

THE MILITARY SYSTEM
OF
THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
(1798 - 1858)

by

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PREFACE

This study may be prefaced with a few remarks on the choice of its period and its subject. The reason for choosing the year 1858 as marking the close of the period under study is obvious. The choice of the year 1798, however, as marking the beginning of the period of this study needs some explanation. It was in 1796 that orders were passed for a comprehensive re-organisation of the armies of the East India Company, but these orders did not become effective before 1798. Consequently, actual re-organisation of the armies started only in 1798. And since the re-organised armies were markedly different from what they had been before, there is enough justification for choosing the year 1798. However, the 'background' to the period of this study has not been completely ignored and this 'background' will suggest a certain measure of continuity in the history of the armies of the East India Company. Nevertheless, the period under study is distinct from the earlier period and possesses a unity of its own.

The military system of the East India Company during this period of sixty years is a vast subject. The choice of such a vast subject in these days of 'micro-studies' is not easy to justify. But no comprehensive study of this subject has yet been made even on an elementary level and in the absence of a general framework it may not be very fruitful at this stage to undertake detailed studies of the various aspects of this extremely important subject. It is not being suggested, however, that the present study is not based on

factual details. On the contrary, an attempt has been made here to combine detail with comprehensiveness, so as to provide a reliable framework for further researches. In due course this entire framework might be modified or even discarded but, by then, it would have served its purpose.

This study is based mainly on manuscript sources and printed records. An extensive use has been made of the military letters between the Court of Directors and the Government of India, the military consultations, the foreign secret consultations, parliamentary papers and reports of enquiries and committees. Use has also been made of biographies and autobiographies, army orders, military proceedings, home department public proceedings and periodical material.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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| 1. For. Sec. Cons. | Foreign Secret Consultations. |
| 2. Inquiry | Inquiry on the subject of the Reorganisation of the Armies of India with reference to the fifth paragraph of the letter from honourable the Court of Directors of the Government of India, No.235, dated 21 November, 1857, as also the general subject with precis and returns attached. |
| 3. Minutes of Evidence | Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, communicated from Commons to Lords, dated 21 June, 1833. |
| 4. PP | Parliamentary Papers. |
| 5. Replies | Replies connected with the re-organisation of the Armies of India, 1858. |
| 6. Report Army Commissariat | Report of Commission to enquire into the system of Army Commissariat, 1852. |
| 7. Report of Commissioners | Report of Commissioners appointed to enquire into the organisation of the Army, together with minutes of evidence, London 1859. |

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THE BACKGROUND

The year 1798 marks the beginning of an important period in the history of the army of the East India Company. Nevertheless it is necessary to have some idea of the rise of the Company's army from its humble beginnings in the seventeenth century and its growth in the eighteenth century as a requisite background to the period under study.

The history of Colonial enterprise in India has been essentially a history of war. European nations indulged in un-official war and amidst commercial rivalry the British merchants were obliged to adopt measures of defence. Peaceful trading in the eighteenth century was bound to die a natural death and survival of the fittest was rather the rule than an exception. Though apparently the British continued to be merchants, they were conducting their business with the aid of soldiers, guns, forts and treaties.¹ The Company's innumerable unrecorded wars brought about an increase in the number of its forces and the armies of contesting nations too swelled very considerably. Once an armament race had begun there was no end to it, for the contestants looked at one another with distrust which prevented them from dis-armament. Though there could be no open war in India when there was peace in Europe among the mother countries,² no disarmament was possible owing to

1. Wilbur, W.E. The East India Company, California 1945, Introductory.

2. Lyall, Alfred The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominions in India, London 1920, 5th Edn., P.89.

constant fear of war.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1589 may be said to have marked the beginning of the British commercial interest in India. Elizabeth granted permission to a body of English merchants to fit out a fleet for eastern trade under George Raymond who sailed from Plymouth in 1591. By a charter granted on 31 December, 1600, the Company of merchants at London was empowered to trade with the countries of Asia, Africa and America. Many voyages were undertaken by the Company between the years 1600 and 1612 and profits were made by 'force of arms rather than peaceful trade'.¹ In February, 1613, Jahangir granted some trade concessions to British traders, and Sir Thomas Roe, who came as ambassador to Jahangir from James I, succeeded in 1619 in establishing a small factory at Surat for trade with Persia. In those early days there was no regular military force; the mainstay of the East India Company was the Navy which consisted of factors and officers of the crew of armed trading ships. These crews had no specific training; but they were adventurous and were perhaps the best fighting material of the day.² Sir Thomas Roe entered into a treaty with the governor of Surat who was to lend armed ships to the English for the defence of the port, to permit ten armed men of the Company's ships to land at one time and to permit resident merchants to bear arms.³

1. Carnac, The Presidential Armies of India, London 1890, P.27

2. Ibid, P.30

3. Ibid, P.33

The crews of armed trading ships, however, did not serve the Company's purpose very long and guards of peons were employed when factories were established at Masulipatam, Armgaon, Madras, Hooghly and Balasore. The guards were¹ enrolled for the protection of the factories. Though armed with weapons, they had no training and no idea of military tactics. They were hardly worthy of being called a military force, for they were employed rather to add to the pomp and show than for any offensive or defensive purposes. Nevertheless, as the number of these peons became larger, rules were framed for their conduct. By 1624, the Company's servants² could be tried by common and martial law.

