians had no internal bond of unity whatsoever and that they were, in reality, no better than "a confused, disjointed collection of struggling races".<sup>8</sup>

4. Saturday Review, 3 Oct. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: "The Government of India and the Mutinies," British Quarterly Review (hereafter referred to as BQR.), XXVI, 1857, pp.499-500; "Hindoosim and Mohammedanism in India," CEM., XLIII, 1857, p.191; Manchester Guardian, 17 Aug. 1857.

5. Manchester Guardian, 17 Aug. 1857.

6. Ibid.; "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.374.

7. "The Bengal Mutiny," Ibid.

8. "The English in India," Westminster Review (hereafter referred to as WR.), New Series, XLII, 1858, p.199.

The existence of any fusion among Indians was denied even at the village level. The only connecting link, thought one advocate of this thesis, was provided by the central police and judicial systems.<sup>9</sup>

Since the Indians did not fall into the category of a nation, there could be no question of "national discontent" or for that reason of a "national insurrection."<sup>10</sup> A writer in the Westminster Review lashed out against John Bright when the latter called the outbreak a movement for independence. He observed, "as to independence, it is the veriest chimera ever begotten by prejudice out of ignorance... The people of India has no existence but in the brain of Mr. Bright."<sup>11</sup> The Times also expressed similar feelings but with regard to the Hindūs alone. It maintained discreet silence as far as the presence of any national feeling among the Muslims was concerned.<sup>12</sup>

With nationality denied to the Indians and the idea of a national insurrection counted out, the mutiny school spent all its energies emphasizing the anomalies in the army administration of India and so tried to build, though with only partial success, its thesis of an army insurrection. Starting off with a discussion of the nature of the sepoy army this school covered every conceivable aspect of military confusion and concluded that the sepoy was nothing less than a pent-up volcano.

9. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.374.

10. Ibid. For a similar opinion, see also: Manchester Guardian, 25 Sept. 1857.

11. "The English in India," WR., New Series, XLII, 1858, p.199.

12. 1 July, 1857.

It stressed that time after time the Government had been served with unheeded warnings.<sup>13</sup> On each such occasion it behaved like an ostrich with its head in the sand, while these warnings went unheard, unseen and unnoticed. Unchecked, the sepoy volcano had built up pressure until it reached a point where the explosion was only a matter of time, and it came to its necessary erupting point in May, 1857.

Even the nature of the army upon which the continuation of the empire depended, was to many interpreters, contradictory.<sup>14</sup> It was an organization composed of foreigners and mercenaries, from which the loyalty of a national army could not be expected. Its only link with the English was its pay and that was far from a steady bond.<sup>15</sup> This relationship was further enfeebled by the recognition of caste in the Bengal army.<sup>16</sup> The noxious practice of attending to caste at the time of enlistment quite frequently excluded not only the best material from the army but also resulted in "enlisting the very worst."<sup>17</sup> Under this system a man was not selected on account of the most important qualities in a soldier, i.e., physical fitness, willingness and strength, docility and courage, but because he belonged to a certain caste or sect. Where he failed to fulfil caste qualifications, whatever his other merits, he received no attention because the Government was afraid of offending

13. Manchester Guardian, 7 and 16 Sept. 1857; Illustrated London News, 1 Aug. 1857; The Scotsman, 2 Sept. 1857; Leopold Von Olrich, Military Mutiny in India: Its Origin and its Results, with Observations by Maj.-Gen. Sir W.M.G. Colebrooke, trans. Anonymously (London: T. and W. Brone, 1859), pp.22-23; Wm. R. Aikman, The Bengal Mutiny: Popular Opinions Concerning the Origin of the Mutiny Refuted: The Real Cause Considered; with suggestions for the Future, in a Letter to Viscount Palmerston, 26 Sept. 1857 (London: Richardson Bros.), p.13; Annual Register, 1857, p.239; Henry Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, Civil, Military and Social, from the First Landing of the English, to the Suppression of the Sepoy Revolt, including an Outline of the Early History of Hindoostan, (Three Vols.; London: Black and Son, 1862), 111, pp.553-54; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 284, 443 and CXLVI, 1333-34. Viscount Melville who had earlier served on the Indian army, was not even allowed to make public the deficiencies of the Bengal army. When he tried to do so on his return from India in 1850, he was asked to keep silent, lest "foreign nations should be acquainted with the real state of affairs."

14. This was almost an universal opinion.

15. The Mutiny in the Bengal Army (London: John Chapman, 1857), p.5.

16. Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857; Julius George Medley, A Year's Campaigning in India, March 1857 to March 1858 (London: W. Thacker and Co., 1858), pp.199-204; "The Indian Mutiny," Electric Review (hereafter referred to as ER.), 11, 1857, p.535.

17. Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857; Brig. General John Jacob, Tracts on the Native Army of India, its Organization and Discipline (London: Reprinted by Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), p.27.

"the lazy and insolent Brahmins."<sup>18</sup> The hard result was that the Bengal army did not contain the same diversity of sects and caste as the armies of the Bombay and Madras presidencies. It was confined to Brahmans, Rājput̥s, and Muslims -- the three dominant races.<sup>19</sup> After criticizing the attention paid to caste in the army, the Manchester Guardian, as did many other papers, periodicals, pamphlets and individuals, quoted liberally from Brigadier-General John Jacob of the famous Sind Irregular Horse,<sup>20</sup> who had earlier clearly underlined the perils and hazards hidden in the system. Jacob had observed:

The effect of enlisting men of certain caste, or creed to the exclusion of others in the Indian army is to subject that army to the control, not of the Government and the Articles of War, but to that of Brahmins and Goseins, Moollahs [Mullā]<sup>21</sup> and Fakheers [Faqīrs]<sup>22</sup>.... The consequences are ruinous to discipline. BY REASON OF THIS A NATIVE SOLDIER IN BENGAL IS FAR MORE AFRAID OF AN OFFENCE AGAINST CASTE THAN OF AN OFFENCE AGAINST THE ARTICLES OF WAR AND BY THIS MEANS A DEGREE OF POWER RESTS WITH THE PRIVATE SOLDIER WHICH IS ENTIRELY INCOMPATIBLE WITH HEALTHY RULE.<sup>23</sup>

The caste monopoly in the Bengal army was regarded as one of its major weaknesses. It led to the formation of caste and creed groups on regimental lines. Subsequently, the caste groups wielded real power in the regiments -- a power to be reckoned with in several fields of army administration. While "TREACHERY, MUTINY, VILLAINY OF ALL KINDS"<sup>24</sup> were rendered possible without much fear of detection because of caste, creed and family bonds,

18. Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: Jacob, op. cit., pp.33-34; "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.538.

19. [W. Sinclair], The Sepoy Mutinies: Their Origin and their Cure (London: Wertheim and Macintosh, 1857), pp.5-6; Manchester Guardian, 16 Sept. 1857; "The Sepoy Rebellion," London Quarterly Review (hereafter referred to as LQR.), IX, 1857-58, p.236. Criticising the composition of the sepoy regiments, which included 400 "hereditary priests", 200 Rajputs -- with every one of them considering himself as "the son of a King", 200 Muslims and 200 other low caste soldiers, the author of "The Sepoy Rebellion" bitterly questioned:

What should we think of a British statesman who would attempt to govern Ireland by regiments of Maynooth priests.

20. Jacob died in service on 5 December, 1858. Although his military writings were extensively quoted by the holders of the mutiny point of view, Jacob himself, strangely enough, never seems to have commented on the nature of the outbreak.

21. A learned Muslim; a Muslim priest; a Muslim theologian.

22. Poor, needy, indigent, destitute; a beggar; a religious mendicant; an ascetic; a devotee.

23. Jacob, loc. cit.; Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857. Also quoted and reported by: "The Indian Mutiny," ER. 11, 1857, p.538; [G. B. Malleson], The Mutiny of the Bengal Army (also called Red Pamphlet), (Two Parts; London: Bosworth and Harrison, 1858), pt. 1, p.7.

24. Jacob, op. cit., p.34; Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.538.

these orders (caste groups) became a sort of pressure group in the regiments. In order to support his contention, Jacob reported an instance of forced dismissal of "an excellent sepoy because the other men had discovered him to be of inferior caste and demanded his dismissal."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, if a low caste Hindū happened at all to fill a higher post, i.e., Śūbahdār in the army, he was invariably under the spiritual influence of the Brahmanical clique and would always show too great a reverence even to the rawest recruit of the priestly class.<sup>26</sup> This materially impaired discipline in the army. Even if he were to know of a conspiracy being hatched in the lines, he would not dare to divulge the secret for fear of excommunication -- a penalty more dreadful than that of death.<sup>27</sup> Such a regimental composition was also dangerous from another point of view. Since the army had become a stronghold of caste and superstition, contended one, the soldiers could easily be made to believe the stories that man's ingenuity could invent.<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, the Bengal sepoy being a high-caste man, he took pride in his own person and his own soldierly qualities as against the Bombay and Madras sepoy, who, on the contrary, looked upon his European comrade as his model in "all things pertaining to soldiership."<sup>29</sup> As a

25. Jacob, op. cit., p.34. For similar opinions, see also: Martin Richard Gubbins, An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh, and of the Siege of the Lucknow Residency with some Observations on the Condition of the Province of Oudh, and on the Causes of the Mutiny of the Bengal Army (London: Richard Bentley, 1858), pp.89-90; "Has the Preservation of Caste Conduced to the Present Revolt in India - Affirmative Reply," BC., 1858, p.226; Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

26. Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and its Consequences, p.22.

27. [Malleeson], op. cit., pt. I, p.7.

28. The Rev. J. Smith, "Resumption of the Mission in Delhi," Missionary Herald (hereafter referred to as MH.), Ll, 1859, p.389. For a similar opinion, see also: "Has the Preservation....Affirmative Article - 1," BC., 1858, p.29.

29. Jacob, op. cit., p.35; Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

result, it was argued, the latter was amenable to teaching, guidance, and discipline; the former was not. The Madras and Bombay sepoy was always prepared to execute any order from the cleaning of lines to the building of officers' houses and messrooms as well as other odd jobs. This, however, was not applicable to his counterpart in the Bengal Presidency. The situation had become so deplorable there, complained Jacob, that a cavalry man would not picket, unsaddle or groom his horse until the arrival of "Syces [Sā'īs]" and grasscutters -- sometimes several hours after the arrival of the regiment at its ground. A Bengal sentry was not prepared even to strike the gong at his own quarter-guard and men called "gunta-panday [Gantā Pāṇḍē]"<sup>30</sup> were especially maintained and paid for that purpose.<sup>31</sup> To such a state of helplessness had the recognition of caste reduced the army, editorially complained the Manchester Guardian, that jobs came to be classified. A man who would dust his officer's furniture or trim his lamp would not sweep the floor; the personal attendant would not serve coffee; one who brought his officer's pipe would not light it; the groom who rubbed down his officer's horse would not make his bed or cut grass for him.<sup>32</sup> It was complained that each duty required a person of separate caste to perform it. On 15 September, 1857, the Manchester Guardian quoted Jacob

30. Ghantā means bell, and Pāṇḍē is a sub-caste among the Brahmans. Ghantā Pāṇḍē apparently was the designation in the army of one employed for striking the bell.

31. Jacob, op. cit., pp.35-36; Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

32. 16 Sept. 1857.

who had severely criticised this rigid stratification in the army and the acceptance of caste in its ranks. Jacob had observed:

....in the army of Bombay, where in hundreds and thousands of men from Hindoostan, from the same villages, of the same caste, and even of the same families, brothers by the same fathers and mothers as the fine gentlemen of the Bengal army, are seen in the ranks, shoulder to shoulder, nay, even sleeping in the same tent with the Mahratta, the Dher and the Purwaree, without scruple or thought of objection. The one prides himself on being a Hindoo, the other on being a soldier. Which pride is best for our purpose? This system of regarding caste is the original cause of many other evils in the Bengal army;....<sup>33</sup>

Next day the paper editorially censured the army as uncomfortable, uneconomic and dangerous for discipline.

It strongly advised the Government that:

We must not compel a high-caste man to do a duty below him, but there is no reason why we should not employ a low caste man to do a dozen above him. In Bombay this is done.... In Bombay ten low caste Hindoos, or the same number of Mussalmans, are taught to do the work of thirty Bengal servants; and as the same material is to be found in either presidency, we see no reason why what is done in the one, with economy and comfort, should not be followed out in the other, both in the army and domestic life.<sup>34</sup>

W. Sinclair, Rector of Pulborough in Sussex,<sup>35</sup> saw another clear advantage which could have accrued to the British, had they employed all different castes and sects in the Bengal army. Such a practice, if followed, would surely have bred mutual distrust and jealousy among the sepoys and would, naturally, have obstructed any unity

33. See also: Jacob, op. cit., p.35.

34. Manchester Guardian, 16 Sept. 1857.

35. Sinclair had earlier seen military service in India as a commissioned officer in the Madras cavalry. (DNB., L11, pp.310-11). Though he attributed the outbreak to a large number of governmental mistakes - civil, military and political, his main emphasis was on the role of the Muslims in the uprising. He emphatically called the followers of Islām as the watchful and exasperated enemies of the British.

of action among them against the Government.<sup>36</sup> It was this "castification" of the army which produced the greatest damage. The Earl of Albemarle, earlier an M.P. in Whig interest, called the outbreak a caste affair in the army<sup>37</sup> and the Manchester Guardian critically remarked:

It was by enlisting high-caste men on high-caste terms, and treating them on their own principles, that that disorganization was brought about which has been mediately the cause of such fearful calamities.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to the admission of caste, "unequal enlistment of troops in the various provinces and principalities of India," it was contended, also contributed towards the paralysis of discipline in the army.<sup>39</sup> Since a large section of it was recruited from Awadh, the opinions of Awadhian sepoys in the army governed the rest of it. This was regarded as a factor that bred greater possibilities of fellow feeling and provided increased facilities for the hatching of a conspiracy without being discovered -- something dangerous for the continuation of British rule in India.<sup>40</sup>

Next to this was the great disproportion between the native troops and their European counterparts. This imbalance in numbers was highly important and was naturally emphasized by many.<sup>41</sup> As the empire grew and as warlike and turbulent races of the Panjab, Sind Awadh, Pegu, Nagpur, Berar and many other territories were added to the

36. [Sinclair], op. cit., pp.5-6.

37. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 524-25 and 1335. For a similar opinion also see col. 1590.

38. 14 Oct. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: Manchester Guardian, 31 Oct. 1857; Kenneth Macqueen, Who is to Blame for the Indian Mutinies (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable and Co. London: Hamilton Adams and Co., 1857), p.25; The Rev. James Wallace, The Revolt in India: Its Causes and its Lessons, A Lecture delivered in Belfast, on 2 Feb. 1859 (Belfast: C. Aitchison, 1859), p.21; "Has the Preservation....Affirmative Article 11," BC., 1858, pp.32-34; "The Outbreak in India," CEM., XLIII, 1857, p.266.

39. Investigation into Some of the Causes Which have Produced the Rebellion in India (Printed for Private Circulation, 1857), p.39. For similar opinions, see also: Henry Montgomery Lawrence, Essays: Military and Political (London: Wm. H. Allen, 1859), 29; "The Native Troops in India," Letter to The Spectator, 1857, p.675.

40. Investigation into Some...., p.39; "The Native Troops in India," Letter to The Spectator, 1857, p.675. Calling the native Indian army "a self-chosen corporation", this columnist of The Spectator had this to say:

The district from which they [sepoys] are recruited is too limited: recruiting parties are sent down who recruit mostly amongst their relatives and connexions....the men are thus too much linked together; too many Brahamins are enlisted, and they being more intellectuals than the rest take the lead; an organization is thus introduced which would enable the soldiery, could they succeed in throwing off the English yoke, to become, as lately in the Punjab on the death of Ranjeet Singh, the ruling power in the state by a sort of military republic.

To avoid these pitfalls in the future, the author of The Mutiny in the Bengal Army suggested the formation of a multi-racial army. composed of Gōrkhās, Marhatahs, Afghāns, Rājputs, Jāts, Gūjars, the Bilōchīs, the Panjābīs, Negroes from Africa, Arracanese, Mugs, Puguese, Burmese and Malays. p.22. Cf. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, pp.390-92; Manchester Guardian, 6 July, 11 Aug. and 4 Nov. 1857.

41. Almost universally emphasized by the advocates of the present school of thought as well as

some adherents of other schools. Disraeli and his followers, however, refused to admit this as a cause of the outbreak. They drew their support by pointing to Meerut where there was no deficiency of European troops. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 495.

According to the Manchester Guardian of 30 June, 1857, the strength of European troops at Meerut was 2,200 men of all arms, with a full complement of officers.

British empire of the east, so the problem in the imperial military machine was exacerbated. While the strength of European troops in India in 1857 was less than in 1835, the native army had increased by more than a hundred thousand men.<sup>42</sup> Consequently, Government demands upon the services of the European troops increased immensely.<sup>43</sup> The result was that hundreds of miles intervened between places where British troops were stationed.<sup>44</sup> Awadh was left with only one regiment. The sepoy was quite conscious of his own numerical superiority and the weakness of his masters -- a consciousness which, it was contended, was further enforced by the withdrawal of Anglo-Indian regiments for service in the Crimea, Persia and China.<sup>45</sup> The low tide, it was argued, was at its lowest ebb. The sepoy was now more willing to entertain the idea of a mutiny, and more reluctant to abandon it when once entertained.<sup>46</sup> Thus it was that Martin R. Gubbins, afterwards a judge of the Supreme Court at Agra, strongly held:

Religious alarm might have been excited; the native soldier might have been at the same time discontented and insubordinate; the talooqdars [Ta'alluqah dār]<sup>47</sup> of Oudh and the royal families of Delhi and Lucknow might have plotted; yet had we possessed a few English regiments in the country, discontent would never have matured into rebellion.<sup>48</sup>

This might, in the opinion of the present writer, explain the ferocity of the outbreak in Awadh and

42. "Indian Heroes," WR., New Series, XLV, 1858, p.353; Investigation into Some...., p.15.

43. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 1133.

44. Investigation into Some...., p.15.

45. Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie]. English Tenure of India. Practical Remarks Suggested by the Bengal Mutiny (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1857), pp.4-5. For similar opinions, see also: Beveridge, op. cit., p.555; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," Dublin University Magazine (hereafter referred to as DUM.), L, 1857, p.389.

46. Wallace, op. cit., pp.17-18; "Indian Heroes," loc. cit.

47. One who holds a Ta'alluqah, a landholder, possessor of an estate, lord of a manor. Under the Mughals an officially appointed feudal lord, who had the obligation to perform revenue and fiscal, in addition to certain civil and administrative duties in his Ta'alluqah or estate.

48. Gubbins, op. cit., p.99. Gubbins had joined the service of the East India Company in 1830 as a writer. Twenty-six years later he was sent to Awadh as a member of the British Commission at the annexation of the state. Subsequently he made an extensive tour of Awadh as a financial commissioner in order to test the summary settlement of land revenue which had just been completed. Though averse to the idea of any popular rising having occurred in the North-Western Provinces, Gubbins admitted the general character of the revolt in the state of Awadh.

the North-West Provinces as compared to the quiet (though the Muslims were reported feeling uneasy everywhere) of the Panjab, which had several European regiments.

If the defective nature and composition of the Indian army had made the sepoy self-confident, it had also made the Government conscious of the weakness in its large native army establishment. The Government consequently adopted a weak and vacillating policy, which, it was contended, resulted in the ruin of army discipline. The sepoy was petted more and more into believing that he was irresistible.<sup>49</sup> This pampering of the sepoy had started as early as 1827, when Lord Combermere, then Commander-in-Chief in India, limited the jurisdiction of court-martial and diminished the authority of the commanding officers. Finding his power over his men seriously impaired, the European officer was inevitably dissatisfied and disgruntled. He decided to pass over offences of which, under the new regulations, he could not take cognizance without exhibiting to his men the loss of his authority over them. The sepoy, it was held, soon discovered this and ceased to be as deferential and obedient as before. Although Combermere's successor restored to the officers their partial authority, Lord William Bentinck, who was the Governor-General of India from 1828 to 1835, went one step further when, in defiance of all advice, warning and

49. Manchester Guardian, 14 Oct. and 3 Nov. 1857; "Indian Military Mistakes," Saturday Review, 25 July, 1857; Robert J. Roy Campbell, The Indian Mutiny, its Causes and its Remedies. A Letter to Rt. Hon. Lord Viscount Palmerston (London: Charles Evans, 1858), p.5; India, the Revolt and the Home Government (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1857), p.23; Oliver J. Jones, Recollections of a Winter Campaign in India in 1857-58 (London: Saunders and Otley, 1859), pp.X-XI.

remonstrance, he abolished corporal punishment in the native army but retained it for the Europeans.<sup>50</sup> The result, in the words of a native Şūbahdār addressed to Gubbins, was: "fauj beydar hogeea", that is: "the army had ceased to fear".<sup>51</sup> The Manchester Guardian called it "a piece of moribund humanity and short-sighted policy,"<sup>52</sup> an humanitarian error which the sepoy misinterpreted as the result of Government's fear of his rebellious intentions. It very naturally rendered him more defiant and exacting.<sup>53</sup> The new rule was allowed to work for ten years with all its consequences of disorder and mutiny until partially rescinded in 1845. The decade of its application, however, had already done sufficient damage to army discipline.<sup>54</sup> Yet its restoration could not be welcomed by the sepoys. Robert J. Roy Campbell, M.P., and a resident of twenty-five years' experience in India, described it as an error in military legislation of which the sepoy took advantage.<sup>55</sup>

In addition, it was further complained that Bentinck had also invited appeals against the decisions of army officers and had abolished night guards provided by native officers over the persons and properties of the Company's officers.<sup>56</sup> If the privilege of appeal, argued the same critic, had created a suspicion in the minds of sepoys regarding undue exercise of authority by their

50. Manchester Guardian, 26 Aug. 1857; Joachim H. Stocqueler, India: Its History, Climate, Products, with a full Account of the Origin, Progress and Development of the Bengal Mutiny and Suggestions as to the Future Government of India (London: George Routledge and Co., 1857), pp.17-18; Jones, op. cit., pp.X-XI; "Past Errors of Military Management in India, to be avoided in Future," Letter to The Spectator, 22 Aug. 1857; Campbell, op. cit., p.5; "The English in India," WR., New Series, XIII, 1858, p.196; Sydney Cotton, Nine Years on the North-West Frontier of India (London: Richard Bentley, 1868), p.154.

51. Gubbins, op. cit., p.90.

52. 28 Aug. 1857.

53. Stocqueler, loc. cit.

54. Manchester Guardian, 26 Aug. 1857.

55. Campbell, op. cit., p.6.

56. "Past Errors of Military.....," loc. cit.

officers in the past, the suspension of night guards took away from the sepoy what he had so far considered as the most sacred duty to perform. Both steps were regarded as sufficient to break the bond between officers and their men -- a loss which could not be repaired.

To make matters worse, expostulated a military officer, the sepoy was at times asked to spy on the conduct of his European officers -- a step which was sure to bring the authority of European officers into contempt.<sup>57</sup>

Although in 1857 European commanders were allowed to hold court-martial, the step failed to enhance them in the eyes of their soldiers for the act was described as no better than "a mockery of justice and a curse to the army." The court-martial was to be comprised of native officers. In order to enforce the performance of the smallest duty, or to punish the most flagrant delinquency, the commander was always obliged to appeal to the authority of the native officers, thus reducing the European officer to parity.<sup>58</sup> All these privileges or the "Magna Carta of privileges"<sup>59</sup> as one of this school put it, had turned the sepoy's head and had led him to believe that the officers were only to superintend his drill or to show him the way in battle, with no power to reward or punish.<sup>60</sup> It was this relaxation of discipline, believed Captain Oliver J. Jones, combined with the habit of "giving in to all sepoy whims

57. Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies (London: Richard Bentley, 1857), p.15.

58. Ibid., pp.15-16.

59. "Our Indian Empire," Quarterly Review (hereafter referred to as QR.), C111, 1858, p.262.

60. Ibid.

and fancies, reasonable or unreasonable" and the attempt to "coax and cajole them to their duty by rewards often unmerited; instead of punishing the neglect of it," which imparted to the sepoys an impression that the performance of their duty was a sort of favour rather than a necessity and in turn fostered the spirit of mutiny.<sup>61</sup> No wonder Lord Shaftesbury in his speech at Wimborne Town Hall categorically denied any semblance of civil support to the outbreak and decried it as an army affair first and last. Answering his own question as to who were the rebels, he exclaimed:

It [the rebellion] arose from a monster of our own creation; it arose from an army pampered, flattered, overpaid and underworked. It arose from an army that we had raised by discipline into the attitude it had assumed....and by our neglect we allowed it to acquire a sense of its own importance and the conviction that it could act independently of its European officers, and that it was as capable as it was willing to take the empire into its own hands.<sup>62</sup>

The author of India, the Revolt and the Home Government, expressed similar sentiments (though he called it a Muslim inspired rebellion), and deplored that "we have been bitten by the snake which we have nurtured in our bosom."<sup>63</sup>

Apart from this, editorially criticised the Manchester Guardian, a defect of a dangerous kind had gradually established itself in the army organization. It was the ever-growing tendency to exclude native talent

61. Jones, op. cit., pp.X-XI.

62. The Earl of Shaftesbury, England's Apostasy in India and the Earl of Shaftesbury's Great Speech on Indian Cruelties, delivered at Wimborne, p.6. For similar reactions, see also: Manchester Guardian, 26 Aug. 1857.

63. India, the Revolt....., p.23.

from authority in the native regiments. This could not have augured well for the future. A cursory glance at the history of the sepoy army would at once reveal that the Company's army, though drilled in European fashion, was in the beginning primarily officered by natives, -- "chiefs connected with the men by ties of consanguinity -- and clientship." An European Officer, well versed in the use of native language, was only occasionally attached with very limited duties -- confined to those of a commissioner or a field officer. The result, commented the paper, was that the service thus obtained was very efficient. The first marked change, however, occurred in 1786, when, along with regularizing the size of each battalion to a thousand men, one European Captain and two Lieutenants were added to each one of them. This addition of European officers, no doubt, led to undermining the authority of the natural leaders, still it was done to a limited extent and the native *Ṣūbahdārs* and *Jama'dārs* continued to conduct their companies. So far it all went very well. Then started a period in which the increasing number of English applicants for commissions in the Indian army, coupled with British confidence in its complete supremacy in the subcontinent, resulted in a systematic disregard of the policy of enlisting the sympathies and interests of the Indian aristocracy in support of the British military organization. Soon, the Liberal organ complained,

further European personnel were introduced at a still lower level when a European Subaltern was allotted to command each company. Though the feelings of native Śūbahdārs were spared as much as possible, the new element grew stronger and stronger in the 1790s. The native gentleman could no longer disguise from himself or from his men that his shadow covered less and less.<sup>64</sup>

Such a change brought in its wake three evils:

a) It was no longer possible, the paper pointed out, to select European officers from the sepoy commands. As the vacancies arose, "raw lads, fresh from England, with all their inexperience and inborn prejudices in full flower were brought forward to supply them. Such boys could hardly avoid coming into constant and painful collision with the native officers." The differences of colour and speech further enlarged the mutual aversion.

b) The increased number of English officers, it was argued, made them too familiar to be held in the old respect. Since the Englishman was seen holding no important position but was busy either in the performance of those ordinary duties which any native officer or even a non-commissioned officer could do equally well, or was found trifling away his time in what was described as "frivolous and vicious pursuits," the "prestige of the superior race" was thus destroyed and the officer too lost "somewhat of his own self-respect." At times also a

64. Manchester Guardian, 7 Sept. 1857.

young boy was placed in command of an old native Şūbahdār, from whom, whenever anything was to be done, he had "to crave instructions."<sup>65</sup>

c) The effect, it was contended, of European appointments upon native officers and finally upon the whole military service was no less damaging. It not only deprived the native officer of all his influence and authority in the corps, but soon his very character started to degenerate. In fact, the service "may be said to have changed its very nature altogether." Formerly the elite of the native gentry was enlisted in the ranks of the Company's army. Now no native gentleman would even think of donning the uniform of the regular army. Earlier, since each one of the native officers was an educated person, he would keep the accounts of his company, would write orders and dispatches and, at times, act as an interpreter, "where his European comrades would have been otherwise at fault." All this had changed. The soldiers of India, it was pointed out, became the most unsettled men in the country.<sup>66</sup>

The tragedy was that the changeover from native to European officers was not complete. While more and more European officers were introduced, it was complained, the native officer was also retained. This was a great anomaly. It resulted in the Government gradually losing its hold upon the native army. It was, in fact, in

65. Ibid., 29 Sept. 1857.
66. Manchester Guardian, 7 Sept. 1857.

imminent danger of falling "between two stools."<sup>67</sup> Either the Government, it was suggested, should have made the European element much larger and more efficient than it did or it should have, if it thought fit to deprive the native officer of all real authority and patronage, completely discontinued the class of native commissioned officers. The fact, however, was that it did neither. This writer is of the opinion that power divorced from responsibility or responsibility divorced from power are both dangerous, but the absence of both power and responsibility is still worse. It is exactly the situation in which the native officer seems to have found himself, holding office and rank without proportionate power and responsibility. His position in the army, it was thought, had become tenuous. "It was no longer," argued the Manchester Guardian editorially, "an honoured or honourable calling to wear the English uniform. The natural leaders of the people had been driven from the service with bitterness in their hearts and their place has not been adequately supplied in point either of numbers or respectability, by the substitution of English officers. The controlling and directing power of the army had sunk into the hands of a low, ill-educated and unrespected class of natives, reinforced by the weakest part of the talent, and the least creditable part of the

67. Ibid.

ambition annually deported from England."<sup>68</sup> The net result was that when a mutinous spirit took roots in the army -- a spirit which was completely extinct previous to these changes -- these native officers for obvious reasons either could not or would not do anything. In referring to an article published on the subject of army organization in the Edinburgh Review some years before the outbreak and the subsequent neglect of the Government to pay any attention to it, the very vocal Manchester Guardian critically remarked:

....the foreboding which they [allegations and reasoning] were calculated to suggest appear to be in the course of fulfilment with terrible minuteness and precision.<sup>69</sup>

While the native commissioned officer was reduced to a nonentity, the European commander fared hardly better.<sup>70</sup> Not only, it was contended, did Lord Dalhousie not let the control of the army pass to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, now that Bengal had been constituted into a distinct Government by the Charter Act of 1854, but he embarked upon an ambitious course to centralize all power in his own hands.<sup>71</sup> What Bentinck had done out of humanitarian motives, Dalhousie did to satisfy his excessive desire for more power. This not only weakened the dignity of the Commander-in-Chief but also largely minimized the influence of commanding officers in their regiments.<sup>72</sup> This time the English

- 68. Ibid.
- 69. Ibid.
- 70. Gubbins, op. cit., pp.90-91.
- 71. George B. Norton, The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another (London: Richardson Bros., 1857), p.39. For a similar opinion, see also: Campbell, op. cit., p.5.
- 72. Campbell, loc. cit.

officers were shorn of all power to punish or reward and the prior sanction of the central Government to all such acts was necessary.<sup>73</sup> The most pernicious change, earnestly protested by many, was that in several instances the sepoy was allowed and even encouraged to forward complaints against his commander direct to army headquarters.<sup>74</sup>

The disadvantages of the Governor-General trying to exercise immediate and direct control over the army of Bengal were obvious to several contemporaries. In spite of his disposition to supervise the most minute details of ordinary routine, it was physically impossible for him to look after all of them, especially when he had the countless civil concerns of the great Indian empire to attend to.<sup>75</sup> The inevitable result could be predicted in such circumstances. The military administration of India, it was argued, instead of becoming simple, became "complicated, disjointed and confused"; instead of becoming vigorous, it became "weak, vacillating and ill informed even in general matters and lamentably ignorant in those minute details in which the Central Government so unwisely meddles."<sup>76</sup> The excessive centralisation,<sup>77</sup> these people averred, had doubly harmed the army administration.

Firstly, it sapped the strong feelings of personal attachment of the soldier to his officer -- an

73. Mead, op. cit., pp.27-28. To support his contention the author gave the instance of Shaik Phutto, a sepoy of the 34th. Native Infantry, who gallantly defended an English officer against the attack of Mangal Pāndē, while the rest of the regiment acted as silent spectators, Maj.-Gen. Hearsy, the Commander of the division, promoted the sepoy to the rank of Hawāldār. For this the Major-General was reprimanded by Lord Canning, the Governor-General of India. The reprimand read:

It is not in the power of the Major-General commanding the division to make this promotion, which can proceed only from the Government of India, and therefore should not have appeared in a Divisional Order without the sanction of the Government.

Lord Derby, though not an exponent of the military mutiny thesis, also referred to the same instance and complained about this lack of power with the commanding officers. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 41.

For other similar reactions, see also: Manchester Guardian, 26 Aug. 1857; "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.535; Gubbins, op. cit., pp.90-91; [Malleson], op. cit., pt. 1, p.8; [Sinclair], op. cit., p.7; Investigations into Some...., p.43; "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-58, p.234.

74. Jacob, op. cit., pp.30-31. Also quoted by the Manchester Guardian of 15 Sept. 1857, and several other newspapers, periodicals and pamphlets.

75. Norton, op. cit., p.40.

76. Ibid., p.39.

77. "The English in India," WR., New Series, XLll, 1858, p.196; Medley, op. cit., pp.200-201; "Our Indian Empire," QR., Cl11, 1858, p.262.

attachment which earlier was the result of a feeling of love for and fear of the officer, which was indeed very widespread and had formed the life-blood of the regiment. As the sepoy had now to look to the Government or the new regulations for his future prospects of advancement rather than to his immediate superiors, his love, attachment to and fear of the officer had also disappeared.<sup>78</sup>

Secondly, the extravagantly centralising policy killed independence both of thought and action among the superiors themselves. Honest and efficient army officers resentful of this lack of confidence in themselves were driven to aloofness and "moody silence."<sup>79</sup> Henceforward, they slept soundly on their difficulties, regardless of whether action was necessary. The communication of valuable information began to be ignored. This led to the neglect of essential measures or the introduction of trivial or abortive ones, based as they were either upon ignorance or upon half truths. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and so it was in the case of the handling of the native army by the central Government of India.<sup>80</sup> A correspondent from New Brighton asserted in The Times that centralization was dangerous to experiment with, especially when the native army was mercenary in character and its uninformed patriotism was likely to

78. Medley, op. cit., pp.199-204.
79. Norton, op. cit., p.43. For a similar opinion, see also: Miles, Letter to The Times, 7 July, 1857.
80. Norton, op. cit., pp.43-45.

array itself against the British.<sup>81</sup>

To aggravate the situation further the Government of India had fallen into the habit of withdrawing army officers from military service for civil employment. This rendered the strength of British army officers highly disproportionate with the strength of the native army.<sup>82</sup> On this point the Indian administration was scathingly attacked by critics of all shades of public opinion.<sup>83</sup> The meteoric expansion of territories and the increasing demand for more and more civil administrators and engineers, coupled with the East India Company's desire to economize, led to meeting new demands at the expense of the army; more and more officers were pulled out of active regimental service and employed in the Company's civil and political service; the public works department, irregular corps or in staff or other appointments. The result was that in April 1857, 1215 officers of the Bengal army were absent from their regiments.<sup>84</sup> These loans of personnel, it was contended, became long term.<sup>85</sup> The cumulative effect of all this was disastrous -- a many-pronged thorn in the side of the army administration:

a) Such an anomalous practice, it was contended, deprived the army of officers well acquainted with Hindūstānī. Those left knew little of the language and

81. Miles, Letter to The Times, 7 July, 1857.

82. "India, the Revolt and the Native Troops," Missionary Magazine and Chronicle (hereafter referred to as MMC.), XXI, 1857, p.182; Manchester Guardian, 29 Sept. 1857; "The English in India," WR., New Series, XIII, 1858, p.196.

83. Maj. Tucker, "The Indian Army," Letter to The Times, 24 June, 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1591 and CXLVIII, 426; "The English in India," loc. cit.; Olrich, op. cit., p.8; Gubbins, op. cit., p.97; The Spectator, 25 July, 1857; "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.535; Norton, op. cit., p.24; Medley, op. cit., pp.200-201; The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.18; "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., IX, 1857-58, p.233; Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie], The Indian Mutiny (London: W. Kent and Co., 1857), pp.25-26; Mead, op. cit., p.29; J. L. Archer, Indian Mutinies Accounted For: Being an Essay on the Subject (London: Ward and Co., 1857), pp.4-6; Manchester Guardian, 29 Sept. 1857.

84. The Examiner, 3 Oct. 1857. The figure also includes 416 officers who were either on sick or private leave.

85. Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 426. The Marquis of Clanricarde, attributing the mutiny to mismanagement in the army, reported to the House of Lords, how a son of a friend of his had never gone near his regiment for twelve years before the outbreak and had remained away from it even after the mutiny had started.

eventually the army administration was deprived of a healthy degree of communication with the soldiers. No doubt, in some regiments there were some linguists, but such regiments, it was further argued, did not revolt.<sup>86</sup>

b) It took away pride in military service and the civil service began to be more valued and highly thought of. The army came to be deprived of its most experienced hands. It was left either with young, inexperienced ensigns -- fresh from England, haughty and arrogant in their approach to the problems of the soldiers, or else incapable and discontented officers careless of other than the cut and dried routine of military duty.<sup>87</sup> In fact, the regimental service came to be looked upon as "a sort of penal servitude,"<sup>88</sup> more and more regarded as a "stepping stone to dignified civil employment."<sup>89</sup> If perchance, it was argued, a capable officer was left in the regiment, he felt hurt and his ambition thwarted. Since such an officer always tried to gain a civil appointment, he invariably found himself busy in manoeuvres to get rid of the regimental shackles and so very much tended to forget the needs of his regiment.<sup>90</sup>

c) Thirdly, the civil employment of army officers and its evil effects reduced contact between the individual soldier and his officer,<sup>91</sup> -- and reduced it to the detriment of English interests. The officer, henceforth, failed to identify himself with the sepoy under his

86. The Spectator, 25 July, 1857; [Sinclair],  
op. cit., pp.7-8.

87. Archer, op. cit., pp.4-6; Manchester  
Guardian, 1 Aug. and 29 Sept. 1857.

88. "The English in India," WR., New Series,  
XIII, 1858, p.196; Mead, op. cit., p.29.

89. Manchester Guardian, 1 Aug. 1857.

90. Campbell, op. cit., p.6; [Sinclair],  
loc. cit.; Manchester Guardian, 29 Sept. 1857.

91. Gubbins, op. cit., p.95; Hansard 3,  
CXLVI, 1591.

command.<sup>92</sup> "Naturally", observed J. L. Archer, late of Lucknow, "the influence of European officers over their men seriously declined, and eventually too great facilities were created either for designing person to delude the men, or for men themselves to form and mature a conspiracy against the Government. Hence it was that the conspiracy which we now deplore spread secretly from corps to corps and steadily and gradually matured, while the Europeans in the country remained in their dangerous security and carelessness of ignorance."<sup>93</sup> The indifference of European officers put power into the hands of native commissioned officers, who, because of their advanced age, were either silent spectators of what the sepoys did or were simple tools in their hands.<sup>94</sup>

It was this inadequacy of English officers, their inexperience and incapacity or else indifference which, it was thought, bred the opportunity for revolt.<sup>95</sup> The East India Company tried to save the "almighty" pound and had later to pay the price with compound interest.<sup>96</sup>

There were other factors which, it was held, led to the loss of contact between the European officer and the native sepoy or else down-graded the former in the eyes of the latter:

- 1) The companies drew their salary directly from the divisional paymaster. This was done independently

92. Campbell, op. cit., p.6.

93. Archer, op. cit., p.6. Having attributed the outbreak to religious, political and military causes, Archer argued that it was a religious war which was quickly turned to political account.

94. Campbell, loc. cit.

95. "India, the Revolt of the Native Troops," MMC., XXI, 1857, p.182; Investigation into Some...., p.44.

96. Archer, op. cit., p.4.

and often times without the knowledge of the regimental commanders. This tended to reduce the power of the commanders; curtailed their contact and influence with the regiments and brought them not only into contempt with their men but made "them be despised".<sup>97</sup>

2) Further improvement in the means of communications between England and India too was not regarded as an unmixed blessing.<sup>98</sup> While it had immensely reduced the time distance between the mother country and the colony to the advantage of Indian administration, it had concurrently reduced the dependence of English officers in India upon India. Thenceforth, military officers could easily bring their wives or families with them comparatively inexpensively or else could visit England more frequently than they earlier could.<sup>99</sup> The eased furlough regulations provided a further stimulus to such a tendency.<sup>100</sup> Increased intercourse with England as well as the increased number of European women in India were regarded as two factors largely responsible for the development of a spirit of indifference between officers and their men.<sup>101</sup> Fifty years before the outbreak, it was contended, there was no European society to draw the officer away from his camp duties. In 1810 there were only 250 European ladies in India.<sup>102</sup> Naturally, European officers used to maintain large local harems. In

97. Jacob, op. cit., pp.27-31. Also quoted by the Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

98. The Examiner, 1 Aug. 1857; The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.18; T. C. Robertson, The Political Prospects of British India (London: Thomas Hatchard, 1858), p.8.

99. Robertson, loc. cit.; The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.18.

100. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 496-97.

101. Robertson, loc. cit.

102. "The Indian Mutiny," DUM., L, pp.237-38.

fact, in the same year, claimed an anonymous writer in the Dublin University Magazine, a work by one Captain Williamson, dedicated to the Court of Directors -- was published for the guidance of cadets in this matter. It contained minute details on how to keep native mistresses. One elderly officer kept as many as sixteen. In 1813, however, things started to change and "English women and English morals began to be imported, together with the renewal of the Charter in 1813." This improved morality, believed the same writer, of European society in India had an adverse effect upon the state of the army. The camp and the "zenana"<sup>103</sup> gave "place to the compound, with an English wife and the monthly magazines". The writer in the Dublin University Magazine went on to observe:

The officer is now a refined European. The sepoy remains still a prejudiced Hindu. The time has passed when the Europeans can with decency Hinduise. The time has not yet come when the Hindu will Europeanise and so there remains a gulf fixed between officers and men; they have no interests in common -- the esprit de corps is a tie too frail to bind men together who have no common national glories and consequently there is nothing to check a mutinous spirit, should it unhappily break out among the men.<sup>104</sup>

It was this indifference produced by the enlargement of European society which, according to Thomas C. Robertson, late member of the Supreme Council of India and Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western

103. May be translated as Haram.

104. "The Indian Mutiny," DUM., L, 1857, p.238.

Provinces, later prejudiced all sympathies of the sepoys towards the lives of their officers.<sup>105</sup>

3) After the great augmentation of the native army in 1824, old officers were transferred to new regiments and their places were filled by either men unknown to the regiments or by men new even to the service. This severed life-long connections between the officers and their corps.<sup>106</sup> New people with different attitudes, manners, habits and outlooks joined the regiments. The onus of building up understanding and assimilation anew became an uphill task especially when several of the officers were fresh from England. This must have rankled the soldiers. The following pertinent question posed by a sepoy to an officer who had succeeded in keeping the confidence of his men, "Are the gentlemen who now come out to India of a different caste from those of the former days?" sufficiently reflected to the Manchester Guardian the seriousness of the situation.<sup>107</sup> Joachim H. Stocqueler, past editor of a couple of Indian journals and author of several books and articles on India, asserted:

From that moment may be dated the discontent and alienation of the sepoy. He now looked upon himself as the paid servant of only foreign master, bound to him simply by a compact, of which the essence was pounds, shillings and pence.<sup>108</sup>

4) The "bad example" in the Queen's service that a soldier could not address his officer unless in full

105. Robertson, op. cit., p.8.
106. Stocqueler, op. cit., p.16; Manchester Guardian, 25 Aug. 1857.
107. 25 Aug. 1857; Stocqueler, loc. cit.
108. Stocqueler, loc. cit.

dress and accompanied by a non-commissioned officer was emulated by the European officers of the East India Company. This, it was thought, completely separated them from their men.<sup>109</sup>

5) Still another factor which was thought to have prevented a free intercourse between the European officer and his men was the former's deficiency in "ready knowledge of the colloquial language of the sepoy." This deprived the officer of a much needed opportunity to win over the affections of the men under his command.<sup>110</sup>

The regimental mess system too, according to Jacob, was highly defective. While in certain cases no messes existed at all, in those regiments with the privilege of having them, the advantages were negated by the freedom allowed to their officers in joining them. Such an option did not augur well for regimental discipline. This inevitably broke the regiments into separate parties and gave "rise to all manner of ill feeling." It lessened the power and good influence of the commanding officer to an extraordinary degree and deprived him of much of the support which he could otherwise quietly and imperceptibly command.<sup>111</sup>

The system of promotion by seniority in the Bengal army was also described as no less injurious in casting a shadow upon the already dubious authority of the

- 109. Manchester Guardian, 25 Aug. 1857.
- 110. Investigation into Some...., p.48.
- 111. Jacob, op. cit., pp.31-32. Also quoted  
by the Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

English commander. Naturally it came under heavy criticism.<sup>112</sup> According to the system any native recruit who kept himself clear of actual crime and lived long enough, was sure to don the uniform of a commissioned officer, however unfit he might be for the promotion. Under this arrangement the soldier always felt himself "entirely independent of his officers."<sup>113</sup> He clearly understood that they could neither hasten nor retard his advance in the service. Listless performance of duty or timely shows of courage, fidelity and good conduct made no difference whatsoever in promotion. Also, since promotion to commissioned rank was independent of qualifications of fitness, pride in promotion did not exist.<sup>114</sup> So, while the arrangement constituted the greatest injustice to the really deserving men, it held out "the greatest possible encouragement to the lazy, the idle and the good for nothing."<sup>115</sup> Evidently, this not only cut down the prestige of the commander, bereft as he was of all power of promotion or demotion, but it also struck a sharp blow at the efficiency of the Company's military machine. The Manchester Guardian ruefully quoted Jacob as having observed:

The whole of the native commissioned officers are entirely useless; the amount of their pay is a dead loss to the state. Everyone of them is unfit for service by reason of imbecility produced by old age, or, where in rare instances the man may

112. "The Indian Army," Fraser's Magazine (hereafter referred to as Fraser's), LVI, 1857, p.17; "The English in India," WR., New Series, XIII, 1858, p.196; Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1333-34; Lawrence, op. cit., p.54; "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.535.

If the Eclectic Review called the system of promotions "mischievous", the Manchester Guardian of 15 September, 1857, described it as "very bad and fatally injurious" one. However, there were conflicting opinions on the subject. Sir H. Wheeler, Sir Patrick Grant and W. H. Sleeman were all quoted by the Edinburgh Review as bestowing praises upon the system. The last named had called it the "sheet anchor" of the Bengal army. The periodical itself, commenting on the system, held that the mutiny had started in spite of it and wondered how much sooner it might have broken out had that system been replaced. "India," Edinburgh Review (hereafter referred to as Edin. Rev.), CVI, 1857, pp.558-61.

113. Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

114. Jacob, op. cit., pp.37-39; Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

115. Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857.

not be altogether in his second childhood, he is entirely useless from having been educated in a bad school. All should have been pensioned off long ago.... IT IS ASTONISHING, AND SAYS MUCH FOR THE GOOD OF THE RAW MATERIAL OF THE BENGAL ARMY, THAT UNDER SUCH ARRANGEMENTS THE WHOLE FABRIC HAS NOT ENTIRELY FALLEN TO PIECES. THE THINGS ARE ROTTEN THROUGHOUT, AND DISCIPLINE THERE IS NONE; BUT IT IS WONDERFUL THAT EVEN THE OUTWARD SEMBLANCE OF AN ARMY HAS BEEN STILL MAINTAINED.<sup>116</sup>

The indiscriminate adoption of "Asiatic habits, manners and feelings" by the English officers had not only partly merged them with the Hindūs, but had had, it was complained, the baneful effect of lowering their character. From the day of his arrival in the Bengal Presidency, the officer was constantly reminded that everything English was a sure sign of a "griffin". He was told not to go out in sunshine; always to travel in a Pālki<sup>117</sup> instead of on horse back; must get "punkaed [fanned]<sup>118</sup> and tattied";<sup>119</sup> must keep a Khidmatgār,<sup>120</sup> a "sirdar [head]<sup>121</sup> bearer and bearers"; a servant for his pipe; another for his umbrella; one for his bottle; still another for his chair and so on. These external luxuries and lazy habits of India, it was the contention, gradually ate into the manliness of the Anglo-Saxon character.<sup>122</sup> The Manchester Guardian, commenting on this, added that after lowering himself to the level of the natives, the European officer still tried to assume the superiority

116. Ibid.; Jacob, op. cit., pp.30 and 39. For a similar opinion, see also: Medley, op. cit., pp.194-204. Referring to over-centralization, promotion by seniority and the withdrawal of European officers for civil employment, Medley argued that these three laid the ground work for anybody to exploit the army for his own personal gains.

Here it should also be mentioned that the system of promotion for European officers too was not free from fault. In this case it was neither efficiency nor seniority that counted for promotion but the officer's buying and bidding capacity. For attaining the next step he could not but buy it because of the purchase system. The Manchester Guardian of 17 Sept. 1857 was bitterly critical of it, when the paper pointed out the instance of Havelock who, in spite of his advanced age of sixty-two, in spite of the great capacity which he had shown in independent command, was still a colonel. Explaining that Havelock could not buy his promotion because of his poverty, the paper pointed out that his was one among several such instances.

117. A kind of litter or sedan, a palankeen or palanquin, generally used by a grandee or noble. Formerly the privilege of keeping a Pālki was granted by a king or viceroy.

118. Transliterated as Paṅkhā, meaning fan.

119. Tattie is a screen of fragrant grass hung on a door-way or a window during the hot months of summer and is kept constantly wet with the view, both of cooling and of scenting the air as it enters the room.

120. A serving-man, a servant, a table-servant.

121. Transliterated as Sardār.

122. Manchester Guardian, 15 Sept. 1857; "The English in India," WR., New Series, Xl11, 1858, p.196; Jacob, op. cit., p.28. Jacob discounted the climatic conditions as a reason or as an excuse for such a behaviour. He held out the example of Bombay Presidency where, in spite of a similar climate, the European society was ten times more English than that of the Bengal Presidency.

which a "natural activity of disposition and strength of body and mind" alone could entitle him to exercise. The result was, reasoned the paper, that he became "an imposter, trading upon a capital that he has lost." Now that the English were no better than the Indians themselves, they could no longer command the usual respect from them.<sup>123</sup> No wonder Jacob had strongly advised his compatriot officers:

ALL OUR POWER IN INDIA RESTS ON THIS. WE MAY LAY IT DOWN AS AN ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THAT THE MILLIONS OF NATIVES WHICH A HANDFUL OF ENGLISHMEN GOVERN IN THIS VAST CONTINENT WILL NOT CONSENT TO BE GOVERNED BY A HANDFUL OF THEIR EQUALS. OUR POWER CONSISTS IN OUR BEING ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT AND THEIR BELIEF IN OUR MORAL SUPERIORITY ONLY. THE ONLY THING WHICH CAN ENDANGER THE EXISTENCE OF THIS POWER IS THE DESTRUCTION OR WEAKENING OF THAT BELIEF.<sup>124</sup>

Here it is of importance to note that V. A. Smith, then President of the Board of Control for India and one among the leading proponents of the mutiny theory, blamed, along with others, the officers for their changing attitude towards the sepoy -- a change that called a halt to the creation of better relations and understanding with the men. He emphasized that earlier officers used to win over their men by such trifling things as joining in their pastimes, playing with their children, arranging their law-suits or settling their quarrels.<sup>125</sup> The writer in the Dublin University Magazine argued that fifty years before it had been the fashion among European officers to

123. Manchester Guardian, 16 Sept. 1857.

124. Jacob, op. cit., p.30. Also quoted by  
the Manchester Guardian of 15 Sept. 1857.

125. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 496-97.

Hindūize, for the Hindūs could scarcely be expected to Europeanize. He wrote:

We attended their heathen festivals, and made offerings at the shrines of their gods. Colonel Stewart went even so far as to bring back with him his idols to Europe, for the purpose of continuing his worship at home.<sup>126</sup>

Not only had these friendly gestures disappeared, even the tone and temper displayed by the officers was far from friendly. A strong aversion to the sepoy had gotten hold of the European officers. The former came to be "esteemed an inferior creature"; was sworn at; spoken of as a "nigger"; addressed as a "soor or pig," an epithet most opprobrious to a respectable native, especially to the Muslims. In addition to all this they were very harshly treated. At times the officials even struck them. Such conduct, it was stated, was not exceptional, was not confined to one or two officers of a regiment, but was the rule of the day.<sup>127</sup> Exceptions to it, however, could be found among elderly officers and to these exceptions the sepoys remained closely attached and did their best to save them.<sup>128</sup> All this surely isolated the men from their commanders and cooled the warmth of their affections towards them.<sup>129</sup> The terrible disasters and troubles which later broke out, so contended the Manchester Guardian, were "not wholly devoid of a character of reasonable retribution."<sup>130</sup>

126. "The Indian Mutiny," DUM., L, 1857, p.237.

127. Investigation into Some...., pp.46-47; Manchester Guardian, 1 Aug. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 496-97; Edward Smith Mercer, A Letter to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Ellenborough, on the Military, Religious and European Settlement Questions in the East Indies (London: Edward T. Whitehead, 1861), p.6.

128. Investigation into Some...., pp.46-47; Manchester Guardian, 10 Sept. 1857. It was perhaps because of the reasons described in the preceding pages that T. C. Robertson emphasized the character and capacity rather than the number of English officers stationed with sepoy battalions as the factor upon which the efficiency and loyalty of the native army depended. Robertson, op. cit., p.7.

129. Manchester Guardian, 1 and 17 Aug. 1857; The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.17; Review of The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, The Athenaeum, 1857, p.1028.

130. Manchester Guardian, 1 Aug. 1857.

Alongside all these factors, the sepoys had a fairly long list of important grievances of their own. Unrepaired and continued existence of some of these, and ever and anon the addition of others, had become strong irritants. While immediate attention was the need of the hour, immediate attention was seldom forthcoming. With a few noble exceptions the general body of officers, as well as the Government, had gotten into the habit of taking the sepoy for granted. The sepoys' calls for redress of their grievances were ignored and the frequent outbursts of displeasure either went unattended to or were lightly regarded. This, it seems to the present writer, was a dangerous neglect -- a neglect which led to serious consequences.

The major grievance of the sepoys stemmed from religion. If religious grievance was a universal cry among the rebel soldiers in India, significantly it was universally admitted in England as a major cause of the outbreak. Whatever controversy there was centered round the matter of responsibility. A cursory glance at the history of the rise to power of the East India Company would reveal an extremely cautious and conservative policy followed by that body with regard to native religions, customs and conventions. There was a time when the Company's Government would not let a missionary set foot

on their territory. Obviously this was done for fear of offending the native religious prejudices. Every conquest, every annexation and every occupation was invariably followed by a solemn pledge of non-interference and observance of complete neutrality in religious affairs. This was applicable to the sepoy army in a still greater and stricter degree. At the time of enlistment every sepoy was always given an imposing promise of non-interference in his religious worship. While the sepoy felt delighted with this security and took jealous care to guard it, the ranks of European army officers began, slowly but surely, to be infiltrated by the rising tide of the evangelical spirit in England. As the army was the only section of the Indian society "off limits" to the missionary, quite a few of the English officers had entered its ranks with the missionary spirit -- with a view to rectifying the error allowed to exist by the Government. It was the development and progressive nourishment of this spirit which, if the critics of this trend are to be believed, really began to change the face of things.

Quite a few of the British army officers had, it was reported, come to believe in their "double commission" -- "double commission of rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that

are God's."<sup>131</sup> This was what Colonel Wheler, Commander of the 34th N.I. at Barrackpore, said in his defence to the charge of wrongly using his position in the army for the task of proselytizing.<sup>132</sup> Wheler had been openly preaching the Gospel to all classes, in and outside of the army, and made no secret of his zeal for the conversion of the natives. Officers of Colonel Wheler's stamp,<sup>133</sup> whom Hargrave Jennings, the anonymous author of The Indian Religions; or, Results of Mysterious Buddhism by an 'Indian Missionary', described as "missionary Colonels" and "Padree Lieutenants".<sup>134</sup> "Forgetting their allegiance in their piety",<sup>135</sup> such officers actively indulged in missionary activity in their regiments. Their wives too did not stand aside, and helped them in carrying out what they thought was the right thing to do. Addresses were given and tracts and Bibles were distributed among the soldiers.<sup>136</sup> At times promotions were also given out of religious considerations.<sup>137</sup> Jennings wrote:

Of course, the sepoys could hardly connect these day and night preachings, these earnest solicitations, these ceaseless efforts, this enormous expenditure of money in books and tracts, with mere private enterprise.<sup>138</sup>

The result was that such officers ceased to enjoy even the ordinary respect of their men. Colonel Wheler was obliged to confess that "if his regiment were ordered on field

131. "The Camp and the Mission," Saturday Review, 22 Aug. 1857.

132. Referring to the mission of Colonel Wheler, Sir George Trevelyan reported the Colonel himself having said:

I beg to state that it has been my invariable plan to act on the broad line which scripture enforces, that is, to speak without reserve to every person. When I therefore address natives on the subject of religion, whether individually or collectively, it has been no question with me whether the person or persons I addressed belonged to this or that regiment, or otherwise, but I speak to all alike, as sinners in the sight of God; and I have no doubt that I have often in this way (indeed, am quite certain) addressed sepoys of my own regiment, as also of other regiments at this and other stations where I have been quartered. Cawnpore (3rd. ed.; London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1866), p.29.

133. For other similar references, see: The Scotsman, 15 Aug. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 30 June 1857 and 10 Aug. 1858; Free Press, 19 Aug. 1857; Illustrated London News, 4 July, 1857.

134. An Indian Missionary [Hargrave Jennings], The Indian Religions; or, Results of Mysterious Buddhism, p.144. The Tablet, writing on Colonel Wheler, entitled its article: "A Missionary Colonel - A Strong light on the Indian Mutinies." 22 Aug. 1857.

135. Manchester Guardian, 30 June, 1857.

136. "Indian Military Mistakes," Saturday Review, 25 July, 1857; Manchester Guardian, 14 Aug. 1857; "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.380; Illustrated London News, 4 July, 1857; Scrutator [Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, pp.15-16.

137. An Indian Missionary [Jennings], loc. cit.

138. Ibid.

service, he could not place himself at their head, in full reliance upon their loyalty and good conduct."<sup>139</sup> Sir Benjamin C. Brodie,<sup>140</sup> who regarded the outbreak as a mere military mutiny, but had assigned to it a long list of socio-political-military causes, observed:

There can be little doubt that a preselytising spirit has long manifested itself amid a portion of the Company's servants. They have sought to effect through the means of their official authority, that which missionary zeal unaided has been unable to perform.... No one dreams of a missionary collecting revenue, administering justice or commanding a regiment; yet collectors of revenue, administrators of justice and military officers have attempted this.<sup>141</sup>

The Saturday Review described Mrs. Colin MacKenzie's book, Delhi, the City of the Great Mogul, as a "missionary record in the guise of a military tour." It also strongly criticized the proselytizing activities of Colonel Wheler and his ilk as productive of disaffection among the sepoys.<sup>142</sup> Jennings observed that such things were, in the beginning, tolerated by the native sepoys "sometimes with distaste; sometimes with indifference; sometimes, even, with respect for mistaken zeal." But a persistent effort in that direction did effectually alarm soldiers of both persuasions.<sup>143</sup> This certainly, argued the author of the Mutiny in the Bengal Army, led to a loss of existing cordiality between the officers and their men and decreased intercourse between them.<sup>144</sup> It

139. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.380. Another advocate of this school observed that earlier when officers were not so religious, the sepoys used to play with and fondle their children, and even carry the officer to his grave. But the situation, he went on, was changed now. Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.19.

140. There were two Sir Benjamin Colin Brodies, father and son, surgent and chemist respectively. Apart from papers in their own fields, one of them seems to have been writing on religion and politics under the assumed name of "Scrutator". While the DNB. fails to list the latter publications, the important fact, from the point of view of the present research, remains that neither of the two had ever been to India. British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books, CCXVII, 859-63; DNB., VI, pp.378-380.

141. Scrutator [Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, pp.15-16.

142. "The Camp and the Mission," Saturday Review, 22 Aug. 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: "Indian Military Mistakes," 25 July 1857.

143. An Indian Missionary [Jennings], op. cit., p.144.

144. p.18.

also tended, commented The Illustrated London News, to strengthen the suspicion that "Great Britain, not content with destroying the political independence of India, had determined to subvert its religion."<sup>145</sup> The Scotsman could not swallow its anger when, referring to the atrocities perpetrated by the sepoys, it forcefully reasoned that "Colonel Wheler is but the type of a class out of whose spiritual conceit and mental weakness have been bred these horrors at which the whole civilized world stands amazed and affrighted." Not feeling content with this observation, the paper went on to call the Colonel "silly" and a "foolish person."<sup>146</sup> A large portion of the people and the press ventilated their fretfulness and disapproval at the activities of the army commander by making a unanimous call for his punishment.

Religious fear created by the unwise missionary zeal of the officers alone, it was believed, was the major cause of the outbreak. Otherwise, why did not, it was questioned, such a revolt take place when British authority in India was feeble; when the powerful Indian chiefs continuously threatened its existence? Why did the sepoys remain loyal then? Why, more recently, did they not waver during the Afghān disasters? Why did they choose the year 1857 when the British were strongly entrenched on the soil of India; when the independent princes were few and far

145. "The Mutiny in India," Illustrated London News, 4 July 1857.

146. 15 Aug. 1857.

between and they too were languid and listless? Above all, what brought them together, in spite of their extreme and unbridgeable differences? Was it not due to their fear for their and their forefathers' religion? Was this fear not clearly rooted in the proselytising fervour of the officers in the army.<sup>147</sup> One Edward Smith Mercer regarded official religious interference by the Government, or by Government servants, as one of the major causes of the outbreak. He warned that evangelicals of the day would ruin the empire.<sup>148</sup>

Thus it was that the Illustrated London News fervently urged that missionaries be allowed to go to India and spread the Gospel there, but they should not wear state livery or have any connection, pecuniary or official, with the state.<sup>149</sup> The Manchester Guardian proposing condign punishments for the offending officers, reminded the Government of its solemn obligation to protect the faith and the prejudices of its subjects against all "proposed or accidental outrage."<sup>150</sup> It further exhorted that the Government should be as tender to the superstitions of the natives as if it shared them; that it should put down all attempts which might affront or alarm their religious feelings; that the Government should suppress such attempts as promptly as England would "an anti-popery demonstration in Tipperary, or an attempt

147. Scrutator [Brodie], The Indian Mutiny,  
pp.15-16.

148. Mercer, op. cit., p.5.

149. "Errors of Indian Policy," Illustrated  
London News, 22 Aug. 1857. For a similar opinion, see  
also: The Scotsman, 15 Aug. 1857.