From the earliest days Artillery seems to have occupied an important place in the Company's army, for even in 1628 there were twelve guns on the coast of Coromendal at Armgaon.³ The detachment consisted of 28 men trained as infantrymen and in the duties of artillerymen. Thus, from the early days there were two arms of service known to the Company - the Infantry and the Artillery. Cavalry, which was the dominant arm of the Indian powers, was relegated to a secondary position.

In 1640, the East India Company acquired Madras and built there a fort, which marked the origin of the Madras Presidency. In 1634, by a farmān of Shah Jahan, the Company

1. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford 1907, Vol.IV, P.326

2. Carnac, Op. Cit, P.35

3. Ibid, P.37

had established a factory in Bengal which became the origin of the Bengal Presidency.¹ In 1619, when a factory was established at Surat, the British went to Bombay and that can be considered the beginning of the Bombay Presidency. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Presidential establishments were fairly prosperous and their protection became all the more necessary. The Company petitioned to the Parliament to allow them to fit out men-of-war for the purposes of defence.² In 1652, an Ensign and thirty men were sanctioned for Bengal, which was the first force at the Bengal Presidency.³ Later in the seventeenth century provision was made for the defence of the larger factories by maintaining at each of them a small body of European soldiers, under an Ensign and a "gun-room-crew" supplied by the Company's ships to work the guns of the factory.⁴ In 1653, the Bengal force was increased to 250 men, and many ships were employed on the seas which carried soldiers on them.⁵ The British abandoned Bengal about 1688 and sailed with the whole fleet to Madras. Charnock, the founder of Calcutta, received permission to renew trade in Bengal in 1698, and landed at Chuttanutti in August 1690, with a traditional guard of one officer and 30 men, which was, however, increased to 100 men by the end

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1. The Army in India and its Evolution, Calcutta 1924, P.2
 2. Carnac, Op. Cit, P.39
 3. Calcutta Review, Vol.XIV, London 1850, P.498
 4. Cambridge History of India, Vol.VI, Cambridge 1932, P.153
 5. Calcutta Review, Vol.XIV, London 1850, P.498

of that year.¹

Some new developments took place at Madras and Bombay too. According to the Calcutta Review, in an old volume of travels in India entitled, 'Accounts of the trade in India, by Charles Lockyn', published in 1711, and relating to the period a little before that, there is the mention of a 'gun-room-crew' at Madras; the garrison consisted of 250 Europeans soldiers, and 200 Topasses,² and about 20 experienced Europeans to manage the guns. Beside them was a Captain to command, assisted by an Ensign, Sergeants and Corporals.³ In 1661, when Bombay became the personal property of King Charles II, a force of 400 soldiers was embarked for the protection of Bombay and that marked the first appearance of the Royal troops in India.⁴ In 1668, these troops were encouraged to transfer to the Company's service, and developed into the 1st European Regiment of Bombay Fusiliers. No more troops of the Crown came to India until 1754, when one Battalion was brought by Admiral Watson to reinforce Clive.⁵ Thus with the exception of the Crown's troops that arrived in India for the protection of Bombay, all the troops had belonged to the Company until 1754. The Company had been forming its own forces, obtaining from the Crown the authority and power necessary to

1. Ibid, P.500

2. The name was borrowed from Portuguese word 'tope', or gun, because they were often employed in the capacity of gunners (Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.35).

3. Calcutta Review, Vol.XII, London 1849, no page.

4. Seton, Malcolm The India Office, London 1926, P.187

5. Loc. Cit.

maintain discipline. The charters of 1661 and 1669 had allowed the enlistment of soldiers, and the charter of 1683 authorised martial law.¹ Sometime between 1668, and 1683, two Companies of natives² were raised. Each Company had a Captain for its command, but they differed in their organisation. The first Company was composed of 2 Commissioned Officers, 66 Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates, and 28 Topasses; the second Company was made up of three Commissioned Officers, 73 Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates, and 26 Topasses; there were also 21 pieces of cannon, and two Gunners with ordnance stores.² This force was the largest of the three Presidencies.³ The Bombay force was augmented by enrolment of 2 Companies of Rajpoots, each of 100 men, commanded by their own Rajpoot officers;⁴ and this small force may be regarded the first Native force of the Indian army.

The rapid growth of the army of the East India Company in the late 1740s may be safely attributed to the Anglo-French war in India. In this new situation, the army of the East India Company was inadequate for defending its factories. The war which broke out between the English and French in 1744 had proved to the English the inadequacy of their means of defence. The town of Madras was easily