150. 30 June and 14 Aug. 1857. See also:  
The Scotsman, 15 Aug. 1857.

to thrust episcopal ordinances into the pulpit of the free kirk, nay even more vigorously."<sup>151</sup>

Still another cause for grievance was provided by the Company's changed manner, strictness and greater scrutiny in granting pensions to old and disabled soldiers.<sup>152</sup> According to old regulations a sepoy, disabled after fifteen years of service, retired to his home on a monthly pension of four rupees. Henceforth the system was changed and a sepoy declared unfit was to be retained for odd cantonment duties.<sup>153</sup> Several invalided sepoys whose cases were strongly recommended by the regimental committees were turned down by the general invaliding committee. The result was that they had to go home "to wear out their dregs of life in hopeless despondency." Consequently the sepoy came to believe that the Government had "broken faith" and so could no more be trusted.<sup>154</sup>

Low salaries of army personnel, sepoys and officers, were described as another reason for disenchantment with the Government.<sup>155</sup> The salaries, expenses and duties of the soldiers were spoken of as highly incompatible with each other.<sup>156</sup> Gubbins firmly supported Henry Lawrence on this question, when the latter compared the status and emoluments which a native gentleman could attain under native governments with those obtainable in the British Indian army. To him the disparity appeared

151. Manchester Guardian, 30 June, 1857.
152. Crisis in India, its causes and Proposed Remedies, pp.13-14.
153. Gubbins, op. cit., pp.94-95.
154. Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, pp.13-14.
155. Gubbins, op. cit., p.97; Lawrence, op. cit., pp.27-28 and 390.
156. Mutiny in the Bengal Army, pp.13-15. In an attempt to bring home to his readers the desperate condition of the sepoys, the author gave a detailed statement of sepoy salaries and expenses. He wrote:

A sepoy's pay--is fourteen shillings a month in cantonments and seventeen shillings a month in the field in India. After sixteen years' of service he obtains an increase of pay (one rupee of approximately two shillings) and again after twenty years' service (again one rupee). Out of this moderate sum he pays for the hire of cattle while marching; he builds and repairs his hut, towards which, however, Government contributes a small sum; he pays for his great coat; for his knapsack; his cup; his shoes; his white cotton uniform which he wears half the year; his undress off duty in native style, in which he is expected to be as clean--as on parade. p.13.

All these expenses were in addition to the cost of his food.

to be too great.<sup>157</sup> In this regard the European soldier, argued the author of the Mutiny in the Bengal Army, was a petted person compared with the sepoy.<sup>158</sup> "My father used to receive five hundred rupees a month in command of a company of Ranjit Singh's horse," reported a Sikh Nā'ib, Risāldār Shēr Singh, to Gubbins, "I receive but fifty."<sup>159</sup>

Formerly, soldiers' mail used to pass freely under the frank of the commanding officer. Henceforward, this privilege was suspended and letters were subjected to postage. This, it was reported, naturally became a big grievance with the sepoys.<sup>160</sup>

Another thing that was reported greatly to have disturbed the Bengal sepoy was the Government decision to enlist 200 Sikhs and Panjābī recruits for each regiment.<sup>161</sup> This was highly distressing to the sepoys for two reasons: firstly, they feared a gradual domination of the army by the Panjābīs and, secondly, they felt that foreign military service was not going to end with the addition of these two hundred Sikh recruits.<sup>162</sup> The latter was a fear, contended Gubbins, highly intensified by further extensions of territory and the projected invasions of the Crimea and Persia.<sup>163</sup> On the contrary, they felt convinced that in future, because of the introduction of this new and diversified element in their

157. Gubbins, op. cit., pp.97-98.
158. p.15.
159. Gubbins, loc. cit.
160. Ibid.
161. Manchester Guardian, 26 Oct. 1857; Medley, op. cit., pp.199-204; George Crawshay, Proselytism Destructive of Christianity and Incompatible with Political Dominion. Speech of Mr. Crawshay at the India House on the Vote of an Annuity to Sir John Lawrence, 25 Aug. 1858, with Notes and an Appendix (London: E. Wilson, 1858), p.29.
162. Manchester Guardian, 29 Oct. 1857.
163. Gubbins, op. cit., pp.91-93.

ranks, they would no longer be able to please themselves with regard to foreign service. Coupled with this, of course, was the realisation that their reduced weight would deprive them of bargaining power and that they would no longer be able to play the "cocks of the walk."<sup>164</sup>

The sepoy fear of foreign service became a reality with the passage of General Service Enlistment Act of Lord Canning in 1856. A part of the sepoy-Government covenant was that the sepoy was not to be sent on extra-territorial service. This was to assure the high-caste man of the Government's regard for his caste. According to the traditions of the caste system, if a caste man crossed the borders of India, he lost his caste. No penalty could be severer than this loss. With the passage of time and the development of imperial policy such a contract was difficult of fulfilment. Just as the East India Company was sure to require the services of its native Bengal army for extra-territorial service, similarly the sepoy was sure to resist such a call. The first test, however, came at the time of the First Burmese War, when in 1824, the 47th Regiment refused to serve in Burma, mutinied at Barrackpore and was suppressed with the help of artillery. The name of the regiment was subsequently erased from the army list.

This was just the start of the quarrel. And Government victory, though inevitable, was not going to be

164. Manchester Guardian, 29 Oct. 1857.

easy. While Lord Amherst was able to suppress this show of disobedience and resistance, in an exactly similar case Lord Dalhousie had to give way, when in 1852 the 38th Bengal Native Infantry similarly refused to serve in the same country (Burma) as the 47th had done in 1824.

Referring to this failure of Dalhousie, William Wotherspoon Ireland pointed out that the sepoys were now "beginning to know their power."<sup>165</sup> Every new step was sure to add to sepoy dissatisfaction. Even the sepoy's traditional regard for money was not as strong as his fear of losing his caste. This was especially experienced at the time of the First Afghān war, when the sepoys were hesitant to go even to Peshawar. Sufficient extra-allowances had to be offered as a bribe. Still it was found, reported a writer in Fraser's Magazine, that the sepoy attachment to Mammon was less than his hatred of Peshawar. The writer further stated that regiments were known to break into ecstasy after crossing the Indus on their return journey. He declared that it all resembled the ecstatic state of Prussian soldiers on seeing the Rhine. The sepoys always thanked God for letting them leave Peshawar.<sup>166</sup>

It was in the face of this abhorrence of leaving Indian soil that Lord Canning, shortly after his assumption of office in India, introduced the General Service Enlistment Act. The Act enjoined compulsory foreign service for all new recruits, if and when

165. William Wotherspoon Ireland, History of the Siege of Delhi (Edinburgh: Adams and Charles Black, 1861), p.11.

166. "An Anglo-Indian's View of the Indian Crisis," pt. 1, Fraser's, LVII, 1858, p.271.

necessary. Not only was the Act uncalled for, asserted John Bruce Norton,<sup>167</sup> since eighty-one regiments of the Madras and Bombay presidencies were ready for service abroad, but it was too hazardous to rush in where even Dalhousie had feared to tread. He pointed out that such a step should not have been taken unless the Government felt quite sure of itself; unless it felt convinced that it was in a strong position promptly to crush any sign of disaffection which such an unpalatable order "was certain to call forth." To have decided upon such a course of action, when there was only "a miserably small European force in the country" was to Norton an act of "blind infatuation and inflated self-sufficiency."<sup>168</sup>

Turning to the annexation of territories as a cause of the sepoy mutiny, the holders of the mutiny school of thought were divided among themselves. An overwhelming majority of those who held this interpretation, led by The Times and the Manchester Guardian and prominent individuals like Palmerston and V. A. Smith, then President of the Board of Control, as well as Government benches in the Commons and other pro-Government elements, vehemently argued against any such contention. Since all of them belonged to the "forward" school and, as such, had in the past either justified annexations, endorsed them or advocated such a course of action, it was, very obviously, difficult for them to admit the political excitement of

167. Norton, then a public prosecutor at Madras, did not, however, believe in the military character of the outbreak. As a Madras officer he severely criticised the Government at Calcutta and held it responsible for the uprising. Emphasising the political misdeeds of Dalhousie, he thought that the rebellion was caused by a large variety of political, religious and military causes.

168. Norton, op. cit., pp.21-22. Also read The Mutiny in the Bengal Army for further acquaintance with the sepoy sensitivity regarding their religious and caste prejudices.

the sepoys and thereby shoulder the responsibility. For example, the Manchester Guardian repeatedly in its editorials and general writings denied any connection whatsoever between the annexations and the mutiny, not even the annexation of Awadh. In its editorial of 16 October, 1857, it at once rejected Norton's argument that 40,000 sepoys from Awadh had taken part in the revolt because their feelings were bitterly wounded by the deposition of their native sovereign, as being "childish and dishonest."<sup>169</sup>

The Guardian feebly emphasized that the very fact and motive for which every native of Awadh enlisted one or more members of his family in the British army was in order to obtain British protection for themselves and their families from the grinding oppression of their own sovereign. Since the British occupation of Awadh had taken the sheltering umbrella to their very door steps, it should have, the paper argued, satisfied them rather than precipitated them into rebellion.<sup>170</sup> Any such admission would naturally have looked self-contradictory. The paper was so steadfast in its rejection of such a theory that it was prepared even to accept the presence of a Muslim intrigue in Awadh rather than admit of any connection between the annexations and what it called "the professional revolt of the Bengal army."<sup>171</sup> In fact the paper had

169. Manchester Guardian, 2 Oct. 1857.

170. Manchester Guardian, 2 Oct. and 19 Nov. 1857. A writer in the Illustrated London News, however, provided an answer to the question raised by the Manchester Guardian, when he stated that all those Hindū and Muslim sepoys who came from Awadh always transmitted their savings to their relatives in that country. It was a remarkable fact, he pointed out, and one that fully refuted Dalhousie's assertion about the misgovernment of Awadh, that "not a single instance has been known of a sepoy settling down after the completion of his service in our provinces; he has invariably proceeded to Oude to invest his little fortune in the land." "History of the British Empire in India," Illustrated London News, 28 Nov. 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: "Our Relations to the Princes of India," WR., New Series, XlII, 1858, pp.457-58.

171. Manchester Guardian, 19 Nov. 1857.

earlier elaborated its point of view by arguing that to accept annexations as a cause of the outbreak would be to regard the inhabitants of India as a single nation<sup>172</sup> -- a thesis which the advocates of the present theme were loath to accept. The Times, on the other hand, had, on the first receipt of the news of the mutiny in Britain, at once called for a complete extinction of all native states.<sup>173</sup> Smith, however, was less rigid in this respect and he accepted the annexation of Awadh as a cause only insofar as it affected the sepoys in the loss of exclusive privileges of redress which they formerly enjoyed.<sup>174</sup>

Quite a few of the same school, on the contrary, refused to hold to such an opinion. In their view the policy of annexation had deeply aroused the sepoys and had stirred them into action. They asserted that the Awadh sepoys were highly perturbed over the developments in their country. That the sepoys questioned the justification for the deposition of Wājid 'Alī Shāh and the subsequent annexation of his state.<sup>175</sup> It was pointed out that to give an answer to this frequently put question had become a very difficult problem for the army officers.<sup>176</sup> The proffered reasons of misgovernment and mismanagement had failed to convince the soldiers. The sepoy knew that both of them had existed over a long time. He was also aware that the British Government knew it and

172. Ibid., 25 Sept. 1857.

173. See Chapter I, pp.5-6.

174. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 490. For a similar opinion, see also: "An Anglo-Indian's View of the Indian Crisis," pt. 1, Fraser's, LV11, 1858, p.272.

175. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 422-25 and CXLV1, 1613; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.390.

176. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 422-25.

in spite of that knowledge it crowned king after king on the throne of Awadh. Therefore mis-government and mis-management failed to accredit themselves as plausible excuses in his eyes. The reason, he thought, was to be found somewhere else. Earlier the hands of the British Government were full. It could not act, even if it wanted to. All along, reported Archer, the sepoys thought that the Government followed a "time-serving policy rather than an honest and upright" one. And when all else was subdued, it struck against Awadh.<sup>177</sup>

The 19th and 34th Regiments of the native infantry were among the first three regiments to revolt months before the Meerut outbreak. Both of them were reported to be present on parade at Lucknow when the annexation of the state was announced. A writer in Fraser's Magazine saw a definite connection between their mutiny and the annexation. He called the cartridge grievance only a hypothetical cause.<sup>178</sup>

Armed with these grievances, the sepoy received further encouragement from the contemporary scene. Beginning in 1841-42 he had been intermittantly hearing of British troubles and losses, and by 1857 the myth of British invincibility had, to him, become more and more of a fiction. The disasters in Afghanistan in the early 1840s and the news that English officers were prisoners in the

177. Archer, op. cit., pp.6-7.

178. "India in Mourning," Fraser's, LV1, 1857,  
p.737.

hands of Afghāns, made a powerful impression upon the armies of the three presidencies. The tales of the miseries of those who returned further shattered the halo that hitherto had surrounded England's power in their minds.<sup>179</sup> Added to the retreat from Afghanistan were the battles of Sutlej and the repulse of Chilianwala during the Anglo-Sikh wars. These events clearly indicated to the sepoys, it was held, that even a single tribe among the several Indian races was sufficient to hold the English in check.<sup>180</sup> The Crimean War, the fall of Kars, and the withdrawal of troops for the wars in Asia Minor and Persia further strengthened the impression of growing English weakness.<sup>181</sup> The "Persian war, though a success, was universally believed in Upper India to have been an utter failure," reported the Saturday Review. The false news circulated about the victories of the "invincible Shah of Persia" had become a common topic of conversation.<sup>182</sup> The tide was now at its lowest ebb. The native sepoy establishment, conscious of its numbers<sup>183</sup> and irritated by grievances, was already waiting for an opportune moment. The sepoy had started to foresee the impending nature of the forthcoming opportunity. Lord Portman in his address in answer to the Queen's speech on 3 December, 1857, expressed similar feelings when he said:

179. Olrich, op. cit., p.6; Saturday Review, 7 Nov. 1857; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.388; Charles Raikes, Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858), p.151; Free Press, 17 Feb. 1857.

180. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.388.

181. Ibid.; Saturday Review, 7 Nov. 1857; Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of...., pp.4-5; Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 1134; Wallace, op. cit., pp.17-18.

182. Saturday Review, 7 Nov. 1857.

183. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.389.

Might not the military revolt in India have arisen....from an opinion among the sepoys that we were much occupied elsewhere, that our army was small, that, in short 'their time was come.'<sup>184</sup>

"It was only a question of time with the sepoys," asserted Charles Raikes, a judge of the Sudder Court at Agra and late Civil Commissioner with Sir Colin Campbell, "when they should make Bengal as was Cabool, the grave of the Whiteman."<sup>185</sup>

In fact, the sepoy, it was reported, had already started to test the English control. One regiment having been disbanded for refusing to serve in Burma at the time of the First Burmese War, the sepoy next defied authority during the siege of Bharatpor. So great was this defiance that the commanding officers had to resort to wholesale use of court-martial. As a result the use of corporal punishments became so extensive that the Commander-in-Chief found it necessary to intervene and the powers of commanding officers were restricted. The sepoy looked at it as a triumph, was exultant and became more insolent.<sup>186</sup> Here this writer would like to add that at the time of the annexation of Sind, there was some trouble over the issue of allowance. Though the regiment was disbanded, it was not a sufficient punishment. Whatever little impression the punishment might have produced upon the sepoys, it must have been spoiled by the

184. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 18.

185. Raikes, op. cit., p.151. Raikes firmly believed that the great disturbance in India was the outcome of a mutiny. Though the mutiny, he admitted, had grown into a rebellion, it was certainly not caused by any national discontent. While emphasizing that the vast majority of the people was with the Government, he made the Muslim community of India an exception to this generalization.

186. Stocqueler, op. cit., pp.17-18.

fate that Charles Napier met at the hands of Dalhousie because of the former's military policies. Napier had to resign.

Dalhousie, the last of the British empire-builders in India, though strong and stern in his dealings with the princes of India and his own Commander-in-Chief, had, strangely enough, shown a weak heart when called upon to face the army. At the time of the Second Burmese War when the 38th Regiment refused to serve in Burma, Dalhousie easily yielded. The native army, it was pointed out, must have been flushed with this victory.<sup>187</sup> Another important army émeuté had taken place at Bolarum in the Nizam's territory. Here, during the Muharram mourning,<sup>188</sup> one Colonel MacKenzie was wounded and several Englishmen and women were assaulted. Von Olrich, whose pamphlet had reportedly gained wide popularity on the continent and was soon anonymously translated in England for the benefit of Britons, argued that this should have served to arouse the British Government to dispatch 20,000 extra soldiers to India. When nothing of the sort occurred, the native army was further emboldened.<sup>189</sup>

Not long after this followed the incident of the greased cartridges. The new measure took effect despite all warning<sup>190</sup> and bitter experiences of the past. It appears to the present writer as if the Government was

187. Norton, op. cit., pp.176-77;  
Ireland, op. cit., p.11.

188. The period during which the entire Muslim community in general, and the Shī'ah sect in particular, mourn the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn, the grandson of Prophet Muḥammad.

189. Olrich, op. cit., pp.22-23. Olrich, however, felt sure that the revolt was caused by a wide combination of social, religious, political and military causes provided by the civil administration of the country. It was, not just a military uprising caused by the remissness and neglect of army officers. Those who called the outbreak an army mutiny were, Olrich believed, attempting to shirk responsibility.

190. Major H. C. Tucker, former Adjutant General to the Military Secretary to the Government of India, wrote to inform the people that as early as 1853, he, with the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, had written to the Military Secretary that "in greasing composition nothing should be used which could possibly offend the caste or religious prejudices of the natives." For the present neglect, therefore, he blamed the Military Secretary or the Ordinance Officer residing at Calcutta. The Times, 24 June, 1857; Free Press, 19 Aug. 1857.

However, the Government was almost universally criticised for its folly in this regard. "A Resident in the North-Western Provinces of India" went so far as to say that even a griff in India knew the consequences of introducing the greased cartridges. Investigation into Some....., p.52.

bent upon testing the anti-Government feelings of its native army. The cartridge news spread like wildfire throughout the length and breadth of the country. Aware of the after effects of using the new bullet,<sup>191</sup> the sepoy, it was reported, felt increasingly convinced of the Government's intention to tamper with his religious and caste beliefs, especially so when materials for suspicion were already present in the shape of widow re-marriage, the abolition of Satī and female education.<sup>192</sup> He believed, it was stated, that the Government intended to convert him to Christianity by a ruse -- by the pollution of his caste and by rendering him an alien among his own people and a "loathesome and worthless" person in his own eyes and those of his fellows, -- thus leaving him no choice but to enter the fold of Christianity.<sup>193</sup>

It seems that the history of sepoy mutinies in the preceding fifty years and their success was sufficient to inspire the sepoy to further action. This time again he decided to challenge the Government rather than give way. The rumour of the greased cartridge started at Dum-Dum, near Calcutta, in January 1857. The 19th Native Infantry mutinied at Burhanpur on 25th of February and its disbandment followed a month and five days later (30 March, 1857) at Barrackpore. In April there was unrest and incendiarism in Ambala. On 3 May, a

191. Colonel Sykes, speaking in the Commons, quoted from a memorandum showing the reaction of the native troops towards the introduction of the greased cartridge and the new rifle. He narrated how a part of the 36th Regiment, then forming an escort to the Commander-in-Chief was detached and sent to Ambala. Later on when the Commander-in-Chief finished his inspection and returned to Ambala, the 36th refused to receive its detached part, saying "Hookah Panee bund", that is completely ostracised them, because they had used the polluted cartridge. Hansard 3, CL11, 197.

1857. 192. Manchester Guardian, 6 Aug. and 1 Sept.

193. Ibid., 2 July 1857.

mutiny in Lucknow was prevented by Sir Henry Lawrence. The regiment involved, the 7th Irregular Cavalry, was, however, disbanded. Three days later (6th May) the 34th Native Infantry was also disbanded at Barrackpore.

So far the Government had signally failed in the trial. For acts of mutiny disbandment was criticised as being no punishment at all. In fact, it was perhaps a reward. According to Dr. Edward Henry Nolan, who had rejected the mutiny thesis, regiments which were already desirous of such a retrenchment, when let off so easily, felt rather encouraged than discouraged.<sup>194</sup> Henry Beveridge, who regarded the mutiny as a result of a Muslim conspiracy, similarly described the punishment as inadequate and one which rather provoked "than suppressed the crime against which it was directed."<sup>195</sup> The Manchester Guardian described it as a source of further discontent, disaffection and revolt in the ranks of the army.<sup>196</sup> George Crawshay, the Mayor of Gateshead, in his lecture on 4 November, 1857, strongly criticised the disbandment of the 19th Regiment, the first of the series at the time of the mutiny. He argued that such a punishment raised them from disbanded soldiers to "martyrs of their faith in the eyes of the Hindoos," and so enabled them to spread "disaffection from station to station,

194. Dr. Edward Henry Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the Earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859, II, p.711.

195. Beveridge, op. cit., p.562.

196. 3 Aug. 1857.

wherever they went. The first effect of the disbandment of the 19th was to destroy the 34th Regiment."<sup>197</sup> Later on, the Manchester Guardian felt so strongly about the disbandment affair that it ranked it higher than the so far most-emphasized caste and cartridge causes. It believed that the latter causes had nothing to do with later insurrections, and that they had ceased to exist immediately after the outbreak. Now the cause was the seduction by the emissaries of the disbanded 19th and 34th regiments combined with probably extra military sources, the paper shyly admitted.<sup>198</sup> Moreover, it was contended, that when the sepoy saw one regiment after another being disbanded without committing any overt act of mutiny at all, he naturally felt apprehensive about his own fate. Under these circumstances he considered it the better part of wisdom to join his comrades and thus deserve the punishment which he otherwise was afraid to incur.<sup>199</sup> Crawshay in his later address to a special general court of the East India Company at the India House on 25 August, 1858, further asserted:

It must be remembered, that if no disaffection pre-existed, the act of disarming was certain to create it; if disaffection did exist among any it was certain to extend to all.<sup>200</sup>

Thus it seems to this writer that the Government and the sepoy were engaged in a perilous game. Each was

197. George Crawshay, The Mutiny of the Bengal Army from Official Documents. A Lecture delivered in the Hall of Mechanics Institute, Gateshead, Wednesday, 4 November, 1857 (Gateshead: Printed at the Observer Steam Press, 1857), p.7. For a similar opinion, see also: "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.379.

198. Manchester Guardian, 17, 19 Aug. and 2 Nov. 1857.

199. Ibid., 3 Aug. 1857.

200. Crawshay, Proselytism Destructive of....., p.18.

trying to outdo the other. The impression so far was that the sepoy was on the winning side. Conscious of this, Major Hewitt, the commander at Meerut, decided to strike hard. This fact was reported universally. On 6th May, eighty three sepoy of the 3rd Cavalry at Meerut refused to use the new cartridge while on parade. On 9th May all of them were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, ranging from five to ten years, by a court martial composed of native officers. This was a serious challenge to the sepoy. The cartridges were a common grievance with a large part of the sepoy establishment. There were only two alternatives left with the soldiers; either to submit to a similar punishment of "ten years in irons", or else get rid of the people responsible for the introduction of the cartridge.<sup>201</sup> The choice was not hard to make. The sepoy, it seems, was in no mood to yield. He picked up the gauntlet. The strike rebounded and what was called the "epoch making mutiny of 1857" began its heavy course.

201. "Suppression of Important Passages in the  
Official Report of the Debate at the India House,"  
Free Press, 17 Feb. 1857.

### CHAPTER III

#### VARIATIONS ON THE MUTINY THEME

What really caused the outbreak on 10 May, 1857? Was it the cartridge incident or was it a general religious upheaval? What was its character? Was it an army émeute first and last or was it a mutiny which developed into a national struggle -- limited or general? Was it inspired from outside? What were the motives behind it? Was it just a Praetorian struggle of the army or was it aimed at the re-establishment of native rule, especially that of the Muslims? These were the questions vociferously debated by the advocates of the military mutiny school of thought. As the debate led to major differences of opinion and consequent divisions among the adherents of this school, the mutiny school of thought came to be many views.

There was almost unanimous agreement among all sections of the British public regarding a religious panic as the prime cause of the outbreak. But, at the same time, there existed a large difference of opinion as to the cartridge incident's share in causing the uprising. The Times thought of the cartridge as a mere pretext designed to shield the real intentions of the sepoys<sup>1</sup> and

1. The Times, 6 Aug. 1857.

the Saturday Review regarded it as a minor cause of the mutiny deserving to be "placed last in order."<sup>2</sup> Several of the school thought that religious apprehension was already there and that the cartridge incident came only as a last spark. Even the opponents of this view admitted the immediate significance of the cartridge affair.<sup>3</sup> Still an overwhelming majority of this school considered the cartridge grievance as the prime mover.<sup>4</sup>

This section launched a virulent attack upon those who completely refused to admit the strength of the cartridge argument, chief among them being Disraeli. The Manchester Guardian called them "men of limited experience and narrow views," -- people with an infantile imagination, incapable of appreciating a national character different from their own. It branded them as a people deficient in philosophic care and accuracy, not observing how, in all human affairs, the greatest events sometimes appear to hinge upon the most inadequate causes. To drive home the strength of its argument the paper emphatically controverted, "What should we expect if a regiment of Irish Roman Catholics were ordered to trample under foot the consecrated host."<sup>5</sup> The attack was clearly directed against Disraeli and his followers.

The Examiner was still more open in directing its fury; it attributed the mutiny primarily to the

2. Saturday Review, 18 July 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: The Rev. J. D. Massingham "The Rebellion of the Sepoys traced to its True Source," (a sermon preached in St. Paul's Church, Derby, on 7 Oct. 1857) The Pulpit, LXXII, 1858, p. 397.

3. See Chapters V, p.166 and VII, pp.248 and 257-58.

4. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.389; Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, pp.22-23. In fact, a very widely held opinion.

5. 6 Aug. 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: The Scotsman, 22 Aug. 1857.

cartridge affair and repeatedly called the author of the opposite theory "D'Israeli".<sup>6</sup> Upon Lord Ellenborough, the ex-Governor-General of India, it bestowed the honorific title of the "Eastern Oracle", contriving "to make his tinsel sometimes pass for gold." The paper added that he should no more be judged "by his words but his worth."<sup>7</sup> In fact, Disraeli, Ellenborough and other members of the opposite school were all targets for serious criticism by the "hard-line" section of the mutiny school. Colonel William Henry Sykes, M.P. in the liberal interest and a director of the East India Company, holding that the cartridges were the main grievance -- a grievance that left only two alternatives for the sepoys -- argued that from that time an outbreak in the army became inevitable.<sup>8</sup> Answering those who rejected the cartridge idea on the grounds that the same cartridge was used by the soldiers against their rulers, J. L. Archer argued that the end justified the use. He pointed out the well accepted maxim:

....it is meet and proper, ay, meritorious, to do evil with the intent that good may therefrom ensue.<sup>9</sup>

The fact, however, remains that it was the religious fear generated by so many factors put together, cartridge included, which had contributed to the strength of the outburst. No wonder T. C. Chambers, the Common

6. The Examiner, 1 Aug. 1857.

7. Ibid., 8 Aug. 1857.

8. "Suppression of Important Passages in the Official Report of the Debate at the India House," Free Press, 17 Feb. 1858. Comparing the sepoy with a pet animal and the Government with its master, Colonel Sykes absolved the former of all responsibility to revolt. According to the Free Press, the Colonel had observed before the Court of Directors at the India House, "Suppose he pinched his dog's nose, although in play, and the dog bit his finger, he would leave the court to determine whether he was to blame or the dog was to blame in the matter."

9. J. L. Archer, Indian Mutinies Accounted For: Being an Essay on the Subject, p.11.

Serjeant of the city of London called it "a religious mutiny."<sup>10</sup> A writer in the Missionary Herald observed:

During the extraordinary troubles from which we are now emerging, nothing has so cheered our minds as the fact, which appears to be now well established, that the disaffection of the native troops has originated in their dread of the growing power of Christianity. Most strangely have they erred in believing that the Government was endeavouring to entrap them into the sacrifice of their caste, yet we believe they are right in apprehending that their idols and superstitions are decaying and will be speedily overthrown not by might nor by power.<sup>11</sup>

Another writer writing in the same magazine as late as June 1859 admitted:

I am persuaded that its immediate cause was religious panic, produced to a large extent by the inconsistencies of our rule. Professing to be indifferent to all religions, we have yet in spite of ourselves been destroying heathenism and advancing truth; and as one important element of Hinduism after another had disappeared the people have felt that some secret power was at work which they could not understand, and thus their fears have gradually become excited until all confidence was gone.<sup>12</sup>

Turning to the character of the mutiny, one at once finds himself faced with a major group of thought in the school comprised of "hard-line" individuals. To them the "entire affair was nothing but a mad military outbreak,"<sup>13</sup> which had no background cause whatsoever, military or civil, and had started spontaneously.<sup>14</sup>

Existence of a conspiracy or of any combination was thought highly unlikely.<sup>15</sup> Had such been the case, it was argued,

10. "Extent of Missions in British India," MMC., XX11, 1858, p.44. For similar opinions, see also: George Crawshay, The Mutiny of the Bengal Army from Official Documents, A Lecture delivered in the Hall of Mechanics' Institute, Gateshead, Wednesday, November 4, 1857, pp.7-10; The Spectator, 8 Aug. 1857. How strong was the religious fear can be ascertained from the following extract of a letter from India, reproduced by The Spectator. Referring to the ten mutineers who were brought to be blown from guns at Ferozpur, the extract read:

Some cried out, 'Do not sacrifice the innocent for the guilty!' Two others, 'Hold your snivelling! die men and not cowards - you defended your religion, why then do you crave for your lives?! 'Sahibs!' 'They are not Sahibs, they are dogs!'

While it clearly indicates that the mutinous sepoys were convinced that their religion was actually in danger and that they were dying in its defence, the last part of the conversation reveals the extent of hatred of the natives for the British. Unlike the west, even today a dog in India is regarded as an obnoxious and hated animal.

To realise what little regard the rulers and the ruled had for each other, compare this conversation with Colonel Sykes' statement before the Court of Directors. See n.8.

11. [The Rev.] C. B. Lewis, Ext. from a letter of.... quoted in the MH., in an article "India," XL1X, 1857, p.513.

12. The Rev. James Smith, "Resumption of the Mission in Delhi," MH., LI, 1859, p.389.

13. The Examiner, 4 July, 1857. For similar opinions, see also: The Times, 30 July, 1857; India's Mutiny and England's Mourning; or Thoughts for the Fast Day (London: Hatchard and Wertheim and Macintosh, 1857), p.13.

14. The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.16; India's Mutiny and England's...., p.3; "Suppression of Important Passages....," Free Press, 17 Feb. 1858.

15. The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.16.

Barrackpore or "the great European stations" of the North-West of India would not have been chosen for raising the banner of rebellion. In that case the central stations of Dinapore, Banaras, Allahabad, Nimach and Mhow, where there were few or no European regiments, would have better served the aims of conspirators.<sup>16</sup> For this and other reasons, soon to be discussed, the outbreak was thought to be sudden. Had it not been, the mutineers, though illiterate, were, it was held, not so simple as to have thrown all precaution to the winds by not selecting a safe place and by choosing Meerut<sup>17</sup> -- a place where, but for the pitiful incapacity and inaction of the commanders, the outbreak "could instantly have been crushed by the total destruction of the mutineers."<sup>18</sup> It was, therefore, looked upon as an act of desperation rather than one of premeditated treason.<sup>19</sup> The choice of Delhi too, it was thought, was accidental rather than planned. It was regarded as a choice dictated by the proximity of that city to Meerut rather than by its imperial character. Perhaps, not even one man, it was emphasized, turned his face towards Delhi with the idea that it was the home of the King. It was stressed that the mutineers would have gone there all the same. On the contrary, it "would have been a marvel if they had not made their way to Delhi."<sup>20</sup>

It was further reasoned that a previous general

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.; Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie], English Tenure of India: Practical Remarks Suggested by the Bengal Mutiny, pp.4-5.

18. Scrutator [Brodie], loc. cit.

19. Manchester Guardian, 6 July, 1857.

20. Saturday Review, 8 Aug. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.389. The Times, however, commented that there was only one idea occupying the minds of the mutineers and that was to "run off to Delhi....the traditional seat of the Indian Empire. From the most remote and opposite points there is still a flight to Delhi.... It is at least just what we should desire.... Yet, if Delhi is such a trap, we may possibly pay for it. We have made it ourselves a sort of Indian Sebastopol, strengthened it and filled it with cannon and ammunition. Why we ever did this with a place of high Mahommedan fame, and then assigned it to the keeping of an exclusively native force...." 1 Aug. 1857.

conspiracy would have resulted, after the take-over of Delhi, in the seizure of Allahabad, Banaras and other places. The absence of such attacks, argued a writer in the National Review, went far to prove the absence of any premeditated plan. A long range conspiracy, he thought, should have availed itself of the years 1854-55, when the British Army was busy in the Crimea. Even in 1857, why did it wait until the Persian war was over?<sup>21</sup> Haphazard risings of the sepoys were offered as another proof of this point of view.<sup>22</sup> Absence of definite leadership was to Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie, as it was to many others, a further evidence of the truth of their thesis.<sup>23</sup> The author of the "Military Revolt in India" (published in the National Review) contended that the "puppet King" of Delhi was not at the head of any party and that he was not prepared to "assume the functions of the mimic royalty."<sup>24</sup> The Saturday Review believed that <sup>the</sup> King "became a political personage in spite of himself," who "dreamt as little, a few months ago, of the new honours thrust upon him, as of fitting out an expedition at Calcutta for the conquest of the British Isles."<sup>25</sup> Just because the mutiny was widespread, it should not be assumed that its organization must be of commensurate magnitude.<sup>26</sup> The Manchester Guardian explained away even the extent of the mutiny to the presence of esprit de corps among the sepoys. In many

21. "The Military Revolt in India," National Review (hereafter referred to as NR.), V, 1857, p.455.

22. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 1437.

23. Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of India, Practical...., pp.4-5.

24. "Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, p.452.

25. Saturday Review, 8 Aug. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXll, 1857, p.389; Manchester Guardian, 2 July, 1857.

26. "The Military Revolt in India," loc. cit., p.454.

cases, argued the paper, the mutinous regiments just followed the example of their comrades -- "بھینر چال" [following like sheep] doing it partly out of sympathy and partly from a vague idea that the Government had fallen.<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, it was thought that the mutinous sepoys had no auxiliaries and that they were only joined by the "rabble from the bazars [Bāzārs]," such as London or any other great European town would produce "when murder, robbery and incendiarism were afoot."<sup>28</sup> It was believed that the sepoys were fighting just for themselves; that they had nothing in common with the people; that they did not rally round the throne of Delhi; had no attachment to the King; no admiration for the princes; that there was no national objective before them, and last of all they lacked the presence of a master spirit in their ranks -- a spirit, which could bring together the heterogeneous elements in the rebel army and "elevate the sepoy mutiny... into a great national movement."<sup>29</sup> It was emphasized that there was not even an atom of patriotism in the movement and that it was just a sepoy fight for loaves and fishes.<sup>30</sup> The Manchester Guardian pointed out that the sepoy was not even sparing his own people. The paper took comfort in the fact that this would do much in making the agricultural population of India loyal towards the Government and in increasing their hatred of the rebels.<sup>31</sup>

27. Manchester Guardian, 3 Aug. 1857. For similar opinions, also refer to the Guardian of 6 and 17 Aug. and 2 Nov. 1857.

28. The Examiner, 4 July, 1857. For similar opinions, see also: "The Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, p.452; "Calcutta and the Indian Question," London Journal, XXXVLL, 1858, p.119; "Operations of General Havelock," Saturday Review, 21 Nov. 1857; Smith, "Resumption of the Mission in Delhi," MH., LI, 1859, p.389; The Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts (London: Seely, Jackson and Halliday, 1857), p.5; The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, p.3; "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.383; The Times, 6 Aug. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 6 July and 7 Aug. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 1435.

29. "Within Delhi." Saturday Review, 26 Sept. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: Manchester Guardian, 17 Aug. 1857 and 18 Jan. 1859; Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of India, Practical...., pp.4-5; W. B. Adams, "The Right to Govern and to Punish," Letter to The Spectator, 19 Sept. 1857.

30. "The Operations of General Havelock," Saturday Review, 21 Nov. 1857; Adams, loc. cit.

31. 7 Aug. 1857.

The Times, arguing that the sepoy had only one aspect -- that of the soldier, reproved the Commons, when it wrote editorially:

It is no part of the duty of the English House of Commons to elevate mutineers into malcontents or to recognize them as representatives of their race and religion.<sup>32</sup>

It was because of this thinking that one adherent of the mutiny school asserted that the "cruel stab was from the hand of Brutus,"<sup>33</sup> implying thereby that the blow came from the most unexpected quarter; i.e., the sepoy army, whose loyalty to the Government was seldom doubted.

It was further contended that though the mutiny was all-embracing, and extended to "all tribes and all arms" in the Bengal army, the masses were with the Government.<sup>34</sup> The writer in the National Review, feeling cheerful at the military character of the catastrophe pointed out that every "fresh piece of authentic information" received from India further elucidated the argument in hand. It showed, he stressed, that from first to last the outbreak was a mutiny and not an insurrection; that the peasantry and civil population had abstained from any participation in the mutiny; that the animosity exhibited towards the European fugitives was confined only to "a few villages"; that the indifference shown "in several" was due to "craven terror of the mutineers" which

32. 30 July, 1857.

33. India's Mutiny and England's....., p.3.

34. "Principles of Indian Government," NR., VI, 1858, p.3. For similar opinions, see also: "The Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, p.452; The Examiner, 19 Sept. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 98 and CXLVII, 1435; Manchester Guardian, 6 July, 1857; "India and the Mutiny," Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine (hereafter referred to as WMM.), 5th Series, III, 1857, pp.1032-33 and 1037. By maintaining that the uprising was "purely a military rebellion" and that the "masses had never risen against our authority anywhere," the writer in the Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine was, in fact, contradicting his earlier statement made in the same article that the "true cause of the mutiny was a long-planned and well-laid Mahomedan conspiracy for their restoration to power: this," he further maintained, "was the chronic disease; the cartridge excitement only an inflammatory one."

deterred the inhabitants "from harbouring or aiding Europeans" and, above all, the fact remained that "in many others" they had concealed them and displayed kindness towards them.<sup>35</sup> In this way, not only the mass of population was singularly passive and apathetic, but, insofar as the Hindūs were concerned, they showed themselves, contended the same writer, antagonistic to the revolt rather than otherwise.<sup>36</sup> To another of this school even the civil population of Delhi seemed to be siding with the English against the mutineers.<sup>37</sup> Having expressed similar opinions, the Manchester Guardian saw no reason why the natives should be sympathetic towards the army. It felt that the people had everything to fear from the rebels and everything to hope from the re-establishment of British authority in India. In addition to this, the paper could also see race differences causing active hostilities between the army and the populations among whom the army was stationed.<sup>38</sup> Under these circumstances, it was reasoned that the outbreak, far from being a civil rebellion was not even a mixture of civil and military revolt. Gigantic mutiny as it was, emphasized a writer in the National Review, the mischief was wholly initiated and carried out by the mutineers themselves. Their only associates in this work, he asserted, were representatives of nothing but criminal elements.<sup>39</sup> Such a conviction enabled The Examiner and many others of the same mind to

35. "Principles of Indian Government," NR., VI, 1858, p.3. For similar opinions, see also: Hansard 3, CXLVII, 526; Manchester Guardian, 15 July, 1857; The Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, p.5.

36. "Principles of Indian Government," loc. cit.

37. Ibid.; "The Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, p.452.

38. 15 July, 1857.

39. "The Military Revolt in India," loc. cit.

forecast confidently an early suppression of the outbreak.

This paper observed:

A mutiny of this sort, a servile military war, cannot drag on; the first blow it receives will be decisive.<sup>40</sup>

It is no wonder that one W. B. Adams, in his letter to The Spectator, held the sepoys guilty of heinous crime and called for their "utter extinction" as "complete as that of Sodom and Gomorah."<sup>41</sup>

This strongly-argued thesis, however, fell to the ground when Martin Richard Gubbins, a staunch supporter of the military mutiny theory, was forced to concede to the objections of others. He accepted the fact that the people, instead of helping the Government had rapidly fallen away from their rulers; had broken into acts of violence and robbery; had shown no good will even when the cause of the mutineers was failing, and had not only withheld much needed information, but had even misled the English troops. Though Gubbins offered a strong plea for the last default in the severities of the mutineers, he ended up admitting that:

....affection is a feeling which we have no right to challenge from our native subjects in India. Aliens as we are from them in blood, in feeling, in religion; nowise mingling with them in social intercourse, and interchanging few kindly offices, we have no right to expect from them love and sympathy; least of all, active assistance and support.<sup>42</sup>

40. The Examiner, 8 Aug. 1857.

41. Adams, "The Right to Govern and to Punish,"  
The Spectator, 19 Sept. 1857.

42. Martin Richard Gubbins, An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh, and of the Siege of the Lucknow Presidency; with some Observations on the Condition of the Province of Oudh, and on the Causes of the Mutiny of the Bengal Army, p.53.

The mutiny views were also the opinions which, at one time or another, were strongly maintained by the Palmerston Government, i.e., Earl Granville, President of the Council, rebutting Ellenborough's point of view in the Lords, stressed that the revolt had not "extended beyond the army."<sup>43</sup> Sir G. C. Lewis, Chancellor of the Exchequer, took the outbreak very lightly and ardently hoped that the whole affair might have failed.<sup>44</sup> Ross Donnelly Mangles, M.P. in the liberal interest and Chairman of the East India Company, refusing to admit Disraeli's point of view in the Commons, emphasized that "so far from being a national revolt, the simple truth was that where there were no troops there had been no revolt."<sup>45</sup> The Government emphatically denied the role of the princes in any conspiracy whatsoever. Instances of the loyalty of Patiala and Gwalior were quoted.<sup>46</sup> With the exception of one or two Zamīndārs, it was argued, all were helping the Government.<sup>47</sup> The loyalty of the Panjab was offered as another instance. The Panjābīs were, remarked Mangles, even enlisting themselves in English regiments.<sup>48</sup> Thus it was that the Manchester Guardian admonished Disraeli and the Conservative Party's organs for regarding the mutiny of the Bengal army as a national protest on behalf of the entire people of Bengal against the domination of the foreigners. Calling such a thesis

- 43. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1331.
- 44. Ibid., 1589.
- 45. Ibid., CXLVII, 526.
- 46. Ibid., 482 and 526 and also CXLVIII, 98. A writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, a firm supporter of the Mutiny theory, however, doubted the fidelity of the ruler of Gwalior. "The Bengal Mutiny," LXXXII, 1857, p.584.
- 47. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 526; Manchester Guardian, 6 July, 1857.
- 48. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 526.

an "evident fiction," it hopefully observed:

But we do not suppose that even Mr. Disraeli will consider the adhesion of the rabble of the towns or the banditti, who avail themselves of so tempting an opportunity to rob the fugitives and to plunder villages, a proof of national sympathy with the mutineers.<sup>49</sup>

Here it is interesting to quote a couple of strong opinions in full. Lord Shaftesbury confidently declared:

And who were they that perpetrated these atrocities? Was this a nation rising in a sense of its wrong - writhing under torture, plunder, oppression and cruelty - writhing under the violation of every sacred and social right - rising to recover their lost liberties, rising as one man to assert their independence and the integrity of their religion? No such thing. Has any proclamation been put out by the rebels that they have a single wrong to complain of? Have you found in any one instance a national or even the symptom of a national rising? Has not the whole country, with a very few exceptions, been perfectly tranquil and quiescent? Have not the greater part of the villagers assisted the Royal troops and attempted to discomfit the mutineers? Wherever an exception occurred, it may be traced to brigands and those wild lawless hordes that always will be found on the continent of India, wandering from one village to another. The villagers themselves in no instance have arisen against the British power; on the contrary, they have known that their security consisted in the vigour, and permanence of Her Majesty's dominion. Who then were the mutineers and from whom arose the frightful rebellion?

It arose, he asserted, from a "monster" of British creation, the army.<sup>50</sup> Three days later the Manchester Guardian whole-heartedly endorsed this view of Lord Shaftesbury,<sup>51</sup> but had to contradict itself later on, when

49. Manchester Guardian, 7 Aug. 1857.

50. Earl of Shaftesbury, England's Apostasy in India and the Earl of Shaftesbury's Great Speech on Indian Cruelties, delivered at Wimborne, p.6.

51. Manchester Guardian, 3 Nov. 1857.

it admitted the presence of a civil rebellion worthy of notice in Awadh as well as the participation of the Company's native civil servants in the revolt at other places.<sup>52</sup> Rejecting the parallels drawn by the European press between Austrian rule in Italy and British rule in India, and denouncing their justification of the sepoy revolt as a consequence of the tyrannical rule of the British, of their wilful treachery and spoliation of the princes of India and gross oppression of the agricultural population, the paper desperately cried:

But we repeat perhaps the hundred thousandth time, there has been no national rebellion in Hindostan. There has been none and could have been none, because there exists no such thing as a nation. More than this there has been no civil rebellion deserving of notice except in Oudh....<sup>53</sup>

In line with Lord Shaftesbury, the Illustrated London News observed:

No one seems to have entertained the idea that the rebellion was a national movement. None of the thousand and one races spread over the vast continent have arisen against us.... As a rule the rural population in every part of India have stood aloof and watched the contest between the sepoys and the English.... Of the hundred and fifty millions of Asiatics over whom our rule has been extended not more than two hundred thousand have arisen in arms against us, including the criminals liberated from the gaols and the regular robber population, who have become the secret allies of the soldiery.... Of the Rajahs, Nizams....only three or four have declared against us and they are among the very minor dignitaries of their class -- the King of Delhi being the most conspicuous name, although he has long been without territory; and as to Nana Sahib, he is not a monarch at all.<sup>54</sup>

52. Ibid., 21 Dec. 1857.

53. Ibid. A clear understatement of the enemy strength, for, if accepted, it would hardly do justice to the British civil and military administration in India. The Government ended up deploying more than 90,000 European and 250,000 native soldiers to suppress the rebellion. Still it took more than two years to eradicate it completely.

54. Illustrated London News, 26 Dec. 1857.

As it is always difficult to hold fast to and be consistent with strong opinions, the Illustrated London News also found itself confronted by the same difficulty when it contradicted itself in the next breath. This part of the above editorial needs to be especially noted in view of the opinion regarding the loyalty of the people and princes. The editorial commented that "on the other hand, the most powerful of the native princes have done their best to keep their subjects in hand."<sup>55</sup>

Others of this school of thought were more flexible and accommodating towards the rebels in India than were those whose opinions are described in the preceding pages. Although the opinions expressed by its members cut across the unity and strength of the "parent school", although these opinions themselves were quite divergent, still one finds them more responsive to the tide of events in India than the ones expressed by the "hard line" group. That is why the first group (the "hard line" one) soon found themselves indulging in serious self-contradictions and exceptions, as will be seen in the following pages. These other opinions ranged from voices suggesting that the outbreak was a Muslim inspired military mutiny, to more frequently heard cries of a military mutiny taken advantage of and used by others, especially the Muslims; from the outbreak as "something beyond mere military

55. Ibid.

mutinies"<sup>56</sup> covering all areas, to a war or a national movement in Awadh.

If the author of India, the Revolt and the Home Government thought of the outbreak as "a military rebellion fomented by Mahomedan conspirators", which was "not to be traced to a discontented people",<sup>57</sup> that of India and the Mutiny called it "purely a military rebellion", the true cause of which was a "long-planned and a well laid Mahomedan conspiracy for their restoration to power."<sup>58</sup> Sharply pointing out the known hatred of the Muslims for British rule; the choice of a Muslim city and a Muslim King; the annexation of the Muslim state of Awadh and its Queen's representation to the British crown; the Awadh King's attempted escape to Calcutta and his later imprisonment there, a writer in the British Controversialist found it difficult to "escape the conclusion that the ultimate object of the mutiny was the re-establishment of [Muslim] power in India." Himself a firm believer in the military character of the outbreak, he argued that the scheme to mutiny, however, did not originate in the ranks of the army. He was inclined to believe that the plot was hatched by Muslims and that the sepoys were merely instruments in their hands. He thought that since the

56. "Extent of the Indian Mutinies," Fraser's,  
LV11, 1858, p.360.

57. p.23.

58. See explanation n.34. For similar opinions,  
see also: The Rev. G. Salmon, The Indian Mutiny and  
Missions (Dublin: Madden and Macintosh. London: Wertheim  
and Macintosh, 1857), p.13; "Has the Preservation of Caste  
Conduced to the Present Revolt in India - Affirmative  
Article 1," BC., 1858, pp.25-27.

latter were imperfectly informed on the details of the plot, they had only learnt the signal of the revolt without learning the time when it was to be acted upon. The result was, he emphasized, the revolt ~~was~~ miscarried.<sup>59</sup> —

It was further held that the Muslim conspiracy was the "chronic disease" and the "cartridge excitement" just an "inflammatory" cause of the uprising.<sup>60</sup> Similarly the Rev. Richard Kidd, M.A., Vicar of Potter Heigham in Norfolk, ridiculed the importance that was being attached to the greased cartridge; to him it was just a "colourable pretext for the mutiny." Behind the cartridge pretence, he contended, was cloaked years of anti-Government plotting by the "proud Mohometans, who gladly seized the opportunity, which the employment of the greased cartridge gave, for inflaming the passions of their comrades of the Hindoo superstition." This, he thought, was amply proved by the sepoys' later use of the same cartridge to kill their own officers -- a clear indication of the fact that they had no "insuperable objection" to its introduction.<sup>61</sup>

The Rev. James Wallace of the General Assembly's India Mission further connected the military outbreak with the Muslim propaganda about the Persian War. Such propaganda, by presenting the defeats of the Persians as victories, had convinced the native sepoys that they could sweep the small number of Europeans before them. In this

59. "Has the Preservation of....Affirmative  
Article 1," BC., 1858, pp.25-27.

60. See n. 34.

61. Richard Kidd, "Causes of the Indian Mutiny,"  
(A sermon preached on 7 October, 1857), The Pulpit, LXXII,  
1858, 393-94.

way, Wallace thought, the sepoys were rendered "the more willing to entertain the idea of mutiny, and the more reluctant to abandon it when once entertained."<sup>62</sup> The Rev. J. D. Massingham, M.A., of St. Paul's Church, Derby, in his effort to trace the rebellion of the sepoys to its true source, endeavoured to bring home to his congregation that the mutiny was an "attempt to make Mahometanism supreme by the power of the sword....by the annihilation of all those who worship the One True God."<sup>63</sup> It was this widely shared conviction among the members of this school regarding the nature of the mutiny which made Captain Mowbray Thomson feel relieved at the absence of an Aurangzēb, a Haidar or a Tipū in the ranks of the sepoys. The appearance of any such general or leader among the rebel soldiers, Thomson felt sure, would have required "in all probability," a reconquest of India.<sup>64</sup>

There were others of the mutiny school who, however, refused to accept the idea of a conspiracy previous to the outbreak, (including "The Military Revolt in India", -- published in The National Review, who contradicted his earlier stand that it was purely a military mutiny). On the contrary, they added that the mutinies had "encouraged many individuals to plot against the Government at Calcutta, Banaras, Poona, Bombay, Satara,

62. James Wallace, The Revolt in India: Its Causes and its Lessons. A lecture delivered in Belfast on 2 February, 1859 (Belfast: C. Aitchison, 1859), pp.17-18.

63. The Rev. J. D. Massingham, "The Rebellion of the Sepoys traced to its True Source," (A sermon preached on 7 October, 1857), The Pulpit, LXXII, pp.393-94.

64. Capt. Mowbray Thompson, The Story of Cawnpore (London: Richard Bentley, 1859), pp.43-44.

Hyderabad and elsewhere."<sup>65</sup> They further thought it probable that "in these, as in most Indian conspiracies, Mahommedans were the chief actors." This was so because it was regarded as their habit to "talk secret treason" all over India.<sup>66</sup> In addition to fomenting rebellion, the Muslims were also believed to have influenced the press.<sup>67</sup> Charles Raikes argued that the catastrophe was looked at differently by different sections of what he called "quondam" British subjects. He contended that the mutiny was taken advantage of by the predatory class of Gūjars, the Mēwātīs (who, finding an opportunity, resorted "to their hereditary vocation of plunder.") and, above all, by those whom he preferred to call, "the followers of the false prophet." To quote Raikes:

The green flag of Mahommed too had been unfurled. The mass of the followers of the false prophet rejoicing to believe that under the auspices of the great Mogul at Delhi, their lost ascendancy was to be recovered, their deep hatred to the Christian got vent and they rushed forth to kill and destroy.<sup>68</sup>

He maintained that outside of these three classes, the sepoys, the Gūjar plunderers and the Muslims, "the great agricultural communities, the Jat, the Brahmin, the Rajpoot" looked on the English race, under whose reign they had so long tasted peace and security, with undisguised compassion."<sup>69</sup> Even The Times and the Manchester Guardian occasionally indulged in self-contradictions by admitting

65. "The Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, p.455.
66. Ibid., 453 and 455.
67. Ibid., 453.
68. Charles Raikes, Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India, pp.159-60.
69. Ibid.

the strength of Muslim animosity towards the British and their participation in the outbreak. The Palmerstonian liberal Manchester daily observed that "except among the discontented Mussulmans there exists no hostility towards us on the part of our non-military subjects." It went on to warn the Government against any secret machinations of "Mahometan conspirators and partisans of the mutineers," since the press law prevented them from open action.<sup>70</sup>

Almost a month later, quoting editorially the excerpts of a letter from India, which called the mutiny a definite result of a "cunningly contrived political conspiracy on the part of Mahometans" for the "extermination" of British rule in India, the paper commented that it had no reason to disbelieve that opinion, especially in view of the Muslim behaviour, the choice of the city, and the proclamation of a descendant of the Mughal dynasty as the emperor.<sup>71</sup>

There were others who thought that the convulsion had ceased to be a mere military mutiny and was more and more involving the civil population. It was believed that the mutiny was suffered to grow into a civil rebellion. The writer of the article "Extent of the Indian Mutinies", held that, excluding Awadh, the mutiny spread over a space

70. Manchester Guardian, 7 Aug. 1857.

71. Ibid., 3 Sept. 1857.

of five hundred miles in length from Meerut to Banaras and two hundred miles in breadth from Fatehgarh on the borders of Awadh to Banda on the right bank of the Jumna.<sup>72</sup>

Calling the region "an Alsatia or a battle field," he argued, "It is here that the atrocities have been most numerous, the cruelties most refined, the damage most wanton, the loss of property, private and public, most irreparable and the wreck of our institutions the most complete." With these facts before him he found it "impossible to deny that the disturbances were something beyond mere military mutinies. Where we have had to burn villages, to hang plunderers by scores on the nearest tree, and to execute justice summarily on sundry petty chiefs and landholders, it is clear that a very large portion of the Hindostani population of the Daob, has been more or less against us."<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Massingham, admitted that though the outbreak sprang from the soldiery and not from the people, yet the people were sympathetic towards it and desired "to establish their independence and religion." However, he took care to emphasize that such a spirit was confined to those men and areas which were "most exempt from missionary efforts." Among these men and areas Massingham listed: 1) The native army and places where the native army was stationed; 2) Awadh, the districts of Hansi, Hissar, Moradabad,

72. "Extent of the Indian Mutinies," Fraser's,  
LV11, 1857, pp.359-60.

73. Ibid.

Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Bithur, Azamgarh -- as regions and places where there were no missionaries, and Delhi, where one was stationed, but only recently.<sup>74</sup>

Several others voiced similar feelings, important among them being the Mayor of Gateshead,<sup>75</sup> Charles Raikes, Julius George Medley and an Anglo-Indian writing in Fraser's Magazine. The last pointed out that the habitual sight of over-turned British authority contributed towards giving the uprising a national character.<sup>76</sup> Medley held that what undoubtedly had started as a revolt of the Bengal army, had changed its character into something between a national rebellion and a mutiny. In addition to the interested parties, he admitted that the revolt of the Pūrbiyā army had also drawn into its vortex the whole of that class from which the army itself was enlisted.<sup>77</sup> Raikes, who emphasized the share of plunderers and Muslims, also accepted the changed nature of the revolt, when he emphatically held that "we have in many parts of the country drifted from mutiny into rebellion, is too true; but I repeat my assertion, that we have to deal now with a revolt caused by a mutiny, not a mutiny growing out of a national discontent."<sup>78</sup> Even the Manchester Guardian, though persistent in its refusal to admit of anything like a civil revolt in North and Central India had, with the passage of time and also because of the difficulties faced

74. Massingham, op. cit., p.395.
75. Crawshay, The Mutiny of the Bengal Army.....,  
p.10.
76. "An Anglo-Indian's View of the Indian  
Crisis," Fraser's, LVll, 1858, p.274.
77. Julius George Medley, A Year's Campaigning  
in India, March 1857 to March 1858, pp.194-95. Medley was  
a Captain of the Bengal Engineers and Garrison Engineer,  
Lucknow.
78. Raikes, op. cit., p.156.

by the Government in the suppression of the revolt, to effect a change in its attitude. Four months after the start of the outbreak, the paper editorially accepted the fact of a "popular rising" at Hyderabad<sup>79</sup> and the existence of civil disturbances in the districts of Saugor and Indore in the Madras Presidency.<sup>80</sup>

This section of the military theory school of thought was further heavily reinforced and strengthened when it came to discussing Awadh. Here even some of the "hard-line" school like the Saturday Review,<sup>81</sup> the Manchester Guardian,<sup>82</sup> The Examiner, the Illustrated London News and many others admitted the truth of the revolt's marked civil or national character in Awadh. Thus even civil assistance to sepoys was reported and accepted.<sup>83</sup> The Examiner, vigorously maintaining that the outbreak was military in character, admitted at the same time, its different character in Awadh. It cast aside all reservations and boldly agreed that the entire state of Awadh was in flames -- was up in arms against the rulers, the Lucknow Residency being the only place under British control. The paper felt anguished at this unpopularity of British rule in the whole state of Awadh and strongly doubted the wisdom of its annexation. Though any previous complicity on the part of native gentry, noblemen or chiefs in a possible conspiracy for the overthrow of

79. I have retained the old spelling of Hyderabad which, though wrong, is still current. A trend, however, has now started to spell the place as Haiderabad, because it is حیدرآباد and not حائیدرآباد.

80. Manchester Guardian, 9 Sept. 1857.

81. "Lucknow, Calcutta and London," Saturday Review, 12 Dec. 1857.

82. 21 Dec. 1857.

83. Manchester Guardian, 24 Aug. 1857.

British administration was doubted, it was confessed that all of them had shown no attachment to their rulers. The defection of the upper classes was reported to be universal.<sup>84</sup> No wonder in January, 1858, the Illustrated London News was constrained to observe:

The situation of affairs in India has assumed a new character. It is no longer an insurrectionary movement in the Bengal army which we have to face -- it is a war in Oude.

Again:

We no longer give ear to pratings about triumphal marches throughout India, and sudden exterminations of the mutineers, but we know that we have got a task to perform, the difficulty of which will be greater or less just in proportion to the estimate which we form of it. One thing is clear, if we have not to reconquer the whole of India, we have to conquer Oude; and we have in fact to found a new empire in the East.<sup>85</sup>

Such thinking on the part of the Illustrated London News and others was especially significant as it came after the fall of Delhi and the relief of Lucknow. This displayed a clear veering round to the Disraelian point of view.

As has already been pointed out, a large majority of the school under present discussion asserted with the help of forceful reasons that the mutiny was a sudden affair, with no characteristic background at all. There was, however, a powerful group of dissidents to this proposition. Calling the outbreak a mutiny, the group admitted the existence of outside interference and aid to

1858. 84. The Examiner, 3 Oct. 1857.
85. "India," Illustrated London News, 16 Jan.

the sepoys soon after the cartridge incident and months before the final outbreak. Prominent among them were Gubbins, Medley,<sup>86</sup> Henry Mead, Archer, some anonymous writers in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, the author of "The Military Revolt in India" in the National Review, the Westminster Review<sup>87</sup> and many others. Each one of them came forward with his own explanation. The writer in the National Review -- a stout opponent of the civil and political rebellion point of view, admitted:

We yet see little reason to doubt that about this time the cartridge affair was followed by several, perhaps many, conspiracies.<sup>88</sup>

The writer pointed out the mutiny of the 19th Regiment at Barrackpore in January; the belief of General Hearsey<sup>89</sup> regarding active outside interference; the admission of the sepoys at the time of the disbandment of the 19th Regiment; the discovery of some correspondence regarding a military rising after the disbandment of the 34th; the distribution of cakes in villages and possibly of lotus flowers among the regiments during the earlier part of the year and the conduct of the mutineers themselves as several proofs leading to that conclusion.<sup>90</sup> Likewise, a writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, while maintaining that the outbreak was a military mutiny, and that the civil population was incapable of any conspiracy, accepted the fact that sepoy cupidity was fired by the

86. Medley, op. cit., p.198,

87. "The English in India," WR., New Series, XlII, 1858, pp.194-95.

88. "The Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, pp.454-55.

89. The writer regarded General Hearsey as an able officer, who was thoroughly acquainted with the natives.

90. "The Military Revolt in India," loc. cit. Similarly the author of the article, "The English in India," published in the Westminster Review, also held that the mutiny was not a sudden movement. He agreed with General Hearsey when the latter said that the British for a long time had been sitting upon a mine ready for explosion. Pointing to the warnings issued by the "greatmen of India", i.e., Napier, Munro, Charles Metcalfe, Colonel Jacob, the writer argued that if at all the outbreak was a surprise, it was a "surprise only to the Calcutta Government - poor Brigadier Hewitt and the rest, whom either imbecility or insolence of office had made obstinate." WR., New Series, XlII, 1858, pp.194-95.

Dharma Sabhā (a Calcutta society) and the native press. General Hearsey suspected this society of having put around the speculation regarding the greased cartridge in anticipation of the occasion. He believed that all disaffection was introduced from Calcutta and that every detachment sent on duty to Calcutta came back imbued with suspicions never exhibited before.<sup>91</sup> Advising the Government to impose similar restraints upon the society as the ones imposed upon the press, he critically upheld that:

It is a caricature of constitutional Government to allow a nest of ignorant and malicious traitors to slander its intentions under its very nose, and hamper every design for the improvement of the country by an incessant appeal to the darkest and wildest passions of human nature.<sup>92</sup>

Similarly Gubbins, who firmly believed in the military nature of the rising, also believed in the exploiting hand of an outside agency, especially in fanning religious disaffection. As to the agents of disaffection, he pointed to the Brahmans, discontented followers of Wājīd 'Alī Shāh the deposed ruler of Awadh, and his minister 'Alī Naqī Khān. According to Gubbins the "most absurd rumours were circulated and believed," i.e., it was rumoured that carts or boat loads of bone dust were reaching cities and cantonments to be mixed up with the flour; that the Government intended to cause the spread of

91. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXI, pp.378 and 389.

92. Ibid., 390.

Christianity by importing English Crimean War widows to the sub-continent and by forcing the principal landlords of the country to marry them; declare their children heirs to their estates and thus supplant Hindū proprietors.<sup>93</sup>

Mead, on the contrary, emphasized the part played by the Royal House of Delhi in tampering with the loyalties of Muslim elements in the army. In anger he called Bahādur Shāh Zafar "the sepoy King of Delhi."<sup>94</sup> Even the Manchester Guardian, while admonishing Disraeli for persisting in his national rebellion thesis, slipped into an angry mood and grudgingly admitted the presence of what it called, the hand of "factious conspirators" on a limited scale.<sup>95</sup> The Times also intermittently contradicted itself when, while persisting in its mutiny thesis, it frequently described the outbreak, in its moments of anxiety and anger, as "an atrocious, sanguinary conspiracy" and called its leaders "monsters."<sup>96</sup>

With all these differing opinions in this school, there was, however, one point on which almost all agreed. This concerned the role played by the native press as an independent agency or as a tool in the hands of the conspirators. Although it was not regarded as representative of the Indian people, still almost all unanimously upheld Canning's Press Act, insofar as its suppression of the native press was concerned.<sup>97</sup> If one

- 93. Gubbins, op. cit., pp.85-88.
- 94. Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and its Consequences, p.102.
- 95. 2 Oct. 1857.
- 96. 14 Sept. 1857.
- 97. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXX11, 1857, p.389.

member of this school believed that the Indian Fourth Estate was influenced by fanatic Muslim conspirators,<sup>98</sup> the other blamed it and the Dharma Sabhā (vide supra) for exploiting the cartridge issue and "exciting the jealousy of the sepoys."<sup>99</sup> It was admitted that the circulation of native newspapers was very small, but then it was pointed out that that deficiency was made up by the devotees, both Muslim and Hindū, who passed as agents and read the papers in regimental lines.<sup>100</sup> Lieutenant Edward King, supporting the Press Act, quoted from the Life of Sir Thomas Munro.<sup>101</sup> The latter, in his minutes written on April 12th, 1822, had observed:

....owing to the unnatural position in which India will be placed under a foreign Government, with a free press, and a native army, the spirit of independence will spring up in this army long before it is ever thought of among the people.

The army will not wait for the slow operation of instruction of the people, and the growth of liberty among them, but will hasten to execute their own measures for the overthrow of the Government.<sup>102</sup>

The author of India, the Revolt and the Home Government, likewise quoted another prophecy of the same sage and agreed with him. Holding that the British Empire in India was the child of the awe and respect with which the rulers were regarded by the natives, Munro argued that a free press was sure to destroy such a foundation. He thought that the native troops, because of the influence of

98. "The Military Revolt in India," NR., V, 1857, p.453.
99. "The Bengal Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1857, p.389.
100. Ibid.
101. Having joined the Indian army in 1780, Munro served the Government of India in various capacities, both in the civil and military administration. His career reached its climax in 1819, when he was appointed to the office of the Governor of Madras. He died in office on 6 July, 1827.
102. Edward King, A Bird's-eye View of India: Showing Our Present Position - its Dangers, and Remedy (London: Patridge and Co., 1857), p.45.

the native press and their close contact with European officers were doubly vulnerable -- exposed as they were to the doctrines circulated by the press and the freedom of discussion enjoyed by their officers. From both of these they tended to "learn to compare their own low allowances and humble rank with those of their European officers"; to examine the grounds on which those differences rested; to calculate their strength and resources, and to believe that it was "their duty to shake off a foreign yoke and to secure for themselves the honour and emoluments which their country yields. "If the press be free," contended Munro, "they must immediately learn all this and much more. Their assemblage in garrison, and cantonments will render it easy for them to consult together regarding their plans; they will have no great difficulty in finding leaders qualified to direct them; their patience, their habit of discipline and their experience in war, will hold out the fairest prospect of success; they will be stimulated by the love of power and independence and by ambition and avarice to carry their designs into execution."<sup>103</sup>

Similarly, all maintainers of the mutiny theory, the "hard-line" group included, whether individuals, or newspapers, i.e., The Times, the Manchester Guardian, the Saturday Review, The Examiner, the Government and the Government benches in the two Houses or the members of the courts of Proprietors and Directors of the East India

pp.7-8. 103. India, the Revolt and the Home Government,

Company, one and all looked askance at the freedom of the native press and praised the curbs imposed upon it by the Government. Holding the native press responsible for making a "disgraceful and mischievous use of the liberty it enjoyed" for a long time before the outbreak of the mutiny, the Manchester Guardian argued that the Government would have been guilty of frightful irresponsibility, had it failed to act in this regard.<sup>104</sup> The paper not only dated the attacks of the native press in India upon the Government to the year 1856, but also strongly suspected the political control and motives behind it.<sup>105</sup> The Examiner described the native newspapers as "edged tools" in the hands of infants.<sup>106</sup>

Thus it was that the advocates of the mutiny theory, while holding fast to the idea of a military uprising in one shape or another, either took to differing from each other or indulged in remarkable self-contradictions. These schismatic tendencies not only took away even the outward semblance of congruity and consistency from their ranks, but each differing voice and each new argument tended to weaken their main theme as against the view which held the uprising to have resulted from social and political factors. Those holding the latter view may be conveniently referred to as the revolution school of thought. The strength of the mutiny school was

- 104. 6 Sept. 1857.
- 105. 20 Aug. 1857.
- 106. 12 Sept. 1857.

undermined by its internal discord; it soon succumbed to its own inconsistencies rather than to the adverse forces of the opposing school.

## CHAPTER IV

### CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

A very large section of the British public reacted sympathetically towards the Indians and viewed the outbreak as a socio-political rebellion or a revolution. Thus some of the many strong sentiments expressed depicted the uprising as: "political"<sup>1</sup> in origin, a "social rebellion miscalled a military mutiny",<sup>2</sup> a "servile war and a sort of Jacquerie combined",<sup>3</sup> a "patriotic war",<sup>4</sup> and a "national movement in the fullest sense".<sup>5</sup>

Although the words were different, the theme was the same. All the different currents of opinion issued forth from widely separated sources and channelled themselves into one course. Thus, with added strength and greater direction the current continued its forward journey until it emptied itself into one great ocean. These diverse voices were of the unanimous opinion that the revolt was a vigorous endeavour to repatriate the native authority.

This school of thought was composed of a much wider variety of Britons than the one already discussed. It was made up of: the Conservative Party; the Party press -- with Disraeli and The Press most vocal among them respectively; a great majority of the British military servants, General Sir Robert William Gardiner<sup>6</sup>

1. The Rev. Alexander Duff, The Indian Rebellion; its Causes and Results in a Series of Letters from.... (London: James Nisbet, 1858), p.193; "Indian Mutinies," Fraser's, LV1, 1857, p.628.

2. Gen. Sir Robert William Gardiner, Military Analysis of the Remote and Proximate Causes of the Indian Rebellion, drawn from the Official Papers of the Government of India: Respectfully Addressed to the Honourable the Members of the House of Commons (2nd. ed.; London: Byfield, Hansworth and Co., 1858), p.34. Earlier in the book Gardiner had made a still more unequivocal observation when he described the army outbreak as an "attendant military mutiny" upon a "social rebellion." p.18.

3. William Howard Russell, My Diary in India, I, p.164. In continuation of the above thought and in the same breath, Russell went on to call the outbreak as a war of religion, race and revenge as well.

4. People's Paper, 11 July, 1857.

5. Morning Herald, cited in the People's Paper, 26 Sept. 1857.

6. A seasoned general and an author of several pamphlets (16) on military matters, Gardiner had seen active military service in Gibraltar, Hanover, Sicily, Portugal, Spain, France and Belgium, with generals like General Fox, Sir John More and Sir Arthur Wellesley. In 1848 he was appointed Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of Gibraltar, which offices he held until 1855. Though Gardiner never seems to have visited India, his two lengthy papers on the Indian crisis were inspired by his desire to make a professional inquiry into the state of affairs in India -- an inquiry based upon official papers. This Gardiner did on his own for the benefit of the House of Commons. Earlier too, he had done the same thing in the case of Crimean and Peninsular wars. As was the case with his previous papers, his papers on the Indian crisis were also addressed to the House of Commons. DNB., XX, pp.417-18; BMGC., LXXX11, cols. 66-67.

being their chief spokesman; a large number of missionaries stationed in the subcontinent, chief among them being Dr. Alexander Duff;<sup>7</sup> the Irish nationalists, with The Nation as their principal mouthpiece;<sup>8</sup> the Chartists, with Ernest Charles Jones<sup>9</sup> as the moving spirit among them, and, finally, those whom one might call the "moralists" in the British society.

The military servants and the missionaries were directly involved in the Indian question; one for allowing lax discipline in the army and the other for allegedly causing religious alarm in India. In their case, therefore, it could be argued that both of them came in for a share in the responsibility for the outbreak and as such had reason to stand in self-defence: not only self-defence, but also to attempt to shift the responsibility on to their counterparts among the advocates of the opposite theme. Naturally, they made vigorous and sometimes successful attempts to expose the acts of omission and commission of the Indian civil administration, and to challenge the validity and prudence of the imperial policy prior to the Indian mutiny.

In the case of Irish nationalists it could similarly be argued that they had their own interests to safeguard. Irish experiences of English rule had, in the

7. A graduate of St. Andrews University and a recipient of honorary degrees of D.D. and L.L.D. from the universities of Aberdeen and New York respectively, Duff was ordained as a missionary to India in August 1829. As a devoted Christian missionary and educationist he founded a college at Calcutta, in which English was used for the first time as a medium of instruction in India. To acquaint himself with the country and its people, Duff virtually travelled all over the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. During the mutiny he addressed twenty-five letters to Dr. Tweedie, Convener of the Free Church of Scotland's Foreign Missions Committee. The letters were first published in The Witness newspaper, and were afterwards collected in a volume which went through several editions. DNB., XVI, pp.125-28.

8. Throughout the outbreak this newspaper published scores of articles and poems on India, all of which sympathized with the rebels and wholeheartedly applauded their efforts at overthrowing the foreign yoke. In addition to this, the paper always gave a prominent place to the events in India and invariably published them under the title of "Indian Revolution."

9. Born in Germany of Welsh parents, Jones was a precocious boy. Before the age of ten he had written some poems which were published by Nesler of Hamburg. At eleven he ran away to join the Polish insurgents, but was overtaken and brought back home. At the age of twenty-three Jones was presented to the Queen by the Duke of Beaufort in 1841. In 1846 he joined the Chartist movement and soon became one of its most ardent members. A "most persuasive orator" of his time, in 1847 Jones was connected with O'Connor's monthly magazine, The Labourer, and was later on the editor of The Northern Star.

In 1848 Jones parted company with O'Connor for the latter's failure to advocate force; was in the same year arrested at Manchester for making seditious speeches and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. It was during this period that he wrote his long and famous poem, The Revolt in Hindostan, with his own blood on loose leaves of a prayer book. In 1852 he became the editor of the Chartist newspaper, The People's Paper.

During the Indian uprising Jones vigorously used the People's Paper to convince the people of Britain that

the Indians were fighting in a noble cause. This writer has noticed him as the only public speaker for whose speeches there was an admission charge, and which were publicized much in advance through the agency of his paper. Like Gardiner, Jones too never seems to have visited India. People's Paper, 1 Aug. 1857; DNB., XXX, pp.99-100.

face of the strong ever-present nationalist element in Irish politics, made foreign rule distasteful to them, not only for their own country, but also for other countries of the world. Apart from this consideration and the fact that the India of 1857 offered, to the Irish nationalists, a strong parallel to their own country and called for their sympathetic attitude, it cannot be forgotten that England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity as well. Naturally they wanted to make political capital out of the Indian outbreak. It is no wonder that all these factors, combined, led The Nation and others to call the outbreak a revolution in India, whereby the people of the subjugated colony were striving to overthrow a foreign rule.<sup>10</sup>

The Chartists and "moralists" were the two sections of this school of interpretation most uninvolved personally in the Indian question. Their reactions, therefore, were not influenced by particular, collective, or general party policy motives. They stood for liberty, equality, freedom and fair play at home, and honestly advocated the same for the Queen's subjects in India. As will be evident in the course of the three chapters devoted to this aspect of British reactions towards the Indian crisis of 1857, these groups advocated freedom for India before the outbreak, during the uprising and even

10. See n. 8 and Chapter 1, n. 2.

after it was crushed. In fact, Ernest Jones, the editor of the Chartist news medium the People's Paper, felt so sympathetic towards the Indians, that his heart literally wept for them. While in prison in the late forties, he had depicted the condition of Indians in verse in his own blood -- pen and ink having been denied him.<sup>11</sup>

Turning to the Conservative Party, to the present writer it appears that their reactions were based upon their convictions. The history of this party, as well as the development of the East India Company, reveals that it was always, more or less, the Conservatives who tried to restrict the activities of the Company. Starting from Pitt's India Act of 1784, down to the Charter Act of 1854, the Conservatives invariably either tried to impose further restrictions upon the Company, to restrict its powers, or even to strive for its complete extinction. Not only that, they even opposed, by words or by deeds, the policy of territorial expansion in that far-off part of the empire. As at home, they were for the maintenance of the status quo abroad, and India was no exception to this rule.

This does not, however, mean that there were no wars waged during the Conservative administrations. Of wars there were many, but those were, generally speaking, wars of necessity and were usually followed by some

11. First published privately in 1850 under the title The Revolt of Hindostan, the poem was republished in 1857 under the name, The Revolt of Hindostan; or, the New World by Effingham Wilson of London.

hesitation to occupy territories. A survey of the British imperial history in India shows that whenever wars were waged in India in the time of Conservative administrations, victory was generally followed by a partial, if not full restoration of territories to the vanquished house. In this way an attempt was made not only to retain a semblance of native rule but also to keep the interest of the ruling princes alive in the continuity of the British rule in India. This was also meant to avoid causing any suspicion in the native mind and the possibility of an early confederacy among the Indian princes.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the Conservatives advocated a cautious approach in the fields of social and administrative reforms.

In this way all these sections of the British public, although they had little in common in their political thinking, rejected the mutiny theory. Although there were longstanding predictions of a possible revolt in India by various experts in Indian affairs, although the poetic imagination of Lord Byron,<sup>13</sup> Ernest Jones<sup>14</sup> and a nephew of Canning<sup>15</sup> had long sensed the unmistakable direction of adverse winds blowing in India, and had forecast an insurrection and a war of vengeance in that far-off part of the British Empire, yet the vigorous leadership in the present trend of thought seems to have been

12. Even the much criticized Subsidiary System of Lord Wellesley was designed to advance military rather than political frontiers. When towards the later part of his Governor-Generalship, Wellesley tried to pursue a more vigorous foreign policy, he was recalled, and Lord Cornwallis was sent back to India with the "purpose of undoing the mischief" which his predecessor was "supposed to have done." The idea was henceforth to follow a policy of non-intervention; to end the hostilities with Hölkar and to pacify Sindhviā by the restoration to him of Gwalior and Ghoud. (R.R. Sethi and V. D. Mahajan, British Rule in India and After, 1707-1956, p.88). To take another example, that of Henry Hardinge, whose Governor-Generalship preceded the uprising by less than a decade, one finds that he was faced with exactly the same situation vis-à-vis Awadh and the Panjab as Lord Dalhousie -- though rather more serious and definite where the Panjab was concerned. While Hardinge confined himself to remonstrances and friendly warnings in the case of Awadh, and a far milder action in the case of the Panjab, in spite of the much needed justification for the latter's incorporation into British India, Dalhousie acted vigorously in both cases.

13. "The Indian Nemesis," The Nation, 19 Sept. 1857; "Miscellaneous," CEM, XLIV, 1858, p.232.

14. Ernest Jones, The Revolt of Hindostan; or, the New World (Calcutta: Eastern Trading Co., 1957. Originally published in London by Effingham Wilson, 1857), pp.6 and 11. Also see its review in The Athenaeum, 24 Oct. 1857.

15. The Athenaeum, 29 Aug. 1857.

provided by Disraeli -- nicknamed for this reason by The Examiner as D'Israeli. It was Disraeli who first demanded a discussion on Indian affairs in the House of Commons -- a demand to which the Government had reluctantly to agree. Unlike many other past and contemporary critics, Disraeli was close to the centre of power. His concern for Indian affairs was, therefore, more likely to influence policy. It appears that Disraeli sincerely believed that an honest and objective analysis of the whole situation in India was badly needed; unless that was done, he thought, all remedies applied might easily fall short of the mark.<sup>16</sup> He seems to have been convinced of the fact that if such an attempt was in the interest of India, it was also in the deepest interest of Great Britain.<sup>17</sup> The sincerity of his conviction is proved from his non-committal attitude towards the outbreak for around a month after the first news of the disasters in India. He maintained this attitude even though on 19 May a highly important member of the Conservative Party and one of their most experienced India men, Lord Ellenborough,<sup>18</sup> had warned the Government of the military situation in India.<sup>19</sup> Ellenborough's concern was so great that on 21st May he addressed a letter to the Secretary for the War Department in which he emphasized the Indian situation

16. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1709-10.

17. Ibid., 538-40.

18. Ellenborough was the Governor-General of India from 1842 to 1844. In addition to this he had also served for several times, both before and during the Indian uprising, as President of the Board of Control for India.

19. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 66.

de novo and earnestly inquired about the steps taken by the Government.<sup>20</sup> Still Disraeli was reluctant to draw conclusions soon after the receipt of the news from India, as he easily might have done, had he been inspired by party motives alone. On the contrary, the Conservatives appreciated some of the steps taken by the administration after the mutiny had started.<sup>21</sup> Another factor which proves the strength of his convictions on the Indian situation is that he carried them into office in February 1858, with the formation of the Derby-Disraeli ministry.

Thus it was that Disraeli, who claimed to have been inspired by his profound study of the Indian subject, finally broke through his earlier non-committal stand, and made a dramatic statement in the Commons. Having opened the debate on "India - State of Affairs" on 27 July, 1857, he remarked:

The decline and fall of empires are not affairs of greased cartridges. Such results are occasioned by adequate causes, and by an accumulation of adequate causes.<sup>22</sup>

Quoting instances of street riots in Boston and in Paris, which had respectively ushered in the two greatest revolutions of modern times, he strongly emphasized that significant events always started in an insignificant manner. This might be the case with the Indian outbreak.<sup>23</sup> It was, therefore, incumbent upon the British

20. Ibid., 67. Later on the Conservatives took the Government to task for not paying any heed to the warnings of Ellenborough. 42-43 and 570.

21. Ibid., CXLVI, 514 and 1324-25.

22. Ibid., CXLVII, 475.

23. Ibid., 440.

people to make a realistic approach to the problem so as to be able to devise an effective cure.<sup>24</sup>

This statement quickened the public mood. While many strongly criticised it, many more found in it sufficient food for thought. It had necessitated a searching inquiry by the people for what Disraeli called "adequate causes." All those reports, books, pamphlets, memoirs, observations and warnings which had earlier received little or no notice at all at the hands of the British public, were carefully read, analysed and reappraised. People like Sir Henry Lawrence,<sup>25</sup> John Malcolm,<sup>26</sup> Sir Henry Russell,<sup>27</sup> Sir Charles Metcalfe,<sup>28</sup> Lord Ellenborough,<sup>29</sup> The Duke of Wellington,<sup>30</sup> Bishop Heber,<sup>31</sup> Sir Thomas Munro,<sup>32</sup> Charles Napier,<sup>33</sup> Mountstuart Elphinstone,<sup>34</sup> and some other British Indian celebrities became the most frequently quoted figures. The diagnosis revealed that it was not simply an army outbreak with the cartridge affair as its immediate cause. Social, religious and political discontent had been the driving forces and the sepoy was just a pawn. Thus it was that Edward Henry Nolan was able to assert that to call the outbreak a "disturbance created by a pampered sepoy and some of the vagabond population of the cities" would be tantamount to a deliberate shutting of the eyes to the realities of the matter.<sup>35</sup> Similarly a reviewer in the

24. It was this firm belief which led Disraeli to suggest to the Government the employment of civil remedies along with the application of military measures. He also advised that the reinforcement of twenty to twenty-five thousand soldiers would not be sufficient to quell the rebellion and pleaded that militia be called up. (Hansard 3, CXLVII, 475-79). Although these suggestions were mostly unheeded, and the one relating to militia turned down more than once, the Government was ultimately compelled to adopt most of them, especially the one concerning the militia. It is no wonder that this later on led the Conservatives to taunt the Government. Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 42-43.

25. Duff, op. cit., p.268. Sir Henry's own essays, written and contributed to various periodicals and magazines long before the outbreak, were also republished by Wm. H. Allen of London in 1859, under the title: Essays: Military and Political.

26. Duff, loc. cit.; Hansard 3, CXLVI, 525; Free Press, 11 Nov. 1857; John Bruce Norton, The Rebellion in India, How to Prevent Another, pp.85-86.

27. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 525; "Prospects of the Indian Empire," Edinburgh Review, CVII, 1858, p.3; Gardiner, op. cit., pp.24-25.

28. "Prospects of the Indian Empire," loc. cit., p.4; The Press, 25 July 1857; Gardiner, op. cit., pp.45-63, 66-72, 74-75 and 82-83; Norton, loc. cit., pp.29-35 and 60; The Rev. William Brock, A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1858), p.129.

29. "Prospects of the Indian Empire," loc. cit., p.40; Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 42-43; Free Press, 3 March 1858; Gardiner, op. cit., p.26; Norton, loc. cit., pp.87-88, 136 and 216.

30. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 525.

31. The Press, 25 July 1857; "Christianity in India," Blackwood's, LXXXV, 1859, p.477; Norton, loc. cit., p.7.

32. The Athenaeum, 15 and 29 Aug. and 10 Oct. 1857; Free Press, 11 Nov. 1857; Norton, loc. cit., pp.7 and 83-84.

33. The Press, 25 July 1857; Gardiner, op. cit., pp.19 and 34-38.

34. John Malcolm Ludlow, Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown towards India (London: James Ridgeway, 1859), pp.16-17; Gardiner, op. cit., pp.25-26; Norton, loc. cit., p.87.

35. Edward Henry Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the Earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859, 11, pp.712-13.

Eclectic Review called the greased cartridges and the bone-dust "as diagnosis of the disease and not the disease itself."<sup>36</sup>

The weaknesses of the British Empire in India

It was argued that the very foundation on which the superstructure of the British Indian Empire was built up was unsound. No two characters could be more incompatible than those of the trader and the sovereign. If the commercial interests of the East India Company rendered them "very bad sovereigns", the spirit of the sovereignty made them equally bad traders. In their former situation the servants of the Company "considered themselves as the clerks of the merchants", but in the latter case, the same servants came to regard "themselves as masters of sovereigns."<sup>37</sup> Apart from this, it was argued, it was inconceivable for the Indians to see "a small band of traders -- peddlars with their packs -- who, at their first coming, bowed humbly at their musnuds and licked the dust at the feet of the Rajahs and Omrahs."<sup>38</sup> building up a magnificent empire.<sup>39</sup> That was called the anomaly of history.

The dilemma of the Indians becomes easily understandable when one reads about the type of questions

36. "The Indian Mutiny," ER., New Series, IV, 1858, p.338.

37. Gardiner, op. cit., pp.64-65.

38. Umarā itself is a plural of Amīr and, therefore, cannot be used as a double plural. Amīr means: a governor, prince, noble, chief; a person of rank or distinction.

39. "Our Indian Empire," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1857, p.644. Cf. Russell, op. cit., II, p.54.

often put to the members of the ruling class. Referring to the imperative necessity of the transfer of Government from the Company to the Crown, the author of the "Crisis of the Sepoy Rebellion" argued:

Fancy the efforts of a native to get an idea what the Company is! 'Is it a King?' 'No.' 'An army?' 'No.' 'A Religion?' 'No.' 'It is a sabé [sic].' 'Ah, a society?' 'Yes.' 'Of Padrees (i.e., parsons)?' 'No.' 'Of Kings?' 'No.' 'Of officers?' 'No.' 'Of Pundits (i.e., learned doctors)?' 'No.'; 'Of merchants!' 'Of merchants! Ah, a society of merchants! And does the society of merchants do the sirkar business (the Government) of England?' 'No, the Queen does that!' 'And does the Queen do the sirkar business of Ceylon?' 'Yes.' 'Not the Company! And who is the highest, Queen or Company?'

This was true, reported the author, not only of the common man but also kings and princes.<sup>40</sup> To this writer it appears that the answer to the last questions regarding the nature of the two Governments in England and Ceylon must always have given real anguish to the inquiring natives.

Now if it was hard for the natives of India to reconcile themselves to the rule of a body of merchants, it was equally hard for the merchants of London to lay aside the ledger and successfully to manipulate the sword<sup>41</sup> -- and manipulate it in the interest of the ruled. Merchants they were by nature; merchants they remained throughout. It was the sheer force of circumstances, it

40. "Crisis of the Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-58, p.567. For a similar opinion, see also: [George Dodd], The History of the Indian Revolt and of the Expeditions to Persia, China and Japan, 1856-7-8 (London: W. and R. Chambers, 1859), p.561.

41. Expression suggested by the title of Beckles Wilson's book, Ledger and Sword or The Honourable Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies (1599-1874) (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1903).

was pointed out, which raised them to the pedestal of political power.<sup>42</sup> Since their chief interest lay in commerce, their mercantile pursuits dominated their political moves. Their desire for profit and gain could not join in comfortable harmony with the interests of the governed. The fact of the matter was, criticised Gardiner, that the character of the sovereign was regarded "as an appendix to that of the merchant, as something which ought to be made subservient to it or by means of which they may be enabled to buy cheaper in India, and thereby to sell with a better profit in Europe".<sup>43</sup>

The "dividends and not the millions of India", argued one, were their chief concern.<sup>44</sup> Naturally the policies they pursued were aimed at selfish commercial aggrandizement -- an aggrandizement which branded them as unwelcome rulers to the natives of India. This was not the end of the anomaly. There was still another accompanying evil. A company of merchants acquiring political power had still to look after the interests of the shareholders and directors. Thus it was that the right of patronage in the civil, military and educational services of India took deep root in the body politic of the East India Company.<sup>45</sup> India began to be exploited for the "benefit of the civil service."<sup>46</sup> Who gained? The British! Who suffered? The Indians! "A Resident in the North-Western Provinces of

42. "Our Indian Empire," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1857, p.644.

43. Gardiner, op. cit., p.65.

44. Investigation into Some of the Causes Which have Produced the Rebellion in India, pp.53-54.

45. The Rev. Charles Stovel, India: Its Crimes and Claims (A lecture delivered on the Fast Day, 7 Oct. 1857, and re-delivered on Wednesday, 14 Oct. 1857, in the Commercial Street Chapel and published at the earnest request of those who heard for its circulation), (London: Jackson and Walford, 1857), p.27.

46. Hansard 3, CL, 1652. For a similar opinion, see also: [G. B. Malleson], The Mutiny of the Bengal Army, pt. I, p.29.

India" lamented:

One of the false principles is that India exists for the benefit of Great Britain and not for the benefit of India itself.<sup>47</sup>

Henry Drummond, M.P., a tory of the old school, and one paternally regarded by Pitt in his early boyhood, addressing the Committee on the Government of India on 7 June, 1858, observed still more strongly:

If we were going to look upon India as we had looked upon it hitherto, as a mere place of plunder for English officials, we should surely lose it, and we deserve to lose it!<sup>48</sup>

W. H. Russell, The Times' special correspondent in India, held exactly the same opinion when he wrote that as long as "we regard India as a mere cotton-field, as an indigo-garden, as a plantation for the growth of five-percents and for enriching of younger sons, or as the arida nutrix of the civil and military services," the tenure of the British rule in India was going to rest on weak and uncertain foundations.<sup>49</sup> On the contrary, had the protests and selfish advice of the civilian service been ignored and settlement of Europeans encouraged, an independent body of loyal nobility would have arisen in the land. The numerarity of this class of land holders, it was contended, would not only have given a better organization to the Europeans in India, but would also have provided an enduring and wholesome link between the Government and the natives. It was in the absence of such an arrangement,

- 47. Investigation into Some....., pp.53-54.
- 48. Hansard 3, CL, 1652.
- 49. Russell, op. cit., I, p.Vll.

however, that Britain failed to enlist the interests and the sympathies of the natives on her side.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, the British Indian empire was not only an empire of merchants, it was also an empire of conquest. It was an empire held by truly foreign rulers -- foreigners by origin and foreigners also by inclination. They were different from their Muslim predecessors. The latter were foreigners by origin but not so by disposition. After the conquest, pointed out the writer in the Quarterly Review, they made India their home and adopted Indian customs and manners and so ceased to be, at least in this respect, foreigners.<sup>51</sup>

It was, however, different with the new merchant masters of the country. Not only were the sacred doors of the Company's India closed to European settlers and missionaries for a long time, but even the British civil and military servants did not like to settle there, -- for despite their service in India, England remained their home. Their affections, their loyalty, their love and wealth were all for Great Britain and not for India. Their Indian allegiance, it was stressed, was meant only to suit the interests of the East India Company.<sup>52</sup> In very rare cases would a Briton decide to settle in India after his retirement. They always regarded themselves, alleged one critic, as Englishmen in India, and so kept

50. [Malleon], op. cit., pt. 1, p.29.

51. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, pp.229-30.  
It may be mentioned here that some of the Muslim rulers tried even to set themselves up as national rulers of India. Akbar the Great was a striking example of this phenomenon. He, much to the chagrin of orthodox Muslims, went to the extent of evolving something like a new religion, or what may more properly be called a religious code, purely Indian, a composite of native religions, Christianity and Islām. His successor Jahāngīr was the son of Akbar's famous Hindū wife Rani Jōdhā Bā'ī.

52. Investigation into Some...., p.24.

themselves aloof from Indian society.<sup>53</sup> Every civil and military station, affirmed another had separate European quarters -- veritable ghettos.<sup>54</sup> This it was felt, very naturally fostered loss of contact.<sup>55</sup> Feeling despondent about the situation, Russell was compelled to observe that Belgravia was "not so much removed from Hounds-ditch in feeling, modes of life, and thought" as were the Europeans from the natives. He went on to say:

There is no bond of union between the two.... The West rules, collects taxes, gives balls, drives carriages, attends races, goes to church, improves roads, builds theatres, forms masonic lodges, holds cutchery, and drinks pale ale. The East pays taxes on what it eats grown on taxed lands, grumbles, propagates, squabbles, sits in its decaying temples, haunts its rotting shrines, washes in its failing tanks, and drinks its semi-putrid water. Between the two there is a great gulf fixed....<sup>56</sup>

Evidently the European population of India remained very sparse. If the Europeans and the Indians did not intermarry, they did not dine together either.<sup>57</sup> In fact, it was forcefully maintained, there was nothing in common between the Europeans and the natives.<sup>58</sup> Both were "aliens in birth, soil, climate, manners, language, and religion."<sup>59</sup> There was no common social instinct which could bring the two together. This absence of a common ground was emphasized and re-emphasized by several men of experience.<sup>60</sup> As a result, it was argued, the relationship between the British and the natives could not take any

53. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, pp.229-30.

54. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.233.

For a similar opinion, see also: Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie], English Tenure of India. Practical Remarks Suggested by the Bengal Mutiny, p.7.

55. J. B. Norton, Review of the Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another, Second Notice, The Athenaeum, 10 Oct. 1857.

56. Russell, op. cit., 1, p.180.

57. Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of...., pp.6-7.

58. Review of A Glance at the East, The Athenaeum, 15 Aug. 1857; "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.235.

59. Scrutator [Brodie], loc. cit., p.6.

60. Henry Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, Civil, Military and Social, from the First Landing of the English, to the Suppression of the Sepoy Revolt, including an Outline of the Early History of Hindoostan, 111, pp.555-56; "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.228; Norton, Review of The Rebellion in...., Second Notice, The Athenaeum, 10 Oct. 1857; Brief Observations Addressed to the General Reader on the Basis of the Reorganization of Our Power in India (London: R. C. Lepage and Co., 1858), pp.6-7.

other form save that of governors and the governed.<sup>61</sup>

The net result was, it was asserted, that British rule in India could not become national. Since it could not become national, it could not claim the affections of the native subjects. They were, in fact, looked upon as its "internal enemies."<sup>62</sup> Internal insurrection therefore, firmly believed Gardiner, was one of the greatest threats from which the British Indian administration always suffered.<sup>63</sup> Naturally the empire was basically one of conquest, maintained solely by a strong British military machine.<sup>64</sup> It was with this realization that Gladstone profoundly observed before the Committee on the Government of India, on 7 June, 1857:

Great conquests have been made by races of superior energy, who have gone in among inferior races, who have incorporated themselves with those inferior races, naturalized themselves in the country, associated probably with their religion and institutions, and at last amalgamated in one consistent and homogenous body, so as to become essentially the same in all the particulars which go to make up national existence. That is not our case. We go into the Indian peninsula with no such purpose. We go to take power out of the hands of those who formerly exercised it.<sup>65</sup>

John Bruce Norton, then a member of the Madras judiciary, quoted Metcalfe who had, long before the outbreak observed:

We are still a handful of Europeans governing an immense empire without any firm hold on the country, having warlike and powerful enemies on all our frontiers, and the spirit of disaffection dormant, but rooted universally among all our subjects.<sup>66</sup>

- p.7.
61. Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of.....,
62. Norton, The Rebellion in....., p.32. For a similar opinion, see also: Gardiner, op. cit., pp.46-47.
63. Gardiner, op. cit., pp.45-47.
64. Norton, The Rebellion in....., p.32.
65. Hansard 3, CL, 1621.
66. Metcálfe quoted by Norton, The Rebellion in....., p.30. For the same quotation, see also: Gardiner, op. cit., pp.46-47.

From the constitutional point of view too, the rule of the East India Company was described as a major irregularity. It was defined as "absentee sovereignty", and so all the more anomalous. The experiment of "absentee proprietorship" in Ireland alone, it was argued, should have been a sufficient lesson to prevent its further application to the land of India,<sup>67</sup> which was more remote, vaster, and far more difficult to control.

Turning to Indians, the argument looked very simple. British rule in India was far from national in character. Though it did succeed in enlisting the loyalty and affection of interested and selfish people, true loyalty was always wanting. Henry Beveridge argued that since it was the rule of a completely alien people, it was, therefore, "submitted to as a galling yoke to be endured so long as there was no hope of being able to shake it off, but not a day longer."<sup>68</sup> The present writer is of the opinion that it was the division among the Indians themselves which had encouraged the English to aspire to political power in India. Actually India with its millions had always been its own worst enemy. Earlier political rivalry among the congeries of Indian states had facilitated the invasions of the Persians, the Greeks, the Kushins, the Huns and, later, of the various waves of incoming Muslims. The arrival of the Muslims, while it

67. Martin R. Montgomery, The Indian Empire --- with a full account of the Mutiny of the Bengal Army; of the Insurrection in Western India; and an Exposition of the Alleged Causes (Vol. II; London: The London Printing and Publishing Co., n.d.) p.2.

68. Beveridge, op. cit., p.555.

gave comparative political oneness to strife-torn India, had injected duality of religion instead. Islām and Hindūism in its various forms had nothing in common. To the Reverend Henry S. Polehampton, an Anglican priest at Lucknow, it was Hindū-Muslim disunity in its very acute form on the one hand and Shī'ah-Sunnī differences on the other which enabled a small band of Britons to set themselves up as the rulers of the land.<sup>69</sup>

The ground indeed looked quite fertile. In spite of the original weaknesses of the British themselves, they could conveniently raise up what looked like a weather-proof superstructure. The Government of the Company was well aware of the differences between the two communities and their internal schismatic tendencies, and it did use them. What Disraeli called the "spontaneous circumstances of the country" were, in fact, profitably employed under the principle of divide and rule.<sup>70</sup> This writer is of the opinion that while the existence of such a situation did provide the English an opportunity to spread their roots around, it could not enable them to send them deep into the soil of India. The ground of communal differences was itself too slippery or sandy to tread on or to dig sound foundations upon; while the Hindūs and the Muslims remained at heart the enemies of the Company's rule, the game of divide and rule must also have proved highly

69. The Rev. Henry S. Polehampton, A Memoir, Letters and Diary of....., ed. The Revs. Edward Polehampton and Thomas Stedman Polehampton (2nd. ed.; London: Richard Bentley, 1858), pp.235-36. For a similar opinion, see also: Beveridge, op. cit., p.556.

70. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 447. For similar opinions, see also: Beveridge, loc. cit.; Polehampton, loc. cit.

demanding. It always required a supply of expert hands to handle the situation tactfully. The incapacity of one individual could spoil the hard work of many. That was why the Manchester Guardian, in spite of its strict adherence to the mutiny theory, metaphorically described the two communities "as charcoal, to which sulphur and saltpetre have only to be added, in the shape of arms and discipline, to complete the manufacture of a very dangerous" product.<sup>71</sup> The fact remains however that the Company rule was not acceptable to the people in general. According to Beveridge it never was popular.<sup>72</sup> Even the sepoys were said to have accepted it only because it was a fait accompli.<sup>73</sup> The reasons for such antipathy were not far to seek. It could easily be espied in the native spirit of patriotism -- a spirit which, according to the "British Resident in the North-Western Provinces of India", never dies.<sup>74</sup> Before long, another factor was added to the already existing weaknesses of British rule in India. It consisted in the excessive confidence which the Company had acquired as a result of its successes. It started to overrate the situation in its favour and embarked upon a set of policies which soon caused cracks in the already weak building. The cracks grew wider and ultimately threatened the very existence of the edifice in 1857.

Now if Disraeli voiced his strong doubts and

71. 4 Nov. 1857.
72. Beveridge, op. cit., p.555.
73. "Our Indian Sepoys," Leisure Hour (hereafter referred to as LH.), 1857, p.639.
74. Investigation into Some...., p.11.

challenged the Government's contention that the outbreak was a mere military mutiny, Ernest Jones had long expected such an occurrence in India. Almost all the members of this school unanimously ascribed the outbreak to various economic, social, political, religious and administrative grievances of the people. These grievances, they believed, when combined, produced a strong air of disaffection in the country. While many started to plot, many considered it their duty to spread disaffection. The majority of the aggrieved and disgruntled, however, kept silent but sullen, and continued to live in a world of hope and despair.

#### The Economic Grievance

The first of the grievances was set forth as partly economic and partly political. The imposition of foreign rule naturally excluded a large number of natives from offices of trust and responsibility. Starting under Warren Hastings, the process of de-Indianization of services reached its zenith under Lord Cornwallis. Cornwallis' contempt of native talent as inefficient and corrupt and his simultaneous desire to Europeanize the services was productive not only of irritation and

estranged feelings; it also severed a healthy and much needed connection between the ruler and the ruled. From that time onward the distance between the two, it was contended, grew wider and wider.<sup>75</sup> A writer in the Westminster Review, severely criticised this aspect of the administration. He wrote:

There has never been anything like it in the Mussulman Kingdom of India. Under Mogul Kings, Hindoos have frequently been prime ministers, and from every rank persons have risen into high office.... We can look no where for a parallel to the English rule, except to the Roman empire, where none but Roman citizens could hold office in the provinces. Notoriously this degraded the provincials into a sort of tame cattle....liable to be slaughtered by barbarians the moment the trained troops were withdrawn. Out of this came the ruin of the empire.<sup>76</sup>

Even Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie, who called the outbreak a mere military mutiny, agreed that the shutting out of the natives from participation "in the government of their own country" injured the feelings of the Hindūs and the Muslims.<sup>77</sup> The native states, in spite of their disorders, had presented, he held, an opportunity to the Indians for competition, restless enterprise and for advancement in life.<sup>78</sup> This opportunity was now denied to them. The exclusion of the natives from the services of their country had taken place in spite of audible complaints of humanitarians like Munro. He had earlier observed:

75. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.232. The article quoted figures of native employment taken from the returns laid before the Parliament. The returns showed that in 1857 there were 856 native employees who received less than £120 a year; 1377 who received between £120 and £240 a year; only six who received between £840 and £960 a year, and just five with salaries more than £960 a year, while the average salary of an Englishman was £1750. p.237 n.

76. "Our Relations to the Princes of India," WR., New Series, XlII, 1858, p.456.

77. Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of....., pp.7-8.

78. Norton, Review of The Rebellion in....., Second Notice, The Athenaeum, 10 Oct. 1857.

The consequence, therefore, of the conquest of India, by the British arms would be, in place of raising, to debase the whole people. There is, perhaps, no example of any conquest, in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country as British India.<sup>79</sup>

The liberalization affected by the Charter Act of 1833, which had abolished all distinctions of caste, colour and creed in the recruitment of the Company's services, and which had promised to afford equal opportunity to all was, it was contended, at once negated by the introduction of the English language as a passport for any such employment. Apart from this, the inclusion of examination questions in the Greek and Latin languages (neither of which was taught in India), as well as the insertion of questions on subjects of Christian theology, it was further stressed, were sufficient to keep the prospective candidates out of service.<sup>80</sup> Malcolm Lewin, late Second Judge of the Sadar Court of Madras, virulently attacked the assumption of all the offices by Britons -- offices which were otherwise the due of the natives. He regretfully noted:

Our rule has been that of the robber and the bandit and we are suffering from the natural result -- insurrection.<sup>81</sup>

Simultaneously, it was made clear that the present grievance was more than merely politico-economic. It was social at the same time. The Englishmen who took

79. Ibid.

80. Free Press, 2 Sept. 1857.

81. Malcolm Lewin, quoted by the Free Press,  
17 March, 1858.

the place of the natives were, generally speaking, men of youthful years. This surely added insult to injury. The natives considered it degrading to have to submit to an inexperienced youth who had no great sympathy with them and was unaware of their interests and problems.<sup>82</sup>

### Socio-Religious Reasons

Then came the social and religious grievances. Partly under pressure from the Evangelicals and public opinion at home,<sup>83</sup> and partly out of its own benevolent intentions, the Government of the East India Company decided to purge Hindū society of its various weaknesses. Now these weaknesses had acquired religious significance, and were matters of pride and prejudice among a very large and influential section of the Hindū population. An attempt to suppress them was at once construed as un-called for interference in their religion. A writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine complained that this was being done in the face of a prophetic warning by Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta, in 1824 against any meddling with the religious prejudices of the people of Upper India.<sup>84</sup> Thus it was that the suppression of Female Infanticide<sup>85</sup> and Satī,<sup>86</sup> allowing of Widow Remarriage<sup>87</sup> and interference in the Hindū system of adoption,<sup>88</sup> one

82. "Our Relations to the Princes of India," WR., New Series, XLIII, 1858, p.456.

83. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 488; J. W. Kaye, Christianity in India. An Historical Narrative (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1859), pp.455-62. For a detailed information on the influence exercised by the Anglican Evangelicals in the shaping of the Government policies, read: Ian W. Brown, The Anglican Evangelicals in British Politics, 1780-1833.

84. "Christianity in India," Blackwood's, LXXXV, 1859, p.477.

85. Review of the Indian Infanticide: Its Origin, Progress and Suppression, The Athenaeum, 1 Aug. 1857. Commending the suppression of female infanticide and other social evils, the reviewer argued that the step might have brought applause to the pioneers in Europe, but in their zeal they failed to take note of the gathering clouds in India. He firmly believed that the enmity of the people in the districts of Mainpuri, Etawah and other districts of the Agra division and the collectorate of Banaras was due to the suppression of the crime of female infanticide.

For similar opinions, see also: "The Indian Mutiny and its Causes," London Journal, XXV, 1857, pp.405-406; Ludlow, op. cit., pp.210-11.

86. "Religious Teaching in India," Letter to The Scotsman, 12 Sept. 1857; "A Suttee," London Journal, XXV, 1857, p.404; Annual Register, 1857, pp.239-40; Ludlow, op. cit., p.209.

87. Norton, Review of The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another, First Notice, The Athenaeum, 3 Oct. 1857; Annual Register, 1857, pp.239-40; An Indian Missionary [Hargrave Jennings], Review of The Indian Religions; or, Results of Mysterious Buddhism, The Athenaeum, 26 June, 1858; The Press, 11 and 18 July, 1857; "Religious Teaching in India," loc. cit.; David Urquhart, "The Legality of Acts Abolishing Native Customs and their Consequences," Free Press, 12 Aug. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 465; "Has the Preservation of Caste Conduced to the Present Revolt in India - Negative Article 111," BC., 1858, p.128; T. C. Robertson, The Political Prospects of British India, p.5. Commending the benevolent designs behind these reforms, Robertson bitterly complained

about the manner in which they were carried out. He called them "Inflicted blessings" calculated more often to estrange than to conciliate the natives.

In fact, 58,000 people petitioned the Government against and 55,000 for the Bill allowing widow remarriage. This was done at the time of the passage of the Bill through the Indian Legislative Council. Manchester Guardian, 16 Aug. 1856.

88. "Has the Preservation of....Negative Article 111," loc. cit.; Norton, Review of The Rebellion in...., First Notice, The Athenaeum, 3 Oct. 1857; An Indian Missionary [Jennings], Review of The Indian Religions; or ...., The Athenaeum, 26 June 1858; T. Frost (ed.), The Complete Narrative of the Mutiny in India, from its Commencement to the Present Time compiled from the most authentic sources; including many very Interesting Letters from Officers and Others on the Spot, (London: Pub. by Read and Co., [1858]), p.4.

In fact, female infanticide, Satī, allowing of widow remarriage and interference in the Hindū system of adoption were almost universally accepted as the causes of the outbreak. Female infanticide, Satī and widowhood were practised in certain regions of India among some of the higher castes. Because of the rigours of the caste system as practised among the Hindūs, it had become difficult to find a suitable husband for a daughter within the same caste or income group. While a high-caste man of the higher socio-economic status would not like his daughter to be wed to a man of lower status even in his own caste, with the poorer high-caste families the question of dowry posed an even more formidable problem. The natural result was that the birth of a female came to be dreaded among the higher castes. To save the family dignity and honour, many of the high-caste parents resorted to the cruel practice of female infanticide.

Just as female infanticide was based in the main on most selfish feelings of supposed social necessities, ostentation at wedding feasts, punctilios about inter-marriages and the relative position of either father-in-law or son-in-law, similarly Satī and widowhood also had a kindred background. The pride of the high-caste husband would not permit that his wife should, after his death, cohabit with any other person. Once married, the union was regarded irrevocable both in life and death insofar as the wife was concerned.

and all, quickened the pace of anti-British thinking in the Hindū society. Just to take the case of Satī, Ludlow, who himself was highly appreciative of its abolition, informed his countrymen that even this much-needed reform failed to evoke approval among the Hindūs, "except in the minds of a few thinking men, one or two perhaps in a million." In fact, Satī was a matter of so deep a conviction with the people who practised it that they had even gone to the extent of fighting out their case in the Privy Council.<sup>89</sup> The London Journal and Weekly Record of Literature, Science and Arts, criticising this interference of the government in Hindū observances, remarked:

It is more than probable that the present outbreak in the East is more the result of some blind, precipitate attempt to meddle with the religious sympathies and antipathies of the people than from another cause.

It further went on to advise the government strongly when it said:

We cannot govern Calcutta as we govern London; we must respect the hereditary sentiments of two thousand years; and as inhabitants of the North, it would be folly on our part to disdain the ceremonies, even of pleasure which, in the East, unnumbered ages have invested with traditional sanctity.<sup>90</sup>

A vague fear regarding the safety of their religion had already begun to pervade the Hindū society. There came another reason for it in the introduction of the Religious Disabilities Act. The act removed the

89. Ludlow, op. cit., p.209. Ludlow supported his argument by further quoting an instance of a Lōdhī cultivator's wife from Sir Wm. Sleeman's book Rambles and Recollections. In this case the widow, when denied the right of Sati, herself "stole a handful of ashes from his [deceased husband] pyre", and persuaded her people to burn her the next day.

90. "The Indian Mutiny and its Causes," London Journal, XXV, 1857, pp.405-406.

earlier customary law disinheriting an apostate Hindū. While it opened the gates for litigation,<sup>91</sup> it also went a long way in further confirming Hindū apprehensions regarding the religious policies of the Government.<sup>92</sup> Even before the act could be passed, the Hindūs of Calcutta and Madras lost no time both in lodging protests and addressing petitions and memorials to the Government about their forthcoming grievance. One of the Bengal Memorials read:

Your memorialists will not conceal that from the moment the proposed Act becomes a part of the law applicable to Hindoos, that confidence which they have hitherto felt in the paternal character of their British rulers will be most materially shaken. No outbreak of course is to be dreaded; but the active spirit of fervent loyalty to their sovereign and of pride in their rulers will be changed into sullen submission to their will and obedience to their power.<sup>93</sup>

The Madras Memorialists, on the other hand, called it "a direct Act of tyranny" and were supported by English lawyers in their denunciation.<sup>94</sup> The Government, however, moved by a counterpetition of the Bengal Christian converts, passed the law in April 1850. This, according to Sir John William Kaye<sup>95</sup> fomented growing discontent in the country.<sup>96</sup> How strong were the Hindū feelings on this subject can be easily seen from a perusal of the thirteenth grievance of the Madras Memorial. Fearing a reversal in the religious policy of the Company, it read:

91. Annual Register, 1857, pp.239-40.

92. Norton, Review of The Rebellion in...., First Notice, The Athenaeum, 3 Oct. 1857; The Press, 11 July, 1857; An Indian Missionary [Jennings], Review of The Indian Religions; or,...., The Athenaeum, 26 June, 1858; "Religious Teaching in India," Letter to The Scotsman, 12 Sept. 1857; "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., LX, 1857-58, p.227; Urquhart, "The Legality of Acts Abolishing Native Customs and their Consequences," Free Press, 12 Aug. 1857; Kaye, op. cit., pp.455-62; Hansard 3, CXLVll, 820 and 822-23.

93. Kaye, op. cit., p.462. For a similar opinion, see also: Hansard 3, CXLVll, 518-19, 820-21 and 1414. J. Whiteside, an M.P., calling the petition one of the "most masterly papers he had ever read", deplored the indifference shown to it by the Company and the Parliament. Since the petition had "emanated from some of the first men in Calcutta -- not from armed sepoys....but from men of station, wealth and intelligence", Whiteside thought that it should have been given immediate attention. 820.

94. Kaye, loc. cit.

95. A "voluminous writer, and a constant contributor to periodical literature", Sir John was a graduate of Eton and Royal Military College, Addiscombe. He joined the Bengal artillery in 1832, but resigned his position in the army in 1841 and devoted himself to literature. Fifteen years later he joined the home civil service of the Company and at the abolition of this corporation in 1858, he succeeded John Stuart Mill as secretary of the political and secret department of the India office. His important works included, among others, History of the War in Afghanistan (3 Vols.); Administration of the East India Company; The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe (2 Vols.); The Life and Correspondence of Henry St. Tucker; Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm (2 Vols.); The History of the Sepoy War in India, 1857-58 (3 Vols.) and Christianity in India. DNB., XXX, pp.253-54.

96. In this case, however, it seems that the Government was really forced into taking this step under the pressure of the missionaries and the Anglican Church in India. Kaye reports that as far back as 1832, the missionaries prominently brought this matter to the notice of the Court of Directors. The result was a partial remedy. A regulation was enforced in Bengal whereby in

suits involving parties of different persuasions the matter was not to be decided in accordance with the laws of Hindū and Muslim religions. As the new rule was applicable to the Bengal Presidency only, in 1845 the Bishop of Bombay called the Government's attention to this matter. In the same year a draft act was published which annulled the application of those sections of the Hindū and Muslim laws which inflicted forfeiture of rights to property upon those who accepted another religion. The Hindūs, thereupon, at once memorialized the Government against the threatened innovation. The Government was sufficiently alarmed not only to remove the relevant clauses from the Act, but even go to the extent of expressing regrets upon the whole matter. The Bishop of Bombay, however, did not lose patience. Later on he made another highly successful attempt in the same direction, and the matter was enacted in April 1850, in spite of the petitions of the Hindūs of Bengal, Bihar and Orrisa. Kaye, op. cit., pp.455-62.

On their first arrival the British behaved kindly, securing to the natives of the Carnatic, by Proclamation, under date of 31st July, 1801, the immunity of their religion, laws and privileges: for this the Hindoos willingly engaged in the Military Service of the Honourable Company; and wherever the British standard has been victorious in India, down to the last perilous engagement, on the banks of Sutlej, their Hindoo blood has freely flowed to secure the East India Company's dominion over their native land; because they have preferred it to Mohammedan; and now that the British Government has become consolidated by the assistance of the Hindoos, the country is inundated with missionaries, who bring their creed in the one hand and the sword of persecution in the other -- bidding the Hindoo to take their choice between conversion and extermination. British and Christian policy thus delineated, is far more oppressive and unjustifiable than that of the Mohammedans, for it adds ingratitude to partiality and injustice, and creates a belief that in weakness they are friends to the oppressed, and in power the perpetrators of oppression and wrong.<sup>97</sup>

That was not all. The Government had also stopped the worship of Kālī<sup>98</sup> or Durgā<sup>99</sup> and the Charkh Pūjā,<sup>100</sup> The latter step aroused strong feelings and so had to be withdrawn.<sup>101</sup> Concurrent with this had developed what Lewin called the "missionary mania" in the chief departments of the Government. Many high ranking civil and military officers had started taking an active interest in the missionary activity in India. Some of them had even gone to the extent of assuming the role of preachers of the gospel.<sup>102</sup> So great had become their zeal that the civil and military servants were reported to be vying with each other.<sup>103</sup> This bred the fear that the Government

97. Free Press, 2 Sept. 1857.

98. An epithet of the goddess Durgā, wife of Shīv, the Hectae of the Hindūs, to whom human sacrifices were offered. John T. Platts, A Dictionary of Urdū, Classical Hindī and English (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.804.

99. "The inaccessible goddess", name of the daughter of Himāvat and wife of Shīv. Also called Umā, Bhavāni, Pārāvati etc. In her character of Durgā, she is a goddess of a terrific form and irascible temper, particularly worshipped by the Bengālī Hindūs at the Durgā Pūjā festival. Platts, loc. cit., p.513.

100. A ceremony observed by the lower orders of Hindūs on the day when the sun enters Aries, for the expiation of their sins. Platts, loc. cit., pp.429-30.

101. Norton, Review of The Rebellion in...., First Notice, The Athenaeum, 3 Oct. 1857; Free Press, 11 July, 1857.

102. Malcolm Lewin, The Way to lose India (London: J. Ridgeway, 1857), p.18. For similar opinions and further information, see also: Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of...., p.8; Free Press, 3 March, 1858; Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 1155-56; The Rev. Baptist Wriothsesley Noel, England and India. An Essay on the Duty of Englishmen towards the Hindoos, p.16. Noel had no hesitation in admitting the "earnest and constant" help given by the officers in facilitating the task of the missionaries. Polehampton, the missionary at Delhi, happily wrote in August, 1856, to inform his mother about the efforts of Dr. Nai Smith of the 17th Native Infantry in converting his servants. (Polehampton, op. cit., pp.118-19). The Press in its issue of 11 July, 1857 also lashed out against the entire administration of India. It complained that if the Cannings had made their missionary zeal quite conspicuous, the members of the Indian Legislative Council presided at missionary meetings, and their daughters preached in the Bāzārs "in defiance of oriental propriety."

103. Kaye, op. cit., p.448.

"entertained the idea of compulsory conversions."<sup>104</sup> Even the courts of justice were reported to have shown partiality to Christian converts. If they failed, they were, at times, overturned and the judges dismissed "for refusing to side with the Christian convert against his adversary."<sup>105</sup> The result was a complete lack of confidence even in the administration of justice. Thus referring to the contemporary situation, Lewin, himself a judge of the Madras Presidency, who was relieved of his duties for having tried to maintain the independence of his court,<sup>106</sup> ruefully observed:

Our morality is now accounted for hypocrisy, our Christianity a passport to licentiousness.

He went on to quote Sydney Smith, the well known canon of St. Paul's, who had advised his countrymen in these words:

If you wish to convert the heathen, you must first burn your Bibles, which instead of exhibiting you as Christians, will merely prove you to be imposters.<sup>107</sup>

The situation had come to such a pass that even the Court of Directors had earlier taken alarm and had determined to arrest the increasing proselytizing zeal of its employees in the far-off colony. In a dispatch to the Government of India, the Court made it clear that the British Government in India was known by its officers and that the latter were identified with the former. The dispatch, therefore, made the officers cognizant of the

104. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 487.

105. Lewin, op. cit., p.16. For a similar opinion, see also: Free Press, 2 Sept. 1857.

106. Free Press, 2 Sept. 1857. Cf. Lewin, loc. cit.

107. Malcolm Lewin, The Way to Regain India (London: James Ridgeway, 1858), pp.28-29.

fact that while "invested with public authority their acts cannot be regarded as those of private individuals."<sup>108</sup>

These orders, reported V. A. Smith in the Commons, had gradually fallen into abeyance, and the official efforts had since been carried on with renewed vigour.<sup>109</sup> So much so that even the Governor-General, Lord Canning, was reported to be partaking of that enthusiasm. A few of his critics firmly believed that his contributions to missionary societies and his reply to a Missionary Memorial, in which he had commended their past labours and exhorted them to further efforts, had caused much alarm among the Hindūs. The Hindūs, it was thought, now came to believe in the official nature of the missionary programme.<sup>110</sup>

Government interference in the field of education also, it was believed, had stirred up strong doubts in India. Long years of controversy between the Orientalists and the Anglicists, known as the Macaulay-Wilson controversy, had resulted in 1833 in the adoption of the Western system of education in India. This brought about several changes in the educational set-up of the country, i.e., almost complete withdrawal of state support from the teaching of Hindūism and Islām and transfer of all funds to British institutions, both Government and Missionary,<sup>111</sup> adoption of a new curriculum based on Western

108. Kaye, op. cit., p.449n.
109. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 487.
110. Ibid., 518-19 and 823 and also CXLVlll, 63.
111. Henry Care Tucker, A Letter to the Rt. Hon. Lord Stanley, M.P., Secretary of State for India (London: W.H. Dalton, 1857), pp.5-6. The new policy reached its fulmination by Wood's Dispatch on Education in India in 1853. In this case as well, outside influence, especially missionary, was brought to bear upon the Indian minister. Kaye, op. cit., pp.471-73.

philosophy, at school, college and university levels, grants-in-aid to the missionary schools. Thenceforward, missionary teachers began to be appointed as inspectors of schools. Norton complained that the appointment of clergymen to such offices was sure to alarm the natives in the provinces and feared that their labours were bound to be thought of as "covert attempts upon their religion."<sup>112</sup> The result was, it was pointed out, that even the missionaries came to be looked upon as Government servants. A writer in Fraser's Magazine affirmed that these measures of the Government acted as a triple-edged blade against the British rule in India; they came to be regarded as concealed attempts on the part of the Government to Christianize the people and, as such, were strongly resented.<sup>113</sup> The Government attempts to assure the people of its good intentions, unsupported as they were by example, were said to have further aggravated the situation.<sup>114</sup> Holding religious neutrality impracticable, Lieut.-Col. Sir H. Edwardes accused the Government of saying one thing and doing another. He believed that in this attitude of the Government lay the "secret of disturbances in British India."<sup>115</sup>

The new educational system, it was emphasized, was not completely in the interest of British rule either. It had its own hidden disadvantages --

112. Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.199. For a similar opinion, see also: Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.18.

113. "The Indian Army," Fraser's, LV1, 1857, p.166. For similar opinions, see also: Hansard 3, CXLV11, 823; Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.16.

114. "The Proselytising Danger in India," Letter to The Scotsman, 1 Aug. 1857. The correspondent critically observed:

It is not the unsupported efforts of the poor missionary, or even the private acts of a zealous commanding officer or civilian, that will ever stir up rebellion against the Government among the natives. It is that they see bishops and chaplains quartered upon the revenue of the country, just as soldiers and civilians are, and they rightly infer that supremacy will sooner or later be claimed for the faith of their rulers, and Christianity established by law.

In another letter to The Scotsman of 12 Sept. 1857, the same correspondent attacked some of the contradictory policies pursued by the Government vis-à-vis its avowed policy of religious neutrality. Pointing out to the philosophical system of instruction at Banaras College; list of class books in the curriculum of the Calcutta University; government appointment and the high salary of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, whose advent in any station through which he passed was announced with the thunder of the cannon, and his episcopal Lordship's ecclesiastical position as head of the missionary establishment of the Church of England, the writer sharply struck at the Government efforts to convince the natives of its policy of religious impartiality as falsehood, political blunder and double error. While he applauded the Christian efforts of the Government, he denounced the inconsistency in its attitude and regarded the native distrust as a natural corollary of such a policy.

115. Lieut.-Col. Sir H. B. Edwardes, Christianity in India. The Speech of....delivered at an Extraordinary Meeting held at the Town Hall, Cambridge, on the 18th of June, 1860 (Cambridge: T. Dixon. London: Wertheim and Co., 1860), pp.9-10.

disadvantages which were far from conducive to the continuity of a foreign rule. For example: The study of Roman and Greek history was believed to have made strong nationalists of Indians. These studies provided a "glorious example of ridding one's country of her tyrants and of shedding one's blood in her cause."<sup>116</sup> The Edinburgh Review shared the opinion of Lord Ellenborough, who was reported to have described the European system of education in India as incompatible with the existence of British rule in that country.<sup>117</sup> In fact, some of the young Hindū philosophers, it was reported, had already held public meetings under the unavoidable impact of the new system of education. In them they had described the Government as tyrannical and had called upon their people "to defend their liberties and claim their privileges of a free nation."<sup>118</sup>

Moreover, western education was stated to have brought home to the natives one great weakness of their rulers. Now they knew the immense distance from which their country was ruled; now they were aware of the long journey which the British men and munitions had to undertake before reaching India. In short, education had opened to the native "a vast field of practical knowledge and has thus diminished the great superiority once possessed by the Englishman."<sup>119</sup>

116. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.238.