1. Seton, Malcolm Op. Cit, P.187

2. Carnac, Op. Cit, P.52

3. Army in India and its Evolution, Calcutta 1924, P.4

4. Loc. Cit.

captured by the French in 1746. The demands of the new situation necessitated the mustering of new troops and the Council at Madras was obliged to adopt new measures to fight back the French.¹ During the siege of Madras itself, a number of peons or Irregular Infantry, armed with swords and spears, or matchlocks were enlisted for the occasion. Haliburton, a civilian, distinguished himself in the action and was given a commission as a Lieutenant, and was employed in training a small corps of the natives.² Haliburton was killed on 2nd September, 1748, and Major Stringer Lawrence was given the command of all the East India Company's forces in India. He organised the Madras European Regiment and enlisted 2,000 Sepoys. The Sepoys in the beginning were scarcely better disciplined than the common peons. Soon after being raised, they took part in the capture of Pondicherry in 1748, where they were mostly employed on guard duties and did not give a good account of themselves, for they often ran away on the approach of danger.³ It was with great difficulty that more recruits were procured and in some cases attractive monetary offers had to be given to induce more men to take up service. The Sepoy levies, raised in haste, were armed with all types of weapons, such as matchlocks, bows and arrows, spears, swords; in fact any weapon they could get. There were no specific regulations guiding the strength of the levies

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1. The new danger marked the commencement of progress of the English in India, 'both in the science and spirit of war' (Orme, R, A History of the Military Transactions of British Nation in Indostan, Vol.1, Madras 1861, P.68)
 2. Macleod, On India, London 1872, P.45
 3. Orme, Op. Cit., P.104

and it was not till some idea of drill was acquired by the troops and muskets were issued to them that they showed the appearance of disciplined soldiers.¹ Soon a code of Military Law was made with the help of the 'Articles of War', then in force in England.² At the same time the Court of Directors gave instructions regarding forming, paying, disciplining and governing the army at the Coromendal Coast. It is interesting to note that the earliest British Sepoy Battalions were commanded by Indian officers, and though Clive added British officers and men to the Native Battalions, their Indian Commandant survived for a time.³

The events in Madras had their corresponding effect in Bombay and it was resolved to raise at Surat 2,000 men, consisting mainly of the Arabs and the Turks.⁴ The Bombay government soon received orders from the Court regarding army organisation; Bombay Infantry was ordered to be organised into ten Companies, each consisting of one Captain, one Lieutenant, one Ensign, four Sergeants, four Corporals, and seventy Privates.⁵ The garrisons at Fort St. George and *in* Bengal ~~were~~ put on a similar footing, with seven Companies at the former and five at the latter. The command of the Bombay Infantry was given to a Major. From the number of Companies

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1. Adams, P. Madras Infantry 1748-1943, Bangalore 1943, P.1
 2. Wilson, W.J. History of the Madras Army, Vol.I, Madras 1882, P.48
 3. Seton, Malcolm, Op. Cit, P.188
 4. Cadell, P. History of the Bombay Army, London 1938, P.49
 5. Court's LETTER to Bombay dated 17th June 1748, vide enclosure to the Court's letters, Vol.7, P.194-201, Para 2

ordered at each of the Presidencies, it is evident that the first possession of the Company, that is Bombay, was still the most important military hold of the Company.¹

The Artillery too was ordered to be organised because the gun-room-crews were unable to meet the demands of the new situation. A Company of Artillery was ordered to be formed at each of the three Presidencies, with one Captain, one Second Captain, one Captain-Lieutenant, three Lieutenants fireworker, four Sergeants, four Corporals, three Drummers and one hundred Gunners.² The Artillery Companies were, however, not completed immediately. The Bengal Company was raised in 1749³ but the Bombay Company was raised much later. A director of laboratories was appointed to keep in readiness such ammunition stores of fireworks as were to be required by ordinary service. A storekeeper was also appointed to take possession of the gun room and the magazines of the stores.

It may be remarked that the Court of Directors from the very beginning ensured that no Indian learnt the use of Artillery at any of the Presidencies. They wrote:⁴

No foreigner whether in our service or not (except such as hath been admitted into it by the Court of Directors) nor no Indian black or person of mixed breed, nor any Roman Catholic of what nation soever, shall on any pretence be admitted to set foot in the laboratory or any military magazines either out of curiosity or to be employed in them, or to come near them so as to see what is doing or contained therein. Nor shall any such person have a copy of sight of any accounts or papers relating to any military stores whatsoever.

1. Ibid, Para 179-182

2. Walter, Richard, India and Colonial Forces, London 1890, P.83

3. Stubbs, Regiment of Bengal Artillery, London 1877, P.2

4. Accompaniment to Court's letters to Bombay dated 17th June 1748; vide enclosures to Court's letters to Bombay, Vol.7, P.179-193, Para; 23-33.

They also ordered:

No deserter from any nation whatever is to be entertained in the Company of Artillery, nor even a British subject, who may have once deserted from His Majesty's or the Company's service, although he may have been pardoned for his desertion, nor any Catholic. And if any person belonging to the Company of Artillery marry a Roman Catholic, or his wife become a Roman Catholic after marriage, such person shall be immediately removed from the Company of Artillery and be obliged to serve the remainder of his time in one or the other Companies or be removed to some other Company's settlements to serve it there if the Council think fit.