117. "Prospects of the Indian Empire," Edin. Rev., CVll, 1858, p.40. Ellenborough had deposed before a committee of the Commons in 1852, that in answer to his personal query from a native, Dawārkānāth Taigōr, "You know if these gentlemen were to succeed in educating the natives of India to the utmost extent of their desire, we should not remain in the country for three months", the latter rejoined, "Not three weeks."

For similar opinions, see also: Manchester Guardian, 4 Dec. 1857; "The Indian Outbreak and its Connection with Climate," The Spectator, 8 Aug. 1857; Leopold Von Olrich, Military Mutiny in India: Its Origin and its Results, p.5.

118. "Indian Mutinies and Indian Missions," Church of England Quarterly Review (hereafter referred to as CEQR.), XLll, 1857, p.430.

119. Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, p.17.

Administrative provocations

The administrative grievances of the country presented a very grim picture as well. They largely contributed towards that disaffection which ultimately bred the outbreak. The Company's revenue system was described as very oppressive.<sup>120</sup> If "every mode of exaction and extortion was adopted"<sup>121</sup> in its arbitrary collection before Cornwallis, the Permanent Settlement had fixed the state share still higher. No leniency whatsoever was shown at the time of collection, no matter what the situation. The rigour of the system included the extreme measure of the sale of Zamīndārs' property to clear up any arrears. And quite frequently this resulted in his ultimate ejection.<sup>122</sup> The report of the Torture Commission<sup>123</sup> revealed that the instrument of torture in its different forms was frequently resorted to by the native employees of the Revenue Administration. Even women were not spared and were, in fact, subjected to most indecent and indescribable forms of torture.<sup>124</sup> Henry Mead, a British-Indian journalist of long experience, felt strongly the indifference exhibited by the people of England at the disclosures made by this revealing document and complained that they needed the "occurrence of a rebellion to induce them to give even a passing thought to the subject."<sup>125</sup>

120. An Indian Missionary [Jennings], Review of The Indian Religions; or...., The Athenaeum, 26 June, 1858; "The Indian Monopoly," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.53.

121. "The Indian Monopoly," loc. cit.

122. Ibid.

123. A Parliamentary Commission was set up in the 1840s to investigate into the complaints of torture as practised in India. The Commission conducted its inquiry in the Presidency of Madras only, and the report was to be regarded as a fair representation of the situation in other parts of British India. It was submitted to the Governor of Madras after around seven years of investigation on 16 April, 1855. The check-up unmasked 1690 cases of confession by torture in the Madras Presidency alone, out of which 890 were later on acquitted. For figures and detail, see: Hansard 3, CXLV, 714-17; Review of the Report of the Commissioners for the Investigation of alleged cases of Torture, in the Madras Presidency, The Athenaeum, 20 Oct. 1855.

124. The Nation, 19 Sept. and 10 Oct. 1857; Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and Consequences, pp.207-208; Hansard 3, CXLV, 714-17. The kinds of torture practised included: "Keeping a man in the sun; preventing his going to meals or other calls of nature....the use of kittee [Kittee was an instrument consisting of two sticks tied together at one end, between which the fingers were placed "as in a lemon-squeezer." See: Review of the Report of....], anundal [Anundal was one of the most characteristic forms of torture. It consisted in "tying a man down in a bent position, either with his own cloth or by a rope passed over his head and under his toes, with the ingenious addition of a heavy stone laid on his back, varied occasionally by the peons sitting astride upon him!" See: Review of the Report of....]; squeezing the crossed fingers with hands; pinches on the thighs; slaps, blows with fists or whip; running up and down; twisting the ears....striking two defaulters' heads against each other; tying them together with their back hair; tying the hair of the head to a donkey or buffalo's tail....sometimes arms and thighs are smeared with a hot iron - sometimes a coir rope is twisted tightly about the arm or leg, and then wetted with cold water, so as to contract to a degree utterly beyond endurance!"

Regarding the absence of complaints, the report

read, "In most of these cases we find the painful confession: 'We do not complain. What is the use of a poor man like me complaining to the gentlemen? Who will hear us? It is not useful to complain in such cases, for who will hear us?'. " Review of the Report of...., loc. cit.

125. Mead, op. cit., pp.208-209.

The Press editorially drew attention to one of Charles Napier's letters to a friend (written perhaps on 31 May, 1850), in which the then Commander-in-Chief of India had attempted to expose the horrors of Indian mal-administration. He had pointed out that porters by the thousands were pressed into carrying the Governor-General's baggage and then left for a year and a half unpaid. In some cases cultivators who were dragged out of their fields with their carts to carry the baggage and stores of the army and were taken hundreds of miles away from their homes, often without payment -- their carts broken, bullocks dead and on their return their wives dishonoured and in the keeping of officials. He knew of a judge, who openly bragged that "when either of the parties before him was a woman, and a pretty one, he always made the sacrifice of her honour the price of his decree." He could point out a district where a regiment composed of low-caste men was openly encouraged by the commander in schemes of systematic seduction and abduction. When challenged by police authorities, the commander hurled abusive language upon them. Napier complained that in spite of all this the culprit had escaped because of the Governor's interest in him.<sup>126</sup>

Having communicated all this to his Calcutta

126. The Press, 22 Aug. 1857; The Tablet,  
22 Aug. 1857.

friend, Napier disagreed with him for having described the British Indian administration a blessing for India. He observed to his friend:

The high compliment you pay the Indian Government makes me laugh, because I know that while you believe in it, it is not correct. No! no! I will neither concede to you that 'we are strong, just or regular'; or that 'we take no more from the people than the law declares', or that we 'pay every mouth.' Ourselves, yes! but not others. My dear Sir, you live in an enchanted circle at Calcutta; you know nothing of the Indian Government beyond its theories -- no more than if you were Governor-General. The atrocities which go on are beyond description. You, in your library at Calcutta, could not know anything of them, but I, on my horse, passing through all countries saw and learnt them on the spot; and very indignant I am at them, and have been for many years.<sup>127</sup>

With all these revelations The Press ceased to wonder why Lord Canning had, under the advice of his advisers, muzzled the press.<sup>128</sup>

The administration of justice fared no better than that of revenue. Naturally it fell under heavy criticism. In this respect the critics appeared to be realistic. Starting with F. J. Halliday, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal,<sup>129</sup> down through the Commons and with many other writers in England down to the "Resident in the North-Western Provinces of India",<sup>130</sup> all could see the anomalies of the system. The whole system was described as defective and unsuitable to Indian circumstances and an irritant to the natives. The British system of

127. The Tablet, 22 Aug. 1857.

128. The Press, 22 Aug. 1857.

129. Norton, Review of The Rebellion in.....,  
Second Notice, The Athenaeum, 10 Oct. 1857. Also read the  
book itself, p.119n.

130. Author of the Investigation into Some....  
He called it "anomalous and idiosyncratic" in character.  
p.31. For the criticism in the Commons, see below: p.150.

jurisprudence, it was reported, introduced either young judges from England<sup>131</sup> or senior officials of the Indian political and revenue departments.<sup>132</sup> In both instances they were, to a large extent, devoid of the skill requisite for meeting the basic needs of Indian society. The tragedy of the whole system lay in the great venality of the native subordinates, the web woven by them around the European judge,<sup>133</sup> the latter's virtual inaccessibility to the natives and his lack of familiarity with native affairs and the use of regional languages, not to speak of the local dialects. The last one was a major deficiency as it must have incapacitated him from communicating directly with the plaintiff and the defendant. Naturally a British tribunal often found itself paralyzed in "cases where the experience of a native would have at once unravelled the truth."<sup>134</sup> If the cases brought to the notice of the court ended up in inordinate delays, the method of presenting petitions to the courts was no less cumbersome. All this resulted in an accumulation of civil and criminal cases, "amounting", it was said, "almost to a denial of justice."<sup>135</sup> Naturally it disheartened and discouraged even the most determined. Blackwood's Magazine critically observed:

131. "The Indian Monoply," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.53.

132. Investigation into Some...., p.29.

133. Ibid., p.32; The Rev. James Bradbury, (Notes of Bradbury's tour through the districts of Murshidabad and Rajshahi), MMC., XXII, 1858, pp.263-64. The "Resident in the North-Western Provinces of India" observed:

The European head of a court is a mere puppet in the hands of the vakeels [Wakīls, meaning advocates or lawyers] and amlahs [‘Amlah is a plural, meaning staff]. He cannot be approached except through them. If one man has been injured by another, or an asami [Asāmī, meaning tenant or cultivator] has been oppressed by a zamindar, he cannot at once come into court and complain his grievance. He must present a petition to the huzoor [Ḥuzūr, here meaning judge], but in order to do so he must first bribe half a dozen persons. And after all this he may find himself so snubbed by the head official, who perhaps has received a valuable consideration from the opposite party, that he is afraid to have the petition presented.

Then, again, when a petition, or evidence of a witness, is taken down in writing, the writer being bribed distorts what is said in the most gross and audacious manner. Let it not be asserted that this is an unusual thing. It is practised everyday, of every year, in every court throughout the empire.

134. "The Indian Monopoly," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.53. For a similar opinion on the administration of Justice, see also: Sir Eriskine Perry, Review of A Bird's-eye View of India, The Athenaeum, 12 Jan. 1856.

135. "The Indian Monopoly," loc. cit.

Our courts of justice were little adapted to the usage of the land. They were too slow, too expensive. Their process or principles were not understood or comprehended. They promoted litigation. Consequently these courts were viewed as grievances by the higher classes and not considered as blessings by the low. To the latter they were hardly accessible from their expense and nearly useless from their delays.<sup>136</sup>

The Westminster Review, agreeing with Halliday, termed the system as "little better than lottery",<sup>137</sup> and the "Resident in the North-Western Provinces" called it a system of "justice falsely so called."<sup>138</sup>

At times the whims of the European judges also made a farce of justice. The Marquess of Clanricarde deplored the fabrication in 1854-55 by a certain Jones, a Collector and Magistrate in one of the Indian districts, against Bhawanī Lālā -- a resident of the same district. It was a clear case of harrassment, social insult, use of force and false conviction.<sup>139</sup> Later, when the supreme court upheld the Lālā's contention of innocence and granted him a compensation of 1,000 rupees, the poor Lālā could not get the sum, as the authority of the Supreme Court to question the acts of a Magistrate was questioned.<sup>140</sup> C. L. Cumming Bruce, M.P., reported another case in which a native officer was convicted on false evidence. He, however, was able to redress his grievances as a result of his appeal to the Court of Directors.<sup>141</sup>

136. "Our Indian Empire," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1857, p.658.

137. "Our Relations to the Princes of India," WR., New Series, XLII, 1858, p.475n.

138. Investigation into Some...., p.32. For a critical analysis of the judicial system in India, see also: Hansard 3, CL, 1652; Bradbury, (Notes of his tour through the districts of Murshidabad and Rajshahi), MMC., XXI, 1858, pp.263-64. Admitting that the British Indian Government was the best in its "intentions towards the people than any preceding dynasty", the Rev. James Bradbury, an itinerant missionary in Lower Bengal, felt so disgusted with the judicial administration that he could not help calling the civil and criminal courts as "sinks of iniquity", where justice was "bought and sold like any other marketable commodity." A poor man, he asserted, preferred to suffer in silence than go and seek a remedy at these courts.

139. The Lālā was compelled into signing a document of false charges against him on pain of confinement denial of food. Hansard 3, CXLV, 250-57.

140. Ibid.

141. Ibid., CL, 1971-72. Bruce claimed that there was, in fact, no dearth of such "cases of atrocious injustice committed on the natives", and that he personally knew many of them.

### Discontented Nobility

No less acute was the economic distress of a very large section of agriculturalists and landed nobility. The agrarian outrages committed first in the time of Bentinck under financial distress and later repeated under Dalhousie "as proof of a powerful Government, a vigorous executive, and a most fruitful source of public revenue", brought poverty to the door of thousands of landholders in India.<sup>142</sup> Inquiries were instituted into the titles of the rent free-tenures, ending up in the confiscation of thousands of estates, either because the title-deeds had been lost, or because the land was held by a long prescriptive right. A writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine observed:

No plea was considered too weak to justify a resumption. Grants stamped with the approval of Warren Hastings, Clive and Sir Hector Munro in the Lower Provinces, were pronounced insufficient; while in the Upper India, even the fact of a tenure having been conferred at the instance of Lord Lake, could barely rescue it from confiscation. At last resumption became a passion; hundreds of decisions in favour of Government were passed in a single day; and the principle was broadly proclaimed, that the very existence of a rent-free tenure was a nuisance and ought to be abated.<sup>143</sup>

Though this scrutiny had yielded, it was thought, £500,000 and £370,000 a year respectively in the presidencies of Bengal and Bombay,<sup>144</sup> this "clumsy

142. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 458. For similar opinions, see also: Free Press, 3 March, 1858; Frost, op. cit., p.4; Disraeli regarded this "disturbance of the settlement of property" as one among the three major causes of the outbreak, the other two being "forcible destruction of native authority", and interference in the religion of the natives. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 448.

143. "Indian Mutiny and the Land Settlement," Blackwood's, LXXXlV, 1858, p.704. For a better appreciation of this grievance of the natives read the article itself and William Edwards' book, Personal Adventures During the Indian Rebellion in Rohilcund, Futtehghur and Oude (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1859).

144. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 459.

expedient"<sup>145</sup> had not only cost the British their "name for good faith, humanity and justice"<sup>146</sup> but had also left thousands of nobility and their dependants without any means of subsistence. This was sure to earn the Government active ill will and hostility from the deprived landlords and their adherents.<sup>147</sup> Since they had lost their "Jan se azeez" hereditary land holdings,<sup>148</sup> all of them, it was argued, prayed for the overthrow of British rule in India.<sup>149</sup> William Edwards, as collector of Budaun, had publicly warned the government on this subject but was regarded as an alarmist.<sup>150</sup> "Even in England," argued Disraeli in the Commons, "the process if carried on, would produce a revolution, as the menace of it once did."<sup>151</sup> It was further believed that while the investigations had benefitted the tenantry, it had removed the only hand that could keep it loyal to the state.<sup>152</sup>

#### Other irritants

With these major causes of social, religious and economic discontent, there were also present quite a few fiscal and other important irritants. For instance:

Dalhousie's unilateral conversion of a five per cent loan into four per cent had highly dissatisfied the native creditors of the Government.<sup>153</sup>

145. "Indian Mutiny and the Land Settlement," Blackwood's, LXXXIV, 1858, p.707.

146. Ibid., p.704.

147. Ibid., p.707.

148. Dearer than life. Edwards, op. cit., p.17.  
For the same quote, see also: "The Indian Mutiny and the Land Settlement," loc. cit., p.707.

149. "Indian Mutiny and the Land Settlement," loc. cit., p.704.

150. Edwards, op. cit., p.14; "Indian Mutiny and the Land Settlement," loc. cit., p.707. The author of the "Indian Mutiny and the Land Settlement" further reported that H. S. Boulderson, a member of the Board of Revenue in the Upper Provinces, had also been, along with William Edwards, criticizing and warning the Government on its land settlement policies. The writer admonished the administration for not paying any heed to their public representations. p.703.

151. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 458.

152. Meadows Taylor, Letters from Meadows Esq., Deputy Commissioner of the Ceded Districts in the Deccan, written during the Indian Rebellion (London: Printed by John Edward Taylor, 1857), pp.17-18; Edwards, op. cit., p.12.

153. A Short Review of the Present Crisis in India (Dublin: McGlashan and Gill, 1857), p.14.

The system of taxation too was regarded as inconsiderate and productive of bad blood. The Company's government, it was claimed, thought more of Indian revenue than Indian happiness.<sup>154</sup> L. G. Ruutz Rees wrote:

There was a duty on stamps, on petitions, on food, on houses, on eatables, on ferries. There was an opium contractor, a contractor for supply of corn and provisions, a salt and spirit contractor, -- and, in fact, contracts were given for everything that in Paris would come under the name of octroi.<sup>155</sup>

In reality, criticised Lewin, the Company enjoyed monopolies in opium, salt, arrack and ferry and naturally derived exorbitant profits.<sup>156</sup>

Quite a few emphasized the Europeanization and modernization of India as contributing factors to the whole mass of suspicion and disaffection.<sup>157</sup> It was not a question of one or two European influences at work but many of them. In fact, Christian civilization was said to have been exercising its influence in all different directions.<sup>158</sup> The introduction of steamship, railway, telegraph, the canals, it was argued, had further "filled the imagination of Hindus with vague apprehensions",<sup>159</sup> and had led them to misconstrue the benevolent measures as a "design to Europeanize their country, and to overthrow the whole system of their cherished superstitions."<sup>160</sup> If the high caste priest felt chagrined at the introduction of railways because in them he saw the approaching doom of the

154. Investigation into Some...., pp.53-54.

155. L. G. Ruutz Rees, Review of a Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow, from its Commencement to its Relief by Sir Colin Campbell, The Athenaeum, 6 March 1858.

156. Malcolm Lewin, The Government of the East India Company and its Monopolies; or, the Young Indian Party and Free Trade (2nd. ed.; London: J. Ridgeway, 1857), pp.23-24.

157. "The Indian Mutiny," DUM., L, 1857, p.239; The Examiner, 19 Sept. 1857; Richard Congreve, India (London: Printed by A. Boner, 1907. First published in 1857 by Chapman. The Athenaeum reviewed it in its issue of 2 Jan. 1858), p.23; [W. Sinclair], The Sepoy Mutinies: Their Origin and their Cure, p.9; Olrich, op. cit., p.21; Edwardes, op. cit., p.11; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 483.

158. "The Indian Mutiny," loc. cit.

159. [Sinclair], op. cit., p.9.

160. The Examiner, 19 Sept. 1857.

caste system,<sup>161</sup> the start of telegraph had, on the other hand, alarmed the whole of the Hindū society. Edwardes told his audience at the Town Hall, Cambridge, that it was generally held that after the poles and wires had been set up all over India, the Governor-General would pull a string and that would convert the whole of India at one telegraphic shock.<sup>162</sup> In short, the Hindūs resented this encroachment upon their civilization. They realized that a stand had to be made some where, and so, pointed out a writer in the Dublin University Magazine, the "Hinduism has taken its stand here."<sup>163</sup>

The department of police, the real guardian of public security, was reported to have become "the bane and pest of society, the terror of the community."<sup>164</sup> The Press charged the British Indian Police system with inefficiency and corruption. The paper editorially argued that the system could not afford even as much protection to the natives as they enjoyed under the earlier Hindū and Muslim rules.<sup>165</sup>

On top of them all, it was pointed out, the insolent behaviour of the English residents and officers in India went a long way to alienate the people from their rule.<sup>166</sup> They "stalked as conquerors" in the country.<sup>167</sup> The language of "Billingsgate" was frequently practised towards respectable native servants.<sup>168</sup> Private

161. Olrich, op. cit., p.21.
162. Edwardes, op. cit., p.11.
163. "The Indian Mutiny," DUM., L, 1857, p.239.
164. Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.10.
165. The Press, 11 July 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: Norton, Review of The Rebellion in...., Second Notice, The Athenaeum, 10 Oct. 1857.
166. Investigations into Some...., pp.23-25.
167. Congreve, op. cit., p.10. Having described the behaviour of his countrymen in India, Congreve observed:

So mild a term as regret would not express my judgment on our bearing in India previous to the revolt. The bearing has been singularly concentrated by an Indian statesman in the bold expression: 'We have stalked as conquerors.' I see no reason to doubt the justice of this concentration. As little reason do I see to doubt that the horrors of the outbreak, as distinct from the outbreak itself, are attributable to the long sense of humiliation consequent on that stalking as conquerors.

168. Hansard 3, CL, 1650.

conversations and correspondence aside, even in their official records, it was reported, they branded the natives as "heathens."<sup>169</sup> At times, their treatment of their domestic servants was rather harsh and severe.<sup>170</sup> In view of this Richard Congrove, a nineteenth-century positivist, in his pamphlet India, in which he had pleaded for Britain's abandonment of her Eastern dominions, wrote:

Men must reap the things they sow;  
Force from force must ever flow.<sup>171</sup>

The English, it was stated, rejected all notions of equality between themselves and the subject people.<sup>172</sup> Since they were caught with the idea of maintaining their dignity, complained the "Resident in the North-Western Provinces of India", they were, with the exception of missionaries, "critical, overbearing and fault-finding" of the natives.<sup>173</sup> This trend had become so alarming that even persons in the rank of Governor-General were no exception to it. John Bright regretfully informed the Commons that one of the Governors-General had in his letter to an Indian prince, "ruler over many millions of men", described him as "dust" under his "feet".<sup>174</sup> The fact of the matter was that while the Indian lower and middle classes found the Britons "cold

169. An Indian Missionary [Jennings], Review of The Indian Religions; or...., The Athenaeum, 26 June, 1858. The following extract, though not representative of the British thought and treatment of the Indians, may still be regarded as a fair portrayal of the attitudes of a class of Britons in India. The extract is a part of a letter signed "Anglo-Indian". It originally appeared in The Times and was later reproduced and censured in the Commons. It read:

I am happy to hear that evidence is being obtained both as to the Emperor of Delhi and the King of Oude. It will be pleasant to save £250,000 or £300,000 a year in their forfeited pensions.

I have some hope that the Nawab of Moorshidabad may be implicated too. That would save £120,000 a year more.

Once again, do allow me to plead earnestly that, instead of now yielding to caste, and pottering about the 'prejudices' of the natives, our future policy should be an unbending, stern, and avowed discouragement of everything opposed to civilisation, social morals, and British supremacy. If we now issue a proclamation declaring that, whereas caste has been used as a plea for sedition, and whereas it is based on falsehood, and the British Government regards all men as born equal, therefore, henceforth, it shall not be recognized in any form, the whole Hindoo population will bow, admit the justice of our indignation, and this monstrous anti-social absurdity will soon perish.

I am not for letting the State turn missionary; but, if our soldiers knock down every filthy idol they see, and lay every masjid [mosque] level with the ground; and if they pollute every shrine, and plunder everyone which is worth plundering, I shall not be sorry. For, as to these 'religions,' what are they, in fact, but lust, lies, treachery, murder and social degradation? I should like to see our Government cause it to be known, that its past forbearance has been abused, and that now Mahomedans and Hindoos must look to it for no sort of countenance. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1412-1413.

The present writer is of the opinion that such individuals, of whom there certainly existed an unorganized class in India, must surely have spoiled the name of the British, and immeasurably added to the mass of discontent and dissatisfaction in India.

170. Hansard 3, CL1, 348-49. John Bright reported to the Commons an instance in which one of the officers whipped two of his servants to near murder or death. For a similar observation, see also: "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.235. In this article the author maintained that the "very kindness which it is alleged is shown to the servants and those employed by the Government too generally partakes rather of that shown in England to a domestic animal, or of pitying condescension displayed by a superior to an inferior race."

171. Congreve, op. cit., p.10. For a similar observation, see also: An Indian Missionary [Jennings], The Indian Religions; or, Results of the Mysterious Buddhism, pp.141-43 and 156-60.

172. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.235.

173. Investigation into Some...., pp.23-25.

174. Hansard 3, CL1, 340.

and disdainful", the upper bourgeoisie and the nobility found their behaviour intolerable.<sup>175</sup> Reporting the case of a magistrate who insisted that the natives of all ranks should dismount from their horses or other conveyances to salute him, Drummond went on to observe before the

Commons:

Now, if we were proud of our aristocracy and mindful of their dignity, how could we think that these things did not rankle in the breasts of men who could trace their hereditary rank and their possessions up to a period anterior to the commencement of our history -- in some cases, indeed, up to the time of Alexander the Great? Were we so foolish as to imagine that because they did not retort an insult upon the instant, they did not feel it? We might depend upon it that the Italian proverb was true in India as everywhere else -- 'Vengeance sleeps long, but never dies.'<sup>176</sup>

In short, every individual in India had a cause to complain: either his land was resumed; or he was ruined by a lawsuit; or was tortured by the police; or harassed by a trumped up case; victimised by a spiteful magistrate; forced into corvée; or constrained to part with his bullocks and carts so as to facilitate the movement of the army; compelled to wait for the money payment of materials supplied, and what not. The budget of complaints was full. Norton was prepared to produce a hundred such cases out of his own experience.<sup>177</sup> If some wondered at the delay in the occurrence of the outbreak,

175. Investigation into Some....., p.25.

176. Hansard 3, CL, 1650.

177. Norton, The Rebellion in....., pp.224-26.

For a similar opinion, see also: An Indian Missionary  
[Jennings], The Indian Religions; or....., pp.141-43 and  
156-60.

Drummond asserted that there was sufficient ground for the Indians to hate the English and causes enough for half a dozen rebellions.<sup>178</sup> Such calamities, however, did not occur due to acute schismatic tendencies in the Indian society caused by the caste system as well as the different Indian religions. They did not let them unite against what Norton described as the common enemy, the British.<sup>179</sup>

#### Political grievances

The most upsetting grievance, however, was political in nature. The annexation policy of the Company, it was contended, cut the ground from under its rule both directly and indirectly and hastened the revolt of the Bengal army. While it weakened the European force by spreading it over a larger part of India, it also excited the animosity of influential sections of society all over India.<sup>180</sup> John Malcolm Ludlow, barrister-at-law and author of several books on India, emphatically reproduced the carefully considered opinion of the Duke of Wellington on the subject of the extension of territories. The latter had profoundly observed:

....wherever we spread ourselves....[we make] additional enemies, at the same time that by the extension of our territory, our means of supporting our government, and of defending ourselves, are proportionately decreased.<sup>181</sup>

178. Hansard 3, CL, 1651-52. For similar opinions, see also: Norton, The Rebellion in...., pp.6-7; "Has the Preservation of....Negative Article 111," BC., 1858, p.126.

179. Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.7.

180. Free Press, 16 Dec. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVI, 525 and CXLVIII, 1482; "Prospects of the Indian Empire," Edin. Rev., CVII, 1858, p.3; Investigations into some...., p.11. Between 1846 and 1857, 207,637 square miles of territory with an annual revenue of 4,330,000 pounds and a population of eleven million people was added to the British Indian empire. (Hansard 3, CXLVI, 951-52). In spite of this vast territorial expansion, the strength of European force stationed in India in 1857 was less than in 1835. The strength of native troops during this period, however, had increased by 100,000 men. (See Chapter II, pp.42-43). On the civilian service side the situation was no better. In 1846 there were 431 covenanted civil servants in India and in 1857 this strength could be raised to only 432. (Hansard 3, CXLVI, 952). The Government, however, started to make up this deficiency by drawing upon the military service. The natural result was that while the civilian service could not be fully reinforced, the army was denuded of its experienced officers. (For figures see Chapter II, pp.55 and 55a). According to the Earl of Malmesbury as many as twenty-five per cent of army officers were taken away from their regiments to fill civil employments. Hansard 3, CXLVI, 953.

181. Ludlow, op. cit., p.16.

In fact, it was the Government's grasping hand which perturbed some of the major political elements in the country and had led them to unite their heads and hands in order to rid the land of its foreign ruler.<sup>182</sup>

The native states of India and their populations had completely lost their faith in the promises and pledges of what was called the "paramount power." This suspicion and distrust was not at all new. Brodie in his English Tenure of India pointed out the lack of confidence expressed by the Amirs of Sind in reply to the friendly overtures of Lord Auckland. The plea offered was that "every state which had begun with an alliance with the English Government, had ended with falling under their domination."<sup>183</sup> This distrust reached its climax under Lord Dalhousie, the last of the Company's great imperialists and empire builders. His strong ambition and imperial instinct had led him to launch an aggressive policy of conquest, annexations, confiscations and abolition or curtailment of pensions.<sup>184</sup> The means adopted seldom bothered the mind of Dalhousie, the creator of modern India, for the end justified them. All this was done against past advice rendered by men of experience in the civil, military and diplomatic services of the East India Company.<sup>185</sup> If each one of these steps meant an additional blow and an additional loss to the

182. Ibid.; Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 1482.

183. Scrutator [Brodie], English Tenure of....., p.20. Ironically enough this fear turned out to be too true in the case of Sind itself. Even 'Alī Murād, the Amīr of Khairpur, who had deserted his fellow Amīrs in the Sind Wars in 1842-43, and had helped the British into power in that province, was not given a fair treatment. Retained in power by Charles Napier, the hero of Sind, and Lord Ellenborough, then Governor-General of India, for his loyal services, a "charge of forgery was trumped up" against 'Alī Murād after the departure of Napier from India. As a result 'Alī Murād was deposed. Having given all the relevant facts of the case, the Free Press in its issue of 17 March 1858, was extremely critical of the Government proceedings in this matter.

184. W. H. Sleeman, Review of Journey Through the Kingdom of Oudh, The Athenaeum, 13 March 1858; The Press, 25 July 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVll, 448-461 and CLl, 339-40. It is no wonder that a large section of the British public regarded the outbreak as a Dalhousie aftermath -- a result of the different measures carried out by the Dalhousie administration, the most important being the extension of the territories.

185. Hansard 3, CXLVl, 525; Lawrence, op. cit., pp.Vlll-lX; "Prospects of the Indian Empire," Edin. Rev., CVll, 1858, p.3.

Indian Society,<sup>186</sup> the English suffered as well -- they came to be regarded as "be-eeman" (faithless) in the observance of their treaties.<sup>187</sup> A writer in the Westminster Review ruefully observed:

Conceive the famishing ruin, first, to the respectable families, next, to crowds of their dependents, which would be produced in England by ejecting all the Queen's servants of the rank of gentry, all the judges, magistrates, with all officers of the army, and replacing them by foreigners of opposite habits, who spend their money in quite new channels. Such is the financial convulsion in every native State when it is annexed by the East India Company, to say nothing of the natural displeasure which must always attach to the face of new and foreign rulers.<sup>188</sup>

Furthermore, the annexations were described as a source of weakness to the English in more ways than one. Every new annexation, it was stated, deprived the British government of a favourable contrast which the two administrations presented to the people on both sides of the border before the act of incorporation.<sup>189</sup> They not only made the situation explosive locally but also tended strongly to augment the sense of collective loss. A headlong pursuit of this policy went a long way to deprive the Company of the essential basis of Hindū-Muslim disunity upon which the empire was raised. If the British annexation of various Hindū states and their abolition of Nānā's pension had alarmed the Hindūs, it was very largely held, their annexation of Awadh had

186. Norton, The Rebellion in...., pp.92-93.  
Norton regretfully observed:

If we put on one side of the account what the natives have gained by the few offices that have lately been opened to them, with what they have lost by the extermination of these states, we shall find the net loss to be immense; and what the native loses, the Englishman gains. Upon the extermination of a native state, an Englishman takes the place of the sovereign, under the name of the commissioner; three or four of his associates displace as many dozens of the native official aristocracy, while some hundred of our troops take the place of many thousands that every native chief supports. The little court disappears - trade languishes - the capital decays - the people are impoverished - the Englishman flourishes and acts like a sponge, drawing up riches from the banks of the Ganges, and squeezing them down upon the banks of the Thames. Nor is this all. Native princes and their courts not only encourage native trade and native arts, but under them, and because of their very weakness, public spirit and opinion flourishes; all that constitutes the life of a people is strengthened; and though the Government may occasionally be oppressive, heavier far is the yoke of our institutions.

187. Robertson, op. cit., pp.13-14. For similar opinions, see also: An Indian Missionary [Jennings], The Indian Religions: or,...., pp.157-68; Hansard 3, CXLVIII, 1482; Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.5. Himself firmly believing that the changes in the social, religious and political policies had occurred in the context of increasingly strong position of the British in India, Malcolm Lewin reproduced the feelings of a native intellectual conveyed to him long before the outbreak. The native of India had observed:

The word of the English was formerly as if it were engraved upon granite; now it is written in water; so long it was politic to keep faith with the native, who could be more observant of your faith than you English; now that you have the country at your feet, you have fairly thrown off the mask; you may not believe me....we hate you and you deserve it.

188. "Our Relations to the Princes of India,"  
WR., New Series, XlII, 1858, pp.464-465. For a similar  
opinion, see also: Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.137.

189. Robertson, op. cit., pp.11-14.

equally galled the Muslims.<sup>190</sup> They saw a common ground to get together. The need for solving their differences could not be more apparent than at that time. Any further delay might mean complete absorption and near ruin to both communities. An early united action was immediately needed. Norton, as did a few others, significantly quoted the last address of a Marahtah rebel to the people of India as a specimen of the "spirit which might have animated a South Marahtah outbreak, had it not been checked in time." The Satara conspirator shouted at his countrymen from the gallows as early as 19 June, 1857:

Listen all! As the English people hurled the Rajah [of Satara] from his throne, in like manner do you drive them out of the country. This is murder. I am illegally condemned....This example is made to frighten you, but be not alarmed. Sons of Brahmins, Mahrattas, and Mussulmen, revolt! Sons of Christians, look to yourselves! <sup>191</sup>

Thus it was that Hindū-Muslim unity was nearly achieved and the dissatisfaction and disaffection of the two communities took on a national character.<sup>192</sup>

#### Contemporary situation as a cause

The contemporary situation too was understood to have added its share in unsettling the minds of the Indians. Great Britain of the 1850's seemed to be an

190. A very widely held opinion.

191. Norton, The Rebellion in....., p.97; Ludlow, op. cit., pp.28-29.

192. "Has the Preservation of Caste....Negative Article 111," BC., 1858, p.126; Free Press, 5 Aug. 1857; Morning Herald, quoted by the People's Paper, 26 Sept. 1857; Investigation into Some....., pp.2-4. Cf. "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-8, p.255; Beveridge, op. cit., p.556; Hansard 3, CXLV11, 444.

utterly exhausted power. This must have added a new confidence in the people of the subcontinent.<sup>193</sup> 'Azīmullāh had,<sup>194</sup> on his way back to India, purposely visited the actual battlefield in Crimea,<sup>195</sup> to see with his own eyes "those great Roostums [Rustams],<sup>196</sup> the Russians", who had beaten the French and the English together. He carried home, it was pointed out, a highly unfavourable opinion of the English army.<sup>197</sup> The Crimean War was quickly followed by another in Persia. Quite a few regiments were sent from India to participate against the Persians. While the Persian war was still in its concluding stages, the war clouds were gathering at Canton. Again Britain was compelled to depend upon the sepoy. Two native regiments were sent out from the Madras Presidency. The very sight of British dependence upon the native troops for carrying out the wars of England must have further lowered the military prestige of rulers among the ruled. To them Great Britain must have looked an over-occupied and spent power, and the time right for a rising. Answering V. A. Smith's argument that the number of troops sent out of India was not large enough to have encouraged the natives to embark upon a rebellion, Disraeli contended:

Do you think that the nations of India count your troops upon their fingers? They know that your troops are going away; they hope that you may have

193. People's Paper, 1 Aug. 1857.

194. Nānā Şāhib's agent in London. 'Azīm was sent to London by the Nānā, there to plead his master's case before the Queen and the Commons.

195. In fact, 'Azīm's visit was prompted by the allied defeat at Yalta. Having heard the news of the defeat, 'Azīm got so excited that he specially went to Constantinople, and from there successfully endeavoured to get a passage to Balaklava. At Crimea through the courtesy of Doyne, the Superintendent of the army works corps, and W. H. Russell, The Times' war correspondent in Crimea, 'Azīm even visited the trenches, then under heavy bombardment of the Russians. According to Russell, who was later The Times' special correspondent in India to cover the Indian uprising, 'Azīm felt quite happy at the slim chances of an allied victory and he made no secret of his feelings. Russell, op. cit., I, pp.165-68.

196. A Persian equivalent of Herculese.

197. Russell, op. cit., I, pp.165-66.

to send more; and, deciding broadly upon these facts, they do not inquire how many are going or how many are coming back; it is sufficient for them to know that you have war in Persia and China, and that your European troops are gradually leaving the great Peninsula.<sup>198</sup>

Thus it was argued that the defective nature of the empire, a degenerate and delinquent administration, disenchanted Hindūs and dispossessed Muslims, deprived nobility and deposed royalty etc., provided sufficient causes for and pretext to the interested parties to be active, to conspire and overthrow the foreign ruler.

198. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 474.

## CHAPTER V

### CONSPIRACY THEORY OF THE REVOLUTION

#### OR

### THE CONSPIRACY THEORY: A RECURRING THEME

It was against the background described in the preceding chapter -- the background of popular discontent, social, religious, political and economic,<sup>1</sup> as well as a favourable contemporary scene,<sup>2</sup> -- that the adherents of the conspiracy theory began to develop their ideas. If the soil looked fertile, the time seemed to be no less auspicious. The advocates of the conspiracy theory argued that the mutiny was the result of a long organized, vast and well prepared plan that was meant to be simultaneous, but misfired as a united uprising.<sup>3</sup> The material to support this theory was abundant. Its proponents had no faith in the argument that caste and cartridge were the only two causes of the Meerut émeute and that once the army broke out into open mutiny, it was exploited by the disgruntled parties. Pointing to the long list of grievances, they contended that the disaffection was much more widespread than was believed; that the conspiracy preceded rather than succeeded the outbreak, and that the army outbreak was the result, and

1. Disraeli tried to put across his point of view in the Commons in these words:

If the old principle - the principle upon which our empire was created and established and which prevailed until very recent times - was a respect for nationality, the principle of the new system seems to be the reverse, and may be described as one which would destroy nationality. Everything in India has been changed. Laws and manners, customs and usages, political organizations, the tenure of property, the religion of the people - everything in India has either been changed, or attempted to be changed, or there is a suspicion among the population that a desire for change exists on the part of our Government.

It was this consciousness, Disraeli stressed, which led to "combination and the combination, in turn, led to conspiracy." Hansard 3, CXLVII, 448.

2. People's Paper, 1 Aug. 1857. Also read Chapter IV, pp.160-62.

3. Alexander Duff, The Indian Rebellion; its Causes and its Results in a Series of Letters, pp.219-20. Duff argued "that it is a rebellion, and a rebellion of no mushroom growth, every fresh revelation tends more and more to confirm. And a rebellion long and deliberately concocted...."

N. A. Chick (ed.), Annals of the Indian Rebellion, containing Narratives of the Outbreak and Eventful Occurrences, and Stories of Personal Adventures, during the Mutiny of 1857-58, with an Appendix Comprising Miscellaneous Facts, Anecdotes etc. (Calcutta: Printed and Published by Sanders Cones and Co., 1859), p.1. In an attempt to prove that the uprising was a deep-laid conspiracy, Chick reproduced the argument put forward by the Deputy Judge Advocate General of the Army at the trial of the King of Delhi. The argument read:

The machinery that has set in motion, such an amount of mutiny and murder, that has made its vibrations felt almost at one and the same moment from one end of India to the other, must have been prepared, if not with foreseeing wisdom, yet with awful craft, and most successful and commanding subtlety. We must recollect,

too, in considering this subject, that in many of the places where the native troops have risen against their European officers, there was no pretence even in reference to cartridges at all.

People's Paper, 1 Aug. 1857. This newspaper editorially called it a "long plan, matured with wonderful skill. Its ramifications were maintained with astonishing secrecy.... The time chosen was, while a Chinese war was afloat, and before the British force had returned from its Persian campaign." The Rev. R. Meek, The Martyr of Allahabad (London: James Nisbet, 1858), p.17. Meek called the outbreak "the result of a deep-laid, well ordered and wide spread conspiracy for the overthrow of British dominion...."

For similar opinions, see also: The Press, 25 July, 1857; Christian Spectator (hereafter referred to as CS.), VII, 1857, p.644; Meadows Taylor, Letters from Meadows Esqr., Deputy Commissioner of the Ceded Districts in the Deccan, written during the Indian Rebellion, pp.4-5; Review of Dacoitee in Excelsis; or, the Spoliation of Oude, by the East India Company, faithfully recounted, The Athenaeum, 29 Aug. 1857; The Rev. J. C. Miller, "The Fast-day Sermons. No. VI," The Fast-day Sermons. The "Indian-Mutiny" Twelve Sermons, p.81; Morning Herald, quoted by the People's Paper, 26 Sept. 1857; The Rev. J. E. W. Rotton, The Chaplain's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi, from the Outbreak at Meerut to the Capture of Delhi (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), pp.4-5; The Rev. W. J. Newman, "Our Mercies in the Past, and our Prospects for the Future," The Pulpit, LXXV, 1859, p.441; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 469-71 and 1439-40; Review of The Mutiny in the Bengal Army, A Glance at the East and [David Urquhart's] The Sraddha, The Athenaeum, 15 Aug. 1857; William Taylor, quoted by Duff, The Indian Rebellion...., pp.299-300; The Rev. James Charles, The Lord's Voice to Britain from the Far East, p.8; A. H. Layard, Speech of.... editorially quoted in The Scotsman and the Manchester Guardian, 2 and 11 Sept. 1857 respectively; [The Rev.] Robinson (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.569; "An Anglo-Indian's View of the Indian Mutiny," Fraser's, LVII, 1858, p.271 and also "Indian Mutinies," LVI, 1857, p.271; "The Crisis in India," CEM., XLIII, 1857, p.193; "Indian Mutinies of the Native Troops and Massacre of Europeans," Illustrated London News, 4 July, 1857; England's Troubles in India (Taunton: Printed by T. Hiscock, 1857), p.31; The Spectator, 26 Sept. 1857; The Times (from the Agra

Correspondent), 15 July, 1857; A Short Review of the Present Crisis in India, pp.10 and 14; "Crisis of the Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-58, pp.532-33; Henry Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, Civil, Military and Political, from the First Landing of the English, to the Suppression of the Sepoy Revolt, including an Outline of the Early History of Hindoostan, 111, p.570; Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, p.45; William Taylor, The Patna Crisis (3rd. ed.; London: W. H. Allen and Co., 1857), pp.65-69.

not the cause, of that machination. The events immediately preceding, as well as those which occurred during the outbreak convinced them of its conspiratorial and national character.

This school of thought eventually put the rulers of Delhi and Lucknow at the head of the list of plotters. The initiative having been taken by the king of Delhi,<sup>4</sup> the two houses were reported to have buried their differences and decided to work conjointly against the common foe. The grand motive behind this combination was described as political -- the restoration of the native rule, the sovereignty of the ruler of Delhi and under him that of the subordinate states.<sup>5</sup> Different measures were taken to maintain secrecy so as to avoid detection. To avert the attention of the Government, the ruler of Awadh resorted to subtle diplomacy. He changed his quarters from Lucknow to Calcutta and sent his mother and brother to London. In this manner the Government was thrown off its guard and Wājid 'Alī, the deposed ruler of Awadh, was enabled to keep sending his emissaries to Lucknow.<sup>6</sup>

Slowly and gradually the ranks of the conspirators began to be enlarged. 'Alī Naqī Khān, the Prime Minister of Awadh, was reported to have assumed an increasingly important role.<sup>7</sup> The Nānā's tone and demeanour towards the Europeans were also said to have

4. Edward Henry Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859, II, p.722. Nolan quoted from the report of Major Abbot, a senior serving officer of the garrison in Delhi. The report which was submitted to the government clearly pointed out that the "insurrection was organized and matured in the palace of the King of Delhi with his full knowledge and sanction, in the mad attempt to establish himself in the sovereignty" of India. To achieve this end the King also tampered with the loyalty of the 38th. Regiment, then stationed at Delhi. The 38th, in turn corrupted the other two regiments in the city.

For a similar opinion, see also: "Our Relations to the Princes of India," WR., New Series, XLII, 1858, pp.468-69.

5. Nolan, op. cit., p.740; "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.94; "The Indian Mutinies," Fraser's, LVI, 1857, p.628.

6. "The Indian Mutinies," loc. cit. A conspiracy to murder every European in Calcutta was discovered by chance; its blueprint being found in a carriage by a company of sailors, after they had ejected its native occupants so as to be able to put the vehicle to their own use. The king of Awadh was found implicated in the plot and he was at once put under house arrest. Rev. W. Brock, A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock, pp.131-32.

7. [George Bruce Malleson], The Mutiny of the Bengal Army, pt. II, p.107.

assumed an insolent and haughty character.<sup>8</sup> That he was a party to the whole affair, considered George Bruce Malleson, then an assistant military auditor-general at Calcutta and a well known military writer, was evident from the fact that ever since the annexation of Awadh, the Nānā had been disposing of his investments in Government securities. He did it so secretively that it could not be known until afterwards when the securities had already dwindled from £500,000 down to £30,000.<sup>9</sup> For the time being, however, he bided his time by "concealing his enmity under the mask of an admiration for the European civilization and a taste for English manners", as well as by entertaining English civil and military officials at his palace.<sup>10</sup>

These and other conspirators soon realised the importance of the role which the native army could play in the fulfilment of their scheme and so decided to undermine its loyalty -- perhaps the easiest thing to do, since the sepoys were already said to be serving "with willing limbs" but "not willing hearts."<sup>11</sup> It was at this moment that the cartridge incident occurred as a heaven-sent tool to be usefully and effectively employed.<sup>12</sup> Here the present writer feels that against the background of causes which led to this outbreak as described in the second,

8. William Howard Russel, My Diary in India, I, p.168.

9. [Malleson], op. cit., p.131.

10. Nolan, op. cit., p.726. For a similar opinion, see also: Duff, op. cit., p.53.

11. "Our Indian Sepoys," LH., 1857, p.630.

12. "Our Indian Empire," QR., C111, 1858, p.255. The author of this article observed:

There is no doubt, in fact, that these cartridges were the cause of the revolt, in the same sense that Gesseler's hat was the cause of the freedom of the Swiss Cantons, and the duty on tea the cause of the revolt of the American colonies. They were the spark that fired the train, but the combustible materials had been heaped together long before, and sooner or later an explosion was inevitable in Hindostan as in Switzerland or America.

Gen. Sir Robert William Gardiner, Military Analysis of the Remote and Proximate Causes of the Indian Rebellion, drawn from the Official Papers of the Government of India, p.35. Gardiner described the cartridge cause as a myth - a myth laughed at by even the promoters of the revolt.

[The Rev.] Sale (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.721. Sale, a Baptist missionary at Jessore, in his letter home described the cartridge as an invented cause - "invented to catch the more ignorant and credulous of the sepoys who would not appreciate, or could not be trusted with the conspiracy to turn out the Europeans and to restore the kings of Delhi and Oude."

Lieut.-Gen. Sir S. Cotton, Nine Years' on the North-West Frontier of India, pp.157-58. Cotton called the greased cartridges a "fuse, by which the great mine of rebellion was ignited."

For other similar opinions, see also: Rotton, op. cit., p.1; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 474.

fourth and seventh chapters of this dissertation, the cartridge incident appears to be as hollow a cause for the outbreak of the revolt of 1857 as was the murder of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria for the First World War. However, the mention of the two kinds of fat was argued as essentially a part of the same game.<sup>13</sup> Agents were employed in the guise of Faqīrs in many garbs and hues,<sup>14</sup> and rumours of all sorts were spread.<sup>15</sup>

It was given out that the grease in the cartridges was used as a result of a petition to the Queen by the missionaries in India, who obtained her subsequent concurrence and blessing.<sup>16</sup> It was to contradict these rumours that the Governor-General in Council had to issue, albeit in vain, a proclamation on 16 May, 1857, -- a proclamation which admitted the work of designing and evil-minded men and warned the civil and military populations to beware of the traitors.<sup>17</sup> The army, however, had already fallen a victim to the machination of the plotters. The two arch-conspirators were even said to have offered to give service to the disbanded soldiers at a higher salary.<sup>18</sup> Hence the punishment of disbandment, it was argued, only served as an inducement to revolt to get into what was described as the "national service."<sup>19</sup> One or two sepoys, it was thought, were enlisted in each one of the regiments for the purpose of working upon their

13. Beveridge, op. cit., p.557.

14. Frederick H. Cooper, The Crisis in the Punjab from the 10th of May until the Fall of Delhi (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), pp.23-24 and 117-18; Nolan, op. cit., pp.714 and 740; Thomas Frost, (ed.), Complete Narrative of the Mutiny in India, from its Commencement to the Present Time, Compiled from most Authentic Sources; including many very Interesting Letters from Officers and Others on the Spot, p.4.

15. The Press, 11 July, 1857. There was a widespread rumour that Lord and Lady Canning had, before their departure for India, given a solemn pledge to the Queen to convert the natives of India to Christianity.

Capt. Mowbray Thomson, The Story of Cawnpore, p.192. It was given out that the Nānā had sent a Sawār on a camel to Russia in order to bring assistance from there. Thomson complained that the credulous sepoys (he came into contact with the soldiers of the 56th and 53rd Native Infantry regiments) had come to believe that the "Russians were all Mahomedans and that the armies of the Czar are to liberate the faithful and their land from the yoke of the Feringhees." For such other rumours also see the Nānā's Proclamation given on pages 144-5 of Thomson's book. In fact dozens of such rumours can be counted here.

16. Annual Register, 1857, pp.245-46.

17. Ibid.

18. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 41; [Malleeson], op. cit., pt. 1, p.33.

19. [Malleeson], loc. cit.

fellow troopers and for maintaining secrecy.<sup>20</sup> The Nānā himself, it was reported, in the company of 'Azīmullāh, had taken a tour of some of the cantonment stations before the outbreak, where the "worthy couple" was said to have successfully meddled with sepoy loyalty.<sup>21</sup> One of Nānā's emissaries was mentioned as having penetrated as far south as Mysore, and was reported to have singly tampered with forty regiments.<sup>22</sup> In addition, the mysterious instrument of lotus flowers was reported to have been employed -- an instrument which equally mysteriously travelled from regiment to regiment, and finally drew the sepoy into the "vortex of that conspiracy which had long been secretly" brewing.<sup>23</sup> One of this school felt very sure of the message conveyed by them and believed that no student of religion and anthropology could fail to discern the revolutionary plan which they contained.<sup>24</sup>

If the instances of civil emissaries sapping the loyalty of the army during the outbreak were stated to be many, there was evidence of prior warning of its coming as well.<sup>25</sup> J. M. Ludlow quoted from the Eighteenth Report of the German Evangelical Mission of the Western coast of India. It read:

Long before the outbreak in the North-West, hints were received by silk mercers at Bagulcote from mercantile connexions in the north, to limit their engagements for the next year and call in their

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20. A Short Review of the Present Crisis in India, p.14.

21. Russell, op. cit., I, pp.167-68.

22. Maj.-Gen. Sir G. Le Grand Jacob, Western India before and during the Mutinies (henceforward referred to as G. Jacob), (London: Henry S. King, 1871), p.204.

23. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 471. Thomson, op. cit., p.24. Thomson called the circulation of cakes and lotus flowers as "occult harbingers of the mutiny." Since the latter, he argued, was an "emblem of war", it was distributed among the soldiers.

In an attempt to explain the mystery of lotus flowers, the author of England's Troubles in India pointed out that since lotus was a "symbol of the throne" and since Hindū deities were "represented as seated on lotus thrones", without any doubt all those regiments which accepted the flower belonged to the rebel group. Henceforth they were to unite in an attempt aimed at annihilating the British from India and reinstating the king of Delhi on his throne. p.30.

Apparently the Government or at least the regimental officers knew about the inexplicable circulation of the lotus flower, but they laughed at it "as a practical joke, or an act of unmeaning absurdity." ("History of the British Empire in India," Illustrated London News, 28 Nov. 1857). Ironically enough the circulation of the flowers did become a practical joke.

For other similar opinions, see also: The Rev. A. C. Ainslie, A Few Words about India and the Indian Mutinies (3rd. ed.; Tuaton: Frederick May, 1857) pp.12-13; "Lotus Leaves and Pancakes. The Indian Mystery," LH., 14 Jan. 1858.

24. "Sepoy Symbols of Mutiny," Household Words (hereafter referred to as HW.), XVI, 1857, p.231.

25. The Rev. Henry S. Polehampton, A Memoir, Letters, and Diary of...., pp.246-47; Nolan, op. cit., p.712; Mathew A. Sherring, The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion: An Authentic Narrative of Disasters that Befell it; its Sufferings; and Faithfulness unto Death of many of its European and Native Members (London: James Nisbet, 1859), p.105; John Bruce Norton, The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another, p.6.

debts - gloomy rumours then gained ground from day to day threatening Europeans and native Christians with ruin and death.

Again:

At this festival which took place some time before the mutinies in the north broke out, Brother Kies' addresses were met with the assertion, that the British rule would cease within a year.<sup>26</sup>

General Hearsey, described by V. A. Smith as a man of integrity and resourcefulness,<sup>27</sup> wrote on 28 January, 1857, to inform the Deputy Adjutant General of the Bengal Army about the disaffection created in the ranks of the army "by some designing persons."<sup>28</sup> He reported that agents of the Hindū party in Calcutta were using the widow remarriage grievance as a means of exploiting the religious prejudices of the sepoys.<sup>29</sup>

Again on 8 February, 1857, twelve days after communicating his first warning, Hearsey wrote to complain of the successful activities of the emissaries of Delhi and Awadh in corrupting the loyalty of the 19th Regiment.<sup>30</sup> On the 11th of the same month he further wrote to inform the Government about the precarious nature of the situation at Barrackpore. "We have," he wrote, "at Barrackpore been dwelling upon a mine ready for explosion."<sup>31</sup> Similarly the Gonda Rājā was reported to have been diligently meddling with the loyalty of the 52nd Regiment stationed at

26. John Malcolm Ludlow, Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown towards India, p.25n.

27. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 821. It was so because of Hearsey's marriage with a Hindū lady and his knowledge of many Indian languages and customs which had made him popular with his men.

28. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 819. Cf. Beveridge, op. cit., p.558.

29. Hansard 3, CXLVll, 819; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," QR., XXVl, 1857, p.488.

30. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 39.

31. Ibid.; For similar opinions, see also: The Spectator, 8 Aug. 1857; Beveridge, op. cit., p.558; Hansard 3, CXLVll, 1417.

Jubbulpore.<sup>32</sup> The mutiny at Sialkot was reported to have been caused in all likelihood by the arrival of a messenger from Delhi with a letter from the King.<sup>33</sup> Three of the Mughal King's emissaries were caught in action at Lucknow and one at Kanpur.<sup>34</sup> The Illustrated London News reported the hanging of a Mawlawī caught in the act of abetting the 70th Native Infantry, then stationed at Calcutta, to revolt.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, Mathew A. Sherring, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, also reported on the work of civilians trying to subvert the loyalty of the army at Allahabad and Aligarh, as did many others at several other places.<sup>36</sup> Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan, who preferred to style himself as an "Indophilus", perhaps rightly believed when he argued that the army was only a "pitiable" dupe to be employed for political purposes.<sup>37</sup>

If all this is to be credited, it would seem as though the task of preparing the civil population for a revolutionary movement had progressed hand in hand with that of the army. The national sentiments of the literary sections of Indian society were said to have been aroused by the evidence of British weakness. England's involvement on the continent and the parliamentary debates on the estimates of war were said to have been printed and reprinted at Calcutta in native languages and circulated all through the country. Similarly, maintained William

32. "Crisis of the Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-58, pp.534-35.

33. "The Poorbeah Mutiny: The Punjab, No. V," Blackwood's, LXXXIV, 1858, p.31.

34. A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow, Written for the Perusal of Friends at Home (London: John Murray, 1858. New York: Henry Lyons and Co., 1858), p.31.

35. Illustrated London News, 12 Dec. 1857. Under the title "Court Martial at Calcutta," this weekly informed its readers that a Mawlawī or Ḥāfiẓ was tried by a general court martial "for attempting to seduce the sepoys of the 70th Native Infantry in Calcutta from their allegiance by holding out to them promises of arms, ammunition and aid from 18,000 of the native population and that a similar scene might be enacted by them as that performed by their countrymen at Cawnpore." It further informed its readers that many of "the prisoners taken are priests among their people; if Mahometans, they are moulvis [Mawlawīs] or hafiz [Ḥāfiẓ], and, if Hindoos, they are Brahmins."

36. Sherring, op. cit., pp.105 and 205; Norton, The Rebellion in....., p.6.

37. Indophilus [Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan], Letters of Indophilus on the Mutiny of Vellore, - its Parallelisms and its Lessons (Calcutta, 1857), p.7.

Sinclair, the retrenchment of Britain's militia, her fleets and her army following the establishment of peace on the Continent, were not unknown to the educated people of India.<sup>38</sup> For the rural areas, however, the well known medium of pancakes was believed to have been employed.<sup>39</sup> This was described as nothing new in the history of mankind. The Notes and Queries and Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine found a corresponding movement in Chinese history, which had earlier resulted in the overthrow of the Tatars. The Chinese had, it was stated, not only adopted the pancake medium to achieve revolution, but since then had celebrated the day under the name, "Feast of the Moon Loaves."<sup>40</sup> E. H. Nolan reported that the outbreak had its parallels at home in Scotland and Ireland. If the Scotsmen knew of similar occurrences in Celtic times, the Irish experience was reported as a very recent one. At the time of agrarian disturbance they had reportedly adopted "the holy straws" and "the holy turf" as their fiery signs.<sup>41</sup> The Edinburgh Review came up with an analogous occurrence in India at the time of the Vellore mutiny in 1805, when some form of sugar changed hands.<sup>42</sup> If this be true, its repetition, though in a different shape, seems significant. However, the movement went on for several months.<sup>43</sup> Many felt convinced of its sure connections with the conspirators, including possibly the

38. [W. Sinclair], The Sepoy Mutinies: Their Origin and their Cure, pp.9-11.

39. Nolan, op. cit., p.712; Ainslie, op. cit., pp.12-13; "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.96; Annual Register, 1857, p.245; Illustrated London News, 28 Nov. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 467-71; Manchester Guardian, 15 April, 1857. Two and a half months before the arrival of the news of the outbreak in London, the Calcutta correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, a paper which insisted on the mutinous aspect of the revolt, put the King of Awadh at the bottom of the cake movement as well as the army commotions preceding the outbreak.

40. "The Poorbeah Mutiny," loc. cit., p.94. For a similar opinion, see also: "Pancakes," Notes and Queries (hereafter referred to as NQ.), Second Series, IV, 1857, p.161.

41. Nolan, loc. cit.

42. "India," Edin. Rev., CVI, 1857, p.564n.

43. The time, size and the number of Chapātīs or cakes were variously reported: Nolan thought that the circulation of pancakes started soon after the annexation of Awadh; he put the number at six. Nolan, loc. cit.

The Notes and Queries, on the other hand, put the date of their circulation one year before the outbreak had started. "Pancakes," loc. cit.

The Annual Register gave March 1857 as the starting date. 1857, p.245. Meadows Taylor consigned the Chapātī distribution to the year 1856. op. cit., pp.4-5.

Thomas Frost gave Awadh as the land of the origin of the cake movement and informed his readers that one cake was to be made by each one of the recipients for further distribution. Frost, op. cit., p.4.

The Manchester Guardian first reported the news in its issue of April 15, 1857, and put the number of cakes at ten.

However, the generally accepted time, number and place were: early 1857, six and the state of Awadh respectively.

ruler of Awadh.<sup>44</sup>

The irony of the whole affair, however, was that the cakes, variously described in size<sup>45</sup> and number, travelled from village to village through the agency of the police. Since these "storm signs", as the Chapātīs were described, carried "significant but enigmatical expressions", they were regarded as all the more dangerous.<sup>46</sup> It was thought that they carried some form of secret communication "only to be comprehended by the faithful of either creed allied for the destruction of the foreigner."<sup>47</sup> No wonder the Government was charged with serious neglect for its failure to institute a full scale investigation into the whole affair. A rigorous inquiry, it was believed, could have yielded useful information. Disraeli, calling the cakes "outward visible signs of confederacy", chided the Government for its culpable negligence. He argued that had such a thing happened in Russia, the Czar would surely have regarded it as something highly dangerous for the state and would have instituted a searching inquiry.<sup>48</sup> The Notes and Queries, attributing the outbreak to the pancake movement, was still bitter when it wrote that for twelve months [sic] the cakes kept changing hands, "and yet, so far it appears, not one functionary in India found it within his scope, one

44. "India," Edin. Rev., CV1, 1857, 564n; "Sepoy Symbols of Mutiny," HW., XV1, 1857, p.231; Illustrated London News, 28 Nov, 1857; M. Taylor, op. cit., pp.4-5; Thomson, op. cit., p.24; Frost, op. cit., p.4; The Spectator, 26 Sept. 1857; Annual Register, 1857, p.245; Capt. G. Hutchinson, Narrative of the Mutinies in Oudh (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1859), pp.37-38; Nolan, op. cit., p.712; Ainslie, op. cit., pp.12-13; Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.141. Even the Manchester Guardian, a paper which had earlier taken an opposing line to its Calcutta correspondent (see f.n. 39) and had in its issue of 16 April 1857, discounted the idea of any conspiracy behind this "Newest Asian Mystery", was, four months later, compelled to admit the extreme probability of some connection between the cake circulation and the mutiny. 31 Aug. 1857.

45. From two to six inches in diameter.

46. Nolan, loc. cit. The use of enigmatical signs does not appear to have been entirely unknown to the Government. We have it on the authority of The Spectator that even before the outbreak the agents of the native chiefs, princes, Rājās and Zamīndārs, stationed at the headquarters, used to keep their masters posted with the day to day developments, and that, at times, this correspondence was in ciphers to be deciphered only by the initiated.

47. Nolan, loc. cit. For similar opinions, see also: "The Indian Mutinies," Fraser's, LV1, 1857, p.238; "Sepoy Symbols of Mutiny," loc. cit. Cf. William Edwards, Personal Adventures during the Indian Rebellion in Rohilcund, Futtehghur and Oude, pp.15-16. Edwards observed:

The leaders and promoters of this great rebellion, whoever they may have been, knew well the inflammable condition....of the rural society in the North-Western Provinces, and they, therefore, sent among them the chupatties, as a kind of fiery cross, to call them to action.... I truly believe that the rural population of all classes, among whom these cakes spread, were as ignorant as I was myself of their real object, but it was clear that they were a secret sign to be on the alert and the minds of the people were through them kept watchful and excited. As soon as the disturbances broke out at Meerut and Delhi, the cakes explained themselves, and the people at once perceived what was expected of them.

The author of England's Troubles in India, however, came up with another naive explanation. She thought that since the English ate Chapātī for breakfast, its distribution indicated that the natives no longer wanted the British to eat the "bread of their industry." pp.30-31.

48. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 470. Disraeli's reference to Russia was at once taken up by others, thus showing the influence he enjoyed in moulding certain sections of British public opinion. Dr. Edward Henry Nolan was one of them. See Nolan, loc. cit.

scholar within his knowledge, one native within his duty, to explain the meaning of this direful symbol."<sup>49</sup>

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, calling it "an Eastern symbol of portentous import", described it (on the basis of a District Officer's inquiry) as an old custom whereby the King or chief in need of the services of his people would circulate the Chapātīs in advance in order to prepare the country for receiving his orders.<sup>50</sup> The undeniable fact, however, remains that the cakes did traverse the land with the rapidity of a "fiery cross", as in the Lady of the Lake,<sup>51</sup> and the natives must surely have looked upon the movement "as a forerunner of some universal popular outbreak."<sup>52</sup>

Apart from this, prophecies were said to have been circulated all over India, stating that the British rule in the country was destined to come to a close on completing its first centenary, i.e., 23 June, 1857.<sup>53</sup> This historic day was, therefore, reportedly fixed as the day for a simultaneous rising from the Himalayas to the Hooghly.<sup>54</sup> According to the scheme, it was believed, all Europeans were either to be expelled or massacred.<sup>55</sup> Luckily, however, for the English, so argued several of this school, the Meerut incident misfired on 10 May, 1857, before the united plan was fully ready.<sup>56</sup> Having rebelled

49. "Pancakes," NQ., Second Series, IV, 1857, p.161.
50. "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXI111, 1858, p.94.
51. Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.141.
52. Hutchinson, op. cit., pp.37-38.
53. Brock, op. cit., p.130.
54. Thomson, op. cit., p.124; Rotton, op. cit., pp.4-5; Charles, op. cit., p.8. Cf. Col. George Bouchier, Eight Month's Campaign against the Bengal Sepoys during the Mutiny (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), pp.1-2.
55. Miller, op. cit., p.81; Charles, loc. cit.; Rotton, loc. cit.
56. Newman, op. cit., p.441; The Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, pp.5-6; Rotton, loc. cit.; Bouchier, loc. cit.; Charles, loc. cit.; Miller, loc. cit. The Meerut outbreak, however, should not have come as a surprise to the military authorities at the station. We have it on the authority of Beveridge that on the 9th May, "ominous warnings were given by placards which called upon the natives to rise and slaughter the hated Feringhees." Beveridge naturally criticised that nothing but "an actual rising seemed capable of arousing the authorities to a sense of their danger and as the 9th had passed away without disturbance, it was hoped that the 10th, a Sunday, would also prove fruitful." Beveridge, op. cit., pp.564-65.

prematurely, the Meerut sepoy then made for Delhi, described by the People's Paper as the long pre-arranged centre of operations.<sup>57</sup> There, in combination with the already corrupted Delhi force, Bahādur Shāh Zafar was installed as the king of India, it was stated, to the boom of a twenty-one gun salute on 11 May, 1857. On 12 May, he reportedly seated himself upon the silver throne for the first time since 1842, received homage of the chiefs, and at once settled down to the job of transacting the affairs of the state.<sup>58</sup> Coins, another sign of royalty, were said to have been immediately issued in the name of the Mughal ruler, bearing a sign of victory.<sup>59</sup> Proclamations were issued to the people and the army, and letters were addressed to the rulers of various states demanding their loyalty, and allegiance.<sup>60</sup> Hindūs and Muslims were exhorted to get together for the expulsion of the foreign ruler.<sup>61</sup> The response was encouraging in every case. From that day until its fall, Delhi became the rendezvous of the rebellion. While almost all the regional rebel leaders declared themselves for Delhi and its King,<sup>62</sup> the alienated sepoy army, regardless of the distance, invariably made for the centre of the insurrection. The report of The Times' correspondent stationed at Ambala is worthy of serious notice. It read:

57. 1 Aug. 1857. The Paper argued that the city of Delhi was chosen because it was the ancient seat of the Indian Empire, was a sacred city and had a store of 100,000 muskets, masses of cannon and enough ammunition to meet the requirements of a large army for one year.

58. Beveridge, op. cit., p.570.

59. Annual Register, 1857, p.305n.

60. "The Poorbeah Mutiny, No. 111," LXXX111, 1858, pp.600-602. Letters were addressed even to the most loyal rulers of Rajputana.

For proclamations addressed to the army, see: Duff, op. cit., p.47.

61. Nolan, op. cit., p.740.

62. At Lucknow Birjīs Qadar, a minor prince of eight or nine years of age, was raised as viceroy of Awadh under the King of Delhi. Nolan, op. cit., p.757; Saturday Review, 7 Nov. 1857; L. E. Ruutz Rees, A Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow, from its Commencement to its Relief by Sir Colin Campbell, pp.261-62.

Also see Nānā's Proclamations given by Thomson, pp.143-47.

It is to be remarked throughout the rebellion that all the mutinous troops within several hundred miles of Delhi seem to have made for that place as the centre and nucleus of the rebellion. They have established no local posts, indulged in none of the cares of districts of their own, but have marched to the point where a common stand was to be made against the common enemy - the Feringhee. Still more strange, they have generally not divided the plundered treasure; no man has been permitted to act for himself....They have, almost all in the regular order, marched to Delhi with the treasure, as public treasure. Indeed, the quiet, orderly and peculiar character of the sepoy has been throughout the rebellion our greatest difficulty.<sup>63</sup>

Having already described the city of Delhi as the pre-arranged centre of operations,<sup>64</sup> still later the People's Paper editorially called Delhi as the capital "of the patriotic power."<sup>65</sup>

It seemed to the adherents of this school that the object and purpose of all these activities was rebellion. It surely was the restoration of native rule which had prompted such a big conflagration. Nolan called it the "grand motive" of the rebellion.<sup>66</sup> Rebel leaders, big and small, in Rohilkhand, in the North-Western Provinces, at Lucknow, at Kanpur and several other places had declared themselves as Nā'ibs of Delhi. Even a spirit of cooperation and accommodation pervaded the ranks of the two communities -- the Hindū and the Muslim. If Bahādur Shāh, in order to infuse a spirit of unity and oneness among the two races, had issued proclamations calling upon

63. Quoted by the Manchester Guardian, 31 Oct. 1857. The concern of the sepoys for the cause of Delhi can be well imagined from the treatment of an English officer by a native Sūbahdār. Treating his officer very kindly, while the Sūbahdār allowed him to remove his private effects, he instructed him not to touch the public property as it belonged to the ruler of Delhi. Review of the Crisis in India: Its Causes and Proposed Remedies, The Athenaeum, 29 Aug. 1857.

Another example of these feelings in an exaggerated form can be found in the repeated shouts of a soldier at the Rev. Heinig, the Baptist missionary at Banaras, "Our God is in Delhi." Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858, (London: Printed by J. Haddan Brothers and Co.), p.43.

64. See above, p.173.

65. 3 Oct. 1857.

66. Nolan, op. cit., p.740.

the people to join against the foreigner, the "famous" Nānā did not lag behind. He not only declared himself for Delhi; had the standard of the Mughal overlord unfurled at Kanpur; issued similar proclamation, but even dated his proclamation of Kanpur according to the Muslim calendar rather than the Christian or Hindū.<sup>67</sup> Speaking of the unity of ~~the~~ people, the Morning Herald wrote:

The Hindoos and Mohammedans have at last coalesced. The priests acted upon the minds both of soldiery and civilians, and the three classes animated by the fiercest hatred and foulest passions, are leagued in opposition to our rule.<sup>68</sup>

The London Quarterly Review agreed with a Hindū observer when the latter said that the "people have joined thinking they would clear the English out of the way and have the country to themselves."<sup>69</sup> This unity among the two people and their animosity towards the English, it seems, was not confined to the leaders alone; it was also reflected quite clearly among the people. The proclamations of Delhi were stated to have spread at an extraordinary speed throughout the length and breadth of the country disseminated with equal zeal by Darvīshes,<sup>70</sup> Brāhmans and Faqīrs.<sup>71</sup> A writer from Nimach reported that daily prayers were being offered for the success of the Mughal ruler.<sup>72</sup> Even the adamant Examiner had veered round to admitting the presence of a spirit of unity,

67. Thomson, op. cit., pp.144-47; Annual Register, 1857, p.287.

68. Morning Herald, quoted in the People's Paper, 26 Sept. 1857. For other similar opinions, see also: Rotton, op. cit., pp.100-102; England's Troubles in India, p.31; "Glance at Public Occurrences," WMM., Fifth Series, 111, 1857, p.929; Brock, op. cit., p.129.

69. "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-58, p.255.

70. A religious mendicant, a beggar, poor.

71. Nolan, op. cit., p.740.

72. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857.

though it argued that plunder was the primary motive behind it.<sup>73</sup>

If all this is to be accepted, it appears that the revolt was guided by the subtle machinations of the conspirators. Once the conspiracy was launched it received the support of the army and the united efforts of the two people.

## CHAPTER VI

### UNITY OF THE REVOLUTION THEME

Having provided themselves with a sound foundation in the socio-political and economo-religious causes of the outbreak to build up their thesis, the advocates of the revolution theory found still sounder materials in the actual events of the revolt to back up their contention as to its civil and political character. In fact, every time the mail arrived from India, it further drove home their point of view. If anything could firmly support and prove their line of thought, it was the attitude of the Indian people towards (a) the outbreak, and (b) their afflicted rulers. There was an overwhelming amount of evidence which supported the holders of the civil rebellion theory.

The Press editorially pointed to the 1853 petition of 1,800 Bengal Christians, which had called for a Parliamentary inquiry into the state of affairs in Bengal,<sup>1</sup> and the Quarterly Review referred to the forewarning of the Protestant missionaries of all denominations, who, in a petition to the Parliament in December 1856, had outlined the sullen discontent which had prevailed among the rural population of the Presidency. The petition had emphasized

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1. 18 July 1857.

that discontent and bitterness were daily on the increase and warned that relief measures "could with safety be no longer delayed."<sup>2</sup> Similarly several revenue-collectors had been reporting the same phenomenon.<sup>3</sup> Clearly enough, it was believed, the attitudes of the people of India had started to change much before the outbreak. What was it, it was asked, that persuaded Henry Lawrence to prepare himself for the eventuality beforehand?<sup>4</sup> An anonymous writer drew attention, on the authority of Macaulay, to the great decline in the prestige of an Englishman in India in the past sixty years. Sixty years before the uprising an English traveller was sufficient to cause awe in the country side. Even twenty years before it, though fear had given way to respect, a native would dismount his horse or vehicle, respectfully salute the English traveller, let him pass for a distance of a hundred yards, and then remount and proceed with his journey. But the situation was reported to have changed entirely on the eve of the outbreak. During the convulsion, however, the sight of a Briton was reported to have become a source of "amusement." He was jeered at; even children, who earlier would fly away at his approach, participated in it.<sup>5</sup> W. H. Russell, The Times' mutiny correspondent in India, complained of the same thing on the basis of his own experience.<sup>6</sup>

2. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.227. For a similar opinion, see also: "Fidelity of the Native Christians at Chhota Nagpur - An Abridgement of Sherring's 'The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion'," WMM., Fifth Series, V, 1859, p.176.

3. The Press, 25 July 1857.

4. Capt. R. P. Anderson, A Personal Journal of the Siege of Lucknow, ed. by T. Carnegie Anderson (London: W. Thackers and Co., 1858), p.1.

5. Exeter Hall Versus British India (London: Thomas Richard, n.d.), p.7. For other similar opinions, see also: The Rev. Alexander Duff, The Indian Rebellion; its Causes and its Results in a Series of Letters, p.33 and pp.101-103; "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.228; L. E. Ruutz Rees, A Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow from its Commencement to its Relief by Sir Colin Campbell, p.6; The Press, 8 Aug. 1857; A Lady's Diary of the Siege of Lucknow, written for the Perusal of Friends at Home, p.16; [The Rev.] W. H. Carey (ed.), The Mahomedan Rebellion; its Premonitory Symptoms, the Outbreak and Suppression; with an Appendix (Roorkee: Printed at the Directory Press, 1857), pp.183-84; William Edwards, Personal Adventures during the Indian Rebellion in Rochilcund, Futtehghur and Oude, pp.92 and 125.

6. William Howard Russell, My Diary in India, I, p.161.

In fact, everybody was reported to be aggrieved; everyone was said to be disaffected.<sup>7</sup> Even those who had benefitted at the hands of the foreign ruler were not loyal.<sup>8</sup> No wonder, it was argued, the revolt enjoyed near simultaneity in widespread parts of India; no wonder all those who could, actually did participate in the uprising.<sup>9</sup> The reports coming from all the disaffected areas were far from happy. The villagers and citizens were reported to be taking an active part everywhere. Virtually the entire regions of Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Awadh, Rohilkhand and the North-Western Provinces were either reported to be seething with a spirit of discontent and looking for an opportunity to revolt, or were actually up in arms. The major cities of Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Banaras, Kānpur, Agra, Patna and many others were reported as thoroughly disaffected.<sup>10</sup> Delhi was described as "one leavened mass of disaffection",<sup>11</sup> while the cities of Kanpur, Lucknow, Meerut and Patna were reported no better.<sup>12</sup> If "hatred sat on the averted faces of Mohamedans" at Allahabad,<sup>13</sup> the Hindūs of Banaras were described as praying and waiting for their chance.<sup>14</sup> Some wealthy merchants of Banaras and Lucknow actively plotted against the British; were found guilty of providing the sepoys with monetary assistance and a dozen of them were hanged at Lucknow on 15 June, 1857.<sup>15</sup> Nightly conferences were reportedly held in complete secrecy in mosques and

7. John Bruce Norton, The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another, p.14.

8. Volunteer [Maj.-Gen. W. O. Swanston], My Journal; or What I Did and Saw between the 9th June and 25th November, 1857, with an Account of General Havelock's March from Allahabad to Lucknow (Calcutta: Printed by C. W. Lewis, Baptist Mission Press, 1858), p.10; Martin Richard Gubbins, An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh, and of the Siege of the Lucknow Residency; with Some Observations on the Condition of the Province of Oudh, and on the Causes of the Mutiny of the Bengal Army, pp.56-57.

9. Norton, loc. cit.

10. Extremely popular opinions.

11. Plain Speaker [John Henry Temple], Justice for India. A Letter to Lord Palmerston (London: Printed and Published for the author by Robert Hardwicke, 1858), p.18. For similar opinions, see also: John Bruce Norton, Review of The Rebellion in India: How to Prevent Another, First Notice, The Athenaeum, 3 Oct. 1857; Henry Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, Civil, Military and Social, from the First Landing of the English, to the Suppression of the Sepoy Revolt, including an Outline of the Early History of Hindoostan, 111, p.571; The Rev. T. C. Smyth, Letter to The Scotsman, 10 July 1857; Review of the Mutiny in the Bengal Army, A Glance at the East, A. Kinnaird, Bengal, its Landed Tenure and Police System, and [David Urquhart's] The Straddha, the Keystone of the Brahminical, Buddhistic and Arian Religions, The Athenaeum, 15 Aug, 1857; The Rev. Baptist Wriothsesley Noel, England and India - An Essay on the Duty of Englishmen towards the Hindoos, p.78.

The result of this participation of the people of Delhi in the revolt was that cries for the total destruction of the city were frequently heard. Even Lord Ellenborough was reported to have lost his temper and demanded that every man in Delhi should be castrated after its fall and the city be named "Eunuchabad". (Richard Collier, The Sound of Fury, p.152). Commenting upon these demands, The Spectator chided the advocates of such a policy. This magazine argued that Delhi with its past history already claimed immortality, and emphasized that any attempt on the part of the British to raze the city to the ground would make it still more immortal. 22 Aug. 1857.

12. Very widely held opinion.

13. The Rev. W. Brock, A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock, p.155 and pp.170-71. For similar opinions, see also: [George Bruce Malleeson], The Mutiny of the Bengal Army, pt. II, pp.93-96; Morning Herald, quoted by the People's Paper, 26 Sept. 1857; Annual Register, 1857, p.257.

14. [Malleeson], loc. cit., p.88.

15. The Rev. Henry S. Polehampton, A Memoir, Letters and Diary of....., pp.303-304.

private houses in the city of Patna.<sup>16</sup> A Muslim, who maintained a European style hotel in Kanpur cantonments, "raised a troop of horse, and served against his old customers."<sup>17</sup> The events of the outbreak it was contended, clearly proved how little the Hindūs and the Muslims could be relied upon. Native Christians were thought to be the only people who could be safely trusted.<sup>18</sup>

That was not all; various other extreme measures had to be taken. The four districts of Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Bulandshahr and Delhi were clamped under martial law by the Lieut.-Governor of Agra.<sup>19</sup> The city of Patna was disarmed altogether and the movements of the people restricted by William Taylor, the Chief Commissioner of the Patna Division.<sup>20</sup> Fearing the safety of his British officials, Taylor recalled all of them from the district headquarters in his division.<sup>21</sup> In addition to these, other difficulties had also to be faced. Dr. William Brock, later on the President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and others emphasized the difficulties of Havelock's march from Allahad<sup>ho</sup> to Kanpur and from Kanpur to Lucknow;<sup>22</sup> Nolan did the same thing for an earlier passage of Major Renaud along the same route.<sup>23</sup> In fact, both of them had to fight their way through because the whole population was described as hostile. One John Henry Temple who styled himself as a "Plain Speaker" reported it

16. William Taylor, The Patna Crisis, p.35.
17. Capt. Mowbray Thomson, The Story of Cawnpore, p.246.
18. Sir Joseph Kingsmill, British Rule and British Christianity in India (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1859), pp.62 and 64.
19. The Times, 29 June 1857.
20. Taylor, The Patna Crisis, pp.54-55.
21. Ibid., pp.86-90.
22. Brock, op. cit., p.182; Plain Speaker [Temple], op. cit., p.18.
23. Dr. Edward Henry Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the Earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859, II, p.751.

on the authority of Havelock himself that he found "every cottage turned into a place of arms and defended by the villagers with a resolution which showed that their hearts were in the cause for which they were fighting."<sup>24</sup> An "Irishman" stressed the fact that popular participation in the slaughter of Europeans was larger than that of the soldiery.<sup>25</sup> Even "octogenarian cripples", as the People's Paper called Koer Singh of Awadh,<sup>26</sup> and women did not sit idle.<sup>27</sup> In the Jubbulpore territory the old Rājā Shaṅkar of Ghonda's invocation of the goddess Kālī was quoted as a clear indication of the amount of hatred and enmity he entertained towards the rulers of the country.<sup>28</sup>

Instances of active participation of villagers and the maltreatment of their masters were also reported in plenty.<sup>29</sup> The British fugitives were not only deprived of their belongings, but were beaten, mocked at and even starved. Whenever they were pitied, treated gently, or provided for, it was said to be not out of love, or any sense of fidelity or duty towards them, but out of human feelings or self-interest. Again, it was, generally speaking, a kindness that was exhibited either in the darkness of the night, or in complete secrecy. True, Indians were also killed; but were they not generally, it was contended, plundered or killed for their association with the rulers, and were not the latter, at the same

24. Plain Speaker [Temple], op. cit., p.18.
25. A Short Review of the Present Crisis in India, p.12.
26. 19 June 1858.
27. Illustrated London News, 17 Sept. 1857; Maj. W. S. R. Hodson, Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India, p.259; The Nation, 21 Aug. 1858; People's Paper 19 June 1858.
28. "Crisis of the Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., IX, 1857-58, p.534. The "prayer" read:
 

'Close up the mouths of tale-bearers,  
 Having chewed the tale-bearers, eat them,  
 Grind to pieces the enemies,  
 Kill the enemies:  
 Having killed the English, scatter them,  
 O Mat Chundu, (O Mother Deveen,) let none escape.  
 Kill the enemy and their families,  
 Protect Sunkur Mahades and preserve your disciples,  
 Listen to the calling of the poor,  
 Make haste, O Mat Hacbuka, (Deveen,)

Eat the unclean race,  
 Do not delay, and devour them quickly,  
 O Ghar Mat Kalika (O terrible mother Deveen).'
- Cf. Mathew A. Sherring, The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion: An Authentic Narrative of Disasters that Befell it; its Sufferings; and Faithfulness unto Death of many of its European and Native Members, p.316.
29. Hundreds of such instances were produced, reproduced and quoted by many advocates of the revolutionary theory.

time, plundered with peculiar zest?<sup>30</sup>

In fact, there were numerous reports of the people's participation and their subsequent liquidation. Villages were also burnt wholesale. Some people asked why, if the outbreak was just a mutiny, was such action considered necessary.<sup>31</sup> In short, the entire people were reported to be disaffected. Only individual cases of loyalty were reported -- individual natives attached to individual Britons.<sup>32</sup> Supporting his firm belief by quoting an Englishman from Agra that the Muslims to a man, and three-fourths of the Hindūs, were against the British, the Rev. Alexander Duff ridiculed as "utterly erroneous and misleading" the oft repeated assertion of The Times and some other journals, such as: "It is a military revolt and nothing more"; the "entire non-military population, from Cape Comorin to Himalayas, have stood aloof from the movement"; "not a man has stirred"; the "chiefs of Upper India vie with each other in tendering to the Government their assurances of support and attachment?" as far from the truth. He went on to warn his countrymen that such statements "by lulling the rulers and the people of Great Britain into a false security -- a security as fatal as it is false", could prove highly mischievous.<sup>33</sup>

Naturally, the difficulties of the rulers were great. The outbreak looked like a revolution which affected

30. Carey, op. cit., pp.130-33; Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 1155-56. In fact, all this was widely reported.

31. Carey, op. cit., pp.205-206; People's Paper, 3 Oct. 1857; Frederick Henry Cooper, The Crisis in the Punjab from the 10th of May until the Fall of Delhi, pp.16-17; R. H. W. Dunlop, Service and Adventure with the Khakee Rissallah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse, during the Mutinies of 1857-58 (London: Richard Bentley, 1858), pp.68-69 and 90; Oliver J. Jones, Recollections of a Winter Campaign in India in 1857-58, pp.44-46; The Spectator, 24 Oct. 1857; The Press, 8 Aug. and 26 Sept. 1857; Annual Register, 1857, pp.257-58. Russell, op. cit., ll, p.425.

32. Duff, op. cit., p.99.

33. Ibid., pp.111-14. For a similar opinion, see also: Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, pp.24-27. Here again the author, a military officer, contended with The Times over the same issue as Duff did.

all classes. It seemed as if a powerful combination had been formed against the authority of the British. It became a war that was to be waged on many fronts. The native civil officers of long-standing had defected to the rebels.<sup>34</sup> The contractors of supplies and carriages backed out of their commitments. Malcolm Lewin could find only one exception in this general wave of defection in the person of Jōtī Prasād -- "among the faithless, faithful only he."<sup>35</sup> Many complained, both Government officers and civilians, about the desertion of their household servants.<sup>36</sup> Referring to the situation at Agra, Mathew A. Sherring, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, reported that all the "heathen and Mussulman servants had fled from the fort....and the applications from the most respectable parties in the fort, the Lieutenant-Governor not excluded, for Christian servants were far more than could be procured."<sup>37</sup> There were others who felt indignant at the insolence and maltreatment offered by their servants, or at their betraying them.<sup>38</sup> New servants were not available even at double the salary.<sup>39</sup> Highly placed English ladies and gentlemen were compelled to do their own domestic work.<sup>40</sup> The procurement of labour for transportation purposes became equally difficult.<sup>41</sup> While old or regular porters would defect at the earliest opportunity, new ones were difficult

34. Edwards, op. cit., p.142.
35. Malcolm Lewin, The Way to Regain India, pp.9-10.
36. Maj.-Gen. [Sir James] Outram, Outram's Campaign in India, 1857-58, comprising General Orders and Despatches relating to the Defence and Relief of Lucknow Garrison and Capture of the City by the British Forces, ed. Anon. (London: Printed for Private Circulation by Smith, Elder and Co., 1860), pp.40-41; [Mrs. K. H. Bartrum], A Widow's Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1858), p.22; "The Defence of Lucknow - Martial Incidents in Oude," DUM., Ll, 1858, pp.488-89.
37. Sherring, op. cit., p.80.
38. Carey, op. cit., pp.130-31; [Bartrum], loc. cit.
39. Hodson, op. cit., p.196.
40. Outram, loc. cit.; [Bartrum], loc. cit.; "The Defence of Lucknow - Martial Incidents in Oude," loc. cit.
41. The Defence of Lucknow (2nd. ed.; London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), p.39.

to hire. Captain Oliver J. Jones faced a similar quandary; his Quills having bolted, new ones were forced into the job. And on their refusal to carry the goods Captain Jones stated that:

....I did what I dare say my philanthropists will blame me for; in fact, I took a big stick and gave the miscreants a good licking all around; after receiving which in every good part they took traps and carried them to the end of that day's journey.<sup>42</sup>

Such a boycott by the natives had rendered the job of obtaining information an uphill task. At times the troops were misled by informants into ambushes of the sepoys;<sup>43</sup> at times they misinformed the English as to the strength of the rebels,<sup>44</sup> and still at others they maintained a favourable silence about the movements of rebel troops.<sup>45</sup> The intelligence department of the Company badly failed to secure information.<sup>46</sup> L. E. Ruutz Rees reported that while the enemy could obtain information as to what was going on inside the Lucknow Residency, it was difficult for the English to obtain information even at a distance of twenty yards.<sup>47</sup> The result was, it was reported, that the companies of soldiers were often under the guns of the enemy before they could be aware of their presence. About this Sir Colin Campbell, the Commander-in-Chief, himself bitterly complained.<sup>48</sup> Communications were also affected when post-runners and boatmen in fairly

42. O. J. Jones, op. cit., pp.45-46.
43. Outram, op. cit., p.34; "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.226; Sir Sydney Cotton, Nine Years on the North-West Frontier of India, p.186; Capt. G. Hutchinson, Narrative of the Mutinies in Oudh, p.164.
44. Outram, loc. cit.; The Defence of Lucknow, p.187; Brock, op. cit., p.162.
45. Duff, op. cit., p.287.
46. "British India," loc. cit.
47. Rees, A Personal Narrative of....., p.210.
48. Russell, op. cit., I, pp.401-402; "British India," loc. cit.

large numbers joined the rebels. The result was that different stations were almost completely cut off from each other. "Little is known for certain of what is going on, as there is no communication with or from below," wrote Major Hodson on 16 May, 1857.<sup>49</sup> This became one of Hodson's standing complaints, as it was with James Outram and many others. While one of the letters of General Inglis, the Commander at Lucknow, took thirty-five days to reach Kanpur, twenty-two of his letters written in forty-five days could fetch one reply.<sup>50</sup>

Quite ingenious methods had to be adopted to send bits and pieces of information through Qāsids. In spite of all precautions, messengers, who were generally natives, were caught and killed on many occasions.<sup>51</sup> This and the enmity of the people had also made the procurement of provisions a highly difficult task. Lieut.-Col. McIntyre bitterly complained of such a situation when he was at Alambagh. He reported that provisions could be made available only by foraging parties, or under the shelter of guns.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, so great was the hostility that even Mammon failed to solve the difficulties. The best of Hodson's efforts to get the Jumna bridge blown up failed.<sup>53</sup> The People's Paper, emphasizing the native antipathy towards the British, stressed that their lack of

49. Hodson, op. cit., pp.183 and 250; The Defence of Lucknow, p.107; Outram, op. cit., p.109; "The Defence of Lucknow - Martial Incidents in Oude," DUM., L1, 1858, p.485; The Times (A Letter from Meerut), 5 Oct. 1857.

50. The Defence of Lucknow, p.107. For other similar complaints, see also: Outram, op. cit., pp.259, 311, 326, 341 and 349.

51. Hodson, op. cit., pp.183, 250 and 277; "The Defence of Lucknow - Martial Incidents in Oude," loc. cit.; Edwards, op. cit., p.140.

52. Outram, op. cit., p.109.

53. Hodson, op. cit., p.261. Hodson was prepared to offer a bribe of 6,000 rupees to anyone who would blow up the vital bridge linking Delhi with its outskirts.

cooperation was obvious from their inability to help the British. While the British troops found the bridges broken and boats disappeared, the same mysteriously reappeared the moment native troops arrived.<sup>54</sup> All this was attributed to a complete collapse of the civil authority, which, to function at all, was forced to shelter behind the British bayonets. An Ambala officer, making a historical review of the events in India, remarked:

Thus it was that early in June the whole of the North-West Provinces had become, we may say, completely revolutionized--the British rule was confined to a very few insulated stations held by European troops; in the country generally it had ceased to exist. Entire anarchy had taken its place.<sup>55</sup>

The extent of disaffection and rebellion was not confined to the Bengal Presidency and parts of the Governor-General's territories alone. It was described as all-pervading. The two presidencies of Bombay and Madras, the Chief Commissioner's province of the Panjab and a good many other princely states were not free either.<sup>56</sup> The only difference was that in these territories either the two elements of disaffection and rebellion could not combine themselves or else, if they did, the combination could not assume an active form. The People's Paper in its editorial, the "Revolt in Hindostan", strongly belied the assertions that Bombay and Madras were

54. People's Paper, 19 June 1858.
55. Manchester Guardian (An Historical Review of Events in India by an Umbala Officer), 31 Oct. 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: Russell, op. cit., I, p.114.
56. The Nation, 15, 29 Aug. and 19 Sept. 1857; The Spectator, 14 Nov. 1857.

loyal. "If the soldiers and the populations were faithful," it forcefully argued, "the former would assuredly be marched on Delhi, and crush the centre of insurrection. Why are they not marched thither? Either they are not faithful themselves, or else the population would rise if the soldiers were removed."<sup>57</sup>

Numerous conspiracies reported in the Bombay Presidency indicated that the situation there was quite explosive.<sup>58</sup> Hindūs and Muslims were said to be equally active in tampering with the loyalty of the army.<sup>59</sup> The head of the Wahābī sect in Western India, residing at Poona,<sup>60</sup> and Rangū Bāpūjī, one time Wakīl in London of the deposed ruler of Satara, had become the leading conspirators in Western India.<sup>61</sup> One of the followers of the Wahābī leader, a Munshī, was found guilty of active treasonable correspondence with the regiment at Kolapur and executed.<sup>62</sup> The intercepted letters, it was said, revealed the wide extent of the conspiracy and the readiness for a general uprising. The disaffection really was extensive. Nobody, it was thought, could be safely depended upon.<sup>63</sup> If the Chief of Nargund<sup>64</sup> and the Rājā of Shorapur<sup>65</sup> taxed the resources of the state, the collusion of Chīmah Ṣāhib, the younger brother of the ruler of Kolapur and younger Rājā at the same time, was also proved by the discovery of a sword

57. People's Paper, 29 Aug. 1857.
58. Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society ending March 1858, p.46; The Spectator, 19 Sept. 1857.
59. Sir G. Le G. Jacob, Western India Before and During the Mutinies, pp.152-53.
60. Ibid.; Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist...., p.46.
61. G. Jacob, loc. cit., pp.158-59. The result was that Satara princes were deported. Rangū himself had fled but his son along with other conspirators was hanged.
62. Ibid., pp.214-15.
63. Ibid., pp.154, 157-58, 161, 163, 171, 194-96, 201-205 and 207.
64. Ibid., pp.222-27. He was attacked, defeated and killed during the first two days of June by Colonel Malcolm.
65. Ibid., pp.217-18. Troops having been sent against him by the Resident at Hyderabad and from Belgaum in February 1858, the ruler surrendered, was taken prisoner and sentenced to transportation for life. The Rājā, however, made short work of the sentence by committing suicide while on his way to the coast for transportation. His confession before death, according to Malcolm, unmasked the conspiracy, the details of which Malcolm fails to provide.

sent to him by the Lucknow Darbār.<sup>66</sup> The forethought and the secrecy with which the conspiracy was shaped, the caution with which each group of conspirators worked apart to conceal the connecting links, the care used in entrusting just sufficient information for the purpose in view, and the fidelity with which the conspirators adhered to each other surprised and baffled the mind of Maj.-Gen. Sir G. Le G. Jacob, the Political Commissioner of the Southern Marahṭah Country. So loyal were the participants that they preferred death to betrayal.<sup>67</sup>

How great was the extent of the danger was clearly indicated by the Government decision to disarm the people and by the subsequent fate suffered by a small disarming party under Lieut.-Col. George Malcolm at the hands of the inhabitants of Hulgully village. Several of the party were murdered. Referring to the incident, Sir Jacob observed:

The affair showed the inflammable state of the people and the danger that might accrue from the Forts, when a comparatively defenceless village could thus venture to oppose a Government force, however small.<sup>68</sup>

The exemplary punishments, however, prevented "further open resistance to the demand for arms."<sup>69</sup> One hundred and seventy villagers were reported to have been killed.<sup>70</sup> The Sawunt rebels along the Goa frontier, however, remained

66. Ibid., pp.204-205. The sword was found "silver handled, the blade of wavering **or serrated** edge, covered with Sheeah [Shī'ah] inscriptions in gold." p.204n.

67. Ibid., pp.205-206. Chīmah Ṣāhib's own minister preferred death to divulging the secret. In answer to Government interrogation he said, "Were I to open my mouth I should kindle a flame to burn up the land. I choose rather to meet my fate in silence", and so he did.

68. Ibid., pp.216-17.

69. Ibid., p.217.

70. The Spectator, 16 Jan. 1858. The Spectator gave the name of the village as Hulguttee.

in the field as late as November 1858, and could only be suppressed with the active cooperation of the Portuguese Government in Goa.<sup>71</sup> In spite of all this, the revolt could not assume as threatening proportions as the one in the Bengal Presidency. The Quarterly Review attributed this to the "energy, foresight and judgment" of Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of the Presidency.<sup>72</sup>

In the Madras Presidency, the comparative tranquility was attributed not to any love of the Government, but to the heterogeneous character of its people; the remoteness of the Presidency from the centre of the rebellion; the existence of a large native Christian population interspersed all over the Presidency; the presence of native Christians in the army, and, above all, the comparative weakness of the Hindūs and the Muslims in a large but "poverty stricken and long oppressed class" of the aboriginal races.<sup>73</sup> Despite all this, it was reported, the Government still did not feel confident of itself. It was sufficiently concerned to keep a vigilant European guard at Queen Victoria's birthday ball in the city of Madras. In addition to the above mentioned weaknesses, the major handicap to the Hindūs and the Muslims, it was argued, came from the presence of the European force. But for their presence, held J. B. Norton, no European would have been left in the city of Bangalore, so hostile was the

71. G. Jacob, op. cit., pp.232-36. Jacob himself was sent to the Portuguese Governor-General, the Visconde de Novas Torres, at Goa to invoke the help of his Government.

72. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.225.

73. Ibid.; "Our Indian Empire," QR., ClII, 1858, p.258; Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.17; Nolan, op. cit., p.769.

population.<sup>74</sup>

Though the Panjab was made the base of operations against Delhi and had practically saved India for the British, still the situation there was not described as wholly satisfactory. In spite of the fact that fighting potential in the province had already been crushed as a result of the two Sikh Wars; in spite of the fact that inimical elements in the province had already been wiped out of existence as a result of the vigorous measures adopted by the Government consequent upon the conquest of the province, i.e., disbandment of the Sikh army, in spite of complete disarming of the population; demolition of the forts, resumption of the rent free tenures in order to curb the power of the landlords, the establishment of strict civil and criminal courts; the conviction of 8,000 during the first year of the administration, and in spite of the kind, judicious measures of "the school of Sir Henry Lawrence", later on to be substituted by what George Crawshay termed as the "Reign of Terror in the Punjab" by Sir John Lawrence -- only to be matched by its namesake of 1793 in Paris, and, above all, the introduction of a large European force in the province,<sup>75</sup> civil discontent was reported at Lahore, Amritsar, the district of Sialkot, Ludhiana, Sirsa, Hansi, Hissar, Ferozpur, Kangra and Karnal.

74. Norton, The Rebellion in...., p.17; Nolan, op. cit., p.769. For further information on the feelings of the people in the Madras Presidency, see also: The Spectator, 3 Oct. and 14 Nov. 1857.

75. "India under Dalhousie," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1856, p.239; George Crawshay, Proselytism Destructive of Christianity and Incompatible with Political Dominion, Speech of Mr. Crawshay at the India House on the Vote of an Annuity to Sir John Lawrence, 25 Aug. 1858, with Notes and an Appendix, p.20.

If the people of Ludhiana, it was pointed out, petitioned the restored monarch at Delhi to rescue them from the iron rule of G. Ricketts,<sup>76</sup> the Gūjar population of Sialkot actively participated in the task of rapine and plunder.<sup>77</sup> A writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine described them as "vultures" flocking upon their prey. The domestic servants at the station were mentioned as "privy to the whole plot."<sup>78</sup>

The districts of Haryana, Sirsa, Hansi and Hissar were also up in arms. All of them had declared for Delhi, and General Von Cortlandt was deployed for their suppression. So great was the aversion of the people of Sirsa that they were said to have gone to the extent of ravaging the Christian cemetery there.<sup>79</sup> Even the South-East of Panjab was not regarded as safe and restrictions were imposed upon the travels of officers down the river Sutlej.<sup>80</sup> The people of Panipat in Karnal were disarmed.<sup>81</sup> At Ferozpur the 45th Regiment was reportedly incited into action "by the fanatic Moulvies [Mawlawīs] and disaffected Bunnias [Banyās] of the Bazar [Bāzār]."<sup>82</sup> However, the timely fall of Delhi, with which the safety and loyalty of the Panjab was closely linked, and the stern measures adopted by the vigilant administration of "Christian militants", like John Lawrence and others, were said to have forced the disaffected elements to retreat.

76. Cooper, op. cit., p.41.
77. Ibid., p.140.
78. "The Poorbeah Mutiny: The Punjab - No. V," Blackwood's, LXXXIV, 1858, p.78 and 78n.
79. "The Poorbeah Mutiny: The Punjab - No. IV," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.653; Cooper, op. cit., pp.16-17; Nolan, op. cit., p.769; [Malleeson], op. cit., pt. 11, p.197. Referring to Hansi, Hissar and Sirsa, Malleeson pointed out that every "village in that part of the country is a castle on a small scale: the inhabitants, sympathizing with the mutineers, rose almost simultaneously with them and declared for the cause of the king of Delhi."
80. Duff, op. cit., p.259.
81. "The First Bengal European Fusiliers in the Delhi Campaign," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.122.
82. "The Poorbeah Mutiny: The Punjab - No. 11," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.239.

Frederick Cooper, the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, therefore wrote in his book:

Thus no half measures were adopted. Moreover, the principle that he who is not for us is against us was strictly followed. There was no pause. Treason and sedition were dogged into the very privacy of the Harem [Haram] and up to the sacred sanctuaries of mosques and shrines. Learned moulvies [Mawlawīs] were seized in the midst of a crowd of fanatic worshippers and men of distinction and note were wanted at dead of night. Like selugh-hounds, the district police, on the first scent of treason, and egged on by certainty of reward, fastened on the track, and left it not until the astonished intriguer was grounded in his lair.<sup>84</sup>

Another important reason for the easy control of the situation in the Panjab was to be found in the Sikh dislike of the Hindūstanīs, especially the sepoys<sup>85</sup> and the Muslims.<sup>86</sup> They hated the former for helping the British into power in Ranjīt Singh's kingdom, and with the latter they had old scores to settle.

Outside the Company's territories the contrast between the native and the British rule failed to charm the civil and military populations of the quasi-independent states. While several of the princes and their courts were loyal, or at least sympathetic, their subjects were not. This, in fact, posed a serious problem for many princes. In order to be loyal to the British they had to contend with their own people. In reality, the English name was said to have become a source of weakness for them rather than of strength. Hōlkar,

83. "Missionary Records - Punjab - its Loyalty," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.33; Hodson, op. cit., p.224; Senior, "The Man for India," Letter to The Spectator, 5 Dec. 1857; The Rev. J. E. W. Rotton, The Chaplin's Narrative of the Siege of Delhi, from the Outbreak at Meerut to the Capture of Delhi, p.222.

84. Cooper, op. cit., pp.24-25. No wonder George Crawshay who regarded the outbreak as a mutiny refused to commend the comparative calm in the Panjab. Speaking at the India House on the vote of an annuity to Sir John Lawrence, he referred to Sir John's success in the Panjab and observed:

But you will say he succeeded; so did Robespierre succeed. History is full of the names of men who have succeeded, but whose memory is not spared anymore than will be the memory of Sir John Lawrence. Crawshay, Proselytism Destructive...., p.20.

85. People's Paper, 2 Jan. 1858; The Examiner, 17 Oct. 1857. The Baptist Magazine, however, offered a different theory on the Sikh loyalty. Doubting the sincerity of Sikh intentions, it wrote:

We hope that we do our present allies, but recent foes, injustice when we suspect them of playing their own game. That they are so eager to exterminate the sepoy regiments can hardly be ascribed to their love of us. May it not arise from the desire to crush the right arm of our strength in India, to be followed by an attempt to throw off the yoke which we, by the aid of the sepoy, so recently imposed upon them. XLIX, 1857, p.639.

The Sikh loyalty, however, was confined to the Panjab and the adjacent Sikh states. In Patna the Sikh High Priest refused even to admit Rattray's Sikhs (name of a Sikh regiment) into the shrine, the reason being their help to the British. (Taylor, The Patna Crisis, pp.33-34.) The British had also to pay the price of Sikh help. At times the British officers were taunted by their Sikh soldiers and at others they had to suffer insolent behaviour at the hands of the Sikhs. The British were always reminded of the value of Sikh help in the capture of Delhi and the consequent preservation of India for them. As a result the Sikh soldiers tended to become unruly and disobedient.

The author of The Future of India reported on the basis of his conversation with some of the Sikh soldiers that the Sikhs did not revolt because they did not have a capable leader to guide them to victory, and that they were conscious of it. The Future of India (London: L. Booth, 1859), pp.7-8.

86. The Examiner, 17 Oct. 1857. Not only had the Sikhs acted out of revengeful feelings towards the Muslims, their spirit of vengeance was also exploited by the British. A prophecy was already current among the Sikhs that they were destined to reconquer Delhi with the help of the white man and so avenge themselves of the death of Gurū Tēgh Bahādur. It was to please his Sikh soldiers that Hodson "deliberately shot" the two Mughal princes at Delhi and ordered their bodies to be thrown on the Chabūtrā in front of the Kōtwālī. After this event the Sikhs "looked on Captain Hodson as the 'avenger of their martyred Gooroo [Gurū]', and were even more ready than before to follow him anywhere." Hodson, op. cit., p.302 and 302n.

Sindhiyā, the Skinder Bēgam of Bhopal, the Nizām of Deccan, the Rājā of Rewah, that of Johdpur, all had, at one time or another, to face a hostile population, or an insurgent army because of their sympathetic leanings towards the British.<sup>87</sup> They could not even guarantee protection to the European fugitives. While the Europeans had to consult their safety from the states of Hōlkar and Sindhiyā, the Bēgam of Bhopal, in spite of her loyal intentions, failed to provide shelter to the Indore fugitives within her territories. Welcoming the refugees from Indore, the Bēgam clearly but respectfully pointed out the difficulties in which she was involved. She informed Colonel Durand that all India was turning against the British; that "instead of being a support as hitherto," the English "were now a source of weakness to her; that if Colonel Durand and the British officers would retire for a time to Hashungabad, within the British territories, she might be better able to stem the torrent; but if, on the other hand, they decided upon remaining in Bhopal, so be it -- their safety would be her care; her lot and their's should be one." Colonel Durand, sensing the delicate nature of the situation, left for Hashungabad, escorted by the Bēgam's carefully chosen loyal troops.<sup>88</sup> The "Plain Speaker", pointing to the defection of Hōlkar's army, asked:

87. People's Paper, 12 Sept., 24 Oct., 21 and 28 Nov. 1857; Annual Register, 1857, pp.268-70; Nolan, op. cit., p.772; "Lord Clyde's Campaign in India," Blackwood's, LXXXIV, 1858, p.486; Charles Raikes, Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India, p.43; Sir George Lawrence, Forty Years' Service in India, ed. by W. Edwardes (London: John Murray, 1874), pp.295-96; The Spectator, 23 Oct. 1858; O. J. Jones, op. cit., p.34; Plain Speaker [Temple], op. cit., p.19; Duff, op. cit., p.288; The Press, 8 Aug. 1857.

88. Jas. Travers, The Evacuation of Indore by Lieut.-Gen. Jas Versus History of the Sepoy Revolt by Sir John Kaye (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1876), pp.5-6.

Is it possible, then, to believe that the popular feelings in the provinces from which these contingents have been drawn is not strongly averse to our rule.<sup>89</sup>

Hyderabad, the metropolitan city of the South-Indian state of the same name, was the scene of "a popular (not military) rising."<sup>90</sup> However the situation was soon restored to normal by the strenuous efforts of the British Resident at the court of Hyderabad and the cooperation offered by Sālār Jang, the Prime Minister of the state. The Press and others described Sālār Jang as the only hope of the British, as even the Nizām had wavered and had reclaimed the districts he had ceded to Lord Dalhousie in 1853.<sup>91</sup>

This, however, does not mean that all other princes were loyal. Several instances of open and at times masked hostilities were reported. Apart from the rulers of Delhi and Awadh, the Rājās of Bhartpur,<sup>92</sup> Jaunpore,<sup>93</sup> Mainpuri,<sup>94</sup> Baudpore,<sup>95</sup> Jubbulpore<sup>96</sup> and Pachete,<sup>97</sup> the Nawābs of Murshidabad,<sup>98</sup> Jujjhur and Ballabgarh,<sup>99</sup> the rulers of Kulu<sup>100</sup> -- a state in the Himalayas, and Bhitoor [sic],<sup>101</sup> the Rā'ō of Burtorolee [sic]<sup>102</sup> and many other minor chiefs<sup>103</sup> were reported to be in active hostility against the Government. Some even doubted the loyalty of the Marahtah ruler of Gwalior.<sup>104</sup> On 4 October 1857, Hodson reported to have himself defeated

89. Plain Speaker [Temple], op. cit., p.19.
90. Manchester Guardian, 9 Sept. 1857.
91. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: Duff, op. cit., p.288; Saturday Review, 19 Dec. 1857; Leopold Von Olrich, Military Mutiny in India: Its Origin and its Results, with Observation by Maj.-Gen. Sir W. M. G. Colebrooke, pp.26-27.
92. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857.
93. O. J. Jones, op. cit., p.34.
94. "The First Bengal European Fusiliers after the Fall of Delhi," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.730.
95. Carey, op. cit., p.191.
96. See above, pp.181 and 181a, n.28.
97. Russell, op. cit., I, p.133.
98. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857.
99. Gubbins, op. cit., pp.56-57. Both of these rulers paid the penalty of their "treason" by being sentenced to death after the fall of Delhi.
100. "The Poorbeah Mutiny: The Punjab - No. V," Blackwood's, LXXXIV, 1858, pp.40-41. In this case as well Partap Singh, the ruler, and his accomplices were arrested and hanged.
101. The Press, 15 Aug. 1857. After having risen in revolt, the ruler of Bhitoor [sic] was responsible for the murder of 132 Europeans.
102. The Times (from the Bombay Correspondent), 14 July, 1857. The Ra'o was tried by a drumhead court-martial and hanged.
103. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857; Olrich, op. cit., p.21.
104. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857.

"several rebel rajas", captured their strongholds, and treasure amounting to £70,000.<sup>105</sup> Referring to the much boasted loyalty of Hindū chiefs, a "Friend of the Muslims" taunted that Russia too enjoyed strong adherents in Poland.<sup>106</sup> In fact, the Government was so scared that Meadows Taylor, Deputy Commissioner of the Ceded Districts in Deccan, reported that it had to compromise with Torra Borg Khān, the Rōhīlā Zamīndār, who had led the attack upon the Residency.<sup>107</sup> A writer in the Dublin University Magazine appeared to be quite pessimistic about the whole situation in India, when he observed:

A few of the rajas seemed disposed to remain neutral; none dared to assist us. Many of them had armed retainers to the number of thousands, and might have quenched rebellion in their districts, had they been so minded. There is too much reason to conclude that the majority was closely mixed up with the plot....Even the mahrajahs and shopkeepers seemed to care less for the safety of their property than the success of the revolt.<sup>108</sup>

In short, the whole of India was described as against the British. Even the loyalty of the "loyal" princes was attributed not to their love or liking for the foreign ruler, but to their strong suspicion regarding the success of the outbreak.<sup>109</sup> Several of them offered pseudo-loyalty and tried to keep both sides happy.<sup>110</sup> It was this dismal picture which compelled men of courage and perseverance -- like Havelock and Hodson, to make

105. Hodson, op. cit., p.342.
106. What Shall We Do to the Mussulmans  
(Calcutta: Sanders, Cones and Co., 1858), pp.3-4.
107. M. Taylor, op. cit., p.20.
108. "The Defence of Lucknow - Martial Incidents  
in Oude," DUM., L1, 1858, p.484.
109. Plain Speaker [Temple], op. cit., pp.19-20;  
Hansard 3, CXLV11, 508. Speaking in the Commons, Sir E.  
Perry attributed the loyalty of the Rājās of Gwalior and  
Patiala to their fear of the British power rather than to  
any liking for the foreign ruler.
110. Volunteer [Swanston], op. cit., p.12;  
Hodson, op. cit., pp.331-32; Travers, op. cit., pp.5-6;  
Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies,  
pp.24-27. The author of the Crisis in India, a military  
officer of thirty-two years' standing in India, reported  
from his personal knowledge how a Hindū Rājā in the  
vicinity of Delhi played a three-fold game. Not only did  
he save some European lives, he also kept some of them as  
hostages and at the same time "secretly attended the  
installation of the Delhi usurper. He was, however, so  
anxious to evade detection, in case of our [British]  
ultimate triumph, that in hurrying back to his own little  
territory he rode his best horse to death."

frequent utterances of "a nation in arms",<sup>111</sup> "a continent in arms",<sup>112</sup> or else "all India is up in arms against us."<sup>113</sup> Quite frequently such utterances came from as widely separated sources as Banaras and Mhow. If an officer from Banaras wrote that, "the whole country has risen as one man", another from the latter place did not write differently when he said, "the whole country has risen up against the Government."<sup>114</sup>

Along with the First, Second and Third Estates, the Fourth Estate of India, the native press, was also mentioned as notoriously disaffected. It continuously discussed the propriety of various Government measures, assailed them in the severest language, pointed out the grievances of the people and called upon them jealously to guard and defend their caste and religions.<sup>115</sup> It was believed that the native press had not only made the Hindū aware of his powers, but it also made him conscious of the weaknesses of his rulers, whom he had earlier regarded as invincible.<sup>116</sup> For months before the outbreak the press had preached sedition and had warned the Government of the writing on the wall.<sup>117</sup> Ironically enough, a native newspaper was said to have published in Meerut on 20 February, 1857, that "all the Mahomedans and Hindoos were agitated in mind, that the natives would not obey the Government and that the fire of mischief and the flame of disaffection

111. Hodson, op. cit., p.181.
112. Ibid., p.245.
113. Brock, op. cit., pp.190-91.
114. The Press, 22 Aug. 1857.
115. Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie], English Tenure of India, Practical Remarks Suggested by the Bengal Mutiny, p.21; Manchester Guardian, 20 Aug. 1857; Nolan, op. cit., p.714; [Malleeson], op. cit., pt. 11, p.101; J. H. Stocqueler, India: Its History, Climate, Products, with a full Account of the Origin, Progress and Development of the Bengal Mutiny and Suggestions as to the Future Government of India, p.20.
116. Malcolm Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.4.
117. Hansard 3, CXLVII, 1415. Thomas Frost (ed.), Complete Narrative of the Mutiny in India, from its Commencement to the Present Time, compiled from most authentic sources; including many very Interesting Letters from Officers and Others on the Spot, p.3. Frost admitted the presence of a smouldering discontent among the civil and military populations of India, but he emphasized that the people were not mindful of its existence until recently when the native press started calling attention to it.

would be kindled in the Western Provinces."<sup>118</sup> In fact, it was the native press that was said to have taken to every home the news of: a) Dalīp Singh's conversion; b) the baptism of the daughter of the Rājā of Coorg,<sup>119</sup> and c) the Parliamentary attacks on the rulers of India.<sup>120</sup> The Manchester Guardian blamed the local Indian press for making a "disgraceful and mischievous use of the liberty it enjoyed."<sup>121</sup> Referring to the small circulation of the native newspapers and their commercial viability, the Guardian felt sure of political motives behind the existence of the native press. It regarded the native newspapers as instruments in the hands of the least well-disposed persons -- all the more dangerous when the Company, the Guardian admitted in this case, had no friends, but only servants and foes in India.<sup>122</sup>

The power and influence of the native press, however, was duly recognized by all shades of public opinion. When dealing with the native press and its share in bringing about the revolt similar feelings were expressed by everybody. Even the Manchester Guardian, a paper rather averse to the idea of calling the outbreak a civil revolt, described the Indian Fourth Estate as disloyal, disreputable and scurrilous, playing into the hands of either "those who would employ it as an engine of

- 118. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 1415.
- 119. Ibid., 1429.
- 120. Illustrated London News, 4 July 1857.
- 121. 16 Sept. 1857.
- 122. Ibid., 20 Aug. and 10 Nov. 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: Olrich, op. cit., p.20.

sedition and disaffection, or of men who would simply pander to the passions and prejudices of the populace";<sup>123</sup> and a military officer in his letter home called it "unrestrained and licentious."<sup>124</sup> It was unanimously held responsible for a share in the outbreak; Lord Canning's Gagging Act was highly approved insofar as it covered the native press.<sup>125</sup> It was argued that its continued freedom might further have sapped the loyalty of the so far faithful princes upon whose support the Government was then depending. The Guardian naturally proclaimed the press Act as "a measure clearly dictated by the law of self-preservation" and so needing no defence.<sup>126</sup>

Armed with these facts, the exponents of the school of interpretation under discussion vigorously took issue with those who called the outbreak only a military mutiny, used and exploited by outside interests. They suggested that this was the reaction of interested parties among the British -- interested in diverting the attention of the public from their own responsibility. Duff called it a frail attempt at self-deception on the part of those officials to whom truth was unpalatable, humiliating and discreditable. They preferred to seek shelter behind "isolated snatches of loyalty." Moreover, he argued, it was also the expediency of self-interest, promotions and efficiency mark, which dictated to them not

123. Manchester Guardian, 10 Nov. 1857.

124. Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, p.22. For a similar opinion, see also: Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 244.

125. Gen. Sir R. Gardiner, Military Analysis of the Remote and Proximate Causes of the Indian Rebellion, drawn from the Official Papers of the Government of India: Respectfully Addressed to the Honourable the Members of the House of Commons, pp.73-74.

126. Manchester Guardian, 16 Sept. 1857.

only not to report the explosive situation but to make it a matter of policy to belittle the outbreak.<sup>127</sup> It was in pursuit of this deliberate policy, which the leaders of the civilian service had decided to carry out at all risks, that the restrictions were imposed upon the Anglo-Indian press, which alone was in a position to expose their shortcomings.<sup>128</sup> Duff, therefore, asserted that to call it a military mutiny "is an egregious mistake and as mischievous as it is egregious."<sup>129</sup> Lewin also seriously disputed the thesis of the opposite school and called it "a convenient plea for those who were concerned in annexing the territories of the native princes -- for others who insulted them by advertising or selling by public auction the jewels and paraphernalia of their families and for those who attempted to force the gospel on the natives of the country."<sup>130</sup>

N. A. Chick ridiculed the notion that a few regiments at Meerut and Delhi could conceive the idea of overthrowing the British rule and that, too, over the issue of cartridges.<sup>131</sup> The Press made a double charge first, of self-induced blindness earlier, then of an attempt to blind the people later on.<sup>132</sup> Arguing it to be "essentially a social revolt"<sup>133</sup> rather than a military outbreak, General Gardiner assailed the advocates of the military theory as the people trying to hide from themselves

127. Duff, op. cit., p.302.
128. [Malleeson], op. cit., pt. II, pp.53 and  
101-104.
129. Duff, loc. cit., p.199.
130. Lewin, The Way to Regain India, p.4.
131. Chick, op. cit., p.6.
132. 1 Aug. 1857.
133. Gen. Sir R. Gardiner, Cursory View of the  
Present Crisis in India: together with the Military Power  
of England, respectfully addressed to the Members of the  
House of Commons (London: Messers. Byfield, Hawksworth and  
Co., 1857), p.18.

the reality -- a reality which was the inevitable result of their long practised misrule, misgovernment and injudicious legislation.<sup>134</sup> To invest the civil insurrection with a military character was to Gardiner a poor praise for the brightest achievements of the British officials and native soldiery, both of whom were already honoured with the recorded approbation of their monarchs and the British Parliament.<sup>135</sup> The Nation, on the other hand, thought that to characterize the Indian outbreak as a military mutiny was not more reasonable than calling a French Revolution, with the national guards in possession of Paris, as another military uprising.<sup>136</sup>

It was emphasized that the outbreak was a rebellion caused by national alarm. If it was a mere military mutiny then why were the "natives hung by fours and fives on the trees by the roadside?"<sup>137</sup> Why were the rebel districts being asked to pay for their pacification?<sup>138</sup> Duff took the argument from the mouth of the opposing school by telling them that a mere military uprising in the midst of an unaiding and unsympathetic public could have been crushed after a "few decisive victories, such as we have already had."<sup>139</sup> The outspoken Irish nationalist paper, The Nation, added that in such a case 30,000 British soldiers should have been sufficient to make short work of the mutineers.<sup>140</sup> On the contrary, Duff pointed out, as

134. Ibid., pp.15-17; Gardiner, Military Analysis of....., p.33. For similar opinions, see also: [Malleon], op. cit., pt. II, pp.102-103; "The Commons, the Ministers and the Forces," The Spectator, 17 Oct. 1857; An Indian Missionary [Hargrave Jennings], The Religions of India; or, Results of Mysterious Buddhism, pp.165-66.

135. Gardiner, Military Analysis of....., p.34.

136. 8 Aug. 1857.

137. The Press, 26 Sept. 1857.

138. Richard Congreve, India, p.35n.

139. Duff, op. cit., p.219.

140. 29 Aug. 1857.

several others did that the enemy appeared time and again in spite of repeated crushing defeats, and its loss of guns. "No sooner", he argued, "is one city taken or another relieved, than some other one is threatened. No sooner is one district pronounced safe through the influx of British troops, than another is disturbed and convulsed. No sooner is a highway re-opened between places of importance, than it is closed again and all communications, for a season, cut off."<sup>141</sup> If The Press complained of the inexhaustible number of rebels,<sup>142</sup> the Quarterly Review, reporting that the whole of North-Western Provinces and Central India were against the British to a man, observed:

....like a field of corn stricken by the wind, the population bends as we pass but to rise again.<sup>143</sup>

It is no wonder that the People's Paper emphatically described the outbreak as an "itinerant insurrection - a walking revolt - a moving mutiny - a travelling war." Referring to the fortunes of the insurgents, the paper remarked:

....conquer them [insurgents] at Delhi, they go to Lucknow; conquer them at Lucknow, they go to Jhansi; conquer them at Jhansi, they go to Bareilly .... they carry the war to new scenes, without abandoning the old, and while you [the British] think you have got the hydra in your grasp, lo! it divides its body, the one half still confronts you - the other glides off to a fresh arena, and there grows - grows larger than the entire form was before....<sup>144</sup>

It was pointed out that the sepoys were the most favoured of all classes, with all facilities available,

141. Duff, op. cit., p.223.

142. 5 Sept. 1857.

143. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.226.  
For similar opinions, see also: People's Paper, 2 and 16  
Jan., 10 April and 19 June 1858; Hansard 3, CL1, 2041.

144. 12 June 1858.

and with secure prospects for the future.<sup>145</sup> They were described as the only part of the Indian society which was loyal previous to the outbreak, while everybody else detested the British.<sup>146</sup> In spite of the fact that Hindū and Muslim tamperers of the army loyalty, described by Capt. G. Hutchinson, Military Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Awadh, as hissing serpents, had jumped into the field early in 1857, the army had remained steadfastly loyal throughout the months of March and April. Apart from loyalty the native soldiers and officers even went to the extent of aiding the Government in the arrest of offenders. Soon, however, the tide had turned; the cartridge incident was profitably employed to sap their allegiance to the Government. Even the most loyal could not escape falling prey to the tactics of the plotters. Hutchinson reported an instance in which a native officer who had received "a handsome present for conspicuous loyalty, was hanged for as conspicuous mutiny six weeks afterwards."<sup>147</sup> Further still, it was reported that the troops on escort duty were scattered all over the country and "were in hourly intercourse with the priesthood at the villages," and that the priests never lost any opportunity of "sowing the seeds of disloyalty among them."<sup>148</sup> Under these circumstances it is not surprising if Gardiner attempted to dispel all wishful thinking regarding the

145. Duff, op. cit., p.199.

146. Gardiner, Military Analysis of....., p.41.  
In fact, no concern or doubt was ever entertained by the men in authority on the loyalty of the native army. Lord Dalhousie in his minutes written in 1856, had expressed complete satisfaction with its condition. He was so sure of the loyalty and affection of the Indian soldier that he did not even care to say much about him. In his forty-five page long minute his only reference to the native army was:

The position of the native soldier in India has long been such as to leave hardly any circumstance of his condition in need of improvement. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 445.

Similarly General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Member of the Governor-General's Council in 1857, had never sent a word of complaint either to the Government, the Court of Directors, or the Board of Control, concerning the existence of any bad feelings in the native army. Hansard 3, CXLV1, 1461-62.

147. G. Hutchinson, op. cit., pp.40-41.

148. Cotton, op. cit., p.156.

loyalty of the native subjects by quoting from Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations and from Lord Metcalfe. He quoted the latter as having written in 1814:

Whatever delusions may prevail in England respecting the security to be derived from the affections of our Indian subjects....it will probably be admitted in India that our power depends solely upon our military superiority.<sup>149</sup>

This school unhesitatingly confessed the fact that British rule was not acceptable to the people at all and that they were happier under the native rulers.<sup>150</sup> Russell, after having visited Patiala, contended that had that state been annexed as it could have been on one pretext or another, the British would have experienced a rising in that state as well. There too the natives would have risen to restore their deposed prince to his full rights and powers as they had done, he stressed, in all those states annexed by the British Government.<sup>151</sup> He perhaps exaggerated the state of affairs in India when he said that even the cattle seemed to hate the English.<sup>152</sup> J. B. Norton, quoting the last stirring exhortation of a Satara rebel to his compatriots, pointed to the diametrically opposite reactions shown by the British and the natives. To the former he was just a traitor, to the latter a hero and a martyr.<sup>153</sup> Lewin ridiculed as nonsense the notion that India was tranquil before the outbreak. He sarcastically noted that the same was also boasted about a

149. Gardiner, Military Analysis of....., p.45. It appears from Gardiner's pamphlet as if Metcalfe had been constantly warning the Government of revolt and disaffection in India, against which, he further stressed there could be no practical remedy.

150. India and its Future; an Address to the People of Great Britain and their Representatives (London: L. Booth, 1858), pp.47-48; Sir Henry Montgomery Lawrence, Essays: Military and Political, pp.12-13; Russell, op. cit., 11, p.248.