From this account of the Presidential Armies it is clear that the organisation of the Company's troops as an effective force dates from 1748. With the peace of Aix-La-Chapelle in 1748, war with France temporarily ceased and there were larger bodies of military men in India than ever before. After the fall of Madras, the command of military men came to be placed in the hands of military officers rather ^{than the} civilian members of the Council. The Court of Directors started taking more interest in the army as regular troops replaced Topasses and peons. A separate corps of Artillery replaced the gun-room-crew and it was discovered that the Sepoys could be subjected to European discipline and made like soldiers. Regulations for the army were formed and the Presidency Armies began to be effective, efficient and disciplined. The want of Infantry and Artillery during the wars on the coast from 1746 to 1754, and the impossibility of forming a sufficient number on the spot, induced the Court of Directors to obtain and send out two Companies of Royal Artillery to Bombay and Admiral Watson brought one Battalion of Royal Infantry to reinforce Clive. Many of the officers and men from the Royal Corps were received as volunteers in the Company's

army, and in subsequent years several Crown's Regiments were sent for the service of the Company.¹ The Court seems to have paid a particular attention to Artillery because they were 'fully satisfied how great a share of our dependence must in case of troubles, be on Artillery, and upon the skill of the people appropriated to its service.'² They did not even want that this important service should be trusted with Roman Catholics, for they wrote to the Councils:³

We observe you have among the service several officers of Roman religion. Upon the receipt of this you are to discharge them from our service and send such as are British subjects to England as we will on no account permit their continuing in India.

Around 1755, Madras appears to have had the strongest Artillery of the East India Company. A 'field train' had been organised in that year and a Lieutenant was made its Adjutant.⁴ Each Artillery Company in the year 1757 consisted of 8 six-pounders and two howitzers, to which was attached a body of 100 English artillerymen.⁵ There were no natives employed in Artillery before the Battle of Plassey. In 1757, however, Native Artillery joined Clive in Bengal and cooperated with Madras Artillery.⁶

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1. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. IV, P.327
 2. Court to Bombay, dated 14 March 1753, Para 114, Public Department Court's letters Vol.IV of 1752-1756, P.101
 3. Court to Bombay, dated 4 May 1752, Para 119, Public Department Court's letters Vol.IV of 1752-1756, P.820
 4. Buckle, F. Memoir of the Services of the Bengal Artillery, London 1852, P.5
 5. Moheemadan British India from Queen Elizabeth to Lord Reading, London 1957, P.42
 6. Walter, Richard, Op. Cit, P.172

The political events after the succession of Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah in Bengal opened a new epoch of British power in India. Soon after coming to power the Nawab attacked the factory of Kasimbazar and advanced on Calcutta which at that time was in a state of unpreparedness and after a weak resistance the garrison at Fort William gave way. Lieutenant-Colonel Clive was at this juncture sent from Madras and ^{at} about the same time Major Kirpatrick reached Palta with 230 men under his command. Clive mustered all the resources which amounted to no more than 250 of His Majesty's 39th Regiment, 570 of Madras European Infantry, 1,200 Madras Sepoys, some detail of Artillery, 230 Bengal European Infantry, and 70 volunteers from civil, making a total of about 2,400 men.¹ With this small force and with the help of military officers like Major Kirpatrick and Captain Eyre Coote, the British had some successes which gave them a breathing time. It was at this time that Clive discovered the weakness of the Company's army, and resolved to put it in a condition of efficiency. Clive discovered that the contingents sent from Madras and Bombay, though they formed part of the regular armies of those Presidencies, were not properly disciplined. He also found that even though they were clothed and armed after European fashion, very little of drill and discipline had been imparted to them, and ^{they} were still commanded by the natives.² Clive aimed at not only

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1. The Services of the Bengal Native Army, compiled in the office of the Adjutant General in India, Calcutta 1903, P.4
 2. Broome, A. History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army, Vol. I, London 1850, P.92

furnishing the new corps with European arms and uniform, but also at drilling and disciplining them as regular troops; and to achieve that he appointed an European officer to command, and Non-Commissioned officers to instruct and drill them. Clive did not experience much difficulty in obtaining recruits for his Paltan as a lot of Pathans, Rohillas and Jats came down to the lower provinces in search of profession. Thus in a short time, Clive formed the first regiment of Bengal Native Infantry, called from its equipment the 'Lal Paltan' or 'The Red Regiment', and subsequently Gillis-Ka-Paltan.¹

The Lal Paltan had a complement of European officers and Non-Commissioned officers.² It marked a new phase in the history of the Company's army, for till then the Indian Companies were under the command of Indian officers alone, and it was for the first time that British officers had been superimposed. It may be recalled that in 1748, the overall command of the Presidency Armies was given to military men, whereas the command of the Companies was in the hands of the native officers.

The Court of Directors was anxious to ensure that a minimum number of Europeans must be maintained in each of the

1. The Regiment later came to be called Gillis-Ka-Paltan from Captain Galliez who long commanded it. (Williams, J. An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Native Infantry, London 1817, P.165-66.)
2. British Officers - 1 Captain, 2 Subalterns, 1 Sergeant and Sergeant Major; Indian Officers - 1 Commandant, 1 Adjutant, 10 Subedars, 30 Jemadars; Indian rank and file - 50 Havildars, 40 Naicks, 20 Drummers, 20 Bugles, and 700 Sepoys; making a total of 3 British Officers, 7 British Non-Commissioned Officers, 42 Indian Officers and 800 rank and file.