151. Russell, op. cit., 11, p.267.

152. Ibid., I, p.161. For a similar opinion, see also: Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society ending March, 1858, p.46.

153. Norton, The Rebellion in....., pp.96-97. For the harangue itself, see Chapter IV, p.160.

day before the disastrous retreat from Kabul.<sup>154</sup> At best, it was asserted, the British rule in India was no better than that of Napoleon's in Spain.<sup>155</sup> In an attempt to convince the people of Britain of the true nature of the rising, Duff went on to quote a thirty-year old statement of Sir John Malcolm.<sup>156</sup> The latter had stated:

My attention has been, during the last five-and-twenty years, particularly directed to this dangerous species of secret war carried on against our authority, which is always carried on by numerous though unseen hands. The spirit is kept up by letters, by exaggerated reports, and by pretended prophecies. When the time appears favourable, from the occurrence of misfortune to our arms, or from mutiny in our troops, circular letters and proclamations are dispersed over the country with a celerity that is incredible. Such documents are read with avidity. The English are depicted as usurpers of low caste, and as tyrants, who have sought India only to degrade them, or to rob them of their wealth, and subvert their usages and religion. The native soldiers are always appealed to, and the advice to them is, in all instances, I have met with, the same - 'Your European tyrants are few in number - murder them!'<sup>157</sup>

The fact of the matter was, asserted Lewin, that whenever an opportunity presented itself for striking a blow against the rulers, the Indians never missed it. He could not find any period of five years during which they had not attempted an uprising.<sup>158</sup>

To bear misrule silently, it was argued, was a special trait of the natives of India. They would certainly not expose themselves to bolder risks when

154. Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.3.

155. Congreve, op. cit., p.30n.

156. Sir John Malcolm, famous for his travels to Persia, was the fourth son of George Malcolm of Burnfoot. Born in 1769, at the age of thirteen (in 1782) he joined the military service of the East India Company -- which corporation he served in various capacities. In 1792, he was appointed Persian interpreter to the Nizām's troops. During his military, civil and diplomatic career in India, Malcolm exercised great influence upon the governors and governors-general of India, this being specially true insofar as Wellesley was concerned. In his case Malcolm was spoken of as "Lord Wellesley's factotum and the greatest man in Calcutta." Malcolm earned his great reputation by undertaking several visits to the Persian court as an emissary of the British Government in India. This was specially important because the Government of Britain had at that time transferred the control of Britain's diplomatic relations with Persia to the British Indian administration. In 1827, Malcolm reached the zenith of his Indian career when he was appointed Governor of Bombay. "Simple, manly, generous and accessible, he made himself beloved by the natives of India and to his unvarying good faith and honesty much of his diplomatic success was due."

During the few years which he spent in England after his retirement in December 1830, he joined politics as a tory and represented the borough of Launceston (in Cornwall) in the Commons. He also took great interest in the home politics of the East India Company. He died in 1833. DNB., XXXV, pp.404-412.

157. Duff, op. cit., pp.268-69.

158. Malcolm Lewin, The Government of the East India Company and its Monopolies; or, the Young India Party and Free Trade, pp.6-9.

helpless to act, would rather prefer to ponder over their lot and wait for the opportune moment to come. If there was one thing over which they were united, it was in their hatred of the English rule, "which was never more deeply felt and never more openly expressed."<sup>159</sup> The universal cry, it was reported, was for the destruction of everything English, including the British themselves -- the idea being completely to obliterate the past.<sup>160</sup> The Athenaeum, holding that a revolt was long brewing in India, and that the English were sitting upon a powder keg, came up with a review of the verses of a nephew of George Canning. A score of years before the outbreak, the composer, summing up his experiences at Delhi, Bareilly and Kanpur, had prophesied a revolt. Canning had written:

There needs but some surpassing act of wrong  
 To break the patience that has bent so long;  
 There needs but some short sudden burst of ire  
 May chance to get the general thought on fire;  
 There needs but some fair prospect of relief  
 Enough to seize the general belief,  
Some holy juggle, some absurd caprice  
 To raise one common struggle of release.

Again:

Think not that prodigies must rule a state,  
 That great revulsions spring from something great;  
 Out breaks at once the far resounding cry,  
 The standard of revolt is raised on high,  
 The murky cloud has glided from the sun,  
 The tale of English tyranny is done,  
And torturing vengeance grinds as she destroys,  
 Till Sicil's vespers seem the game of boys.<sup>161</sup>

In short, it was the universal dislike of the English, combined with political discontent, which, many thought,

159. Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.3.

160. R. S. Fullerton, "Last Days of the Futteghur Missionaries," Calcutta Christian Observer, cited in WMM., Fifth Series, IV, 1858, pp.1133-34; "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., IX, 1857-58, p.227; England's Troubles in India, p.31.

161. The Athenaeum, 29 Aug. 1857. I have not been able to identify this nephew of Canning.

The Church of England Magazine quoted Byron from his "Curse of Minerva," in which Byron had similarly predicted the approach of a revolt in India. For reference, see Chapter IV, n.13.

had led to the projected rebellion of the army.

The proponents of the civil rebellion point of view drew further support from the special nature of the sepoy army. Lewin called it "unsafe" and "absurd" to think of the sepoy differently from other people of India.<sup>162</sup> He was in fact one of the people before he enlisted himself in the army; became their representative after joining its ranks, and ultimately went back to them after his retirement. Perhaps he was to be thought of as with the people, of the people and by the people.<sup>163</sup> The army was described as the "Magna Charta", "the Constitution", and "the Bill of Rights" of the people of India.<sup>164</sup> The grievances of the people were the grievances of the army and vice versa. Both belonged to the same organism, injury to one limb pained the whole. With this thought in mind, Lewin asserted that the "soldiers and citizens of India have all things in common, and the wrongs done to one will be avenged by the other."<sup>165</sup> The Quarterly Review, admitting the laxity of discipline in the ranks of the army and its faulty distribution pinpointed the same fact. It observed:

But the real causes of the rebellion must be sought for elsewhere. The sepoy army was a part of the people, its grievances were those of the population from which it had been drawn, and with which it still maintained the most intimate social ties.<sup>166</sup>

"Well paid and well cared" for, the nature of the native army's grievances was described as national and

162. Lewin, The Way to Lose India, pp.6-7.

163. "Has the Preservation of Caste Conduced to the Present Revolt in India, Negative Article - No. 111," BC., 1858, p.126; Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.7.

It was because of this nature of the army that the 8th Cavalry when ordered for service in Bengal from Bangalore halted at a distance of twenty-six miles from Madras. The regiment refused to proceed further on the pretext that their claims for increased pay, prize money and pensions were lying in abeyance since 1837. The Government, however, was quick to meet this subterfuge by immediately granting all these demands. Left with no excuse, the 8th Cavalry did march but for thirteen miles only and came to a halt again. This time the soldiers came out in their true colours and refused to go ahead on any terms whatsoever. Their firm stand was that they were not prepared to make war on their countrymen; the regiment was, thereupon, disarmed. The Spectator, 3 Oct. 1857.

164. Hansard 3, CXLVlll, 930.

165. Lewin, The Way to Lose India, p.7. For a similar opinion, see also: Norton, The Rebellion in...., pp.90-91.

166. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, p.228. For similar opinions, see also: Cotton, op. cit., p.286; Hansard 3, CXLVll, 506 and CXLVlll, 930.

religious rather than military. Actually the sepoy, it was pointed out, never did put forward any military grievance. His intercepted letters bespoke the kindness of his officers, but emphasized the wounds of his country and his religion.<sup>167</sup> The fact was that he could not reconcile the love of his country with his military allegiance. The latter was stated to be like "feathers" when put in the balance against the former. Again, the sepoy army was the only educated, well-knit and well-equipped body which could help the people to strike effectively for deliverance.<sup>168</sup>

The people of India, it was claimed, knew it very well. That was why the army was always appealed to over a period of decades. Of late the appeals had changed into biting taunts and sarcasms. Capt. Thomas Evans Bell of the 2nd Madras European Light Infantry, wrote to inform that for the last fifteen years the sepoy had been hearing "loud execrations in every place of public resort against the grasping and greedy policy of their foreign rulers." They were sneered at and held responsible for the ruin of the motherland. It was pointed out to them that their bayonets had enabled a group of merchants to efface the name of the "most illustrious native monarchies" and "extinguish the last remains of the Indian glory." The sepoys were told that at that pace in a short time no

167. "British India," QR., ClV, 1858, pp.227-28;  
Hansard 3, CXLVll, 444 and 506.

168. "Our Indian Empire," QR., Cl11, 1858, p.256.

Indian prince would be left to be "deposed and plundered," and that the British Government would then either discharge them or send them on extra-territorial service to "conquer the countries of Burmah, Persia, Arabia and Russia."

After all this they were painfully reminded of the absence of any reward for their numerous services. Not even one of them had attained any "exalted rank, wealth or dignity." No doubt they were paid regularly; no doubt some of them might rise by seniority to the rank of a Jama'dār or Šūbahdār, than what! None of them, they were further told to their anguish, could ever hope to obtain even one quarter of the pay of a freshly arrived ensign from England, or for that matter rise to the rank and authority of the youngest ensign.<sup>169</sup>

In this way the sepoy was made increasingly aware of his national neglects in the past; informed of his duties and obligations to the motherland and, above all, shown the possible way for an atonement. He was alternately flattered and reproached. Naturally when the higher call came, his "uninformed patriotism" was reported to have ranged itself against the British.<sup>170</sup> The sepoy arose to redress the national afflictions and became the first exponent of the people's grievances.<sup>171</sup> The Tablet seems to have been carried away by its pro-Irish sentiments, when it observed:

169. Capt. [Thomas] Evans Bell, The English in India: Letters from Nagpore, written in 1857-58 (London: John Chapman, 1859), pp.60-61.

170. Letter to The Times, 6 July 1857. Cf. The Nation, 29 Aug. 1857.

171. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVll, 444.

The sepoys after a hundred years of submission, have begun to retaliate upon us the wrongs which their countrymen suffered. They can tell stories of torture, of fraud, of violence and of rapine. Their grandfathers suffered what we are suffering now. The wheel has turned now and the conqueror submits to the law of the conquered. The tortured Indian tortures in turn and the robbers are robbed.<sup>172</sup>

In this way the native soldiery shook their allegiance to the English; "declared for the legitimate king of Delhi" -- the "national sovereign" of the country, and as a "national army" revolted at the head of the people.<sup>173</sup>

Sir De Lacy Evans, M.P., strongly endorsed the opinion of an Englishman in India, who had described the sepoy participation in the revolt as "one side of a great national insurrection" -- an insurrection for freedom.<sup>174</sup> The Indian people, however, played their role by actively supplying the national army, by enlisting themselves in it, keeping open its lines of communications and cutting off those of the "enemy".<sup>175</sup>

Sure in their convictions, the advocates of the present theme severely criticized their opponents for not comprehending the outbreak in its proper perspective and blamed them for playing down the Indian news. They censured the Government and what The Press called "the ministerial journals" for underestimating the situation in India, for confiding high hopes in the fall of Delhi as well as for deriving false satisfaction from the belief

172. The Tablet, 5 Sept. 1857.

173. The Nation, 18 July and 8 Aug. 1857. For further clarification of this point, read: "The Legal Position of the Sepoys," Free Press, 11 Nov. 1857; "The Phrase - 'Our Indian Empire'," Free Press, 16 Dec. 1857; Russell, op. cit., II, pp.67-69.

174. Hansard 3, CL1, 2042.

175. The Nation, 8 Aug. 1857.

that the worst was over.<sup>176</sup> They contended that neither the fall of Delhi nor that of Lucknow was going to end the rebellion so easily. It might have been true, they emphasized, had the rebellion been just military. "Since it neither was nor is confined to the sepoys' ranks,"<sup>177</sup> the fall of Delhi, on the contrary, would signal only the start of the real struggle.<sup>178</sup> The People's Paper, earlier having cautioned its readers against one-sided character of the news coming from the Government,<sup>179</sup> convincingly prophesied as late as October 1858 -- six months after the fall even of Lucknow, that the enemy would still fight "from town to town - village to village, city to city and hill to hill", and so drain the British resources.<sup>180</sup> Comparing Lucknow with Prague and Moscow, The Nation contended that the fall of "Indian Prague" was just as profitable "as Moscow was to the Great Napoleon."<sup>181</sup> Gladstone though a Liberal voiced similar feelings when he admitted before the Government of India Committee in June 1858:

We are landed again in the hot season, and, I apprehend, the most sanguine man among us does not believe it possible that a war which, unfortunately, has assumed so much more formidable character since we were accustomed to regard it as a mere military mutiny, can be terminated during the present Session of the Parliament.<sup>182</sup>

A general amnesty was eventually suggested as one of the

176. The Press, 15 Aug. and 5 Sept. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: People's Paper, 22 Aug. 1857; Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, pp.12 and 17; The Nation, 29 Aug. 1857.

177. The Press, 25 July 1857. The Paper argued that had the people not been involved in the outbreak, the cakes could not have passed through the villages, and the sepoys would not have dared to take such a desperate step.

178. The Press, 11 and 25 July and 1 Aug. 1857; People's Paper, 28 Nov. 1857; Duff, op. cit., p.139.

179. 18 July 1857.

180. 10 Oct. 1858.

181. 17 Aug. 1857.

182. Hansard 3, CL, 1616-17.

possible ways to end the struggle. John Bright and others took issue with those who favoured amnesty to all those who had done nothing, for, it was strongly argued, there was no such person.<sup>183</sup>

So sure was Ernest Jones about the nature of the revolt that he and his newspaper termed it as one of the noblest movements, in which the people were fighting for a very sacred cause -- just, holy and glorious, as genuine as that of the Poles, the Hungarians, or the Italians. He not only prayed for the success of the rebels and at times expressed satisfaction and joy over it, but he also invoked the sympathies of the people of Britain for India and unhesitatingly told them that their blood was shed in a bad cause. Appealing to the democratic sense of his countrymen, Jones attempted to bring home to them the idea that the cause of the Indians was theirs and the success of the Indians was, indirectly, theirs as well.<sup>184</sup> The Irish nationalists went even a step further; not feeling satisfied with verbal sympathy, they called upon the Irish youth not to enlist themselves for an unjust cause.<sup>185</sup>

From the above discussion, if anything is evident in the present school of thought it is the increasing strength it gained as a result of the different arguments, and different points of view put forward by its diverse components. In the case of the military mutiny school of thought, each additional argument detracted from

183. Ibid., CL1, 350 and 2041-42.

184. Ernest Jones, The Revolt of Hindustan, p.52; People's Paper, 8 Aug. and 5 Sept. 1857 and 9 Jan. 1858. For a similar opinion, see also: Reynald's Newspaper, 5 July, 1857.

185. The Nation, 5 and 26 Sept. and 3 Oct. 1857.

or weakened the main theme. It was, however, different with the revolution school. Here every new reason either ratified or added to and so strongly built up the main thesis. Whatever doubts the British public may have had about the national revolutionary character of the revolt, the frequent appeals for national unity to meet the challenge to British prestige make it evident that the outbreak constituted a national crisis for Great Britain.<sup>186</sup>

In a sense Palmerston's Government itself gave tacit recognition to the national revolutionary character of the mutiny. By appointing Wednesday, 7 October, 1857, a working day, as a "Day of National Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer", it acted contrary to its own convictions, and successfully endorsed the broad impression that the outbreak in India was certainly more than a mere military uprising. The lingering doubts in the minds of Britons in this regard, however, were further removed by the Queen's Indian Proclamation, issued by Derby-Disraeli Government. The Proclamation had "frankly and manfully" admitted that ambitious men had led their countrymen into "open rebellion"; and that the Queen's power "has been shown by the suppression of that rebellion."<sup>187</sup>

186. Hansard 3, CXLV11, 520 and 544-46.

187. John Malcolm Ludlow, Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown towards India, p.22,

## CHAPTER VII

### MUSLIM CONSPIRACY

The beginnings of Muslim rule in India coincided with their overrunning of Spain in 711 A.D. The start was made by the Arabs; the thread, only much later on, was picked up by Maḥmūd of Ghaznā and Muḥammad Ghūrī. Quṭbu-d-Dīn Aybak, with his capital at Delhi, laid the foundation of Muslim rule in India in 1206. They came as invaders; they conquered and settled down in India. Thenceforward India became their home.

From that time various dynasties rose and fell, but the Muslims continued to hold sway over most of the subcontinent. Centuries of uninterrupted rule gave the Muslims a strong vested interest in India. They were the rulers, the courtiers, the nobility, the civil servants and the military aristocracy -- the 'thanes' of the Muslim monarchs. In short, the Muslims enjoyed all the advantages which could, generally speaking, fall to the share of a ruling community.

The arrival of the English and the subsequent establishment of the British empire in India changed the whole situation, especially for the Muslims. The Muslims of the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent were, in fact, placed

in an unusual position. Earlier they had dispossessed the natives of India, the Hindūs, of their inheritance and the fruits of power. As a result the Hindūs disliked the Muslims, and the latter distrusted the former. The tensions arising from this situation were compounded by their religious differences; Islām and Hindūism as religious and social systems had virtually nothing in common. Centuries of living together and the strenuous efforts of those Hindū and Muslim preachers who were able to rise above individual affectation and communal strife, and who tried to bring about more harmonious relations between the two communities, had considerably softened their acute differences without removing the basic causes, so that the underlying suspicion and hatred was still prone to flare up.

It was in this situation that the English put aside the ledger, and unsheathed the sword. Now it was the Muslim turn to be dispossessed: to dislike and be distrusted. Theirs was an anomalous position. They were disliked by an overwhelming majority of the Indian population, the Hindūs, and distrusted by the new masters of the land. Now the gain of the English was to be the loss of the Muslims. All that the latter had acquired over a period of eleven centuries was at stake. Naturally, there would be a very strong reaction among them

at the establishment of British rule in India. Such at least appears to have been the British experience and hence it coloured the British interpretation of events. It is not to be wondered then that in every uprising, in every serious movement, the Muslim hand was suspected.

In these circumstances, when the mutiny broke out in India, the Christian missionaries -- virtually one and all -- several of the Company's civil and military servants, and an overwhelming number of the British population in India lost no time in declaring the outbreak to be a war between the Cross and the Crescent in India.<sup>1</sup> Many of these guides of public opinion claimed to speak on the basis of their personal experiences; many echoed the experiences of others and many more dwelt on hearsay. Of all these, the missionaries, however, were the most agitated and vocal in this regard. It seemed as if they were possessed with only one thought and that was "Islām", "Muhammadanism" or the "Mussulman". Naturally they headed this school of thought; laymen joined them in large numbers but with still stronger reactions.

The Rev. W. Carey, the Baptist missionary, with several decades of experience in India, hurriedly edited a book in India, entitled, The Mahomedan Rebellion; its Premonitory Symptoms; the Outbreak and Suppression, in the very first year of the mutiny. Without a doubt the book

1. The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), MM.,  
XXI, 1857, p.203; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MR.,  
XLIX, 1857, p.717; The Rev. Mathew A. Sherring, The Indian  
Church during the Great Rebellion: An Authentic Narrative  
of the Disasters that Befell it; its Sufferings; and  
Faithfulness unto Death of Many of its European and Native  
Members, p.208; Caritus, "The Sane and the Insane,"  
Letter to the Free Press, 21 Oct. 1857.

was inspired by Carey's deep conviction. He was so sure of his thesis that his opinion never wavered. In his subsequent work, The Good Old Days of the Honourable John Company, published twenty-five years later, he again styled it as the "Mahomedan Rebellion of 1857."<sup>2</sup>

Almost every letter from the missionaries which touched the nature of the revolt had something to say on Muslim hostility. This hostility became more obviously true in the eyes of the British public when around half a dozen incidents of Muslim bigotry were published by most of the newspapers, periodicals, books and pamphlets. As the reaction went on mounting, an overwhelming section of the public in Britain felt convinced that it was a Muslim affair, and that all other causes were of secondary importance. In their view the Muslims because of their religious hostility to Christianity should logically wish to re-establish their own House upon the throne of India.<sup>3</sup> On this assumption many opinion-makers in Britain built their theory of Muslim conspiracy.

It was a first proposition that Islām was ambitious and bloodthirsty in its very nature and bore active and unmitigated religio-political hostility towards Christianity.<sup>4</sup> Every Muslim, it was boldly asserted, was sure to be an enemy of the professors of Christianity,

2. W. H. Carey, The Good Old Days of the Honorable John Company; being Curious Reminiscences Illustrating Manners and Customs of the British India during the Rule of the East India Company, from 1600 to 1858 (Simla: Printed at the Argus Press, 1882-87). See the title of the sub-chapter on the Indian mutiny in chapter eight of Vol. III.

3. The Rev. A. C. Ainslie, A Few Words about India and the Indian Mutinies, p.15; The Rev. Alexander Duff, The Rebellion in India; its Causes and Results, in a Series of Letters from...., p.93; The Rev. Robinson (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.658 and also "Foreign Intelligence - India," L, 1858, p.50; The Rev. James Wallace, The Revolt in India: Its Causes and its Lessons, A Lecture delivered in Belfast, on 2 Feb. 1859, pp.8, 9 and 13; The Rev. Daniel, Prayer the Refuge of a Distressed Church (Calcutta: T. J. M'Arthur, Bishop's College Press, 1857), pp.6-7; Sherring, op. cit., p.208; "The Mutiny in India," United Presbyterian Magazine (hereafter referred to as UPM.), New Series, 1, 1857, p.431 and also "The Capture of Delhi," p.569; "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.151; Illustrated London News, 12 Sept. and 28 Nov. 1857; R. H. W. Dunlop, Service and Adventure with the Khakee Rissalah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse during the Mutinies of 1857-58, pp.152-55; Review of Mrs. Colin Mackenzie's book Delhi, the City of the Great Mogul, Literary Gazette, 1857, pp.804-805; Dr. A. Christian, Letter to The Scotsman, 2 Sept. 1857; Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi (London: G. Routledge, 1857), p.7; William Howard Russell, My Diary in India, 11, pp.77-78; "The Christianization of India," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.109; Investigation into Some of the Causes which have Produced the Rebellion in India, p.7; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.386; The Times, 1 Sept. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 3 Sept. 1857; People's Paper, 12 Sept. 1857; Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, p.54; A Short Review of the Present Crisis in India, p.9.

4. "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.151; What Shall We Do to the Mussulmans, p.3; Christian, loc. cit.; "The Crisis in India," (comments on Macleod Wylie's pamphlet, Commerce, Resources and Prospects of India), The Scotsman, 9 Sept. 1857; Caritas, "The Sane and the Insane," Letter to the Free Press, 21 Oct. 1857; The Examiner, 8 Aug. 1857; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, pp.385-86.

however much he might pretend otherwise. The antagonism was believed to be so ingrained that no amount of affection, kindness or benefit could change it. This, combined with the Muslim past in India, it was argued, produced a dangerous situation.<sup>5</sup> Here it is interesting to note what a writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine had to say around ten months before the outbreak of the mutiny. Referring to the descendants of Muslim conquerors, he quoted from the "First Punjab Report." The quote read:

'They look upon the empire as their heritage, and consider themselves as foreigners settled in the land for the purpose of ruling it. They hate every dynasty except their own, and regard the British as the worst because the most powerful of usurpers.'<sup>6</sup>

Many made references to Muslim religious bigotry and fanaticism -- what they called the animosity of Islām towards Christianity.<sup>7</sup> One of the papers on India, published by the Church Missionary Society, argued that the Muslims had chafed "under the British dynasty, not only on mere religious grounds, but also as conquered conquerors, whose rule has been immediately suppressed by Nazarenes from the west."<sup>8</sup> A writer in the Quarterly Review pointed out that no "Moslem people, before our conquest of India, were ever long subject to the Christian yoke, while their whole history is full of their triumphs

5. Almost a universally held opinion.

6. "India Under Dalhousie," Blackwood's, LXXX, 1856, pp.254-55. For similar opinions, see also: Investigation into Some...., p.7; "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.151; Wallace, op. cit., p.9.

The author of "India Under Dalhousie," was so conscious and sure of Muslim antagonism towards the British rule that while vividly describing the moving scene of Dalhousie's departure from India he reports the pathetic feelings of the Hindūs and the Europeans as witnessed by him at the Calcutta harbour but fails to make any mention of the former ruling community of India.

7. Read: The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.245; "The Capture of Delhi," UPM., New Series, 1, 1857, p.569; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, pp.385-86; Dr. A. Christian, Letter to The Scotsman, 2 Sept. 1857; "The Crisis in India," (comments on Macleod Wylie's pamphlet), The Scotsman, 9 Sept. 1857.

8. Religious Neutrality in India - Delusive and Impracticable (Occasional Paper No. IV on India, published by the Church Missionary Society in 1858), p.16. For a similar opinion, see also: "India in 1807 and 1857," loc. cit.

over the sons of Nazareth."<sup>9</sup> This, it was argued, gave the Muslims a feeling of pride and this was especially true of the Muslims of India. The Indian Muslim had long ruled over the subcontinent. He could never be expected to accept the yoke of an alien people. His Indian past and its glories were too recent, and the glimmers of it were still living. The memory of his past dominion, it was asserted, had acquired a permanent abode in his breast.<sup>10</sup> The belief was that at heart the Muslims had always looked to the King of Delhi as their real sovereign.<sup>11</sup> This was regarded as dangerous phenomena because it added religious hatred to resentment of past defeat.<sup>12</sup> In fact, British power was considered to act as an open wound to the Muslims, a constant reminder to them of their vanished glory, and the result was a sullen animosity towards the British. This was even more so since the Muslims were a warrior race and a people who, it was argued, could intrigue as well.<sup>13</sup> The "Resident in the North-Western Provinces of India" held that the Muslim "hostility to the conquerors of India is deadly. It is a fire always burning. Proud, vengeful, and fanatical, they look upon the British as a lawful prey, to be slaughtered and exterminated by every means that cunning and cruelty could devise."<sup>14</sup> The Muslims would clench their fists but

9. "Our Indian Empire," QR., C111, 1858, p.257.
10. The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.245; Scrutator [Sir Benjamin Colin Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, p.19; Russell, op. cit., II, pp.77-78; "The Christianization of India," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.109; "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.151; Walayat Ali of Delhi. A Martyr's Narrative of the Great Indian Mutiny of 1857 (London: Pub. by T. Pewtress and Co. for the Baptist Missionary Society, 1858), p.8; Duff, op. cit., pp.176-77; What Shall We...., p.1; R. C. Mather, Christian Missions in India, On the Present State and Prospects of Christian Missions in India; and the Duty of the Churches at the Present Crisis of Our Indian Affairs (London: John Snow, 1858), p.6.
11. Beynon, loc. cit.
12. Duff, loc. cit., pp.176-77.
13. Read: Dunlop, op. cit., pp.152-55; Russell, loc. cit.; Scrutator [Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, p.19; Wallace, op. cit., pp.8-9; "India in 1807 and 1857," loc. cit.; Duff, loc. cit.; Investigation into Some...., p.14.
14. Investigation into Some...., p.14. For similar opinions, see also: Crisis in India...., p.29; J. L. Archer, Indian Mutinies Accounted For. Being an Essay on the Subject, pp.7-8; Russell, loc. cit.; "India in 1807 and 1857," loc. cit.

would feel helpless. The British might would make them realise their impotence. The editor of the Delhi Gazette wrote in his Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi:

Instead of being the dominant race, the friends and kinsmen of the mighty emperors of Hindustan, they found themselves reduced to the miserable alternative of engaging in trade and agriculture, or accepting subordinate situations in our law courts.... The unwonted humiliation rankled sorely in their hearts, but they felt their impotence and were constrained to abide their time.<sup>15</sup>

Even the Manchester Guardian, a newspaper most insistent upon calling the outbreak a sepoy mutiny, editorially remarked:

[That] the Mohammedans should be ill disposed is natural enough. When the English first landed in India, they were the rulers of the country; they have been dispossessed, and they have not yet forgotten or forgiven.<sup>16</sup>

The Rev. Alexander Duff and several others expressed similar views. The author of "The Revolt of the Bengal Army" expressed strong opinions on the subject. His opinions were put forward as either his personal observations, or those of a friend. Holding that it was the fierce hand of Islām that worked behind the outbreak, he gave instances of Muslim malevolence and bigotry. He pointed out that at the time of the Kabul disaster many officers had the opportunity of discovering this truth. One of General Nott's staff, on his return from Kabul,

15. Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7.  
For similar opinions, see also: Scrutator [Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, p.19; "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.151.

16. 7 Aug. 1857.

continued to wear his Afghān dress as he passed through the North-Western Provinces. His knowledge of the native languages and customs enabled him to pass through Delhi and its neighbouring districts without causing any suspicion. As he visited "the chief places of resort, the mosques" and other spots of travellers' interest, everywhere he "heard the same avowal of rancorous hate from the lips of Mussulmans." Around the same period the author himself had a similar experience near the British Indian capital of Calcutta, when he attended a large gathering of two thousand high class Muslims. As the European visitor passed unnoticed in the guise of a Mughal, he had the opportunity of hearing from all sides the eager and oft-repeated hope that the star of the Farangī had set. In that "secure assemblage of the faithful", all native officers of the Government had put off the smiling mask and had come out in their true colours -- each having a "scowl of hatred and defiance" for the British. The author complained that they did not even remember the salt they were eating. It appeared as if it had completely lost its savour. He went on to observe:

This being the leaven which leavens the whole mass of Muhammadan population in India, it cannot be a matter of surprise that at the great cities, Delhi, Meerut, Agra, Cawnpore, Benares, and Lucknow, there has been a decided movement against us.... At Hyderabad, in the Dekhan, the stronghold of

Muhammadanism in the south of India, there has been a violent outburst, quenched only in blood and quenched but for a time. 'Tell us,' cried an impatient listener to the Friday sermon at the capital of the Nizām, 'tell us how we may slaughter the infidel Feringis. This is the only thing to preach about and all we care to listen to.'<sup>17</sup>

The loss of political power meant a serious economic setback for the Muslims. Day by day the Europeans were stepping into their shoes in the field of higher civil and military services and other allied opportunities. Only subordinate ranks were left open to the Muslims or else they were compelled to take to "the miserable alternative of engaging in trade and agriculture."<sup>18</sup> As such they could not put up with the sight of their alien masters holding positions which they had once enjoyed and administering territories which they had earlier administered. Even in the subordinate ranks, it was contended, Muslims of "high birth and illustrious antecedents were compelled to jostle with reprobates and outcasts." Every new annexation meant an additional loss, and the already "narrow field of employment was still further contracted."<sup>19</sup> Advancement was denied to the Muslims, and aspiration was daily becoming more and more impossible for the "once dominant race." As the desire for money and social status are the roots of all evils, so this ever increasing deprivation of socio-economic

17. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, pp.385-86. For a review of and comments on this article, see also: The Nation, 10 Oct. 1857.

18. Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7. For a similar opinion, see also: "India," Edin. Rev., CVI, 1857, pp.567-68.

19. "India," loc. cit., p.567. For a similar opinion, see also, Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7.

opportunities was sure to make for irritable and disgruntled elements in the Muslim population -- ever brooding upon their losses. A writer in the Edinburgh Review contended that it "was a necessity that the descendants of Mahomedan conquerors of India should hate us, and that mingled with this hatred there should be an undying hope of recovering the supremacy they had lost."<sup>20</sup> Such a state of affairs was bound to reverberate; a calamity, contended the same writer, was long predicted by the more intelligent and keen sighted of the Company's civil servants in India.

For these reasons Muslim submission to British rule was regarded as a purely perfunctory one. It was pointed out that the submission of the Hindūs was sincere but that of the Muslims was not. The latter tendered fealty because there was no other way out. And when they yielded, they yielded "with a painful recollection of their fallen greatness and with the hope of the restoration of their power."<sup>21</sup> Many of the Muslims, it was believed, had to pacify their conscience for serving the English. In so doing they either transferred the "reproach to destiny" or repeated the old maxim "Jeskā deg uskā tegh," "Whose the purse, his the sword."<sup>22</sup> Even this, thought the Manchester Guardian, they did with curses on

20. "India," Edin. Rev., CV1, 1857, p.568.
21. Wallace, op. cit., p.9.
22. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.385. For similar opinions, see also: Manchester Guardian, 23 July, 1858; Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7.

their lips and vengeance in their hearts.<sup>23</sup> Thus it was firmly believed on the basis of experience that the Muslim political spirit, as well as its religious spirit, had survived in India "in all its active and unmitigated hostility to Christianity."<sup>24</sup> In such circumstances the question arises, why did the Muslims not make an earlier attempt, a wholehearted one, at the overthrow of the British? The answer appears to be quite simple; earlier the situation was not as bad as after 1856. Formerly the titular sovereignty of Delhi was still intact and the house of Awadh was still in power. This was no small consolation. The Muslims had something to call their own; something to stand upon. It was better than nothing. They were, however, reported to be passing time in the hope of a better future.

The enmity of the Muslims toward the British was not political alone. Added to their loss of power was their reported aversion to Christianity, and their hatred of the Farangī.<sup>25</sup> Such an opinion was shared by a very large portion of the present school, chiefly the missionaries and the clergymen. The Rev. Edward Storrow, of the London Missionary Society, contended that "Christianity has no foe in India, so fierce, unyielding and formidable as Mohamedanism."<sup>26</sup> It was reported that

23. 23 July, 1857.

24. "The Crisis in India," (comments on Macleod Wylie's pamphlet), The Scotsman, 9 Sept. 1857.

25. Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7;  
What Shall We...., p.1.

26. The Rev. Edward Storrow, India and Christian Missions (London: 1859), p.15.

all Europeans were regarded as "infidels and unclean" by the Muslims in India. One major reason for the Muslim intolerance of Christianity was said to be the success of Christians in depriving the followers of Islām of their centuries of supremacy in India. A Muslim, it was believed, could never be satisfied with any government other than that of Islām.<sup>27</sup> In spite of the fact that Islām, doctrinally speaking, was nearer to Christianity than the idolatrous religions of India, still, it was argued, its followers hated Christianity most. While their attitude towards Hindūism was reported to be that of "dislike and contempt", their feelings toward Christianity were said to be those of "unmixed hate and fear."<sup>28</sup> Henry Mead in his Sepoy Revolt argued:

The bitter hatred with which Orangemen and Roman Catholics used to regard each other in Ireland had its intensified type in the feeling entertained towards us by the whole Mussulman race. Fierce antipathy to our creed, intense loathing of our persons, and never-ceasing dread of English valour and ability, make up the impression which is stamped on the minds of their children in early infancy, and deepens with every year of growth.<sup>29</sup>

In fact, the Muslim, it was thought, dreaded the spread of the Christian truth and so employed all possible means to check it.<sup>30</sup>

In the opinion of this writer, behaviour and attitude are always the best indicators of a people's

27. Ibid., p.16.
28. Ibid., p.15.
29. Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and Consequences, p.24.
30. Storrow, op. cit., p.16.

disposition and temperament. At least the outward show of fidelity, attachment, fear, respect, or regard could only be lacking when the inner fountain was either wholly non-existent or dried up. If contemporary British writers are to be credited, the apparent behaviour and attitude of the majority of Muslims in the pre-mutiny period toward their foreign rulers left no doubt about their true feelings. It was certainly not favourable to the new governors of the subcontinent, who were Christians at the same time. Virtually the entire stream of Muslim thought was flowing against the British.

Starting from education, a powerful base for profitable employment as well as for human progress, the Muslims of the mainland of South Asia almost completely boycotted the educational system introduced by their new rulers. They knew the consequence of not sending their children to the schools established by the British. Although threat of economic impairment, loss of influence in government circles which, combined with a loss of social status, stared them in the face; although the risk of Hindū advancement at their expense was present as a very real incentive, still the Muslims would not, or could not, reconcile themselves to the idea of placing their children at the schools run by their rulers -- schools both

missionary and governmental. If the Bible was taught at the missionary schools, what about the English language? It was taught at both agencies of education.<sup>31</sup> As both the study of English literature and philosophy formed the main items in the curriculum, the Muslim fear and aversion to them was as strong as that towards the Bible.<sup>32</sup>

This could not have been shown more clearly than from the attitude adopted by the Muslims towards these schools -- government in general and missionary in particular. The number of Muslim children attending these schools was very small. The Rev. M. A. Sherring, referring to the Kanpur School, points out in his Indian Church and the Great Rebellion:

Those who attended were chiefly Hindoos of the surrounding villages, with a sprinkling of Christian boys resident on the premises. The number of names on the rolls seldom fell under a hundred. Parents and children all seemed eager to avail themselves of the opportunities of improvement afforded them. The Bible was a constant class-book, and Christian works were freely used; yet there was no murmuring, no apprehension, apparently, on the part of the heathen. Mohammedans, it is true, were scarcely seen in school; and no wonder, when one considers the bitter contempt for Christianity which Mohammed's false philosophy of religion instils into its votaries.<sup>33</sup>

So great seems to have been the Muslim dread or hatred of a missionary teacher, that even native initiative failed

31. The author of What Shall We Do to the Mussulmans, a person who styled himself as a "Friend to Mussulmans but not Mohammedanism", charged the Government with being responsible for such a state of Muslim mind. He complained that the introduction of English education was calculated to keep the Muslims out of service. Referring to a recommendation which called for excluding Muslims from all important posts unless they were proficient in English pronunciation, he reproachfully observed:

They do not yet appreciate useful knowledge sufficiently, though given in their own language, and yet they are expected to acquire through a foreign medium. Protestants cried out against the Romish church, because she could give her religious knowledge through the medium of Latin chiefly. Do you not act much similarly in forcing the English language on the Mussulmans? Let us by all means give them English knowledge, but in a form adapted to them.

The Mussulmans have more independence of character than the Hindoos; they have a strong and proper attachment to their literature which has won the admiration of the ablest European scholars. Why should we require them, as some propose, to renounce this, and compel them to get all education through an English medium. pp.6-7.

Next referring to the spread of Western knowledge among the Muslims in the Presidency of Agra when communicated through the Urdū language, this friend of the Muslims further scolded his own nation for her failure to learn any lesson from the Irish experience. He observed:

In Ireland the policy of the Government had been for centuries to give religious or secular knowledge to the Irish through the English language. The simple result was, the Irish would not take it, and were left entirely to the superstitious guidance and instruction of their own priests. In 1559, it was enacted by a Statute of Queen Elizabeth that as the Irish did not understand the common prayers in church in English language, the prayers were to be said in Latin, but not in Irish. The Irish looked at everything English as a badge of conquest, and hence the English Bible was regarded with detestation as the Saxon's symbol. Two

centuries after the Reformation, when Bishop Bedell, an Englishman, at the age of sixty, encouraged by Usher and the great Boyle, undertook the translation of the Bible into Irish, he was opposed by his brethren, who thought the language ought to be extirpated; for two centuries the book remained unpublished, the masses revelled in rebellion and hostility to England; - not until 1821 was Bedell's Bible first published. Alas, the policy of Bedell's countrymen is the policy now of many educationists, both missionary and government, with regard to the Mussulmans. pp.7-8.

This may properly be regarded as the failure of history to teach by example.

32. Investigation into Some...., p.7; Storrow, op. cit., pp.15-16; Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.246; Duff, op. cit., pp.39-40. In his letter of 24 June, 1857, to Dr. Tweedie, the Rev. Alexander Duff wrote to inform him that between two to three hundred Muslims had attacked the Government and Missionary schools at Agarpara near Calcutta. Shouting that the rule of the East India Company had come to an end, they ordered the teachers not only to stop teaching English but also to destroy the English books, and to teach the Qur'ān only.

33. Sherring, op. cit., p.175. For other similar information, see also: Beynon, loc. cit.

to produce any results. For example, the Rājā of Mysore established an English school in 1840. Since he had employed a missionary teacher, and had allowed the teaching of the Bible, that was sufficient to hold the Muslim children back from the school. Of a total of ninety-four scholars, there were sixty-nine Hindūs, and the number of Muslim students was confined to three only. They too acquiesced in the reading of the Bible after some initial difficulty.<sup>34</sup> This was perhaps quite generous in the circumstances, for parents were reluctant to send their children even to a class instructed by a Muslim teacher, where he was either in touch with, or receiving aid (books in this case) from Christian missionaries.<sup>35</sup>

In fact, every government effort to gain support among the younger generation was described as having failed badly insofar as the Muslims were concerned. Chambers's Journal, referring to the new class of Indian students and teachers, educated in western style in the English schools and colleges, thus bitterly commented:

Not one Mussulman, not a single follower of the Prophet of Mecca is to be found in their ranks. Those stiff-necked, stubborn disciples of the Koran remain as they were a thousand years ago, and as they will be found a thousand years hence. They never change or progress; they are neither softened nor civilised; they have still the same undying hate for every 'dog of a Christian', for every unbelieving Feringhee, as of old....<sup>36</sup>

34. Minute of the Marquis of Tweeddale, Late Governor of Madras, on the Introduction of the Bible as a Class-book into Government Schools in India (Occasional Papers on India, No. VII), (London: Church Missionary House, 1859), p.14.

35. Sale (letter from), MH., L, 1858, pp.182-83. Sale, who was a Baptist Missionary at Jessore, wrote this to inform the people at his headquarters in London:

Only last evening, a Mussulman schoolmaster, whom I have occasionally aided with books and in other ways, came to me saying that several Mussulmans had united and brought a new schoolmaster into the village where he taught his school, and were giving out a report that the reign of the English was fast drawing to a close, and that those who wished to save themselves from future punishment must leave the school where the Sahib's books were read, and come to the new school, for the ruler who would succeed the English would deal very severely with those who continued to go to such schools. This is going on within eight miles of our sudder [Sadar, meaning central] station; and after the fall of Delhi has been proclaimed, and with stringent laws for the punishment of treasonable practices lately passed and published. I think, therefore, that we may only judge what would have been our fate had the wretched mutineers been more successful.

Muslim animosity towards receiving western education becomes easily understandable when one reads the observation made by the Reverend John MacKay, the missionary martyr of Delhi. Writing home on 25 January, 1857, MacKay reported that in the case of Muslims "it was not only the religious, but the national prejudices of the people against which we [the teachers, lay and missionary] have to contend." James Culross, The Missionary Martyr of Delhi. A Memoir of the Rev. John MacKay, Baptist Missionary, who was killed at Delhi, May, 1857 (London: J. Heaton and Son, 1860), p.121.

36. "Young Bengal," Chambers's Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts (hereafter referred to as Chambers's Journal), XXIX, 1858, p.199.

The result was not much different from what could be expected in such circumstances. The Hindūs, though described as inferior to Muslims in "point of energy and intelligence", showed greater desire for receiving English education and so conveniently stole a march upon their former rulers. The Muslim pride in their past; their inability to reconcile themselves to British rule; their aversion to Christianity; their strong attachment to their literature; and, above all, their national prejudices, were described to have kept them at a distance from the new system of education.<sup>37</sup> No wonder, as a community, that they were losers, economically and socially. The "Resident of the North Western Provinces" observed:

For a long time a remarkable change has been going on in the courts of law and Government offices throughout India, whereby the Mussulmans have to a very considerable extent been supplanted by Hindus. Formerly the great majority of the employees were Mussulmans. Now the Hindus outnumber them in the ratio of three to one. This startling difference has arisen mainly through the pride of the Mussulmans, who have refused to give proper education to their children in those subjects which would eventually qualify them for Government situations.<sup>38</sup>

The Muslim sensitivity about Christian missionary activity was quite in keeping with their sensitivities regarding English education. It was known that the missionaries could seldom make any headway in the Muslim districts.<sup>39</sup> The Rev. John Mackay in his letters

37. [The Rev.] John Mackay (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.583; What Shall We....., p.6.

38. Investigation into Some....., p.7.

39. Russell, op. cit., II, p.78; Mackay, loc. cit.; Culross, op. cit., p.121; Sherring, op. cit., p.266; Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.246; Mather, op. cit., p.6.

home invariably admitted frankly the difficulty of approaching the followers of Islām for their conversion to Christianity. Always admitting the superiority of their race, intelligence, valour and civilization, but blaming them for their bigotry, the Baptist missionary confessed to the dilemma posed by the Muslims. As compared with the Hindūs, the intelligent among the Muslims were reported to be well acquainted with the rudiments of Christian doctrine. Though not very familiar with the general contents of the Christian Scriptures, they were described as especially well versed "with most of those difficult passages" which referred to the Trinity. The Muslim knowledge of the arguments used by the Unitarians in England, and their critical faculty often led them to challenge the arguments used by the missionaries. Even attempts to avoid getting involved in discussion on complex subjects like the Trinity were not always successful.<sup>40</sup> The Muslim mind was said to be obsessed with the force of the idea of "Divine unity", and firmly believed that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity was inconsistent with it.<sup>41</sup> The skilful among them would often use their "Socratical mode of disputation", and lead the missionary "into a subtle and profitless discussion", even before the latter could be aware of the inner

40. Culross, op. cit., pp.104, 112 and 123.

41. Mather, op. cit., p.6.

meaning of the trend of argument.<sup>42</sup> To make the argument comprehensible, Mackay reported one of his personal experiences. He observed:

Take a single example. Some time ago a Mohammedan came to me, and in a very simple manner put the question, Does God know all things? Of course I was bound to answer, Yes. And is Jesus Christ God? Yes, I again replied. Then Jesus Christ must know all things? As I did not know what the man was driving at, I again answered, with some hesitation, Yes. Upon which, with an air of triumph, he quoted Mark XIII, 32, 'But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.'<sup>43</sup>

The follower of Islām was invariably described as a bigot. Instances of obstructive activity by the Muslims against English evangelical activity were also given.<sup>44</sup> It was further thought that the Muslim's hatred of Englishmen had driven him to exclusiveness.<sup>45</sup> "Like a relentless and stubborn foe he shuts himself up in the fortress of his faith, refuses every overture and stands ready to repel every advance."<sup>46</sup> The result was evident: missionary work became an uphill task. The Muslim "moulvies [Mawlawīs] and fanatics", much to the chagrin of the missionaries, jealously watched their activities and watched them with "the greatest suspicion."<sup>47</sup> Christian missionary activity naturally got confined to the Hindūs.<sup>48</sup> Even that was not safe. It was reported that the fear of a Muslim Zamīndār acted strongly upon many Hindūs. At

42. Culross, op. cit., p.123.

43. Ibid., pp.123-24.

44. Sherring, op. cit., p.186. Sherring quoted Gōpīnāth Nandī who, having explained how the Muslims tried to impede, one way or the other, all such missionary activity which could possibly lead to conversion, observed:

Another time, when the baptism of six individuals took place, the Mohammedans, like the Jews of the old, said amongst themselves, 'What are we doing? At this rate, the whole of Futtehpore will soon become Christians.' They contrived a plan, which they felt quite sure would end in breaking up the mission; but He whose work we were doing protected it. They gave out that my catechists, with my permission, took cartfuls of pigs' and cows' bones, and threw them into all the wells of the town. This was noised abroad, not only in the town, but also in the villages around.

45. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.717.

46. Storrow, op. cit., p.16.

47. Russell, op. cit., 11, p.78.

48. "Foreign Intelligence - India," loc. cit.; [The Rev. John] Mackay (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.583; Russell, loc. cit.; Culross, op. cit., pp.104-24.

times even the arrival of a Muslim landlord's servant was sufficient to deprive a missionary of a fair part of his listeners.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, Islām was described as the most violent, determined and implacable foe of Christianity.<sup>50</sup> The London Journal and Weekly Record of Literature, Science and Arts called it fruitless even to think of Christianization of the subcontinent unless "Mohamedan passion for rule in India was tamed and broken." This, the periodical argued, was a prerequisite. Once that was done, it asserted, the Christian voice would reach the Hindūs more easily and successfully.<sup>51</sup>

It was argued that the spirit of independence is a part of human nature. No people ever like to be ruled by another. Once yoked to foreign domination, they always strive for the cherished goal -- the goal of liberty and freedom.<sup>52</sup> This was, indeed, reported to be the case with the Muslims. R. H. W. Dunlop, the Deputy Commissioner at Meerut, argued that, like a conquered nation, they naturally discussed the ways to achieve their independence. Born to intrigue, and enjoying greater unity of action among themselves than the Hindūs, the Muslims of India, he contended, had always been "engaged in plotting our destruction."<sup>53</sup>

49. [The Rev.] Anderson (extracts of his journal), MH., L, 1858, p.255.

50. Storrow, op. cit., p.15.

51. "The Christianization of India," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.109.

52. India, the Revolt and the Home Government, pp.80-81; Dunlop, op. cit., p.152.

53. Dunlop, loc. cit. For similar opinions, see also: India and its Future; an Address to the People of Great Britain and Their Representatives, p.47; The Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, p.20; Mackenzie, Review of Delhi, the City of the Great Mogul, Literary Gazette, 1857, pp.804-805; Frederick Cooper, The Crisis in the Punjab from 10th of May until the Fall of Delhi, pp.133-34; [The Rev.] J. Trafford (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.514 and also "Foreign Intelligence - India," pp.649 and 717; The Rev. Dr. Boaz (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.222; Investigation into Some....., pp.7-8; India, the Revolt and the Home Government, pp.80-81.

The Muslim acceptance of the British rule was universally described as very reluctant. The result was they were "incurably disaffected to the British Government."<sup>54</sup> Theirs was regarded as a double hatred, -- religious aversion,<sup>55</sup> combined with hatred generated by their loss of political power.<sup>56</sup> It was a double force marching in the same direction, operating towards the same goal -- the overthrow of the foreigner and the restoration of the Muslim rule.<sup>57</sup> The Muslims always considered themselves a "wronged" people -- "wronged", it was said, "by the hateful infidel force."<sup>58</sup> Their glorious past had stuck fast in their dreams. That was why, believed many of this school of thought, they were in a state of permanent ferment. Whenever they were not, it was not for lack of hostility towards their rulers, or because they had reconciled themselves with the situation, but because it was not feasible to launch an anti-government movement.<sup>59</sup> A writer in the London Quarterly Review angrily pointed out that the Muslims regarded India as the "spoil of their forefathers' valour" and that their deep rooted feeling was "that they will

'Spoil the spoiler as they may,  
And from the robber rend the prey.'<sup>60</sup>

They were, in fact, waiting for a safe and propitious opportunity.

54. "The Sepoy Rebellion," LQR., 1X, 1857-58, p.215. For similar opinions, see also: Mackay (letter from) MH., XLIX, 1857, p.583 and also "Foreign Intelligence - India," L, 1858, p.50; Wallace, op. cit., pp.8-9; Archer, op. cit., pp.8-10; "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., p.151; Investigation into Some...., pp.7-8.

55. "The Capture of Delhi," UPM., New Series, 1, 1857, p.569; Caritas, "The Sane and the Insane," Letter to the Free Press, 21 Oct. 1857; Sherring, op. cit., p.208; Archer, op. cit., pp.11-12; The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.203; Wallace, op. cit., p.13; Mackay, loc. cit.; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.717.

56. See above and below.

57. See above and below.

58. "The Sepoy Rebellion," loc. cit. For other similar opinions, see also: Investigation into Some...., pp.7-8; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.386; Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.717; Lacroix, loc. cit.; Dunlop, op. cit., pp.152-55; What Shall We...., pp.9-10; Archer, op. cit., p.7.

59. "The Sepoy Rebellion," loc. cit.; Archer, op. cit., p.7; Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7.

60. "The Sepoy Rebellion," loc. cit.

To establish their point of view still further, the members of this school profusely quoted instances of past Muslim hostility. The Muslim hand was clearly seen in the Vellore Mutiny of 1805.<sup>61</sup> Taylor, the Chief Commissioner of the Patna Division, referred to the Patna conspiracy of 1846, which, he argued, not only involved several Muslims of Patna and the neighbouring districts but was regarded as a branch of a more general plot; that at that time too, attempts were made to tamper with the sepoy loyalty, the objective being the overthrow of the British Government in India and re-establishment of the Muslim rule; that since then Bihar had been the "Bete noire" of Indian statesmen, and that Patna had become the most dreaded place in India.<sup>62</sup> Capt. G. Hutchinson pointing to the revolt of Mawlawī Ahmad 'Alī Shāh at Faizabad in February 1857, reported that the Shāh, (a native of Arcot in the Madras Presidency), before his arrival at Faizabad in 1857, had visited a "vast number of cities and stations" under the British rule; had everywhere preached Jihād against the Europeans and had established his disciples everywhere.<sup>63</sup>

The author of "The English in India" also referred to the existence of a plot for the murder of all Europeans in January 1857, and believed that the ministers of the ex-King of Awadh in concert with the sons of the King of Delhi were the chief conspirators.<sup>64</sup> A

61. Mackenzie, Review of Delhi, the City of the Great Mogul, Literary Gazette, 1857, pp.804-805; Indophilus [Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan] The Letters of Indophilus on the Mutiny of Vellore, - its Parallelisms and its Lessons, pp.4-7; "India in 1807 and 1857," CEM., XLIV, 1858, p.150.

62. William Taylor, The Patna Crisis, pp.21-22.

63. Capt. G. Hutchinson, Narrative of the Mutinies in Oudh, pp.35-36. For similar information, see also: Manchester Guardian, 15 April, 1857; M. Wylie (ed.), The English Captives in Oudh: An Episode in the History of the Mutinies of 1857-58 (London: W. H. Dalton. Calcutta: G. C. Hay, 1858), pp.30-31.

64. "The English in India," WR., New Series, XLIII, 1858, p.196.

writer in the Dublin University Magazine, who stoutly believed in the Muslim character of the rebellion, referred to Mawlawī Skandar Shāh, who with his armed followers had publicly preached holy war upon the English on 17 February 1857, in Awadh, and had called upon the Muslims to throw off the English yoke. He also referred to the murder of Mr. Boileau, Assistant Commissioner at Gonda (near Lucknow), on the 8th of March by a Muslim "desperado" named Faql 'Alī.<sup>65</sup>

Six months before the outbreak the Rev. W. H. Haycock of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was informed by a Mawlawī that the British "will soon feel the sharpness of the Mussulman's sword."<sup>66</sup> That was why a writer in the Church of England Magazine argued that the outbreak would have taken place even without any religious apprehension, "for it would not be difficult", he argued, "to show that the Muslims had laid their plans for years."<sup>67</sup> If the "Resident of the North-Western Provinces in India" dated the Muslim conspiracy "as far back as the termination of the last Cabul campaign",<sup>68</sup> another of this school thought that the Awadh annexation exploded the mine laid up for years.<sup>69</sup> Even the most mutiny-minded Sir Benjamin C. Brodie complained that the Muslims had been prompting every disorder which had occurred since the establishment

65. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.392.

66. The Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, p.21. For a similar piece of information, see also: Sherring, op. cit., p.168.

67. "The Wrongs of India and their Remedy," CEM., XLIII, 1857, p.341. For a similar opinion, see also: India and its Future, p.47.

68. Investigation into Some...., pp.4-5. For a similar opinion, see also: "The Mutiny of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.385.

69. See below, pp.239-42.

of the Empire. He argued that in the present mutiny, as well, the Muslim hand could be seen clearly. Brodie maintained that since the follower of Islām had long brooded over the loss of his power, he "eagerly pounced upon the cartridge grievance as a subject affording him an excuse for insubordination and as one likely to excite the superstitious Hindu."<sup>70</sup>

Even a cursory reading of the contemporary writings on the mutiny leaves one in no doubt that the entire Muslim population was dangerously disposed towards the British. The Muslims were said to be ever in a state of readiness to revolt.<sup>71</sup> They had no solicitude for their rulers, and hated them with the hatred of a dispossessed race. Always intent upon revolt, the Muslims were reported to be hesitating because of the Hindūs -- the Hindū majority of the country not being with them. The worshippers of Brahmā were the friends of the British. They looked upon them as emancipators and not tyrants as the Muslims did.<sup>72</sup> The former, it was said, still had painful memories of Muslim domination. It was in recognition of this deliverance of theirs that the Hindūs gave the new rulers their wholehearted fealty and respect, and reposed full confidence in them.<sup>73</sup> In these circumstances, if the Muslims could not rely upon the Hindūs, the latter too were not prepared "to rally round

70. Scrutator [Brodie], The Indian Mutiny, p.19.  
For a similar opinion, see also: [W. Sinclair], The Sepoy Mutinies: Their Origin and their Cure, p.11.

71. Investigation into Some....., pp.5-6; Archer,  
op. cit., p.7.

72. Manchester Guardian, 23 July 1858; Archer,  
loc. cit.; Wallace, op. cit., pp.7-9.

73. Wallace, loc. cit.; Investigation into  
Some....., pp.5-6.

the standard of a Mohamedan revolt", and thereby re-invite the once hated rule.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, the native army as well, it was pointed out, was dominated by the Brāhmans -- something heavily discouraging.<sup>75</sup> The Hindūs were thus described as the Achilles' heel of the Muslims. They "feared to be crushed by the Hindu legions of the Government." They were well familiar with the fact that any untimely action would mean disaster and so were not prepared to translate their feelings into the language of hasty action.<sup>76</sup>

Fearful of the might of their rulers, apprehensive of possible Hindū treachery, the Muslims were reported to have had recourse to God simultaneously. They believed in the efficacy of prayers. The followers of Islām felt that actions joined by prayers had perhaps a greater chance of success -- all the more so, because India was believed to have been snatched from them by God for the sins of their forefathers.<sup>77</sup> The atonement for past omissions and ungodliness called for long and genuine prayers. As the national spirit of the Muslims was also to be kept alive and since they could not always remain in action, prayers were perhaps the safest way to pursue that end. No wonder, ever since the dawn of British rule in India, prayers had been going up in the mosques all over

- 74. Archer, op. cit., p.8.
- 75. Investigation into Some....., pp.5-6.
- 76. Archer, op. cit., pp.7-8.
- 77. The Press, 22 Aug. 1857.

India at daily, weekly and annual congregational services, as well as at other religious festivals. Allāh's mercies and help were earnestly invoked "for the restoration of ancient Mahomettan princes....and for the final expulsion of the stranger from the land."<sup>78</sup> If this was so of public prayers, it was no less true of private ones. This, in fact, was said to have become the beat of the Muslim pulse, -- their hourly wish; their permanent longing. The Missionary Magazine thus reported the conclusions of Major-General W. H. Sleeman, late British Resident to the court of Lucknow, formed on the basis of his personal observation:

The Muslims in India sigh for the restoration of the old Mohamedan regime. 'We pray', said they, 'every night for the emperor and his family, because our forefathers ate the salt of their forefathers.' As a result of personal inquiry, I am enabled to state positively that for nearly the last hundred years daily prayers have been offered in the mosques throughout India for the House of Timur and the re-establishment of the King of Delhi on the throne of his ancestors -- a fact probably, which at this moment is wholly unknown to the British rulers of this land.<sup>79</sup>

To keep the Muslim mind in a state of constant agitation and expectancy, soothsayers and Šūfīs among them also circulated prophecies, -- almost all prophesying that the British rule in India was to last only a hundred years after the battle of Plassey.<sup>80</sup> These were thought to be of divine origin by the natives of all creeds. It

78. Manchester Guardian, 23 July 1858 and also 3 Sept. 1857. For other similar opinions, see also: "State Intervention in the Religions of India," MM., XXI, 1858, p.226; Duff, op. cit., p.177.

79. "State Intervention in the Religions of India," loc. cit.

80. "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.542; "A Few Words from the Khyber," Blackwood's, LXXXI, p.613; The Press, 22 Aug. 1857; Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, p.20; N. A. Chick (ed.), Annals of the Indian Rebellion, containing Narratives of the Outbreak and Eventful Occurrences, and Stories of Personal Adventures, during the Mutiny of 1857-58, with an Appendix Comprising Miscellaneous Facts, Anecdotes etc., p.4; "India," Edin. Rev. CVI, 1857, p.563. One of the prophecies attributed to some "Saint, the revered Shah Niamut Ali Moulvy" was as follows:

After the Fire-worshippers and Christians shall have held sway over the whole of Hindoostan for 100 years, and when injustice and oppression shall prevail in their Government, an Arab Prince will be born who will ride triumphantly to slay them. Chick, p.4n.

The Edinburgh Review, however, reported that General Low had received some Persian couplets composed by one Ni'matullāh 700 years ago. In them he had predicted the fall of the English in 1260 A.H., or 1864 A.D. And that these verses were circulated in the whole of North-Western India. "India," Edin. Rev., CVI, 1857, p.563n.

The proximity between the names of the two soothsayers suggests that the reference is, perhaps, to the same prophecy.

was "blindly and confidently" believed, reported The Press, that the prophecies would be accomplished with the help of "God and Mahomet, his prophet."<sup>81</sup> The result was, complained The Press, that every Muslim found himself "bound to respond to the call now made upon him to fight for the recovery of the Kingdoms given as an inheritance to the faithful."<sup>82</sup>

It was in the context of the above situation that the Indian social, political and religious scene had started to change. While the whole Muslim population was disaffected, -- was ever desirous of overthrowing the foreign and Christian ruler in India; while they had almost unanimously shown their indifference, verging upon enmity, towards receiving English education; while they had expressed their united disapproval of the Christian missionary activity; while they were resorting to prayers mixed with feeble actions to overthrow the British rule -- in brief, during the time when the Muslim mind was in a furious state and was looking for a chance, just then the rulers themselves had begun to alienate the sympathies of the Hindū majority. The Legislative Council in India had started issuing laws "bearing in the strongest manner on Hindū superstitions."<sup>83</sup> It was a change of policy that certainly tended to help the Muslim designs. Perhaps their prayers were in the process of being heard? The East

81. 22 Aug. 1857.
82. 22 Aug. 1857.
83. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.389. Also see Chapter IV, pp.138-44.

India Company had started to interfere with the customs and usages of the Hindū society -- customs and usages having religious significance. The changes, generally speaking, were benevolent, humanitarian and civilizing in their nature, and in certain cases they were approved by a large section of Hindū society. But other reforms, it was contended, completely antagonised an equally large section and, in quite a few instances, the entire Hindū society.<sup>84</sup> Hindūs became full of murmurs and complaints. This, it was argued, provided the Muslims with a long sought opportunity -- an opportunity not to be missed.<sup>85</sup> Upon their successful achievement in this field depended their future success. The Muslims decided to play upon the Hindū feelings.

The temper of the followers of Islām was said to be running high. Full of desperation, they were on the verge of explosion. Still something more was needed to raise the storm, and it was not long in coming. In February 1856, a singular event took place, which proved to be the last straw. Awadh was annexed in spite of its treaties. This annexation drove a knife into the Muslim heart.<sup>86</sup> The last hope of the Muslims was, it was said, being washed away. The belief was that the deposed monarch of Awadh, as the last remaining independent Muslim sovereign, "commanded veneration and regard of all the

84. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.389; Archer, op. cit., pp.8-10. See also, Chapter IV, pp.138-44.

85. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," loc. cit.