Presidencies. ^{For} At Fort William they ordered that the number will not go below 500.¹ To keep the proportion of Europeans, the Court sent a Battalion of the Crown's troops for service in Bengal.²

The Madras and Bombay Councils ~~two~~ undertook to organise their armies. On 4 December, 1758, the Council of Madras ordered the Sepoys to be formed into four Battalions with European Subalterns for each regiment and a Captain to command all the four. The officers were sent from the Royal service and their military experience was of great value in disciplining and training the new troops.³ But soon hostilities began which prevented the formation of new Battalions. The Madras government requested and obtained detachments from Bengal for immediate service. It was not till the fall of Masulipatam that the proposed Battalions were raised. The Sepoy Battalions, like the 'Lal Paltan', were given requisite establishment of both Europeans and natives to officer them, so that two Subalterns, three Sergeant Majors, and one Indian Commandant (under the orders of the Commissioned officers) were appointed to the command of each Battalion. Each Battalion had nine Companies,⁴ one of which was called a Grenadier Company.⁵

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1. Home Public letter from Court dated 3 March 1758, Para 70-71
 2. Home Public letter from Court dated 23 January 1759.
 3. Phythian, Adam The Madras Regiment, Madras 1958, P.271
 4. Each Company consisted of : 1 Subedar, 2 Jemadars, 6 Havildars, 6 Naicks, 1 Trumpter, 2 Tom - Tom, 2 Colourmen, 1 Vackeel, 1 Puckali, and 93 Sepoys; total 115 effective men.
 5. Wilson, W.J. History of the Madras Army, Vol.I, Madras 1882, P.142

No attention to re-organise the Bombay army was paid till 1759, and in all probability it was losing its preeminence. In that year, Major William Frazer, the Commander of the Bombay army, submitted proposals for forming Companies on the pattern of the 'Lal Paltan'. Bombay was allowed to have Sepoy Companies, each of 500 natives, but the new Companies continued under their own officers and did not have Europeans attached to them.¹

By the new organisation of 1758-59, the Native army of the Company, with the exception of Bombay army came to be officered by Europeans. Non-Commissioned officers were employed to drill and discipline the Sepoys and they formed a part of the Battalions. Artillery as a supporting arm increased largely, but the army was still without Cavalry, the inclusion of which would complete the army structure. Even at Plassey the British forces did not have any Cavalry, whereas the Nawab had eighteen thousand horsemen. British Cavalry is said to have been employed in India for the first time in the battle of Bedanah in November, 1759, when a body of 20 to 30 mounted volunteers from Calcutta, mostly civil servants, took part in the battle. But the real beginning of Cavalry was a result of the efforts of Major Caillaud who experienced want of Cavalry in^a campaign against the prince Ali Gauhar; and by an order in Council dated 22 September, 1760, he began organising two troops of Dragoons and one of Hussars. The men were selected from European Infantry and horses were obtained by purchase. The establishment of each troop of Dragoons was one Captain, three Subalterns and sixty

1. Cadell, Patrick History of the Bombay Army, London 1939, P.67

Non-Commissioned officers and ^{the} rank and file; but for Hussars, only 2 Subalterns and 36 Non-Commissioned officers and troopers were allowed.¹ The state provided horses, arms, clothing, and accoutrements and saddling, but troop commanding officers had to keep the latter in repair, and ^{to} feed the horses, for which they received a monthly allowance.² In 1762 two Ressallahs of Native Irregular Cavalry or Moghul Horse were raised and commanded by two Native Ressaldars. A small European Body-guard was organised at the same time, which included horsemen from ^{the} Moghul Horse. The Moghul Horse found and maintained their own horses, arms and equipments, for which an allowance, per mensem, was allowed. The Cavalry did a wonderful job at Buxar, where 918 ^{of the} Moghul Horse were present. Cavalry by this time had become a sizeable force, especially the Moghul Horse. Great augmentations and reductions occurred in this arm from time to time as the Court intended to disband them as soon as circumstances warranted. In 1765 they wrote:³

The progress that the natives make in the knowledge of the art of war, both in Bengal and on the coast of Coromendal is become a very alarming circumstance, and we are not without our apprehensions the consequences of your teaching them our Cavalry exercise. We hope therefore that you will have only made it a temporary expedient...

From the above account of Cavalry it is evident that this arm had started gaining importance along with Artillery,

1. Calcutta Review, Vol. XXVI, London 1856, P.550

2. Ibid, P.551

3. Home Public letter from Court dated 26 April 1765, Para 17

as a supporting arm.

Bengal, between the year 1759 and 1765 had added large tracts of land to its territorial limits, and the case of Madras was similar. Mir Jafar died in January 1765 and was succeeded by his next surviving son, Nizam-ud-Dowla. The British resolved to take the military defence of the country entirely in their own hands, as they considered the new Nawab incapable of defending the new acquisitions. In the treaty with the new Nawab, they allowed him to keep only so much force as was necessary for parade of the government, the distribution of justice, and the business of collections, and the whole military defence became the responsibility of the Company,¹ who appointed Clive as the President of Bengal, and Commander-in-Chief on 3rd May, 1765. Clive by his appointment as the civil as well as the military head, got the most independent powers, both in military and political affairs. One of the first measures that he adopted for the territorial defence of the Company's newly acquired provinces, was to re-organise his army in Bengal into an efficient body of troops. He found that the Bengal Native Infantry, to which he had given a beginning by raising 'Lal Paltan', had grown into nineteen Battalions. He raised two new Battalions and divided them into three Brigades of 7 Battalions each, so that all Brigades had equal strength.² He allowed each Brigade one Ressallah of Native Cavalry, one Company of Artillery and one Regiment of European Infantry of the same

1. Haugh Political and Military Events in British India, London 1853, P.24-25

2. Calcutta Review, Vol.XIV, London 1850, P.530

strength. Keeping the late orders of the Court of Directors on Cavalry in view, Clive disbanded European Cavalry and transferred them to Infantry and Artillery; only a small body-guard for the governor was retained. The Moghul Horse was dismissed, with the exception of 300, which formed the three Ressallahs of equal strength. The establishment of each Brigade was the same,¹ and a large number of lascars was attached to assist in working the guns. The ordnance with the Company of Artillery appears to have consisted of six light six-pounders and two Howitzers, forming a battery or field train as it was then termed, of eight light pieces.² In addition to the guns with the park, each Battalion of Infantry was equipped with two six-pounders or three-pounders worked by the men of the regiment, assisted by the native officers and lascars from Artillery.³ Europeans instead of natives came to be employed for working the Battalion guns on an order of the Court of Directors:⁴

As it is very essential that the natives should be kept as ignorant as possible both of the theory and practice of Artillery branch of the art of war, we

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1. Each European Regiment consisted of: 1 Colonel, commanding the whole Brigade, one Lieutenant Colonel commanding the Regiment, 1 Major, 6 Captains, 1 Captain Lieutenant, 9 Lieutenants, 18 Ensigns, 36 Sergeants, 36 Corporals, 27 Drummers, 630 Privates. Each Battalion of Sepoys consisted of; 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Ensigns, 3 Sergeants, 3 Drummers, 1 Native Commandant, 10 Subedars, 30 Jemadars, 1 Native Adjutant, 10 Trumplers, 30 Tom Tom, 80 Havildars, 50 Naicks, and 690 Privates. Each Company of Artillery consisted of: 7 Commissioned officers, 102 Europeans, and a body of lascars. Each Ressallah consisted of: 1 Subaltern, 1 Sergeant Major, 4 Sergeants, 1 Ressaldar, 1 Jemadar, 1 Second Jemadar, 1 Third Jemadar, 16 Daffadars, 2 Naicks, and 100 Privates (Calcutta Review, Vol.XIV, London 1850, P.530)
 2. Broome, A., Op. Cit. P.540
 3. Buckle, Op. Cit. P.28
 4. Home Public letter from Court dated 27 March 1770.

esteem it a very pernicious practice to employ the people of the Country in working the guns, and therefore direct that in future four European Artillery men be constantly attached to the service of the two guns which belong to each Battalion of Sepoys and that no native be trusted with any part of this important service unless necessity should require it.

The Bengal organisation, inspite of its defects, was remarkable on the whole. The new force had all the fighting arms of service necessary in modern warfare. The three Brigades were capable of independent action in view of the fact that a Company of Artillery and a Ressallah formed a part of each Brigade. By separating and dividing Sepoys into three Brigades 'the danger of their holding labels in a great measure [was] avoided.'¹ Clive had made no arrangements for payment of^{h.} Brigade, and within a few months of the new organisation, a paymaster and a commissary of musters were appointed to each Brigade.² No Commissariat at this time existed, but all supplies of provisions, cattle etc. were furnished by contractors, who in their own persons were present with the Brigades.³ The contractors were not very reliable. To rectify this defect, the subordinate officers submitted fortnightly reports of requirement of carriage and draught animals,⁴ so that action to procure them could be made well in time. The biggest defect of the new organisation perhaps was a comparative deficiency of

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 1. Public letter from Court, dated 16 March 1768, Para 128
 2. Broome, A, Op. Cit., P.543
 3. Ibid.
 4. Home Public letter from Court dated 23 March 1770, Para 134

European element in each Brigade. The Court gave an anxious thought to Bengal organisation for there 'the Company have so much at stake'. After consulting Lord Clive, Lawrence, Caillaud and Carnac, they considered it highly expedient to increase the number of Europeans, and have them commanded by a larger proportion of field and other officers.¹ Upon this, the Court not only despatched European recruits for their establishments, but also undertook to send out every season a requisite number of European officers to keep the European part of the Army to the established strength. The Court, in 1768, fixed the European establishment for each Presidency; for Bengal they ordered it to be three Regiments of European Infantry and a Battalion of European Artillery. Each Regiment of Infantry was divided into two Battalions, each of seven Companies, and one of Grenadier Company.²

It is interesting to note that the Court granted the Presidents and the Council at each of the Presidencies the power of dismissing European officers who did not behave to the full satisfaction of the civil government, with a view