86. Almost universally accepted as such by the advocates of the present theme.

members of Mussulman persuasion."<sup>87</sup> To strike him down, it was held, was sure to excite further discontentment among a very powerful class of the British Indian subjects.<sup>88</sup> That was why the act of settlement was heavily criticised by a large segment of the British people. If it was described as "a measure as ungrateful as it was impolitic",<sup>89</sup> an act of outright "political robbery",<sup>90</sup> "burglary",<sup>91</sup> and "atrocious machiavellism"<sup>92</sup> by the rulers themselves, the deposition of Wājid 'Alī Shāh was taken as a "personal misfortune" by every Muslim. The act of annexation was regarded as "a terrible disgrace" to the whole Muslim community in India.<sup>93</sup> The sudden nature of the blow, argued one, had not only hurt the Muslims most, but it also shook their trust and faith in the rulers. No one could imagine that the English nation could be guilty of "such slyness and secrecy." The followers of Islām, it was thought, saw in the occupation an approaching doom for them in India. In future their royalty in India was to be a symbol rather than a reality.<sup>94</sup> They now desired eagerly to pay back.<sup>95</sup> The Illustrated London News called the incorporation of Awadh into the British Indian dominion a signal for the Muslim conspiracy to extend itself.<sup>96</sup>

The Awadh affair had made the Muslims so angry that they would not even discuss the pros and cons of the

87. [G. B. Malleson], Mutiny of the Bengal Army, pt. 1, p.11. For a similar opinion, see also: [Sinclair], op. cit., p.8.

88. [Malleson], loc. cit.; Investigation into Some...., p.8.

89. [Sinclair], loc. cit.

90. Maj. R. W. Bird, The Spoliation of Oudh (London: Printed at Nassau Steam Press, 1857), p.13.

91. The Annexation of the Kingdom of Oude one of the Main Causes of Rebellion in India (Manchester: Loony and pilling, [1857]), p.1.

92. William Wotherspoon Ireland, History of the Siege of Delhi, p.8.

93. Investigation into Some...., p.13. For similar opinions, see also: India and its Future, p.47; Archer, op. cit., p.7; The Mutiny in India - A Letter to the Honorary Clerical Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, dated Calcutta, July 13, 1857 (London: T. C. Jones), p.13; [Sinclair], op. cit., p.8.

94. Investigation into Some...., p.8. For a similar opinion, see also: [Malleson], op. cit., pt. 1, p.11.

95. [Malleson], loc. cit.; "Has the Preservation of Caste Conduced to the Present Revolt in India - Negative Reply," BC., 1858, p.273.

96. "British Ideas in India," Illustrated London News, 12 Sept. 1857.

annexation. The anarchical state of affairs in the state, the debauchery and dissoluteness of the King, argued the author of the investigation into some of the causes which had produced the rebellion in India, and his incapacity to rule, were all immaterial to them.<sup>97</sup> After their experience of Kashmir, contended W. W. Ireland, the people were not prepared to believe in the good intentions of the British Government. Looking back into the recent record of the doings of the East India Company, Ireland observed:

It was not forgotten, how a few years before, we had sold the beautiful valley of Cashmire for a sum of money to Golab Singh, one of the most odious tyrants that ever desolated Central Asia and had lent our troops to force the people to submit to his hated sway. The Mohamedans have a close sympathy with one another; to degrade a prince of their religion is to put out one light of Islam. The King of Oudh had long been our friendliest and truest ally. The country might be ill governed; most eastern countries are so; but one thing is clear, they preferred the rule of their native princes to ours.<sup>98</sup>

The Muslim thinking now channelled itself into a dangerous path. A very alarming and explosive ingredient of national consciousness was said to have added itself to their politico-religio-economic grievances. "We have lost our King and our country was their only thought." They felt that their foreign masters had, slowly and gradually, "denationalized" them and that they were "no longer a society which could boast of a monarch who was one of

97. Investigation into Some...., p.13.

98. Ireland, op. cit., p.8.

themselves, but a scattered people, without a head, without glory, without power." The present grievance, it was pointed out, drove the entire Muslim community mad, and had consequently endangered the lives of Englishmen. Wherever the Muslims were in India, there the revolt had become a matter of time.<sup>99</sup> Even then their resentment was so strong that several of the Muslim cities, reported the author of the "Revolt of the Bengal Army", could not contain their anger. In many of them there were outbursts of hatred and violence. In some of these incidents Europeans were injured and even killed.<sup>100</sup> This was a dangerous trend, and certainly augured ill for the British.

The annexation of Awadh was followed by another event of great significance -- an event that was calculated further to arouse Muslim hostility towards their Christian rulers. The event was the war with the Kingdom of Persia. The Free Press argued that it served only to unite in India "the most opposite creeds and races against us",<sup>101</sup> and a correspondent, in his letter to the Honourable Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, pointed to the inflammable ingredient in the war. He wrote to say:

A war with Persia, the Shah of which is, to our Shiah's here, something like the Pope to our Romanists. Can you wonder that we now discover that this is a Mussulman movement.<sup>102</sup>

99. Investigation into Some....., p.13.
100. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.389.
101. 3 June 1857.
102. The Mutiny in India - A Letter to the Clerical....., p.13.

The Muslims of India at this time, it appears, were undergoing an intense process of reviewing their past and present. Once a great Indian nation, now they were brought low. Every inch of Indian territory bore mute witness to their glory. But was not that glory rapidly becoming a thing of the past? They realised, pointed out a writer in the Eclectic Review, that the splendid "pageant of the empire at Delhi was fast fading away, and the Kingdom of Oude had recently been extinguished." Now they had virtually nothing to call their own. If their present looked dark to them, their future looked darker still. They "thought their time had come."<sup>103</sup> "Now or never", suddenly became their desperate cry. Whatever be the hazards, they must make a last bid to recover their old supremacy.<sup>104</sup> In "their opinion", argued the "Resident in North Western Provinces", "they had nothing to lose, for all had been already lost. Whereas there was everything to gain." While success might bring them back their past glory, failure would cost nothing. There was a shining ray of hope in the gamble. The only important ingredients they needed to make the eventual outbreak successful were: a) unity in their own ranks, b) the assistance of the Hindūs -- only if they could get it "by some device." Then, they felt sure, the game was going to be theirs.<sup>105</sup>

103. "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.542.
104. Investigation into Some...., p.9.
105. Ibid.

To the Muslim delight the internal as well as external situation vis-à-vis Great Britain seemed to be quite favourable. Hindūs had already started feeling discontented. They could be profitably exploited. The Muslims believed, it was thought, that the might of England had earlier been strained in the Crimean War. Now she was busy squandering her resources in Persia. While the empire in India had greatly expanded, a part of the existing European force -- the true guardian of the British interest in India -- was withdrawn for service in the Crimean and Persian Wars. The Chinese danger was looming large on the horizon.<sup>106</sup> Von Olrich believed that the news of the martyrdom of two Englishmen, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Connolly, in Bokhara, and Britain's failure to rescue them, had gained currency, and "had produced an aversive influence upon the minds of Mussulman princes."<sup>107</sup> It was thought that the journals of England had also contributed towards strengthening native belief in the weakened power of Britain by publishing stories "about the wretched condition of our army at home, and the miserable feebleness of our Government."<sup>108</sup>

There was another flaw in the situation; a major portion of the native regular army came from the ex-state of Awadh. These soldiers were all in favour of the state

106. Ibid. See also, Chapters II, pp.79-81 and IV, pp.160-62.

107. Leopold Von Olrich (tr. by A.R.), Military Mutiny in India: Its Origin and its Results, with Observations by Maj.-Gen. Sir W. M. G. Colebrooke, p.6.

108. "The Indian Mutiny," ER., 11, 1857, p.542.

as a separate entity. In fact, the Awadh sepoy in the British army had lost a good deal of prestige as a result of the annexation. The social esteem in which he was held in his village, and the privileges he used to enjoy as a soldier in the British army, had ceased to exist with the extinction of Awadh as an independent state. He was now feeling, it was firmly held, disgruntled, and thus provided a fertile ground to the exasperated Muslims for their anti-government activities.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, the Indian administration, believed the "Resident in the North-Western Provinces", was new in office. Lord Canning had arrived only recently; he had still to acquaint himself with the Indian scene. Such an opportunity might never come again and "the Mussulmans thus decided not to let it slip."<sup>110</sup> The two houses of Delhi and Lucknow assumed the leadership of the movement.

At Delhi, either the King or his council, it was thought, had started carrying out their designs.<sup>111</sup> Ever since General Lake's deliverance of Shāh 'Ālām from the Marahṭahs in 1803, the Kings of Delhi, it was believed, had never given up their pretensions to the throne of Delhi.<sup>112</sup> In fact, they had been, it was said, asserting their right occasionally, though in "an artful and cautious manner."<sup>113</sup> Muḥammad Bahādur Shāh Ṣafar, the octogenarian Mughal emperor at the time of the outbreak,

109. Investigation into Some...., p.9; Ireland, op. cit., p.9; Free Press, 3 June 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 468-69 and CXLVIII, 1158; Volunteer [Maj.-Gen. W. O. Swanston], My Journal; or What I Did and Saw Between the 9th June and 25th November, 1857, p.54; The Annexation of the Kingdom of Oude...., p.7.

110. Investigation into Some...., p.9.

111. Ireland, op. cit., p.5; Olrich, op. cit., p.25.

112. Their title to the throne of Delhi had become purely nominal.

113. Ireland, op. cit., p.5.

and the princes of his house were reported to have been long disaffected with the British. The princes felt especially chagrined over the prospects of a dismal future lying in wait for them -- debarred as they were from receiving even a particle of the shadowy dignity and pomp of their father, after the latter's death. If the heir to Bahādur was precluded from inheriting the royal title of King, the whole house was asked to quit the royal palace in Delhi (after the death of the old King), and find some other place outside Delhi for their residence. Thus it was that they were all reported eager for a rebellion.<sup>114</sup> One Sīdī Qambar was said to have been sent to Persia and the Porte as early as 1855 to solicit aid from the sovereigns of those two countries. The idea behind this mission was to help restore the house of Delhi. Sīdī had promised to be back with succour in 1857 -- a year fixed, it was held by Muslim soothsayers, as the last year of British rule in India.<sup>115</sup>

It would seem from reports that Bahādur Shāh's strong desire to restore his house to power had made him a very credulous person. His courtiers took advantage of his weakness. In order both to gain their prince's good will and to stiffen his attitude towards the British, they played upon his credulity. On 27 March 1857, one

114. Ibid., pp.11-12. In his Indian diary W. H. Russell chided his countrymen for considering the King of Delhi ungrateful to his benefactors. He observed:

The first knowledge the great mass of Englishmen had at home of the King of Delhi was that he was the nominal chief of a revolt which was shaking our Indian empire to its foundations. He was called ungrateful for rising against his benefactors. He was, no doubt, a weak and cruel old man; but to talk of ingratitude on the part of one who saw that all the dominions of his ancestors had gradually been taken from him, by force or otherwise, till he was left with an empty title, a more empty exchequer, and a palace full of penniless princesses and princes of his own blood, is perfectly preposterous. Was he to be grateful to the Company for the condition in which he found himself? Was he to bless them forever because Polyphemus, in the shape of the British Government, snatched poor blind Shah Alum from the hands of Mahrattas and then devoured him peacemeal? We, it is true, have now the same right and the same charter for our dominions in India that the Mahomedan founders of the house of Delhi had for the sovereignty they claimed over Hindostan; but we did not come into India, as they did, at the head of great armies, with the avowed intention of subjugating the country. We crept in as humble barterers, whose existence depended on the bounty and the favour of the lieutenants of the kings of Delhi; and the 'generosity' which we showed to Shah Alum was but a small acknowledgment of the favours his ancestors had conferred on our race. Russell, op. cit., 11, pp.53-54.

115. Chick, op. cit., p.4. For other similar information, see also: Duff, op. cit., p.301; Ireland, op. cit., pp.11-12.

Muhammad Darwēsh wrote to inform Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor at Agra, that Ḥasan 'Askarī (through whose agency Sīdī Qambar had been sent to Persia)<sup>116</sup> had convinced the King on the basis of a divine revelation that:

....the dominion of the King of Persia will to a certainty extend to Delhi, or rather over the whole of Hindoostan, and that the splendour of the sovereignty of Delhi will again revive, as the sovereign of Persia will bestow the Crown on the King.<sup>117</sup>

That was not all. Receptive as Bahādur Shāh was to any news which augured ill for the British, he seems, as was reported at the trial of the King, easily to have accepted Ḥasan 'Askarī's version of a resounding Persian victory over the British. The unfortunate King was further brought to believe that the King of Persia had occupied Bushire and planned to invade India through Afghanistan, ostensibly to facilitate his task of overthrowing the foreign rulers.<sup>118</sup> Such a conviction ushered in a period of rejoicings in the palace at Delhi. Prayers were offered and vows taken. Ḥasan 'Askarī himself was reported to have "entered upon a daily performance of an hour and a half before sunset course of propitiatory ceremonies to expedite the arrival of the Persians and the expulsion of the Christians." Every Thursday alms began to be distributed by the King, obviously to please God, so as to hasten the course of events.<sup>119</sup>

- 116. Duff, op. cit., p.301.
- 117. Chick, op. cit., p.5.
- 118. Ibid.
- 119. Ibid.

Active in seeking foreign assistance, the Delhi conspirators did not remain inactive at home. They launched, it was argued, a well prepared scheme to turn the minds of the people from their Anglo-Saxon masters. The end was described as twofold: a) to make the Indians ready for the change; and b) to prepare them for their participation in the work of overthrowing the English by means of a well prepared insurrection.<sup>120</sup> All possible means were said to have been adopted to put false but ingenious and effective rumours into circulation. Here too the conspirators were faced with the double problem of dealing with two widely divergent communities: a) Muslims -- the ever sympathetic people of their own faith; b) Hindūs -- a people they had to win over at any cost in order to achieve their end. If the latter were ensnared through the medium of Chapātīs, bone-dust and cartridges, the former, strongly maintained the Advocate Judge at the Delhi trial, were worked upon through the agency of the press.<sup>121</sup> The Authentic News was reported to have started promoting Delhi as early as 1856. News of Persian assistance, of fully equipped Russian armies on the alert to back the Persians, and even of expected Turko-French assistance, were played up. Once the paper was said to have observed:

Let the readers of the Authentic News, be prepared to see what the veil of futurity will disclose.<sup>122</sup>

120. Ibid., pp.2-3 and 7-8.
121. Ibid., pp.7-9.
122. Ibid., p.8.

In its issue of 19th March (probably 1856) it reported that five hundred Persian troops were staying in Delhi, and that nine hundred more were on their way. At another time it said that the King of Persia had assigned even the governorships of different provinces to his courtiers -- one was to get Bombay, another Calcutta and a third Poona, while the Crown of India was "plainly spoken of as reserved for bestowal on the King of Delhi." Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, a joint-magistrate at Meerut at the time of the outbreak, was mentioned by the Advocate Judge as having admitted the wide currency which the rumours of Russian help to Persia had gained. Even Dōst Muḥammad was publicized as having been in league with the Persians. Having established all that at the trial, he argued:

Are we then to suppose that in all this there was no connection between the palace and the press? Were all these concurrences fortuitous? Can it be that the dreams of the priest, the plots of the Court, and the fabrications of the newspapers worked accidentally together?<sup>123</sup>

That was why Dr. Daniel, the Bishop of Calcutta, called it a "secret conspiracy of the court of Delhi and other Mahometan princes"<sup>124</sup> -- a conspiracy which, he told his congregation, spread over a "number of years."<sup>125</sup>

Moving south-east to Lucknow, the annexation of Awadh had made a Simon de Monfort of Wājid 'Alī Shāh, the

123. Ibid., pp.8-9.

124. Daniel, Prayer the Refuge of a Distressed Church, pp.6-7.

125. Daniel, Humiliation in National Troubles  
(Calcutta: T. J. M'Arthur, Bishop's College Press, 1857),  
p.23.

ruler of the state -- up until now a staunch ally of the East India Company. Truly the Company had sowed the wind in this case and shortly had to reap the inevitable. Earlier described as if soaked in wine and sunk in debauchery, Wājīd 'Alī behaved very sensibly at the time of annexation. Perhaps the great shock had awakened his so-far dormant faculties. Quietly setting his plans, he was reported to have politely turned down all offers of an annual family allowance made by the Governor-General. He decided to hit back, and hit back with compound interest. It was firmly believed that Wājīd was a party to the conspiracy and the rebellion.<sup>126</sup> Ireland held that to compel the British Government to abandon the state of Awadh, as it had been done in the case of Afghanistan, some leading men of the state started a series of intrigues.<sup>127</sup>

To disarm suspicion among the rulers Wājīd 'Alī was reported to have taken a few clever and competent steps. To convince the Government of his harmlessness, his gentle demeanour, and of his good intentions, he was said to have turned down overtures of assistance made by the people and sepoys of Awadh.<sup>128</sup> Next he changed his quarters from Lucknow to British India's metropolitan city of Calcutta. Thirdly, he lost no time in dispatching his

126. Duff, op. cit., p.121; The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.203; "Has the Preservation of....., Negative Reply," BC., 1858, p.273; "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1858, p.96.

It was reported as a "significant fact" that the ruler of Awadh had protested as early as 29 January, 1857, "against the surveillance of a European officer, Major Herbert, who had been appointed to control his movements." "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.391.

127. Ireland, op. cit., pp.11-12.

128. Free Press, 3 June 1857; Hansard 3, CXLVI, 1485.

mother, brother and son to England in order to plead his case before the Queen. In this way, argued some, the stage for a counter-stroke was set and the English were caught off their guard.<sup>129</sup> The cities of Calcutta and London were said to have become centres of numerous subtle stories. These were attributed to the Awadh royal family, which was then divided between these two cities. Rumours of the Government intentions of occupying Udaipur in Rajisthan; of making drastic reductions in the stipends of all native princes; of transferring His Highness the Nawāb of Murshidabad to Dum Dum; of converting his palace into an engineering college, and the like, emanated from these two headquarters.<sup>130</sup>

Wājid 'Alī, reported Carey on the basis of documentary evidence found bearing his signature, lost no time in entering into correspondence with the ruler of Delhi, and proposed to corrupt the whole of the native army; to invite all native princes to join the plot, to fix a day for the uprising; to rise as a single unit and massacre all Europeans and Christians, and then to repatriate the native rule as it existed before the advent of the "hated" British rule. This he suggested was to be achieved "under the general sovereignty of the King of Kings at Delhi."<sup>131</sup> Their common grievance had, it was

129. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, pp.388-89; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, p.487; "Has the Preservation of...., Negative Reply," BC., 1858, p.273.

130. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, p.390. It was rumoured that the pensions of the ruler of Delhi and the Nawāb Nizām were to be cut down by forty and sixty percent respectively.

131. W. H. Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion; its Premonitory Symptoms, the Outbreak and its Suppression, p.5. For similar opinions, see also: The Scotsman (letter from a lady in Calcutta to a friend in Edinburgh), 19 Aug. 1857; "Has the Preservation of....," loc. cit.

argued, brought about a conciliation between the Shī'ah and Sunnī houses of Awadh and Delhi.<sup>132</sup> The fact remained that they were all Muslims. And the Muslims, as indicated by the British, had come to acquire a common grievance and a common cause against their rulers. By its sale of the Muslim-dominated state of Kashmir to a Hindū, Mahārājā Gulāb Singh, the Government, it was argued, had earlier forfeited their trust and confidence.<sup>133</sup> This, the misdemeanour in Awadh, and the changing attitude towards the ruler of Delhi, had now compelled them to forget their differences and foster unity within their ranks. To galvanize the rank and file of the movement, placards, "some ambiguously hinting at a general rebellion, others openly calling on the followers of the Prophet to exterminate the unbelievers" were reportedly circulated.<sup>134</sup>

Apparently Nānā Ṣāhib had, in one of his proclamations, invoked the authority of the "Sultan of Roum" against the British in India. Pointing this out, a writer in the Edinburgh Review complained that "even the Mahrattas appear to recognize the superior force and ferocity of their Muslim conquerors."<sup>135</sup> The fact of the matter was, that of late Hindūs had been badly disenchanted by the attitude adopted by the administration. Now, they too were an aggrieved party. The Muslims, being aware of

- 132. Indian Mutiny to the Fall of Delhi, p.7.
- 133. See above, p.241.
- 134. "The Poorbeah Mutiny - The Punjab,"  
Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, pp.94-95.
- 135. "India," Edin. Rev., CVI, 1857, p.568.

this, did their best, it was repeatedly and forcefully pointed out, to play upon the Hindū feelings, and draw them closer to themselves. This was to be done at the cost of Hindū relations with their British masters. All possible ways and means were adopted to draw the former away from the latter. The Indian princes were invited to join in the task of overthrowing the British. A return to pre-British days was promised. Re-establishment of all Hindū and Muslim principalities, which existed before the advent of the British rule, was pledged under the overlordship of the ruler of Delhi.<sup>136</sup> It was at this development that W. Russell of The Times remarked in his Diary:

....the heart of every Mussalman was moved within him, and Hindoos were naturally agitated by the prospect of regaining their independence in their old States.<sup>137</sup>

Every effort, it was widely reported and held, was made by the wily Muslims to dupe the harmless Hindūs into their net.<sup>138</sup> A writer in the Dublin University Magazine, describing Hindūism as "a frozen serpent in the fable....grasped as a whip in the hands of the blind man", angrily held that it "needed the hot breath of Muhammadan fanaticism to give it life and energy to wound the arm that wielded it."<sup>139</sup> Capt. R. P. Anderson reported that a garlanded head of "a half grown buffalo" was found on the gate near the King's palace in Lucknow. Calling it a

136. See below and also Chapter V, pp.164 and 173-74.

137. Russell, op. cit., I, p.130.

138. Chick, op. cit., pp.2-3; Dunlop, op. cit., pp.152-55; Cooper, op. cit., pp.13-14; L. E. Ruutz Rees, A Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow, from its Commencement to its Relief by Sir Colin Campbell, p.37; Archer, op. cit., pp.8-10.

139. "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, p.386.

Muslim device to hurt the Hindūs, he observed, "I fancy it was as much to say, 'see the Europeans kill buffaloes in your very streets.'"<sup>140</sup> The Muslim spies were said to have told their Hindū audiences that, like Islām, Hindūism too would be disrespected; the Hindūs would all be Christianized and compelled not only to handle cow fat, but also to eat beef. As the Hindūs were already excited against the Government, they were easily led into believing all this.<sup>141</sup>

Bishop Daniel felt so sure of Muslim antagonism and their machinations, that he told his congregation that thirty million "ruthless Mussulmans" were engaged in conspiracies against their rulers; that they had worked "with too much success" upon the feeble minds of one hundred and fifty million Hindūs for a number of years and, as such, had ultimately broken out into open rebellion against a small number of Europeans.<sup>142</sup> It was because of these reasons that the Illustrated London News was able to assert that "as the drama develops and unfolds itself, it seems to become evident that he [the ruler of Delhi] and the dethroned King of Oudh -- both of them Mahommedans and not Hindoos -- were the prime instigators of the plot; that the conspiracy was Mahommedan; and that the Hindoos have been made the instruments of villains more crafty and

140. R. P. Anderson, A Personal Journal of the Siege of Lucknow, pp.9-10.

141. Rees, A Personal Narrative....., p.37.

142. Daniel, Humiliation in National Troubles,  
p.23.

more savage than themselves. ....The religion of the Hindoos, which is not in its nature aggressive, is the instrument, and not the cause, of the explosion."<sup>143</sup>

It was simultaneously decided to undermine the loyalty of the army.<sup>144</sup> It was contended that agents, well provided with money, were sent to every army station in India. Their main duty was to prepare the native army for an insurrection and in doing so they were instructed to adopt all possible means to "bring about the revolt without the cognizance of the authorities."<sup>145</sup> Here again, insofar as the Muslims in the army were concerned, it was argued that there would not be much difficulty. Like their brethren outside the army, the Muslim soldiers were reported to be always in a state of readiness to revolt. It was claimed that their views were wider and more dangerous than those of their Hindū neighbours and that they never cherished any affection for their Anglo-Saxon rulers -- "not a spark." Hence there was no need to buy or corrupt them; they were already rebels.<sup>146</sup>

It was, however, very different with the Hindūs. A Hindū sepoy was described as a "friend of the English", who, it was said, "looked upon them with confidence and respect." Naturally, an effort to corrupt him was a highly delicate affair. All difficulties, however, had to

143. "Progress of the Indian Rebellion," Illustrated London News, 5 Sept. 1857. For other similar opinions, see also: Mackenzie, Review of Delhi, the City of the Great Mogul, Literary Gazette, 1857, pp.804-805; Archer, op. cit., pp.8-11; Ainslie, op. cit., p.15; Observations on the Late Events in the Bengal Presidency (Jersy: Joshua Coutanche, 1857), p.7; Mead, op. cit., pp.94-95; A Short Review of the...., p.9; Dr. A. Christian, Letter to The Scotsman, 2 Sept. 1857; "A Few Words from the Khuber," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1857, p.613; Manchester Guardian, 3 Sept. and 22 Oct. 1857; [The Rev. Mathew A.] Sherring (letter from) MM., XXI, 1857, p.243 and also, The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), p.203; [The Rev.] J. Trafford (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.514; Hansard 3, CXLVII, 1435; "The English in India," WR., New Series, XLII, 1858, p.196; Investigation into Some...., pp.4-5; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., I, 1857, p.386; The Examiner, 8 Aug. 1857; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, p.487; Daniel, Humiliation in...., p.23; Daniel, Prayer the Refuge of...., pp.6-7; The Times (letter from a cavalry officer in India), 1 Sept. 1857.

It was thought that the Muslims, in spite of inherent differences between Islām and Hindūism, had given, in order to entice and beguile the Hindūs, a political colour to their religious war. This was viewed as a weak point in the unnatural alliance and a source of strength to the British cause in India. It not only prevented the outbreak from becoming universal, but it was regarded to be the only ray of hope amid dark clouds for the continuation of the British rule in India. The Manchester Guardian thus observed:

The Hindoos have been all along mere tools in the hands of their former oppressors.... Sooner or later, the Hindoo part of the rebel force is sure to find this out. Report says that in Delhi they have already begun to discover it....and then the work of our army will be facilitated by an incurable disunion in the camp of the enemy.... The Hindoos will not fight to restore Mohammedan rule in India. 22 Oct. 1857.

For other similar opinions, see also: Hansard 3, CXLVII, 1435; Archer, op. cit., p.12; The Scotsman (letter from India), 3 Oct. 1857.

144. Ireland, op. cit., pp.11-12; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, p.487; "The Indian Mutiny," ER., New Series, IV, 1858, p.542; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.658; "Has the Preservation of.... - Negative Reply." BC., 1858, p.274.

145. "Has the Preservation of Caste.... - Negative Reply," loc. cit.

146. Investigation into Some...., pp.5-6. For a similar opinion, see also: "The Government of India and the Mutinies," loc. cit.

be overcome, because Hindū support to the Muslim cause was described as very essential.<sup>147</sup> It was all the more imperative, since the army was virtually in the hands of Brāhmans. But for the help of Hindū soldiers, the Muslims, it was contended, realised that they would not be able to achieve their objective out of sheer numerical weakness.<sup>148</sup> Again, if the Hindūs were a weakness in the Muslim plan for revolt, the latter had their own weaknesses to cover up as well, argued the author of the "Poorbeah Mutiny." These consisted in what he called the past tyrannical rule of the Muslims and their present objectives.<sup>149</sup> A small miscalculation would have led to a complete fiasco of the whole insurrectionary movement even before it could have started. Hence the wooing had to be done with utmost caution.

The work of corrupting the Hindū sepoy, though difficult and delicate, did not turn out to be an uphill task. The whole affair, it was argued, was facilitated by the Hindūs themselves. The Hindū sepoy, though a friend of the English, had his own weaknesses. Avarice was described as a master passion with him -- a passion stronger than his friendship for the English. His weakness was that he "could be bought" and "he was bought."<sup>150</sup> In addition to putting in most strenuous efforts to lure him

147. Investigation into Some...., pp.5-6. For a similar opinion, see also: "A Few Words from the Khyber," Blackwood's, LXXXI, 1857, p.613.

148. Investigation into Some...., pp.5-6; "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.95.

149. "The Poorbeah Mutiny," loc. cit.

150. Investigation into Some...., pp.5-6.

from his allegiance, the emissaries of Delhi and Awadh used bribery to seduce the Hindū sepoy.<sup>151</sup> But this was not all. The Hindū sepoy had another weakness and it consisted in his caste and religion -- things for which he had always been quite willing to make any sacrifice.<sup>152</sup> Along with the exploitation of his "master passion", the Muslim conspirators, in order to assure their success, decided to touch this most delicate chord of the Hindū sepoy -- the chord of religion and caste.<sup>153</sup> Hence the religious feelings of the sepoys were worked upon. It was at this time that the Government erred. The error was of great magnitude, and led to fatal consequences. This was the introduction of greased cartridges in the army. The ingredients used in greasing the cartridge were said to have been cow and hog fat -- both detrimental to Hindū bias, and the latter drastically impure in Muslim eyes. The cartridge affair provided the Muslims with a long-sought opportunity. The incident, it was widely believed, was at once profitably seized upon by the "watchful and exasperated" enemy,<sup>154</sup> and shown as evidence of the Government's intentions of Christianizing India.<sup>155</sup> The crafty Muslims, it was argued, used it as an effective handle to stir up Hindū prejudice.<sup>156</sup> It served both of their purposes; it supposedly enabled them successfully to

151. Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion...., p.179. For other similar opinions, see also: Daniel, Prayer the Refuge...., pp.6-7; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, pp.388-89; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, p.489; Ireland, op. cit., pp.11-12.

152. Almost a universally held opinion.

153. Investigation into Some...., pp.5-6. For a similar opinion, see also: "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, p.487.

154. [Sinclair], op. cit., p.11.

155. Ibid.; Cooper, op. cit., pp.133-34; The Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, p.20; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, pp.487-88; "State Intervention in the Religions of India," MM., XXI, 1858, p.226; Sherring, op. cit., p.208; "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.95; Annual Register, 1857, p.240; Ireland, op. cit., pp.11-12; Duff, op. cit., p.121; [The Rev.] J. Trafford (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.514.

156. Duff, op. cit., pp.46, 63 and 121; Mackenzie, Review of Delhi, the City of the Great Mogul, Literary Gazette, 1857, pp.804-805; Archer, op. cit., pp.10-11; Ainslie, op. cit., p.15; Observations on the Events...., p.7; "A Few Words from the Khyber," loc. cit., p.613; "State Intervention in the Religions of India," loc. cit.; The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.203; Sherring, loc. cit.; "The Government of India and the Mutinies," BQR., XXVI, 1857, p.488; Dr. A. Christian, Letter to The Scotsman, 2 Sept. 1857; Indian Mutiny - Thoughts and Facts, p.20; Cooper, op. cit., p.46; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857 and L, 1858, pp.659 and 50 respectively; [Sinclair], loc. cit.

Believing that the Muslims had always longed for a revolt, but had feared the Hindūs, Archer asserted that the Muslims ultimately got their chance in various acts of the Government affecting the Hindūs - acts which finally climaxed in the greased cartridge. He was so sure of the Muslim exploitation of the cartridge incident that he imaginatively cited a possible harangue addressed by a Muslim to Hindū soldiers for the latter's seduction. The

chimerical sermon ran in these words:

Brothers, we know you are men who would joyfully die in the cause of religion, but beware lest craft should accomplish that, the attempt to effect which by force you would resist by force, and gloriously defeat. Have you watched the conduct of your Christian rulers lately? If you have not, we have, and we will awaken you to a sense of imminent danger now impending over you; and what is more, we will assist you with our swords, for your cause is a common cause. First, then, did you mark the extension of civil right to Indian proselytes from your religion or our own? This was doubtless a cautious first step, by which the Christians wished to ascertain how far they could with safety venture on such ground. Their encroachment was unchecked, unresisted, - and what followed? The marriage of Hindoo widows and sisters was boldly declared legal; yes, your widows and sisters were tempted to disgrace themselves and you, and yet you murmured not; then, intoxicated by success, and forgetful that our arms maintained them in this country, unmindful too of the debt they owed to those who had freely bled for them on the plains of Aliwal and Sohraon [the two bloody battles, among several others, waged for the conquest of the Panjab], amidst the rugged mountain-passes of Afghanistan, in the pestilential swamps of Burmah, and on a hundred battlefields, they, by the advice of crafty men of their nation, deeply read in our religious books, formed a design for the suppression of our religion, towards which their first step has been to do what they now have done. Shall we, then, thousands in arms, permit a handful of treacherous foreigners to disgrace and ruin us for time and for eternity? Believe not that they have acted thus in ignorance, for there is not a European in the land who does not know that the lowest of his Hindoo menials would lose his place a thousand times rather than touch this abomination. Nor because for a hundred years they have allowed us to enjoy our faith in safety, think that we wrongly suspect them now of such designs. Did you not mark their cautious and time-serving policy towards Oude? They waited, biding their time, and then with one fell swoop they

robbed and ruined a royal family, when not another independent prince in India was left to avenge the injury. And now when Oude is theirs, and their sway extends from the Himalayas to the waters of the Indian Ocean, they think the time is come for christianizing us by guile and force. Hindoos, we will not insult you by pointing out to you your duty now in the cause of religion. Archer, op. cit., pp.8-10.

No wonder, Frederick Cooper, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, asserted that the true colours under which the sepoys were fighting "have now long since been shown; they were simply armed tools of Mohammedan insurrection." Cooper, op. cit., p.46.

play up the Hindū weakness of religion and caste and play down, as well as cover up, the Muslim weaknesses of their past tyranny and present ulterior motives. One of the school observed:

Thus under the idea that an attack was being meditated on their religious prejudices, the great mass of Hindoo sepoys were caught in the trap laid for them by wily Mohammedan, who himself **also** could find, or pretend to find, in the **same** cartridge with its fancied odour of forbidden pig's fat, a religious motive for rebellion, under which the real political motive was cunningly kept out of sight.<sup>157</sup>

The Christian Spectator had something similar to say when it remarked:

It is now pretty generally acknowledged by the more independent portion of the press that the causes of the mutiny are anything but mysterious. Our own bad and blundering Government had furnished the fuel to which Mohammedan ambition has applied the torch.<sup>158</sup>

And a writer in the British Quarterly Review summed up this debate when he argued that in this way it was "determined that the Hindu and the Mussulman should combine and rise together to expel and massacre the Christian." Firmly believing in the existence of a Muslim conspiracy, and definitely dating it back to the annexation of Awadh, he further tried to convince the reader by telling him that weeks before the outbreak Lucknow had become "the hotbed of intrigue and the scene of nightly meetings and conflagrations." He pointed out that soon

157. "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXI111,  
1858, p.95.

158. "Monthly Retrospect," CS., VI1, 1857,  
p.652.

after the disbandment of the 19th Regiment, the deposed King's brother informed the native troops that he was "prepared to give service, at an increased rate of pay, to all who might be discharged by the Company."<sup>159</sup>

To disguise their intentions from the Government, the conspirators of Delhi and Lucknow were reported to have employed the subtle, effective and dangerous agency of disguised Faqīrs to go about the country and to loosen the discipline and corrupt the native sepoy and the civil population.<sup>160</sup> Nūr Muḥammad Khān, a Sarishtaḥdār of Canal was sent from Delhi to Amritsar "to inaugurate a crusade" at that place. When apprehended by Frederick Cooper, the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, he found "suits of Fakeers' [Faqīrs'] clothes and disguises for further emergencies." Holding that the Faqīrs were mostly Muslims, Cooper argued, "Had all the suspected been pursued, the number of Mussulmans involved would have become embarrassing to the Government."<sup>161</sup> Reporting similarly the case of an itinerant Faqīr who was sentenced to receive a hundred lashes for preaching a universal war against the British, L. G. Ruutz Rees went on to inform his readers that it was not a solitary case. He perhaps exaggerated when he stated that thousands of such ill-looking wretches could "daily be seen passing under the gallows, registering vows of vengeance against us."<sup>162</sup>

159. "The Government of India and the Mutinies,"  
BQR., XXVI, 1857, pp.487-89.

160. Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion....., p.7;  
Cooper, op. cit., pp.117-18.

161. Cooper, op. cit., pp.33-34.

162. Rees, A Personal Narrative of....., p.37.

The Advocate Judge of the Army at the Delhi trial, attributing the circulation of Chapātīs to the "wiles of Mohammedan conspiracy", argued that the Muslims resorted to these means in order to prepare the minds of the people for the forthcoming rising, and to create among them a feeling of standing by one another. Or else it was intended to show to the people "that in future there should be but one food and one faith."<sup>163</sup> Carey also regarded them as the most powerful and the most successful contrivance that could be devised for "combining all classes of Mahometans in the general cause." He told his readers that the Muslims, in order to avoid detection, let it be known that the Government had given orders for their distribution.<sup>164</sup> The cake movement, having been found out and stopped by the Government, the Muslim schemers, it was pointed out, hurriedly took to flour. The bone-dust idea replaced the circulation of cakes. It was firmly believed that this was a continuation of the Chapātī matter -- a continuation of the same symbol of "one food and one faith."<sup>165</sup>

The Muslim or the Muslim-inspired rebellion, it was contended, did not come like a bolt from the blue. The Government had received a couple of warnings long before the outbreak but it had preferred either to laugh

163. Chick, op. cit., pp.5-7.
164. Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion....., pp.9-10.
165. Chick, loc. cit.

at or just ignore them. Gulāb Singh, the well-known ruler of Kashmir, pointed out one, had written to Canning in November 1856, warning the Governor-General of the Muslim intentions to rise and overthrow the Government. Gulāb had also mentioned that the Muslims had even offered him the "direction of the projected movement." But he had refused. Again, Hamilton, a merchant at Kanpur and Allahabad was requested by his native dealer friends to send his family away within six months -- advice which the advised was reported to have accepted with some hesitation. Hamilton, however, did not fail in his duty but passed the information on to the Governor-General and offered still further to assist in the matter. His letter failed to evoke even the courtesy of a formal reply. One Thomas Johnson approached the President of the Board of Control, the Earl of Clarendon (the Foreign Secretary), and finally the Court of Directors, one after the other, in order to inquire into the above mentioned charges, but failed. To his letters, though acknowledged, the replies were either discreetly silent or else recipients declined to answer the specific inquiry.<sup>166</sup> No wonder, Sherring, in his letter home, appeared quite perplexed and astonished when he wrote this to say:

166. "The Mutiny in India and the Government,"  
Free Press, 16 Dec. 1857. For a similar piece of  
information, see also: "The Revolt of the Bengal Army,"  
DUM., L, 1857, p.392.

I think little doubt exists in the minds of Europeans in India, that Mussulmans and they alone, have originated this foul conspiracy to upset the Government and massacre all white faces. The papers in the hands of the Government implicate several of the chief Mussulman families in India, including the Great Mogul and the King of Oude. The Hindus have been gulled by them into rising against their rulers and have been too infatuated to perceive, until too late, the fatal mistake they have made. How it is the authorities were not acquainted with this conspiracy -- which was so widespread that I suspect there was scarcely a Mussulman of influence in North and Central India who was ignorant of it -- is a mystery as great as the conspiracy itself.<sup>167</sup>

In fact, the British seem to have felt themselves so secure and entrenched that when Mrs. H. H. Greathed, the Commissioner and Political Agent of Delhi, told her husband and his colleagues, Colonels Constance and Finnis, on 9th May, 1857, at Meerut, that "placards had been seen about the city calling upon all true Mussulmans to rise and slaughter the English", they treated the "threat with indignant disbelief."<sup>169</sup> The very next day the outbreak started at the same station and ravaged the land.

167. [The Rev. Mathew A.] Sherring (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.243. For a similar opinion, see also: "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.658.

168. H. H. Greathed, Letters written during the Siege of Delhi (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1858), p.XIV.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MUSLIM REBELLION

After having established on the basis of past evidence that there were reasons enough among almost the entire Muslim community of India for them to feel dissatisfied with the political, social, religious and economic situation in the country, the advocates of the Muslim rebellion theory went on to strengthen their contention by drawing further testimony from the actual events of the outbreak in India. From the conspiracy, they now shifted their attention to the rebellion itself. In fact, the best demonstration of their thesis was the hearty reception by the Muslim masses of the news of the outbreak, and their consequent participation in the ensuing struggle. This was the observation of the numerous British reporters on the spot. The present writer can believe that the mere prospect of the crescent rising once again over the horizon of India made the Muslims of India cheerful and exuberant. Their dreams and prayers must have appeared to them to be taking the shape of reality; -- hence their joy and jubilation.

The reports of the day to day progress of the uprising convinced an overwhelmingly large section of the

British public of its Muslim genesis. The adherents of this school came from all shades of public opinion. Indeed, if there was anything on which a large majority of the first two groups, the civil and the military, as well as others, agreed, it was in calling the outbreak a long-planned Muslim conspiracy for the overthrow of the British and the restoration of Muslim rule in India. The result was that participation of the Muslims was emphasized, and their attitude towards the fugitive members of the ruling community, their treatment of the few converts from their ranks to Christianity and the sullen, insolent and dismayed expressions worn by them when powerless to act, were especially marked and brought to the notice of the masses in Britain.

The missionary and the Church of England press actively stressed the Muslim role in the crisis. They were followed by secular newspapers, periodicals, pamphleteers and public speakers. It was strongly argued that if the catastrophe was India-wide, it was so only insofar as the Muslim resentment of the British rule and Muslim sympathies for the rebels were concerned.<sup>1</sup> To the Saturday Review all Muslims appeared to be excited and it argued that their enthusiasm will never subside into "repose so long as the King of Delhi is really King, though

1. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH. XLIX, 1857 and L, 1858, pp.658 and 50 respectively; The Rev. James Wallace, The Revolt in India, its Causes and its Lessons. A Lecture delivered in Belfast, on 2 Feb. 1859, pp.8-9; R. P. Anderson, A Personal Journal of the Siege of Lucknow, p.11; [G. B. Malleeson], The Mutiny of the Bengal Army, pt. 1, p.43; The Rev. Mathew A. Sherring, The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion: An Authentic Narrative of the Disasters that befell it; its Sufferings; and Faithfulness unto death of many of its European and Native Members, p.208; [The Rev. Mathew A.] Sherring (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.243 and also, the Rev. William Beynon (letter from), p.245; The Press, 25 July 1857; Volunteer [Maj.-Gen. W. O. Swanston], My Journal; or What I Did and Saw between the 9th June and 25th November, 1857, with an account of General Havelock's March from Allahabad to Lucknow, p.54.

his dominions may be bounded by the limits of his ancient capital."<sup>2</sup> This was perhaps because of the fact, as Henry Mead pointed out, that the Muslims of India had always regarded the Mughal ruler, -- in spite of the long subjection under which he had lived for around a hundred years, as "being the fountain of honour" and "the rightful monarch of Hindostan."<sup>3</sup> In short, from the Church of England Magazine through the Manchester Guardian, The Scotsman down to the Free Press, the organ of the "mystery monger"<sup>4</sup> David Urquhart; from the pulpit down to the completely secular platform, all agreed in pronouncing it as a Muslim rebellion.

The first thing that attracted the attention, nay, struck the imagination of the press and consequently of the people, was the centre and the leadership of the revolt. Delhi, the pivot of the revolt, was a Muslim city and had been the chief Muslim capital for centuries in the past.<sup>5</sup> Muḥammad Bahādur Shāh, who was described as its leader, was again a Muslim. An old Indian in his letter to The Times emphasized this aspect of the uprising,<sup>6</sup> and the Manchester Guardian in its issue of 3 September, 1857, brought out an editorial on the same subject.<sup>7</sup> Soon, the inclusion of Lucknow -- another Muslim city -- plus the suspicions entertained regarding

2. "The Progress of the Sepoy War," Saturday Review, 3 Oct. 1857. For other similar opinions, see also: Volunteer [Swanston], op. cit., p.54; Henry Mead, The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and Consequences, pp.94-95; [The Rev. Mathew A.] Sherring (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.243; William Wotherspoon Ireland, History of the Siege of Delhi, p.5.

3. Mead, loc. cit., p.94. Commenting upon the reasons of Muslim enthusiasm for the Mughal ruler at Delhi, Mead went on to say:

....there is hardly a single monarch who has not at some time sworn fealty to the House of Tamerlane, and received investiture at its hands. The Mogul is the only person to whom the Mahomedans can look up as their natural head. The founders of the royal houses of the Deccan, Carnatic, and Oude, of Holkar and Scindiah, were the deputies and servants of his ancestors. His divine right to universal dominion still exists....

4. Punch, 12 Sept. 1857.

5. Even in 1857 Delhi was the seat of the figure-head Muslim ruler.

6. 31 Aug. 1857.

7. The Manchester Guardian emphasized this aspect of the revolt on several other occasions as well.

the part played by the deposed ruler of Awadh left no doubt in British minds regarding the role of the Crescent in the insurrection.<sup>8</sup>

On the basis of what was reported to have followed the outbreak, this analysis seems to be justified. It was believed that Bahādur Shāh had long been preparing for revolt and soon was described to have assumed the leadership of the uprising (although feebly because of his age and temperament). Once having shown himself in his true colours, Bahādur was reported to have lost no time in issuing proclamations to the army and the people invoking their assistance in ousting the foreign rulers.<sup>9</sup> He was also said to have addressed letters to various princely states impressing upon their rulers the magnitude of the situation and the value of their help.<sup>10</sup> Not only that, his messengers even talked of a letter written to Sir Robert Montgomery, the Revenue Commissioner at Lahore. Condescendingly thanking him "for his excellent arrangements hitherto on his behalf for the affairs of India", Bahādur was reported not only to have dispensed with the services of the Revenue Commissioner, but also accorded him "his royal permission" to retire via Bombay.<sup>11</sup>

After the start of the outbreak, emissaries of

8. See Chapters V, p.164 and VII, pp.249-52.
9. See Chapter V, pp.173-74.
10. Ibid.
11. Frederick Cooper, The Crisis in the Punjab from the 10th of May until the Fall of Delhi, pp.32-33.

Delhi and Lucknow were reported to have penetrated and tried, at times very successfully, to disrupt the army and civil establishments of the East India Company. Every department seems to have been invaded. All sections of the Indian population were approached to join the movement. Perhaps no part of India was safe from their operations. The turbulence and disaffection at Bareilly, the capital of Gwalior, a Marahṭah state, both in the city and cantonment, was attributed to the machinations of the emissaries from Delhi.<sup>12</sup> Frederick Cooper, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, referring to the situation in the hills of Kasauli and Sanaur, thus quoted the Governor of Lawrence Asylum:

Before and during these troubles, faqueers [Faqīrs] were everywhere seen about the neighbourhood; and I have since learnt that the emissaries from Oude and Delhi were empowered to offer seven rupees per man to anyone willing to enter the service of the respective pretenders to sovereignty. About a hundred coolies [Qulīs] employed at the Asylum went off to Oude in consequence, and small drafts of Poorbeas have been continually leaving the hills during the whole period for Oude and Delhi.<sup>13</sup>

Even the newest recruits to the Company's service, the Sikhs, were vainly approached to join the standard of Islām with promises of land endowments.<sup>14</sup>

If the chief leaders of the revolt -- the King, the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief at

12. W. H. Carey (ed.), The Mahomedan Rebellion; its Premonitory Symptoms, the Outbreak and Suppression; with an Appendix, p.179.

13. Cooper, op. cit., pp.117-18.

14. Ibid., p.212.

Delhi<sup>15</sup> -- were described as Muslims, the great centre of rebellion was the city of Delhi itself.<sup>16</sup> A lady writing from Gwalior to The Scotsman described it as the "stronghold of Mohammedanism"<sup>17</sup> and Beveridge called it a notorious "centre of Mohammedan intrigue."<sup>18</sup> Mawlawīs were reported to be flocking to this pivotal point of the movement to become Ghāzīs, and the green flag was said to have been unfurled from the Jāmi' Masjid.<sup>19</sup> Even The Examiner, a newspaper which persistently called it an army émeute, repeatedly emphasized the Muslim character of the city of Delhi. It feared the fact that the mutiny was backed in the city "by a fanatic Mohammedan population of 80,000."<sup>20</sup> That was why "A Volunteer" in his Journal recorded:

There is no doubt that as long as there was a King of Delhi, acknowledged though in ever so small a way, and so long as there remained a Delhi for that King to live in, so long would the Mahommedans all over India hope and pray to see him once more seated in state on the throne.<sup>21</sup>

It was believed that the entire mass of the Muslim population was disaffected.<sup>22</sup> Even Muslim women were reported to be participating in the actual war.<sup>23</sup> The fidelity of the most loyal Muslims was also doubted. If they were loyal at all, it was argued, they were not so from the core of their hearts but on account of selfish and worldly reasons.<sup>24</sup> An Englishman, writing from

15. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.722; The Rev. A. C. Ainslie, A Few Words about India and the Indian Mutinies, p.15; The Times (letter from Bays Water), 25 July 1857; Manchester Guardian, 3 Sept. 1857.

16. The Times (letter from Bays Water), 3 Sept. 1857; The Scotsman (letter from India), 19 Aug. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 3 Sept. 1857; The Rev. Alexander Duff, The Indian Rebellion; its Causes and Results in a Series of Letters from....., p.4.

17. 18 July 1857.

18. Henry Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, Civil, Military and Social, from the First Landing of the English, to the Suppression of the Sepoy Revolt, including an Outline of the Early History of Hindoostan, p.555.

19. Cooper, op. cit., pp.196-97.

20. The Examiner, 1 and 8 Aug. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: The Press, 25 July 1857; [Malleston], op. cit., pt. I, p.43.

21. Volunteer [Swanston], op. cit., p.54.

22. Manchester Guardian, 7 Aug. 1857; Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion....., pp.187-88.

An interesting sidelight of this is that even European converts to Islām were reported to be participating in the fight against the Government forces. L. E. Ruutz Rees, one of the surviving defenders of the Lucknow Residency, bitterly complained by name of those European converts to Islām who could be, more or less, identified. They were: Capt. Savory, a retired officer of the East India Company - an Englishman who had for many years received the pension of a captain and who had embraced Islām; Capt. Rotton, a Lucknow born Englishman, who had likewise accepted Islām and whose daughters as well were married to Muslims; Monsieur Leblanc, a Frenchman, whom Rees had described as an "apostate" to Islām and as great a "villain" as "ever breathed"; and a young man whose name Rees purposely held back "on account of his family", and who "most probably" was the person "who commanded the enemy's cavalry at Chinhut" - a place where Henry Lawrence

had suffered a heavy repulse. Calling them "haters of their own race", Rees proposed the severest possible punishment for them. L. E. Ruutz Rees, A Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow, from its Commencement to its Relief by Sir Colin Campbell, pp.116-17 and 144.

23. H. H. Greathed, Letters written during the Siege of Delhi, p.130; Maj. W. S. R. Hodson, Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India, p.259.

24. Manchester Guardian, 23 July 1857.

Meerut, observed that among "our enemies are thousands of the worst sort of people, -- viz., 'Goojjurs [Gūjars]', and I believe every Mussulman in the country. We have found many here whom everyone would have supposed incapable of it [enmity], and they have been some of the principal leaders in the riots. The sepoys have lost all spirit (if they ever had any when opposed to us). The Hindoos and Mussulmans quarrel, and the Hindoos reproach them and say, 'This is all your fault.'"<sup>25</sup>

The Muslim civil servants in the employ of the Company were no exceptions to this general Muslim hatred of the British. The Chambers's Journal, referring to the enlistment of Muslims in the civil service, "even to the exclusion of Christians", bitterly remonstrated:

Well, the Government have sown the storm, and they have reaped the whirlwind. The foremost men in the present murderous rebellion are Mohammedans. Every Mussulman official in Upper Bengal and in the North-West Provinces has turned against us, has obeyed the dictates of his faith, and drawn his sword upon us 'dogs of unbelievers.'<sup>26</sup>

The fact remained that two among the top three leaders of the outbreak at Delhi, the Commander-in-Chief and the Prime Minister, and several others, occupying ministerial and lower ranks in the rebel Government, came from among the Muslim civil servants.<sup>27</sup>

If the Muslims of Delhi and Lucknow were either

25. The Times (letter from Meerut), 5 Oct. 1857.

26. "Young Bengal," Chambers's Journal, XXIX, 1858, p.199. For similar opinions, see also: "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.722; Cooper, op. cit., p.151; Investigation into Some of the Causes which have Produced the Rebellion in India, p.14; A Letter from a Layman on the Policy of the East India Company in Matters of Religion (London: W. H. Dalton, 1858), p.30; R. H. W. Dunlop, Service and Adventure with the Khakee Rissalah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse, during the Mutinies of 1857-58, pp.152-55.

To prove that the army mutiny and the Muslim rebellion were planned together and perhaps in conjunction with each other, Dunlop quoted an interesting piece of conversation between a Muslim civil servant "Nawab Ahmud Oollah Khan of Nugeenah, nephew of the Nawab Mahmood Khan of Nujeebabad" (Nawāb Ahmadullāh Khān was a Tahşıldār in the service of the East India Company.) and Francis Sistan, a European Inspector of Police at Sitapur in Awadh, then on three month's leave in Meerut. Mistaking Sistan for a Muslim (Sistan was reportedly dressed in the Muslim style) and upon knowing his service, Nawāb Ahmedullāh instinctively inquired from him about the situation in Awadh. Dunlop reports the dialogue with his own comments as follows:

"What news from Oude?" said the Tehsildar; "how does the work progress, brother?" "If we have work in Oude, your Highness will know it well," replied Sistan, who had inherited a good deal of Hindoostanee suspicion, and made the Tehsildar thus think him not ignorant but cautious. The trifling mutinies at Barrackpore, as they were then thought, had commenced. "Depend upon it, we will succeed this time," said the Tehsildar; "the direction of the business is in able hands."

Dunlop goes on to inform his readers that this Tahşıldār was later on the leader of the rebels at Bijnor. He complained that had Sistan reported the conversation to the authorities at that time, he would have been "laughed at as an alarmist."

27. "Foreign Intelligence - India," loc. cit. Criticizing the recent appointment of a Muslim as Assist.

Commissioner to Mr. Samuells, the newly appointed Commissioner of Patna Division, the Rev. Sale, Baptist Missionary at Jessore, observed:

The Mussulman is to receive 1,000 Rupees a month. I suppose the policy is to bribe him as a decoy duck to the disaffected Mussulmans. This is the true Company's policy.

The truth of the accusation of treachery against Mussulmans in Government employ is proved by the following instances:- The Commander-in-Chief of the rebel forces is a native commissioned officer. The Prime Minister of the King of Delhi is a Mussulman from the Company's civil service; as is also the man who is his Assistant Minister. So the man who led the wretches who murdered Mr. Tucker, of Furruckabad, was high in the Company's service, and had been indebted greatly to Mr. Tucker for his advancement. So the man who ordered the massacre at Bareilly, and headed the insurgents, and tried even to induce the ladies to come back by false promises of safety; this wretch and his father had both held judicial appointments, and was receiving, by a special act of favour, the double pension for himself and his father.

hostile, disaffected, intriguing, excited or up in arms, so it was reported were the Muslims all over India. Muslims of all three presidencies, Bombay,<sup>28</sup> Bengal<sup>29</sup> and Madras,<sup>30</sup> were given out to be equally strong in their anti-British sentiments. (The Muslim populations of the cities and towns of Agra, Allahabad, Amritsar, Banaras, Belgaum, Bakarganj, Bahagapur, Bombay, Budaun, Calcutta, Chittagong, Dacca, Firozpur, Faizabad, Fatehgarh, Fatehpur, Gorakhpur, Hyderabad (Deccan), Jessore, Jaunpur, Lahore, Ludhiana, Monghyr, Moradabad, Mymensingh, Madras, Nagpur, Patna, Peshawar, Poona, Rampur, Ratnagiri and Sawantwadi were either reported to be in actual revolt or eagerly awaiting a suitable opportunity).<sup>31</sup> Muslim plots, it was largely reported, were discovered everywhere and they seemed to be at the bottom of everything.

The countryside was no exception to this. Far in the North-West, the Khyber Pass<sup>32</sup> and Swat state<sup>33</sup> were reported to have become centres of Muslim intrigue. So great was the Muslim zeal that at some places voluntary subscriptions were raised, men were hired and arms provided.<sup>34</sup> Seditious letters written by private Muslim individuals were intercepted.<sup>35</sup> The Muslims' stores were reported to have become centres of revolutionary talk. Cooper thus observed:

28. The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, pp.245-46; Wallace, op. cit., p.10; "The War in India," Illustrated London News, 19 Sept. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 14 Sept. 1857; Dr. E. H. Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the Earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859, 11, p.769.

29. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, pp.647-48 and 720, "The Mutiny and the Missions," p.578 and also, The Rev. Williamson (letter from), L, 1858, p.562; Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858, p.35.

30. Crisis in India, its Causes and Proposed Remedies, p.29; "The Outbreak in India," CEM., XLIII, 1857, p.265.

31. AGRA. Charles Raikes, Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India, pp.52-53; Sherring, op. cit., p.89; Dwarkanath Lahoree (letter from), MH., L, 1858, pp.253-54.

ALLAHABAD. The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), MM., 1857, p.203; Carey, op. cit., pp.187-88; Sherring, op. cit., pp.208-209.

AMRITSAR. Joseph Kingsmil, British Rule and British Christianity in India, p.69; "The Poorbeah Mutiny," Blackwood's, LXXXIII, 1858, p.101.

BANARAS. Sherring, op. cit., p.260; The Rev. W. Buyers (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.205.

BELGAUM. Manchester Guardian, 29 Sept. 1857; The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.245; Nolan, op. cit., p.769; Wallace, op. cit., p.10.

BAKARGANJ. "The Mutiny and the Missions," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.578.

BHAGALPUR. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.649.

BOMBAY. See n. 28.

BUDAUN. "Perils in India," HW., XIX, 1859.

CALCUTTA. The Scotsman (letter from India), 19 Aug. 1857; Manchester Guardian, 6 Aug. 1857; "Foreign

Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.655; The Rev. A. F. Lacroix (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.203 and also, The Rev. Dr. Boaz (letter from), pp.222-23; "The Revolt of the Bengal Army," DUM., L, 1857, pp.385-86.

CHITTAGONG. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., L, 1858, p.120; The Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858, p.35.

DACCA. "The Mutiny and the Missions," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.578; The Sixty-seventh Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1859 (London: Printed by Yates and Alexander, 1859), p.34.

FIROZPUR. Cooper, op. cit., pp.13-14.

FAIZABAD. Capt. G. Hutchinson, Narrative of the Mutinies in Oudh, p.111.

FATEHGARH. Sherring, op. cit., pp.125-26.

FATEHPUR. Ibid., pp.182 and 186-87.

GORAKHPUR. Ibid., pp.279-80.

HYDERABAD. Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion...., pp.219-20; Nolan, op. cit., p.770; Capt. Hastings Frazer, Our Faithful Ally, the Nizam. Being a Historical Sketch of Events Showing the Value of the Nizam's Alliance to the British Government in India and his Services during the Mutinies (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1865), pp.285-86.

JESSORE. [The Rev.] J. Trafford (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.514, and "The Mutiny and the Missions," p.578 and also "Foreign Intelligence - India," L, 1858, pp.182-83.

JAUNPUR. Sherring, op. cit., p.266.

LAHORE. Cooper, op. cit., p.20.

LUDHIANA. Sherring, op. cit., pp.319-20.

MONGHYR. Carey, loc. cit., p.216; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, pp.648-49.

MORADABAD. Carey, loc. cit., pp.144-45.

MYMENSINGH. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.647.

MADRAS. See n. 30.

NAGPUR. The Press, 8 Aug. 1857.

PATNA. Carey, loc. cit., p.216; William Taylor, The Patna Crisis, pp.44-50 and 71-72; Duff, op. cit., p.63; Kingsmill, op. cit., p.63; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, pp.648-49.

PESHAWAR. Julius George Medley, A Year's Campaigning in India, March 1857 to March 1858, p.26.

POONA. Wallace, op. cit., p.10; Nolan, op. cit., p.769; The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.245.

RAMPUR. Carey, loc. cit., p.144.

RATNAGIRI. Nolan, op. cit., p.769.

SAWANTWADI. Ibid.

32. Lieut.-Gen. Sir Sydney Cotton, Nine Years on the North-West Frontier of India, pp.202-204. Cotton tells that a "fanatical Mahomedan priest" Syyed Amīr, had raised the Muslim standard in the Khyber Pass, beyond the reach of the British authorities - the region being in the tribal belt and not under British control. From there Syyed Amīr attempted to undermine the loyalty of the British army stationed in the Peshawar region, "raise a force of Hindostanee mutineers for a religious crusade", and launch an attack on the British frontier. The Syyed met sufficient success and was enabled to present himself twice at the frontier posts of "Mitchnee" and "Abazaie". His attempts, however, were successfully foiled.

In the case of Khyber as well, I have retained the old spelling, which though incorrect is current. Now there is some tendency however, to spell the place as Khaiber, which is the correct spelling because the place is called خاىبر and not خائبر or خائبر.

33. The Press, 19 Sept. 1857; The Spectator, 19 Sept. 1857; "The Poorbeah Mutiny - The Punjab, No. 1V," LXXXIII, 1858, p.652.

34. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, pp.648-49; Carey, loc. cit., p.216; Duff, op. cit., p.63.

35. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX,  
1857, pp.648-49; Carey, loc. cit., p.216.