1. Home Public letter from Court dated 16 March 1768, Para 77
2. Each of the seven Companies consisted of: 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 4 Sergeants, 4 Corporals, 2 Drummers, and 50 Privates; whereas a Grenadier Company consisted of 1 Captain, 3 Lieutenants, 5 Sergeants, 5 Corporals, 3 Drummers, and 67 Privates. The Battalion of Artillery was composed of four Companies and each Company consisted of : 1 Captain, 1 Captain Lieutenant, 1 First Lieutenant, 1 Second Lieutenant, 3 Lieutenant Fireworkers, 6 Sergeants, 6 Corporals, 2 Drummers, 2 Fifers, 10 Bombardiers and 20 Gunners. (Home Public letter from Court dated 16 March 1768, Para 79-85)

to keeping the military under proper subordination of the civil authority.¹ It was left entirely to the judgement of Indian government to consider what number of Sepoys was requisite for service, for it depended upon 'the circumstances and situation of affairs', but at the same time directed that the natives be paid regularly and Battalions be given as many commissioned and non-commissioned officers as the service could afford.² The Court soon realised that in order to keep the discipline of the Sepoy corps, the Sepoys should have at least one officer for each Company.³

By 1785, the Bengal Army had undergone a lot of organisational changes as a result of great increases due to India often being in a state of warfare, and owing to reductions caused by heavy casualties. For example, the Rohilla War required re-numbering of Battalions in 1775. Transfer of the Nawab's troops in 1777 to the Company dictated minor changes to be introduced in the arrangement of Battalions. In 1778 nine new Battalions were raised,⁴ and two years later six Battalions were sent for service to Bombay which could not be included on the rosters of Bengal.⁵ All such arrangements necessitated re-organisation of the Bengal army in 1781. Under the new arrangements, Battalions were increased each to 1,000 rank and file, and formed into

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1. Home Public Letter From Court, dated 16 March 1768, Para 126.
 2. Ibid, Para 128.
 3. Home Public Letter from Court, dated 11 November 1768, Para 95.
 4. General Orders Commander-in-Chief dated 15th, 26th and 30 July 1778.
 5. Home Public Letter from Court, dated 11 April 1781, Para 22.

thirty-five Regiments of two Battalions of 500 men each. The Regiments so formed were each commanded by a Major Commandant, and each Battalion by a Captain.¹ But the new organisation too did not last long as the cost of maintenance of Battalions, which was already very high, increased still further when six of those sent for service to Bombay returned to Bengal. These Battalions were considerably 'under-numbered' owing to heavy casualties in the late wars and the men were absorbed in the existing Battalions.

Like the Bengal Infantry, the Bengal Cavalry and the Bengal Artillery too did not show any signs of steadiness with respect to their organisation. Owing to the constant state of warfare that India had been in for a number of years, and the non-availability of requisite European Artillery necessitated formation of Native Battalions of Artillery termed as 'Golundauze'. The increase was so great that in 1778 the Artillery had to be formed into a Brigade consisting of one European Regiment and three Native Battalions.² At the time when Lieutenant General Sir Eyre Coote arrived from England as the Commander-in-Chief, the Court of Directors sent orders to Bengal, similar to those which had been sent to Bombay in 1752-53, ordering discontinuance of employment of Indians and Roman Catholics in Artillery, which resulted in disbanding the 'Golundauze'.³

1. General Orders Commander-in-Chief dated 10 January 1781.

2. Buckle, Op. Cit, P.51

3. Ibid, P.62

The Golundauze having been disbanded, the Artillery was re-organised into two European Battalions of five Companies each.¹ The discharged personnel of Golundauze were asked to join their ranks with lascars.

The case of the Bengal Cavalry that formed a part of each Brigade under Clive, was not different. The Ressallahs proved very expensive and accordingly the European body-guard and three Native Ressallahs were disbanded.² The Court ordered: 'from the absolute necessity of retrenching all superfluous^u charges of the military as well as civil establishment at your Presidency, we can no longer permit you to continue in our service three troops of Moghul Cavalry ... It is therefore our pleasure that instead of three you keep one hundred privates with European and Black officers according to your last establishment.'³ The Court, however, entered into arrangements in 1775, with the Nawab of Oudhe who agreed to maintain six Regiments of Cavalry and six Battalions of Infantry with a Company of Artillery, commanded and disciplined by officers of the Company's service; and this force was transferred to the Company's service in 1777.⁴

The Madras army witnessed as many changes as the Bengal army. By an order of the Court of Directors, in 1765,

1. Ibid, P.64

2. Calcutta Review, Vol.XXVI, London 1856, P.553

3. Home Public letter from Court dated 25 March 1772, Para 116

4. Calcutta Review, Vol. XXVI, London 1856, P.556

the Madras army was re-organised. There was no attempt at forming Brigades which deprived Madras of all the advantages that Bengal had as a consequence of that measure. The Battalions of Native Infantry which formed the largest portion of the army, were differently organised than those in Bengal. The strength of each Battalion was 900 and it was commanded by a Captain, assisted by a Lieutenant and an Ensign.¹ In the next year there were ten Battalions of 1,000 men each, the establishment having been revised as a consequence of new regulations; and till 1784, they continued to be on that establishment, the number being 80 in excess of Clive's Battalions of 920 men each. These Sepoy Battalions were classified into Circar and Carnatic Battalions, depending on the areas from which they were recruited, and they were normally not required to serve outside the area of recruitment.² There was no such distinction in the Sepoy Battalions of the Bengal Presidency. Recruitment of Madras Battalions on regional basis posed problems of procuring recruits, and imposed limitations on their employment outside the recruiting area limit.