The shops of Elahi and Nubee Buksh (Amritsar) as familiar in India as Moses and Son in England.... became arenas of political discussion. The Delhi, Bareilly and Shajahanpur massacres were freely discussed and the necessity of imitation became a matter of commonplace talk.<sup>36</sup>

The participation and the joy and jubilation of the followers of Islām was reported to know no bounds. Even long-standing Muslim domestic servants in the employ of the Company's officials, if not actually implicated, were ecstatic at the news of the convulsion. Cooper tells us of the rapturous notes into which the Muslim Khānsāmān of General Hewitt had fallen after he had heard of the rising; forgetting his twenty years' service, he at once started "flinging all the plates from the dining room into the air, dancing with joy", when General Hewitt's aide-de-camp, Captain Hogg "suddenly allayed his transports" by killing him on the spot.<sup>37</sup> The Muslim household servants at Muree were said to have gone a step further, -- they were actually implicated in a plot.<sup>38</sup> Even Charles Raikes, the Judge of the Sadar Court at Agra, who was inclined to believe that the outbreak was a mutiny, had a similar complaint to make against the Muslim servants.<sup>39</sup>

Nothing could better illustrate the nature of the uprising than the attitude adopted by Muslims towards the British during the outbreak. As rulers, as

36. Cooper, op. cit., pp.33-34.
37. Ibid., pp.100-101. Another similar case was reported by L. E. Ruutz Rees. See: A Personal Narrative....., p.269.
38. Cooper, op. cit., p.118.
39. Raikes, op. cit., p.64.

foreigners, and as Christians, the British had to undergo all types of experiences. If there were a few instances of Muslim generosity, there were many more of Muslim bigotry. The instances of generosity were quite insufficient to balance acts which went against their own Muslim vision of moral law. These were the experiences, past and present, from which the advocates of the Muslim rebellion school of thought drew their support. If the fact of Muslim rule over the subcontinent; earlier Muslim reactions towards the establishment of British rule in India; towards Christian missionary activity; towards the English educational system; one and all provided the strong foundation on which to build the superstructure; the material for the superstructure itself was deduced from some of the practical experiences of the mutiny. In fact, the Muslims were driven mad by their pent-up feelings towards their Farangī rulers and their missionary activity. Many were only endeavouring to protect Islām from what they thought were the threats of Christian encroachment. Many thought a Jihād (holy war) had started.<sup>40</sup> W. H. Russell even tells us of Ghāzīs taking part in the battle of Bareilly. They wore green turbans, Kamarbands and silver signet rings with verses of the Qur'ān engraved on them. Raising cries of "the Faith!",

40. Sherring, op. cit., pp.84-85.

"the Faith!", they were said to have courted death in the bravest manner.<sup>41</sup> We also hear of a Muslim lady leading a sortie out of the city of Delhi. Calling her a Jihādān, H. H. Greathed, the Commissioner and Political Agent at Delhi, described her as another "Joan of Arc." Dressed in male attire, her head covered with a green turban, this lady was said to have fought like a "Satan" until she was captured.<sup>42</sup> With many Muslims, however, the outbreak became simply an opportunity for passing all limits of religious legality and traditional behaviour.

Quite a few incidents of religious fanaticism and bigotry were reported in which the Muslims were either actors or suspects. If Dr. Batson secured his escape because of his knowledge of the native language and by making an appeal in the name of the Prophet Muḥammad,<sup>43</sup> Wilāyat 'Alī, a Muslim convert to Christianity, died a martyr's death.<sup>44</sup> Referring to the Muslim activity outside of Agra, Dawārkānāth Lahōrī, a Hindū convert to Christianity, wrote that the "fanatical and inhuman followers of the false prophet armed to the teeth, like so many hungry wild beasts sucking the forlorn and inoffensive followers of the Lamb for their prey, and with the hideous war cry 'Allah! Allah!' breathing bloody vengeance against them and those who moved by compassion, would dare shelter them."<sup>45</sup> Marcus, an English soldier, was reported to have

41. William Howard Russell, My Diary in India, 11, p.16.

42. Greathed, op. cit., p.130. For a similar piece of information, see also: Hodson, op. cit., p.259.

43. People's Paper, 22 Aug. 1857; Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion....., pp.62-64. In fact, very largely reported.

44. The Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858, p.4; "The Martyrs and Confessors of Delhi," WMM., Fifth Series, 1V, 1858, pp.548-49; Kingsmill, op. cit., pp.70-84.

45. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., I, 1858, pp.253-54.

been offered a choice between Islām and death.<sup>46</sup> Carnillious, a native Christian, had to embrace Islām twice.<sup>47</sup> Robert Tucker, the Judge at Fatehpur,<sup>48</sup> and Timothy Luther, another native Christian,<sup>49</sup> underwent similar experiences. Dhōkul Parasād, the headmaster of the City School at Fatehgarh, his wife, four children and twenty-eight other Christians were reportedly killed by the Nawāb of Farrukhabad.<sup>50</sup> The native Christians of Gorakhpur were said to have suffered almost as badly; they were compelled to abandon their houses and take refuge at Aliganj. Not only that, seven of them were stated to have escaped only after their acceptance of Islām.<sup>51</sup>

All these incidents were looked upon as a manifestation of the general enmity of Islām towards Christianity. The result was that pathetic and at times highly moving verses were composed on several of these cruel and unfortunate happenings. These reflected the strength of public opinion on the subject. The Honourable and Reverend Baptist Wriothlesley Noel, M.A., thus referred to the plight of Gōpīnāth Nandī whom he described as a Muslim convert to Christianity. (He had never been a Muslim as his name clearly indicates). This is how Nandī was said to have suffered at the hands of the people of his supposed former faith.<sup>52</sup>

46. The Rev. Robert Meek, The Martyr of Allahabad. Memorials of Ensign Cheek of the 6th. N.B.I., murdered by the Sepoys at Allahabad (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1858), p.30.

47. Sherring, op. cit., pp.278-81.

48. Ibid., p.182.

49. Ibid., pp.283-90.

50. Ibid., p.151.

51. Ibid., pp.303-304; "India: Flight and Deliverance of Native Christians," CEM., XLIV, 1858, pp.319-20; Kingsmill, op. cit., pp.68-69.

52. All accounts which refer to such a dialogue between a Mawlawī and a native convert to Christianity at Allahabad furnish only one name and that is that of Gōpīnāth Nandī. The name definitely indicates that he was a Hindū and, therefore, there could be no question of Nandī's being a "slave of Mahomet" before his conversion to Christianity. For Nandī's story itself, read: "India," MM., XXIII, 1859, pp.149-50; Kingsmill, op. cit., pp.64-68; "The Courage of Faith: Gopinanth Nandy and Ensign Cheek," CEM., XLIV, 1858, pp.109-11; "Converts in India under Trial," Fifth Series, WMM., III, 1857, p.1045.

But who is he that elderman,  
Bound, beaten, fearing worse,  
On whom each fierce Mohemmadan  
is pointing out his curse?

Why are those guards around him set?  
Those chords upon his wrist?  
He was the slave of Mahomet,  
And now he preaches Christ.

'Repent!' exclaimed the sepoy crew  
'Or Allah's vengeance taste!'  
'Repent!' exclaimed their captain too,  
'or this day is thy last!'

'Seek then the prophet's aid by prayer,  
Abjure the Christian lie  
Or by his sacred name I swear  
Apostate thou shalt die!'<sup>53</sup>

In short, bitterness on the part of Muslims was reported from all parts of India. The letter of almost every missionary had something to say on this subject.<sup>54</sup> The Rev. Robinson, the Baptist Pastor at Johnnugger,<sup>55</sup> complained of Muslim malignity when he wrote to say that the Muslims "in our neighbourhood gave expressions to feelings no less bitter than their brethren elsewhere."<sup>56</sup> Almost everywhere their slogan was that the Company's rule had come to an end and that the Muslims were to have supremacy in its stead.<sup>57</sup>

Such opinions, already strongly held, tended to become stronger still when the attitude of the Muslims was contrasted with the behaviour of the Hindūs. There were occasions when the Muslims attacked Europeans or native

53. Meek, op. cit., pp.54-55.

54. "Reports of Mission Stations," The Sixty-Sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858. Read the reports sent by the Baptist Missionaries stationed at Johnnugger, Dacca, Comilla, Chittagong and Mathura, pp.17, 34, 35 and 45 respectively. Also see footnotes to Chapters VII and VIII.

55. Probably the reference is to Jaynagar in Bihar.

56. "Reports of Missionary Stations," The Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist....., p.17.

57. Ibid., pp.17, 34 and 35.

Christians and Hindūs rescued them.<sup>58</sup> The Reverend W. Buyers, a missionary, in his letter home told how the native Christians in Banaras were protected by "a heathen" -- a job rendered difficult the next day by Muslims "some of whom said, that if they got a chance they would kill all Christians."<sup>59</sup> Gōpīnāth Nandī, an evangelist of the American mission at Fatehpur, while attacked by a group of Muslims, was saved by a Hindū goldsmith.<sup>60</sup> Nathaniel, a native Christian of Agra, along with nine others, while hunted by Muslims, was saved by some Hindūs.<sup>61</sup> The Reverend W. Beynon, the London Missionary Society's missionary at Belgaum, informed his people in England how the Christians there were saved by a Hindū friend, Mooto Comar [Muttū Kumār], and how Mooto's employment of very trusted servants led to the discovery of a plot among the Muslims. The plot had as its objective the murder of all Europeans at and between Belgaum and Poona.<sup>62</sup> Similar were the experiences or complaints of several others.<sup>63</sup> The "Volunteer" wrote in his Journal:

That the villainous and barbarous deeds committed have, with few exceptions, been perpetrated by the Mahommedans there is little doubt: and however guilty the Hindoo soldiery may be, the Hindoos as a race have generally been the people to save and protect the Christian.<sup>64</sup>

58. The Spectator, 22 Aug. 1857; "India: Progress of Insurrection," MM., XXI, 1857, p.205. In fact, very largely reported.
59. "India: Progress of Insurrection," loc. cit.
60. "India," MM., XXI, 1859, pp.149-50.
61. Sherring, op. cit., pp.98-103.
62. The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p. 245.
63. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., L, 1858, pp.50 and 254; Sherring, op. cit., pp.29-30 and 134-35; The Indian Crisis. A Special General Meeting of the Church Missionary Society at Exeter Hall, on Tuesday, January 12th, 1858 (London: Church Missionary House, 1858), pp.36-37.
64. Volunteer [Swanston], op. cit., p.56.

And an officer from Naini Tal had this to say:

Since I wrote yesterday news has come that Hindoos have arisen against the Mahomedans and seized Moradabad and the guns there, and that they have also split and are ready to go at one another's throats at Bareilly. The Mahomedans have been oppressing the Hindoos terribly, and the worm has turned. The Hindoos are numerous enough to win the day if they are staunch.

They are also very well affected to us (at least in this neighbourhood), and have been sending us constant messages to come back again, which we should have done if we had had any force here at all....<sup>65</sup>

Those who held to this thesis were convinced that the outbreak was entirely a Muslim movement, in which Hindūs had no part. They had reasons to offer, on the basis of which they tried to rationalize their arguments. It was contended that:

Firstly, it was centuries ago that the Hindūs were deprived of their domination in India - practically a millennium. During such a long period it was unlikely that the art of government would be retained by them. In fact, they had come to believe in their status; they had ceased to be aspiring; ambition had become foreign to them. In the future too, maintained the London Journal and Weekly Record of Literature, Science and Arts, it "would be a matter of indifference to them who were their rulers."<sup>66</sup> Secondly, the Hindūs had, it was contended, not yet

65. The Times (letter of an officer from Naini Tal), 5 Oct. 1857.

66. "The Christianization of India," London Journal, XXVI, 1857, p.109. For a similar opinion, see also: Russell, op. cit., II, p.78.

forgotten the tyranny of the Muslim rule. They hated them from the core of their being. As such, it was maintained, they would not be prepared to restore the past and so cause their own doom.<sup>67</sup>

Thirdly, the rich merchants in the Indian community, it was stated, came from among the Hindūs. The establishment of peace and security was in their interest. This was what, it was thought, they knew they could only get from the British administration. The Missionary Magazine wrote that "notwithstanding the critical state of the country, there is much to excite our confidence and gratitude, and to fill our hearts with thanksgivings to our heavenly Father. The whole country, including all its wealth and respectability is with us -- that is, the mass of the Hindus."<sup>68</sup> The wealthy landowners and bankers, happily reported a lady from Gwalior, were feeling as concerned as the English were. They openly said that if once the Muslims gained power in the subcontinent, they would snatch their lands and riches from them.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, it was believed that Hindūism was not an aggressive religion. Aggressiveness was thought only to be in the nature of Islām.<sup>70</sup> Unlike Muslims, the Hindūs had no religion to preach -- nothing to propagate. Politically as well, it was affirmed, while the Muslims had a tradition

67. J. L. Archer, Indian Mutinies Accounted For. Being an Essay on the Subject, pp.7-8; "State Intervention in the Religions of India," Letter to The Times, 1 Sept. 1857.

68. The Rev. William Beynon (letter from), MM., XXI, 1857, p.246. For similar opinions, see also: Wallace, op. cit., pp.8-9; N. A. Chick (ed.), Annals of the Indian Rebellion, containing Narratives of the Outbreak and Eventful Occurrences, and Stories of Personal Adventures, during the Mutiny of 1857-58, with an Appendix Comprising Miscellaneous Facts, Anecdotes etc., 1857-58, p.2.

69. The Scotsman (letter from India), 18 July 1857. For a similar opinion, see also: Wallace, loc. cit.

70. "The Progress of the Indian Rebellion," Illustrated London News, 5 Sept. 1857. For similar opinions, see also: Chick, loc. cit., p.6.; "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., XLIX, 1857, p.717.

of almost a thousand years to impel them to action and while they had a ruler to reinstate, the Hindūs had no king to rally them.<sup>71</sup> Nationally speaking, the Muslims were represented as a homogeneous body. They were looked upon as a conquered nation; and a vanquished people, it was believed, would naturally consult the chances of their independence. In order to achieve the goal of freedom, it was pointed out, the Muslims possessed the requisite ammunition -- an ammunition embodied in the unity of action they enjoyed. This unity, however, was said to be wanting among the Hindūs.<sup>72</sup> It was reported that not only did the Hindūs not conspire against the British, but the most significant fact about them was that they even reproached the Muslims for misleading them.<sup>73</sup> In these circumstances the Advocate Judge was able to assert at the Delhi trial:

....it is a most significant fact, that though we come upon traces of Mussulman intrigue, wherever our investigation has carried us, yet not one paper has been found to shew that the Hindus, as a body, had been conspiring against us, or that their Brahmins or priests had been preaching a crusade against Christians. In their case there has been no king to set up, no religion to be propagated by the sword. To attribute to them, under such circumstances, the circulation of these chapaties or the fabrications about ground-bones in the flour, would be to ascribe to them acts without a meaning, and a criminal deception without any adequate motive.<sup>74</sup>

71. Chick, op. cit., p.6. For a similar opinion, see also: Investigation into Some...., p.7.

72. Dunlop, op. cit., p.152. For similar opinions, see also: India, the Revolt and the Home Government, pp.80-81; Volunteer [Swanston], op. cit., p.54; Cooper, op. cit., p.134; Investigation into Some...., pp.7-8.

73. [The Rev.] J. Trafford (letter from), MH., XLIX, 1857, p.514; Anderson, op. cit., p.13.

74. Chick, op. cit., p.6.

In brief, it was claimed, that it was not in the political, religious, social or commercial interests of the Hindūs to take up arms against the British, and as such the outbreak could not be attributed to them. It was purely a religious war waged by the followers of Islām. Archer took issue with those who called it just a political affair. He alleged:

....I would say that when the Hindoos had once been induced to cross the Rubicon, the Mohammedans would not fail, as their assistance became valuable, and indeed indispensable, to turn the religious war to political account.<sup>75</sup>

To prove it further still, the Hindūs were represented as cheerily reconciled to the falling fortunes of the rebels, while the Muslims were gloomy and sad.<sup>76</sup> The Rev. Williamson, a missionary, reported from Sewry that while all Muslims had believed that the English would either be all killed or driven out of India and were now feeling crestfallen, the Hindūs did not share such beliefs or feelings. The latter neither wished nor believed in the expulsion of the British.<sup>77</sup> That was why, argued the Reverend Lawrence, the Baptist missionary at Monghyr, the Hindūs, whenever they were asked to condemn the mutineers, always joined in, but it was not so with the Muslims.<sup>78</sup> Even after the backbone of the rebellion had been crushed, the missionaries could not resume their activities in the predominantly Muslim areas.<sup>79</sup> On the contrary, it was

75. Archer, op. cit., pp.11-12.
76. "Foreign Intelligence - India," MH., L, 1858, p.585.
77. Ibid., p.652.
78. Ibid., p.585.
79. Ibid., XLIX, 1857, p.721.

reported, in Hindū regions the evangelistic work had either continued through the insurrection or was resumed shortly thereafter. In such regions, while the number of Hindū audiences had gone up considerably, the expression worn by a casual Muslim listener, it was stated, betrayed his injured pride -- his recent defeat was writ large on his face.<sup>80</sup>

The depth of the feeling of the Muslim rebellion theorists is evidenced further by the retaliatory steps and punishments, especially their implementation, that some members of this school proposed for the Muslims. Such an attitude was based upon their conviction that Islām or its followers were the only enemies of both the British rule in India and the spread of Christianity on the subcontinent. The result was that even a religious minded person like Outram failed to mention the Muslims, while advocating lenient treatment for the Hindūs to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces.<sup>81</sup> The omission looks deliberate when one considers a fruitless attempt by Outram to separate the Hindūs from the Muslims so as to weaken the latter's position. Raikes, who regarded the uprising as a sepoy mutiny, plus a Muslim and Gūjar affair, with an emphasis upon the Muslim role,

80. Ibid., L, 1858, p.585.

81. Maj.-Gen. [Sir James] Outram, Outram's Campaign in India, 1857-58; comprising General Orders and Despatches relating to the Defence and Relief of Lucknow Garrison and Capture of the City by the British Forces, p.285.

completely concurred with Philip Egerton, the Magistrate of Delhi, when the latter proposed the conversion of the Delhi Masjid into a church with each brick named after a Christian martyr. Raikes went so far as to write to Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjab, urging him to attend to this proposition.<sup>82</sup> An Anglo-Indian ardently advocated through the agency of Calcutta Englishman the re-introduction of torture for the Muslims of Delhi. He recommended that "respectable" Muslims should be subjected to the thumb-screw or the rack.<sup>83</sup> The author of "A Few Words from the Khyber", while advocating a memorable punishment for the "murderers of women and infants", gave vent to his wrath against the city of Delhi. Especially emphasizing the Muslim character of the city, he observed:

....the city which has been for centuries the stronghold of Islamism in India, and in which was hatched this last great conspiracy against the Christian religion should be utterly destroyed; and that on its site should be built another city, to be the centre from which victorious Christianity should radiate to every point from North to South, from East to West, from Bombay to Calcutta, from the Himalayas to the Cape Camorin.<sup>84</sup>

Thus the treatment of the Muslim population of Delhi was especially harsh. They were all regarded as unfaithful. Every Muslim house was reportedly ransacked and every Muslim inhabitant was turned out of the city to

82. Raikes, op. cit., p.78 and 78n.

83. The Nation, 24 Oct. 1857. The paper, editorially reporting the suggestion, taunted:

Such is the English humanity in the middle of the 19th century.

Since the press in India at that time was under government control, the paper held the Government responsible for "at least not disapproving" this tendency.

84. "A Few Words from the Khyber," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.613.

remain in banishment for six months. The treatment given to the Hindūs was far more lenient than that which was the lot of the Muslims.<sup>85</sup> The Missionary Herald of January 1859 had this to report on the authority of the Rev. James Smith:

As yet Mohammedans have not been admitted to the city. There are about sixty thousand Hindoos, a third of the former inhabitants. The beautiful musjids [sic] are all occupied as barracks by the Sikhs, and there can be no doubt that the humiliation of Mohammedans is complete.<sup>86</sup>

A writer in Fraser's Magazine proudly remarked:

....the unfriendly race of Mahomedans was put on its defence, and banished for the time from that city which had so long been the pestilent focus of Mahomedan intrigues....<sup>87</sup>

Later on, however, those Muslims who were allowed to return to their homes had to give proof of their good intentions before gaining entrance into Delhi.<sup>88</sup>

There were many others who could not contain their happiness at what they thought to be the declining fortunes of Islām -- "its violent overthrow and humiliation."<sup>89</sup> A writer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine thus observed:

While believing that the insurrection was meant as a lesson to us, I also believe that by it a great blow has been struck at the Mohammedan religion -- a blow from which it will never recover in India. Tens of thousands of its most bigoted supporters will lose their lives;

85. "Delhi As It Is," Fraser's, LVlll, 1858,  
p.63.
86. The Rev. James Smith, "Resumption of the  
Mission in Delhi," MH., Ll, 1859, p.390.
87. "Delhi As It Is," Fraser's, LVlll, 1858,  
p.64.
88. Ibid., p.63.
89. "The Crisis in India," (Review of Macleod  
Wyllie's book, Commerce, Resources and Prospects of India),  
The Scotsman, 9 Sept. 1857.

the King of Delhi, the head of the religion, will infallibly be hung; and the city itself, the great stronghold of the faith, will be utterly destroyed. This mutiny, I believe, will be the death blow to Islamism, and from its ashes will spring up and flourish, that only true religion which is destined to overshadow the whole earth.<sup>90</sup>

90. "A Few Words from the Khyber," Blackwood's, LXXXII, 1857, p.614. Bahādur Shāh Zafar, the octogenarian Mughal ruler of Delhi, was soon sent to Rangoon in perpetual exile and twenty-four Muslim princes were shot to death in a single day at Delhi. See: R. R. Sethi and V. D. Mahajan, British Rule in India and After, 1707-1956, p.162.

## CHAPTER IX

### WORLD-WIDE JIHĀD?

A sizeable section of the British public looked at the uprising in India as if it were a Jihād waged by world-wide Islām against world-wide Christianity. Their conviction seems to have been born of their own interpretation of Islām; their belief that Islām was a religion of the sword; the discovery of a document at Khurramshahr (then called Mohamra) in Persia; allied treatment of Turkey after the Crimean War and its possible repercussions in the Muslim world; stray incidents in the Turkish empire and, finally, the brutal massacre of twenty-one Christians at Jeddah in 1858. This interesting attitude gained momentary strength all over Britain after the last-mentioned incident and subsided shortly after, leaving not much of a trace behind. Like the Muslim rebellion school of thought, this group gained its adherents from all different levels of British society, irrespective of their political, social, or denominational affiliations. One thing was evident, however. With few exceptions the attitude remained confined to the British Press. It would be hard for the present writer to assign

any definite reasons to their conclusions, except that they were based upon their advocates' understanding of Islām, the contemporary situation, and perhaps the journalistic flavour of current writing about Islām. It is no wonder, therefore, that this attitude could not last long.

It was believed by advocates of this thesis that Allied help to Turkey to meet the Russian threat in the 1850s was regarded as an affront to the Turkish power. The Allies, by sending their armies, had slighted the Turks -- a slight which the latter had not forgotten. Not only that; in fact it was a help, it was believed, that had humiliated the entire Muslim world. The consequences and the conditions attached to this military assistance appeared to the "Faithful" as a menace to the "doctrine of Islamism" in the region. The supposition ran that the Muslims regarded it as a blow aimed at their four centuries of hegemony on the banks of the Bosphorus.<sup>1</sup> The Allied insistence that the Porte introduce reforms gave the Muslim states, especially the Muslims of Persia and India, an impression that the Allies had helped Turkey to betray her.<sup>2</sup> The Muslims all over the world were reported to have felt indignant at the Tanzīmāt.<sup>3</sup> The apprehension among the Muslims was that the Allies, by

1. "Great Mahometan Conspiracy against the Christians," The Tablet, 24 Oct. 1857.
2. Dr. E. H. Nolan, The Illustrated History of the British Empire in India and the East, from the Earliest Times to the Suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1859, 11, p.711; "India," Edin. Rev., CVI, 1857, p.567; The Times, 30 July, 1858; Illustrated London News, 17 July, 1858.
3. Tanzîmât, or rather Tanzîmât-i-Khairîye, meaning beneficent legislation, is "the term used to denote the reforms introduced into the government and administration of the Ottoman empire from the beginning of the reign of Sultân 'Abdul Madjîd and inaugurated by the charter generally called the KHATT-i SHARÎF of GULKHANE." Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1913 ed., IV:2, p.656.

entering into a treacherous alliance, had destroyed "the ascendancy of the religion of Muhammad and of the grand Padishah." And thus it was, it was asserted, that "the war in Turkey prepared the way for a Mohammedan struggle in India, in Persia -- everywhere."<sup>4</sup> It was stated that the Christians had never been more detested, persecuted or abused than since the "Christian states declared themselves the protectors of Mahometanism."<sup>5</sup> A writer in the Edinburgh Review contended that all this was "attributed to the sinister influence of Great Britain."<sup>6</sup> The result was, it was stressed, that the Muslims made no secret of their feelings; they broke out everywhere, whenever a pretext presented itself for the "explosion of their suppressed hatred."<sup>7</sup>

A further development of this spirit took place, it was contended, when Persia, already aroused, was itself threatened with hostilities from England. She dispatched emissaries to the states of Central Asia and called upon Muslims "to reject the alliance with a nation whose friendship was more dangerous to Islāmism, than its enmity could be." The author of the article "India", published in the Edinburgh Review, went on to argue that the emissaries, having been sent to India with the idea of playing upon the religious fears of the Muslims of India,

4. Nolan, op. cit., p.711. For a similar opinion, see also: "India," Edin. Rev., CV1, 1857, p.567.

5. "Great Mahometan Conspiracy....," The Tablet, 24 Oct. 1857.

6. "India," loc. cit.

7. "Great Mahometan Conspiracy....," loc. cit.

had thus incited the soldiery to revolt, but the train of powder could not be ignited in time to aid the Persian designs. The only reason for this failure was, he maintained, that England struck Persia too quickly and effectively, so that England was even able to relieve her invading armies in time for them to aid in the suppression of the revolt in India.<sup>8</sup> W. H. Carey, however, dealt with the Persian machination more elaborately and emphatically, when he referred to the proclamation of the King of Persia found at Delhi. To him this document was a sufficient indication of a Persian-backed Muslim scheme for an uprising and their plan of indiscriminately murdering Europeans, and thereafter of restoring the House of Timur at Delhi.<sup>9</sup> He attached so great an importance to this paper that he came to regard the late events in India as the immediate cause of the outbreak, and the machinations of Tehran as the ultimate one. The well-known missionary believed that it was the Persian proclamation that "had already unsettled the minds of good Mussulmans throughout the length and breadth of the land, and laid them open to the reception of any well devised plan whereby they might regain that ascendancy which they had lost for so many years." Otherwise, he thought, the Muslim disaffection in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras could not possibly have been due to the influence of Delhi and Lucknow alone.

8. "India," Edin. Rev., CV1, 1857, p.567.

9. W. H. Carey (ed.), The Mahomedan Rebellion; its Premonitory Symptoms, the Outbreak and Suppression; with an Appendix, p.6. For similar opinions, see also: Frederick Cooper, The Crisis in the Punjab from the 10th of May until the Fall of Delhi, p.Xlll; Free Press, 3 June, 1857; The Spectator, 4 July, 1858.

To emphasize this aspect of the revolt he went on to observe:

And we are rather confirmed in opinion from the circumstance that when intelligence of the rebellion reached Teheran [sic] the ulemas preached up the righteousness of the cause in all their mosques, and supplicated the divine blessing on the efforts of the insurgents.<sup>10</sup>

So sure was Carey of the Persian machination that he dated the Muslim conspiracy back only to the Anglo-Persian war. The basis of such a view with Carey was the discovery of a "manifesto of the Shah of Persia," found in the camp of a prince after the battle of Khurramshahr. The evidence quoted in full by Carey provides, if an authentic document, an insight into the Persian feelings, verging on conviction, of the common wrongs of the Muslims at the hands of the British in particular and the Farangī in general. It also gives a vivid pen-picture of the Persian efforts to put up a common front against the common enemy.<sup>11</sup> The manifesto was indeed a strong exhortation to the Muslims of Persia as well as of Afghanistan to "arise in the defence of the Orthodox faith of the Prophet."<sup>12</sup> After having referred to various army commands and the dispatch of various troops, the manifesto alluded to India and read:

10. Carey, The Mahomedan Rebellion....., p.6.
11. Ibid., pp.2-3.
12. Ibid., p.3.

....and in the direction of Cutch and Mekran towards Scinde [Sind], and from the direction of Affghanistan [sic] the Nawab Ahsham Ooh Sultanut with 30,000 men and 40 guns, abundantly supplied and equipped; and the Affghan Sirdars (viz). Sirdar Sultan Ahmed Khan, Sirdar Shah Doolah Khan, Sirdar Sultan Ali Khan and Sirdar Mahomed Allum Khan, who have been appointed by his Majesty, have been ordered towards India, and they are hopeful that by the blessing of divine aid they may be victorious.<sup>13</sup>

The manifesto, urging "all true believers" to unite, fervently invoked their help against the British. In fact, it gave a call for jihād, which read:

And it is necessary that the Affghan tribes and the inhabitants of that country, who are co-religionists of the Persians, and who possess the same Kuran and kiblah [Qiblah, meaning direction of prayer: i.e., toward Mecca and the Ka'bah] and laws of the Prophet should also take part in the Jahad [Jihād] and extend the hand of brotherhood, and on receiving these glad tidings act according to the words of the prophet....and for the purpose of settling the quarrel it is necessary that not only a small number of true believers should stand forth in the defence of the faith, but that the whole should answer our call....and we are hopeful that after the publication of this proclamation, Dost Mahomed Khan, Ameer of Cabool [sic].... should also unite with us against the tribe of wanderers from the path of righteousness, and that he should become one of the leaders of the faithful in this Jahad, and that he should become a 'Ghazi' in Hindostan.... And this proclamation is published for the information of all true believers, and please God the followers of Islam in India and Scinde will also unite with us and take vengeance upon that tribe (the British) for all the injuries which the Holy faith has suffered from them, and will not withhold any sacrifices in the holy cause.<sup>14</sup>

13. Ibid., pp.3-4.

14. Ibid., p.4.

This manifesto and the clauses which it contained were, to Carey, a clue to the "formidable rebellion" which plagued the British Indian administration for quite some time. Frederick Cooper and a few others also emphasized the influence of the Persian proclamation.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, the Reverend G. P. Badger, a chaplain in the diocese of Bombay, had another piece of evidence to offer on Persian complicity in the conspiracy. He referred to what he called "a singular proof", a Persian Government Farmān,<sup>16</sup> which appeared in the Tehran Gazette in March 1857. The object of this decree, contended Badger, was to "excite a Jihad or religious war against the infidel British." According to this clergyman, the decree, after severely commenting on the British Indian financial and taxation systems, charged the British Government in India with an attempt to: subvert the religion of the natives of India; force the wives of the "faithful" to walk abroad unveiled; compel them to "violate another precept of the Holy Koran, by commanding them to drink"; and, above all, to "crown the nefarious and profane designs", force Muslim children into English schools at a "very young" age and keep them there until eighteen years -- an age at which the youth would not submit to the initiatory rite of circumcision, thus enabling the rulers to convert him from Islām.<sup>17</sup>

15. Cooper, op. cit., p.Xl11; Free Press,  
3 June 1857.

16. Can be translated as, "Edict", "Order",  
"Ordinance", or "Decree". Here, however, "Edict" or  
"Decree" seem to be better substitutes for Farmān.

17. The Rev. George Percy Badger, Government in  
its Relation with Education and Christianity in India  
(London: Smith, Elder and Co. Bombay: Smith, Taylor and  
Co., 1858), pp.14-15.

The Annual Register, as did the Advocate Judge of the Army<sup>18</sup> at the trial of Bahādur Shāh, and quite a few others, referred to the discovery of "a traitrous correspondence", which, according to the Register was kept up between the courts of Delhi and Persia. It reported that efforts were being made to allure Dōst Muḥammad of Afghanistan into the conspiracy. The belief was that Dōst was being asked to invade the Panjab at a time when the Bengal army had revolted; and when the North-West frontier had been left defenceless. The object of such a plot was given as the inculcation of "dis-satisfaction" in the ranks of the native army. It was thought that the difficulty of decoying the sepoy into this combination had prevented a much earlier rising.<sup>19</sup> Dr. Alexander Duff likewise feared that Persian agents had long been present among the Muslim princes of India. In his letter of 26 August, 1857, addressed to Dr. Tweedie in Scotland, the Scottish missionary further informed the latter:

And to-day one of our best-informed journals positively announces that the "Government of Bombay has transmitted to the Supreme Government of India, certain Persian documents addressed to the Khan of Kelat [Kalat], asking him to give his assistance to the mutineers in expelling the British power."

Duff attached great significance to it because of the Shī'ah ties between India and Persia.<sup>20</sup>

18. Read Chapter VII, pp.246-47 and 249.
19. Annual Register, 1857, p.240.
20. The Rev. Alexander Duff, The Indian Rebellion; its Causes and Results in a Series of Letters, p.94.

All this becomes more meaningful when one reads about the Indian Government's efforts to shroud the Persian war with complete secrecy as well as the rumours spread by the allegedly Muslim-backed press about the presence of Persian troops at Delhi. Twenty-five days before the actual outbreak at Meerut, the Calcutta correspondent of The Times bitterly complained of what he called the Government's "rigid and most injurious secrecy" regarding the operations of war in Persia. Referring to the attempts made at concealing even the "smallest facts", he wondered "if the Persian court were in communication with the Indian press." To him such an inexplicable attitude was symptomatic of weakness "beginning to be felt by every department of the Government", as well as indicative of "want of courage" and "of audacity" in every resolution of the supreme authority.<sup>21</sup> Compared with this was the news item in the Authentic News of 19th March (most probably 1856), as pointed out by the Advocate Judge of the Army at the Delhi trial, about the presence of Persian troops in India.<sup>22</sup>

It was reported that the outbreak, though little more than a military revolt in India, was not viewed as such in the Muslim countries stretching beyond the British Indian frontier. Instead of merely regarding it as a

21. Manchester Guardian, 15 April, 1857.

22. N. A. Chick (ed.), Annals of the Indian Rebellion, containing Narratives of the Outbreak and Eventful Occurrences, and Stories of Personal Adventures, during the Mutiny of 1857-58, with an Appendix Comprising Miscellaneous Facts, Anecdotes etc., p.10.

contest between the master and the servant -- "between a discontented or excited army and the Government, they regarded it as a war between Mahomedanism and Christianity, upon the issue of which the very existence of Islamism was staked." The outbreak had, it was believed, caused much hope and jubilation among the "Faithful" in all the countries in which the word of the Prophet was "preached to the many or to the few" -- a feeling which, it was thought, was sure to continue so long as the Muslim city of Delhi remained the centre of the outbreak and Bahādur Shāh its leader.<sup>23</sup>

Such an opinion was not shared by certain sections of the British society alone, but also seems to have been held by the European press. Under the title, "The Coming Struggle", the Free Press quoted from and agreed with the Neue Preussische Zeitung. It was believed that the struggle of Islām against Christianity was not confined to India alone, but that the Muslims were "standing to their arms....throughout Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt." The Neue Preussische Zeitung reported that the trade in arms in all these countries had enormously increased; that there was a massive movement of arms to the above mentioned Middle Eastern countries and that the gunsmiths' stores everywhere were full of customers. No

23. "The Fall of Delhi," Saturday Review,  
31 Oct. 1857.

doubt, Birmingham and Liège were "reaping a golden harvest" from this arms traffic. The paper maintained that this was a matter of concern to the "Franks and Christians." Wherever there were Muslims and Christians living together -- be it Calcutta or be it Smyrna, Acre or Alexandria, everywhere, the paper stated, the Muslims were showing signs of distrust and hatred towards the Christians. If the Governor-General at Calcutta was witnessing them buying arms, so were the consuls in Egypt, Syria and Turkey. If this account is to be accredited, the Muslim anxiety and feverishness seems to have reached its highest pitch at this time. It was reported that even the most peace-loving among the Muslims, and even villages and towns were working towards an organization of communal defence. To the paper it appeared as if the entire Muslim population of Asia was preparing itself for the kind of struggle that had already manifested itself in the Indian subcontinent.<sup>24</sup> Finally, the paper rounded up its discussion of the East with a warning to the people of Europe as well as the countries championing the cause of Turkey, of the incredible amount of antipathy and hostility that existed against them broadcast among the Muslims.

The paper went on to observe:

Whether these intense feelings will be allayed without bloodshed, we cannot tell; but it is quite necessary for Europe to be on its guard.<sup>25</sup>

24. Free Press, 4 Nov. 1857. For an identical reference, see also: "Great Mahometan Conspiracy....," The Tablet, 24 Oct. 1857.

25. Free Press, 4 Nov. 1857.

It was against this state of public thinking that around a year later the news of the gruesome massacre of twenty-one Christians at Jeddah arrived in Britain in the middle of July 1858. On 15th of June, 1858, a mob of five<sup>26</sup> to eight<sup>27</sup> thousand infuriated Muslims was reported to have attacked the British and the French Consulates at Jeddah, killing the consuls of the two leading nations of Europe and letting loose a day of terror and plunder. Nineteen other Christians,<sup>28</sup> mostly Greek, who attempted to protect the English, were mentioned among the slain. The precise cause of the atrocious occurrence could not be ascertained. The difficulty in doing so arose from the character of the followers of Islām. Antoine D'Abbadie, who identified himself as a correspondent of the l'Institut, never had the "good fortune of meeting a Mussalman who was not a liar." Hence, he believed, it was not possible to analyse the true nature of the Jeddah uprising.<sup>29</sup> However, four most plausible guesses were offered for the calamity; that it was: (a) caused by trading jealousies which, it was claimed, lay at the bottom of the sanguinary affair; (b) instigated by a Muslim messenger from India who described the rebels at Delhi and other places as triumphant; (c) actuated by the hauling down of the Ottoman flag said to have been unlawfully hoisted on an Anglo-Indian vessel,<sup>30</sup> or else,

26. The Times, 16 July, 1858. The paper editorially put the strength of the "miscreants" at five thousand. The Tablet also gave the same number. 17 July, 1858.

27. The Times, 27 July, 1858. An officer on board the steam frigate "Cyclops", which was harbouring at Jeddah at the time of the bloody occurrence and was itself involved in the incident, writing to The Times of 27 July, reported the "rabble" strength at eight thousand.

28. The total number of the slain was unanimously reported at twenty-one.

29. Antoine D'Abbadie, Letter to The Times, 19 July, 1858.

30. The Spectator, 1858, pp.746 and 757; The Times, 15, 16 and 27 July 1858. The Earl of Malmesbury, however, reported to the House of Lords that the dispute arose between the Turkish authorities and the Captain of an English ship, Cyclops (then anchoring at Jeddah in connection with the laying down of the telegraphic line to India), about an Indian vessel - a ship belonging to some of Her Majesty's Indian subjects. The Indian owners wanted to change the nationality of the vessel and assume Ottoman protection. Since it was contrary to the law, stressed Malmesbury, the matter was brought before a legal tribunal. The tribunal decided that the nationality of the ship could not be changed. In spite of this verdict, in the course of the next few days the English flag was lowered and the Ottoman standard was hoisted instead. An attempt by the Captain of Cyclops to enforce decision led to the gruesome happening. The Earl of Malmesbury further reported that the Turkish Government did its best to protect the Christian lives and that four or five Turkish soldiers were even killed in the attempt. Hansard 3, CL1, 1657-58.

(d) caused by what The Nation described as the real explanation of the incident; the excitement produced in the Muslim mind by the continued slaughter of their brethren in India by England. This paper forcefully asserted that England was engaged in raising a blood cloud in the East, which might finally envelop the world.<sup>31</sup>

Whatever the true cause, the atrocious event stirred the already excited British people and their press to new heights. It was firmly believed that Muslim ill-will was of long standing and widespread all over Arabia. D'Abbadie attested to it on the basis of his personal experiences and those of others.<sup>32</sup> Hence, it was thought that the flag issue was merely a pretext, hurriedly seized upon to execute "a long concocted scheme",<sup>33</sup> which had as its ultimate end the expulsion of all Christians from the Muslim "Holy land."<sup>34</sup> For further proof, it was reported that public thanksgivings were offered at Mecca for the extermination of Christians in the neighbourhood of the city.<sup>35</sup> The real cause, therefore, was fancied to be the Muslim fanaticism and their "national" hatred of Christians.<sup>36</sup> Various other incidents, i.e., the alleged treatment of the British embassy in Persia and the attempted assassination of the British Consul at Belgrade were at once lined up one with each other.<sup>37</sup> It was also recorded on the basis of intelligence from Athens that a

31. The Nation, 17 July 1858.

32. D'Abbadie, Letter to The Times, 19 July 1858. As proofs D'Abbadie mentioned that: a) In 1839 the English and the French Consuls were insulted at Jeddah in his own presence by "the Jeddah rabble"; b) in the same year a Christian doctor was assassinated because one of his patients had died; c) the things were still worse at Mocha, where the Captain of a French warship having landed incautiously was detained along with other officers in the common jail; d) twice in 1839 and 1840 the British flag was trampled upon, in the second instance his own brother having been forced to tread upon the Union Jack before meeting the Sheriff of Mocha. These, he claimed, were some of the many instances which proved the permanent nature of Muslim hostility towards Christianity and the Christian powers.

33. The Times, 27 July 1858. For a similar opinion, see also: Hansard 3, CL1, 1656.

34. The Times, 27 July 1858.

35. Ibid.

36. "The Jeddah Massacre," CEQR, XLIV, 1858, p.219; The Times, 27 July 1858.

37. The Spectator, 17 July 1858.

terrible reaction against Christians had set in among the Muslims in Candia and that attacks upon European consulates and the Catholic Church at that place had compelled its Christian population to leave the city.<sup>38</sup> Further rumours of belligerent attitudes assumed by Muslims at other places in order to intimidate Christians were also reported.<sup>39</sup> Having held England indirectly responsible for the Jeddah massacre, The Nation feared that the incident appeared to be the beginning of a larger movement. The paper denounced the Muslims and observed:

The religious fanaticism of the Mohammedans is analogous to the patriotic enthusiasm of the western nations. Islamism is the nationality of the East.<sup>40</sup>

In short, the press and the people refused to regard the Jeddah massacre as an isolated incident. They at once looked at it as a supplement to the Indian revolt -- a monstrosity that had visited England on its "high road" to India in the Red Sea.<sup>41</sup> From the sober Church of England press to such popular publications as the Illustrated London News, including highly informed papers like The Times, the Manchester Guardian, The Spectator, strong editorials were written condemning the brutal massacre, as well as what was called "Islamism"<sup>42</sup> as the driving force behind it. The Muslims of Turkey, Arabia, Persia, Egypt, Syria and India, one and all, were seen in

38. Ibid.; The Tablet, 17 July 1858.
39. The Spectator, The Nation, 17 July 1858.
40. The Nation, 17 July 1858.
41. The Spectator, 17 July 1858; "The Jeddah Massacre," CEQR., XLIV, 1858, pp.218-19. The Spectator asserted that the Jeddah atrocity had received its "first inspiration from Delhi."
42. Manchester Guardian, 13 July 1858; "The Jeddah Massacre," loc. cit.

a state of ferment, and their religion and "race" were chiefly blamed for the late occurrences.<sup>43</sup> Since the centre of the present tragedy was Jeddah, the port town of Mecca, the whole thing was viewed with still greater apprehension. The Church of England Quarterly Review believed that the latent spirit of intolerance among the Muslims had been stirred to its depths. The periodical observed:

From Candia in the Mediterranean to Jeddah on the Red Sea, the old hatred of Islamism to Christianity is in full activity. Wherever the followers of the false prophet are strong enough to express their real convictions, the hatred against the Giaours breaks forth and there is reason to believe that that hatred, especially in the more eastern domain of Islamism, has been stimulated by the Indian massacres, vague rumours of which have found their way to all parts of the Mussulman world.<sup>44</sup>

The Spectator seems to have been much more appalled, and the paper candidly warned the entire Muslim world of the definite consequences -- another crusade -- which could follow such an attitude, as the challenge would have to be accepted. It observed:

....it would appear that the Mussulmans, following the instinct of their lower race and lower creed, are spoiling their own alliances by acts which must array against them, not only England, not only Western powers, but the whole of Christendom, for all Europe must be aroused against warfare carried on as it has been at Jeddah and against the gross superstition which asserts its religious rivals in such shapes.<sup>45</sup>

43. Illustrated London News, 17 July 1858; The Spectator, 17 July 1858.

44. "The Jeddah Massacre," CEQR, XLIV, 1858, pp.218-19. Editorially commenting upon the Jeddah massacre, the Manchester Guardian similarly observed:

The world of Islamism is in turmoil....In India, a quasi-religious war, of which the most active and intelligent promoters are undoubtedly Mahometans, still rages against the English; having been provoked, as its authors assert by the discovery of a profound design to force the Christian faith upon native acceptance....In the wild misrepresentations of current events put forth by Nana Sahib, and some other chiefs of the Indian mutiny, it is probable that we have seen fair illustrations of what is said and believed about England by Mahometan fanatics of every hue, from the banks of Ganges to the coast of Morocco and from Danube to the Niger. 13 July 1858.

45. The Spectator, 17 July 1858.

As no oppression or outrage was believed to have been offered to Islām or the Sharī'ah, the Church of England organ saw no reason to account for the late events in India and the Arab world, except that the outrages were the outcome of a "conscious weakness" on the part of the followers of Islām. Regarding the entire system of this religion as "moribund", the Church magazine looked at the whole chain of events as a result of sheer desperation on the part of "more sincere" or "fanatical" spirits among the Muslims, who wanted to prove the vitality of their religion. It was confidently believed that like all "such paroxysms of violence", the present outbursts in the Muslim world were sure to hasten the destruction of Islām.<sup>46</sup>

It was this very important aspect of the outbreak in India which led to its inclusion in a series of talks on the "Signs of Time."<sup>47</sup> The uprising began to be viewed in the much larger context of Islām. Efforts were even made to find out the event in Biblical apocalyptic prophecies in the hope of discovering its "bearing....on the Prospects of Mahometanism."<sup>48</sup> Having been requested to do so, the Reverend Edward Hoare told his congregation about the futility of such an attempt. The "prophecy", he declared, "deals more with great systems than minute details." No doubt, the mutinies had caused a lot of suffering, yet the event, he thought, was not big enough to

46. "The Jeddah Massacre," CEQR., XLIV, 1858,  
p.219.

47. The Rev. Edward Hoare, "The Mutiny in  
Relation to Mahometanism and its Appointed Issues," (fourth  
of a course of twelve lectures on "The Signs of Time"),  
The Pulpit, LXXXIII, 1858, pp.241-47.

48. Ibid., p.241.

find an independent mention in the biblical writings. The occurrences in India were, therefore, to be treated as "mere drops in the great ocean of world's troubles -- a mere link in the long chain of world's history." He exhorted his audience to concern themselves with the chain -- "the great plan" and behold the "sad events" in India as "passing incidents in the gigantic purpose, whereby God is preparing the world for the glorious appearance of its coming King."<sup>49</sup>

Hoare drew a crude analogy between the "rise and spread" of what he termed "the most extraordinary power, having its origin at Baghdad near the banks of the Euphrates" -- the Ottoman empire and the rise and overflow of the Euphrates. He firmly believed that this symbolism held just as true when applied in reverse. To convince his audience of what he had said, Hoare further emphasized that it was no mere theory, but that history itself was evidence for this phenomenon. Thus if the overflow of the Euphrates was a sign of the rise and spread of the Ottoman empire over Asia, Africa and Europe, the recess, he stressed, was surely a "symbol of the loss of it." As the waters of the Euphrates advanced, so did they recede. Similarly, the Turks, who had experienced a rapid rise to power, had already, he pointed out, lost their hold in

49. Ibid.

North Africa, Persia and India. All this, he adduced, was happening according to the divine plan. Just as the waters were returning to their original channel as designed,<sup>50</sup> similarly the Turks would have to quit Constantinople and go back to Asia. It seemed as if the Turks were also conscious of their impending doom. Otherwise "Why", queried Hoare, "to this day [do] they bury their dead on the other [i.e., Asiatic] side of the Bosphorus?"<sup>51</sup> This, he stressed, the Turks were doing because they themselves knew that they had no tenure on the European side of the straits. "We shall see", he continued, "the living soon following the dead. We shall see the great Euphrates beaten back again to Baghdad from which it originally took its rise." The Indian mutiny, he claimed, provided further evidence of the same phenomenon. Although there was no mention of the revolt in the prophecy, still he could easily see the great loss of power that Islām had suffered in India during the last twelve months -- a loss "that was never supposed possible before."<sup>52</sup> He observed:

And thus it seems to me that the mutiny will just be an additional blow to weaken the Mahometan power, or another link in the mysterious chain which is drying down the great Ottoman empire.<sup>53</sup>

To Hoare the decline of Islām was not purposeless. The fresh defeat of Islām was another indication of God's

50. According to Hoare the Euphrates or at least its canal system was actually drying up at that time. p.242.

51. Hoare did not provide any instance in which the coffin of a Turk was carried from European Turkey across the Strait of Bosphorus. Historically, however, Hoare's contention appears to be quite untrue. The fact of the matter is that Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī, one of the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad, is buried in European Istanbul. Ever since its conquest Istanbul continued to be the capital of the Ottoman Empire until the time of the republic. Most of the Sultāns since the conquest were buried in European Turkey.

Also, European Turkey always received a greater amount of attention in the development of Muslim or rather Turkish art and architecture. The result is that some of the best specimens of art and architecture today are to be found on the Western side of the Bosphorus. In Istanbul, for example, one can ennumerate Cinili Kiosk, Sulaimāniyāh mosque, the mosque of Sultān Ahmad, the mosque of Rustam Pāshā, Fāteh mosque, the mausoleum of Sulaimān and, above all, several palaces of the Sultāns, the most important being Topkapi.

52. Hoare, op. cit., pp.241-46.

53. Ibid., p.247.

will for an accelerated effort in the field of missions. The most important duty of the Church of Christ at a time when the Euphrates was drying up (or when the Turks were in the process of decline) was to assist in the work of Eastern missions; was to exert itself more than ever in order to "pour forth the Gospel amongst the Kings of the East." In the first instance India was not given to England just for acquiring wealth. There was a different purpose behind this acquisition -- it was that "England may carry the glorious Gospel to the 170 million people under her sceptre." Now, he emphasized, there was a still greater reason to achieve the same end because of the "Fresh opportunities" offered by the remarkable breaking down of the Muslim power in India.<sup>54</sup> Hoare thus exhorted his audience and concluded:

....we are encouraged by prophecy to believe that it is our special duty to act in obedience to the Divine signal, and to pay peculiar attention to missions in the East.<sup>55</sup>

It was in deference to this divine call that the Church of England and all the missionary societies in Britain stepped up their fund-raising efforts considerably, so as to enable them to send more missionaries to India to civilize the people there.

54. Ibid., pp.246-47.

55. Ibid., p.247.

## CONCLUSION

The Indian mutiny left its traces forever upon the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, and the year 1857 is recognized today as the turning point in its history. Also, the intensity of public reaction in Britain radically changed the trend of the British Indian policy. Public debate among the parties concerned as to what groups should be held responsible for the sanguinary outbreak led to successful attempts to expose each other. The participation in the debate by the Conservatives, the Chartists, the Irish nationalists and the "moralists" brought to light the acts of omission and commission in the British ranks and revealed the weaknesses of the British Indian administration. While there could be no poll of the reactions of British public opinion, it would seem that these reactions produced a commensurate impact upon all those aspects of future British thinking -- especially political, imperial, military and religious -- which had anything to do with British relations with India. When legislating for India, the Government of Britain now had to take into account the interest and the demands of the British people. This was amply manifested in the Act for the Better Government of India as well as Queen Victoria's India Proclamation of October 1858. The

once often concealing mantle of dual government was thrown off; henceforth, the Government of India was to become the special care of a responsible minister.

Before the insurrection, the average Briton accustomed to the daily perusal of newspapers could, like the Indian, not understand the relations between the East India Company and the Crown. He asked questions as to who was responsible for the disastrous campaign in Afghanistan in the late 1830s? Were those operations conducted by and for the Queen or by and for the Company? If for the Queen, then why was the Company made to bear the expenses of war? He also wondered whether the Panjab was taken possession of by the Company or by the Queen? Similarly questions were asked about various other operations, i.e., the annexation of Awadh, the war in Persia, the Burmese War and the like. This confusion was not confined to the people at large; even their representatives in the Parliament, and members of the cabinets, disagreed with each other. Still the anomaly of the East India Company -- a governing body whose governing powers no one rightly understood -- continued to exist. The revolt of 1857, however, altered the whole tenor of public reaction; it led to almost universal dissatisfaction with the Company. In spite of the petitions and protests of the

once mighty merchant corporation, which had survived over a dozen British monarchs and fifty Parliaments, the Company passed into history on 1 September, 1858, by a Parliamentary Act for the Better Government of India. A new era in Anglo-Indian history was started.

In the imperial field the reactions of the anti-annexationists, who were for the most part men familiar with Indian affairs, were respected. Although the advocates of the mutiny theory virtually refused to admit any connections between the outbreak and Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexations; although they argued that each annexation brought the oppressive native rule to an end and introduced instead the enlightened British reign, and thus provided the subjects the cherished protection of the British, their argument failed to carry weight. The contrary view -- that the policy of conquests and annexations had caused politico-religious and socio-economic resentment in India -- was much more widely accepted and appreciated.

It came to be believed that the breach of treaties with the native states (particularly in the case of Awadh) had cost the British their good name -- a name which needed to be re-established in the interest of the British Empire in India. The co-operation, support, and

help rendered by Hōlkar, Sindhiyā, several rulers of Rajputana, the ruler of Nepal and the Prime Minister of Deccan were highly regarded. In fact, their loyalty had provided a breakwater to the storm which otherwise would surely have swept away the British in one great wave. The belief grew that but for their valuable help the British would have had to leave India. They also began to realize that had Wājid 'Alī still been on the throne of Awadh, the revolt might never have occurred; had the Doctrine of Lapse not been applied to the state of Jhansi, its Rānī would not have joined in the rebellion; and had more consideration been shown to the Nānā regarding his pension, the massacre of Kanpur would not have taken place. The British people and the Government were now convinced of the hold which the rebel princes enjoyed over their subjects.

It was due to this widely held belief which the Government of the time shared with the people, that the Queen's Indian Proclamation carried eloquent pledges of honouring past treaties with the princes of India. The proclamation declared that henceforth the British Government would not annex Indian states. The whole policy towards the princely states of India was brought under complete review. In the future, instead of

subordinate isolation, a new policy of subordinate union was inaugurated. In affirmation of the new policy, Lord Canning granted Sanads and certificates to all important ruling chiefs in recognition of their status. These documents assured the native princes of Queen Victoria's ardent desire to see their rule perpetuated. Henceforth all Indian princes were assured of their right of adoption and succession; the result was that the post-mutiny era saw no more annexations.

The changed British Imperial policy in India had its parallel in the reorganization of the Indian army. Though there were sharp differences among the British on the nature of the revolt, no one disputed the fact that the sepoy army had taken the lead in it; whether on its own or after having been incited into action by an outside agency was a different matter. Naturally the army administration came under heavy attack. As the basic weaknesses of the army administration were revealed, it became evident that the Company's method of recruiting and enforcing discipline had proved a failure. Earlier the principle of "divide and rule" in the army had been applied to a limited extent and had, in fact, misfired. The three major orders in the sepoy army, composed as they were of Brahamans, Rājputs and Muslims, had become pressure groups. They formed not

only close caste and creed circles; geographical identity had also existed among them. As they all came from almost the same regions, it was relatively easy for them to arrive at an understanding among themselves. In fact, frequent alliance among these three factions had become a common phenomenon. Above all, the British army personnel in India stood out of all proportions to their native counterparts: the ratio was one to five.

Several radical proposals were made. It was recommended that Britain should disband the native army and should garrison the country with a European force. Opponents of this view insisted that it was financially impossible and suggested that in future Britain should recruit its Indian army from different parts of the British Empire, especially from among the negroid people. This was also declared as a highly impracticable proposal. The proposition that the Government should do away with the high caste element too was not regarded as a perfect solution. However, men of experience contended that the Government should increase the comparative strength of the European army, simultaneously diversifying the character of the native army by recruiting soldiers from all religions and races of India and maintaining only European artillery units.

The Government response to these proposals was quite favourable and was amply evidenced in the re-organization of the army. In the new arrangement the strength of the European army was increased to 65,000, and that of the native was reduced to 140,000, the new ratio being four to nine. A carefully considered principle of balancing communities inside the army was introduced. A large number of regiments was disbanded; the reorganized army was drawn from a much wider range of caste and creed; it contained a very strong element of Sikhs, Gūrkhās, Dōgrās and Jāts, all of whom had proved their loyalty to the British Government during the uprising. At the same time the principle of retaining the artillery in European hands was adopted and religiously followed. In this manner the instrument of the army was secured against any future military coup d'état or participation in a possible civilian outbreak.

Religion, however, offered a more delicate problem. A large number of Britons regarded it as the powder keg which had brought about the revolt and blamed the Evangelicals for having created religious apprehension among the native populations of India. An equally large number of people, headed primarily by the missionaries and the Anglican clergy and with Lord Shaftesbury as their Parliamentary spokesman, refused to admit of any such

incitement to the rebellion. The Government in this case was in a difficult position. It knew that legislation affecting native religions, especially Hindūism, introduced under the pressure of the Evangelicals, as well as private missionary efforts (at times aided and urged by government officials) had contributed substantially to the discontent of the Indians. It also had to realize that the spread of exaggerated atrocity stories (largely by the Evangelicals) had caused extreme anger among the Britons, and increased rather than abated their desire to bring the Christian light to their trustees in India. The public was already so much convinced of the missionary point of view that the latter were able not only to absolve themselves of all blame in the eyes of the public, but were also able to raise funds upwards of a hundred thousand pounds for the purpose of expanding the evangelistic programme in India.<sup>1</sup> Their meetings were largely attended by members both of the Lords and the Commons. The religious question, therefore, posed a delicate problem to the weak Derby-Disraeli ministry. In fact, it was a triangular conflict of the practical problems of the empire in India, the presence of an influential evangelical group in the House of Commons, and mounting public pressures.

All these considerations had to be weighed

<sup>1</sup>For figures, see: MM., New Series, 1860, 1, p. 183. The amount collected was quite significant in view of the two other funds, which were being raised simultaneously to aid the missionary programme in Africa and to relieve the British sufferers in India.

heavily before setting the tone of the Government's religious policy in India. However weak the Government might be, the imperial issues demanded action. Popular support at home and in the Commons at the same time, could not be sacrificed by placing restrictions on the missionary activity in India, just as the empire could not be endangered by further Government legislation on the "superstitious beliefs" of the Hindūs and the introduction of the Bible in Government schools. Only the time-honored expedient of a compromise policy would secure the empire, silence the critics of pre-mutiny religious policy and retain the good-will of the Evangelical group. Thus it was that the Queen's Indian Proclamation carried the promise of complete religious protection to all creeds and strictly forbade any official interference in the native religions. The Evangelicals, at the same time, were in no way prevented from continuing their private efforts to redeem the people of India from "darkness".

The only aspect of public opinion in which there was virtual unanimity among all schools of thought on the Indian uprising was that it was a Muslim rebellion. The Muslims were considered the main culprits, the spirit and the body of the whole movement. Slogans demanding severe punishment, destruction and even annihilation were issued from public platform and by the press. The British

Governments too had always apprehended strong hostility from the Muslim community of India. Naturally, in consonance with the trend of public thinking the followers of Islām came in for repression, immediate and prolonged. The punishment took form in physical, political, economic, social and educational chastisements. Several of the Muslim leaders were either hanged or exiled. Twenty-four Muslim princes were hanged at Delhi on 18 November, 1857. The heads of two earlier victims of Hodson were displayed from the Kōtwālī in Delhi for three days. The eighty year old Mughal ruler, Muḥammad Bahādur Shāh Zafar, was exiled to Rangoon. The Muslim rulers of Jujjhur, Ballabgarh, Farrukhnagar and Farrukhabad were similarly punished. Everywhere the Muslim quarters became the targets of the wrath of the rulers; their homes were searched, their property occupied, their belongings confiscated and, in innumerable instances, the occupants banished. The doors of all government services were rapidly closed upon them. At the Muslim expense the Hindūs were encouraged to receive higher education, to benefit from the western institutions and to occupy government jobs of trust and responsibility. This was specially true in the Bengal Presidency. The follower of Islām was crest-fallen after the revolt; his future in India seemed to be dark, dismal and gloomy. It was, however, not until W. W. Hunter, the erudite civil-

servant, and Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān, the pioneer Muslim educationist, both of whom ardently wanted to cause a better understanding between the Muslims and the British, eloquently urged the former to give up their past hostility to the British and pleaded with the latter to re-study their attitude towards the former rulers of India, that the Muslims started to regain something of their share in the subcontinental affairs.

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#### D) Sermons on the Indian Mutiny:

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published either as pamphlets, or were contributed to church and missionary periodicals, or else in The Pulpit, which was a collection of sermons published every three or six months. In the case of sermons almost all of them carried the names of the preachers.

Only those sermons have been included here which were published as independent pamphlets, or which appeared in a collection of sermons, i.e., The Pulpit, The Fast-day Sermons. The "Indian Mutiny" Twelve Sermons. All those sermons which appeared in periodicals, church or missionary, have been, like other periodical articles in section E, excluded from this list.

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Curteis, The Rev. G. H., The Evangelization of India (preached on 22 Nov. 1857), (Oxford and London: J. H. and James Parker, Lichfield: Lomerx, 1857).

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- Fenn, The Rev. Joseph, Britain's Burdens and Causes of Punishment (preached on 7 Oct. 1857), (London: W.H. Dalton, 1857).
- Garden, The Rev. Francis, Vengeance Right and Holy, (preached on 7 Oct. 1857), (London: Rivington. Edinburgh: Grant and Son, 1857).
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#### E) Periodical Literature:

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extracts of letters and on the spot reports, the importance of which cannot be overemphasized.

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British Quarterly Review, (London: Jackson and Walford), 1857-60, Vols. XXV - XXXI.

The Builder, (London: Conducted by George Godwin) 1857-60, Vols. XV - XVI.

Chambers's Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts, (London: William and Robert Chambers), 1857-60, Vols. XXVI - XXXIV.

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Church Missionary Intelligencer (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday), 1857-59, Vols. VII - X.

Church Missionary Record (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday), New Series, 1857-59, Vols. II - IV.

Church of England Magazine, (London: William Hughs) 1857-1859, Vols. XLII - XLVI.

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Dublin University Magazine, (Dublin: Hodges, Smith, and Co.), 1857-59, Vols. II - IV.

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London Journal and Weekly Record of Literature, Science, and Arts (London: G. Vickers), 1857-58, Vols. XXIV-XXV111.

London Quarterly Review, (Dublin: John Robertson London: Alexander Haylin), 1857-58, Vols. 1X-X.

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Missionary Magazine and Chronicle (London: Pub. by the Directors of the London Missionary Society), 1857-59, Vols. XXI-XXIII and New Series, 1860, Vol. 1.

National Review (London: Chapman and Hall), 1857-58, Vols. IV-VII.

Notes and Queries (London: Bell and Daldy), Second Series, 1857-61, Vols. II-XII.

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F) Newspapers (Dailies, Byweeklies and Weeklies):

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- G) In this section are included materials published after 1862 by those who were personally involved in the mutiny or in forming British public opinion when the mutiny was a subject of intense controversy. These works were published too late to influence public opinion during the years of controversy but throw light on attitudes of participants and controversialists.

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