Madras Artillery too was differently organised and equipped than Bengal Artillery which prevented them from being employed together in the field. The first Company of Madras Artillery raised in 1765 had the same establishment as Clive's Company (107 officers and men), and that remained

1. Cambridge History of India, Cambridge 1932, Vol.VI, P.157

2. Phythians, A. Op. Cit. P.272

3. Begbie, P.J. History of the Services of the Madras Artillery, Vol.I, Madras 1852, P.163

the establishment of all Companies till 1767; but on 9 November, 1767, when an additional Company was raised, its complement was 82 officers and men.¹ In 1778, the Companies of Artillery had a very much different proportion of officers and men as compared to the battery raised in 1767.² Whereas the Bengal Artillery employed 6-pounders and howitzers, in Madras, during the wars with Hyder and Tipoo, brass 18-pounders had constantly accompanied the armies.³

Madras Cavalry was also exclusive in its own way. Whereas the Native Cavalry formed an integral part of Clive's Brigades, no Cavalry existed in Madras till 1768. Even subsequently the army depended for Cavalry on the Nawab of Carnatic, who raised the first corps and embodied it into a Regiment under European Officers.⁴ This force served in the campaigns of 1770, 1781-83, and was transferred to the Company's service in 1784.⁵

The Bombay army showed still greater differences in its organisation as compared to the other two Presidencies. There was no attempt at Brigading the whole force and no European officers were appointed to the command of Natives even till 1768. After skirmishes with the Sidies in 1767, the Council at Bombay recorded: 'It appears from late advances that our Sepoys have behaved extremely ill, which we attribute

1. Wilson, Op. Cit. P.283

2. Ibid. P.357

3. Buckle, Op. Cit., P.176

4. Evidence of Major General Malcolm, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix B, P.325

5. Loc. Cit.

in a great measure to a want of European officers.¹ The Court of Directors consulted some reputed army officers including Clive, Lawrence, Calliaud and Carnac, and in 1768, gave a plan for organising ^{the} Bombay army. The Infantry was ordered to consist of one Regiment of 1600 Europeans, which was divided into 3 Battalions, to each of which a Lieutenant Colonel and a Major had been authorised.² It is difficult to comprehend as to why the Court ordered that establishment, as at that time neither Bengal nor Madras had Battalions of that strength. Each Battalion was ordered to consist of seven Companies with 3 officers, 8 Non-Commissioned officers and 63 Privates.³ The Sepoy corps were ordered to be formed into two Battalions of one thousand men each; and each Battalion had ten Companies of equal strength, with a Captain and a Lieutenant to command the whole Battalion.⁴ In 1770, the Bombay Infantry again underwent a peculiar change. Two European Battalions of 1,562 men each, and two Battalions of Sepoys of 2,042 men were ordered.⁵ In 1773, the Sepoy Battalions again underwent a change; each Battalion of Sepoys was ordered to consist of eight Companies, each Company of 90 Privates, making 720 Privates to each with one Captain and two Lieutenants, one Commandant, 8 Subedars and 16 Jemadars to officer them.

1. Cadell, Op. Cit. P.75

2. Courts letter to Bombay dated 18 March 1768, Para 134-175

3. Loc. Cit.

4. Loc. Cit.

5. Court's letter to Bombay dated 6 April 1770, Para 67-73

From the above account of the Presidency armies between 1765 *and* 1785, it is quite evident that each Presidency army had almost independent development and there was very little in common between them. The various establishments had been devised to serve local purposes and to suit local requirements of each Presidency. The establishments were altered as often as the situations demanded regardless of economic repercussions, on the one hand, and difficulties of employing on the field detachments from different Presidencies on the other. The employment of the Presidency armies together in campaigns of 1781, 1782 and 1783 brought home the need to assimilate the organisation of the three armies to one pattern.

With the Pitt's India Act coming into force there started a new phase in the Company's army. The Company's policy in India was subjected to the British governments' control.¹ The political change brought about a change in the Company's army organisation. The short span of peace that followed the warfare in the Madras Presidency saw the army re-organised.

1. The Governor General was forbidden to make war or conclude a treaty likely to lead to war for the reason that schemes of conquest and territorial expansion were measures distasteful to the west and policy of the nation. (Masani, British in India, Oxford 1960, P.13); By Pitt's India Act, the East India Company was made a subordinate department of the English government. Civil and military matters were to be controlled by six Commissioners for the affairs of India properly known as the Board of Control. The government of India was placed in the hands of the Governor-General and Council of three, and the subordinate Presidencies were made definitely subject to Bengal in all questions of war, revenue and diplomacy. (Roberts, E. E. History of British India, Oxford 1958, P.215)

The Court of Directors gave a plan of re-organisation in 1785, with such an object that 'the corps which compose the armies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay, should be formed to enable them to take the field in the shortest notice, and to act with effect whenever they shall happen to be united upon service.'¹ To ensure a uniformity of system in the years to come, the Court ordered that whenever it was to become necessary to increase the army of any of the Presidencies beyond what was then ordered, complete sub-units were to be added, without any alterations in the number of officers and men in each one of them, whether they were Companies of Artillery or Regiments of Cavalry or Battalions of European or Native Cavalry.² The establishment of each sub-unit of all the arms was fixed and ordered to be the same at the three Presidencies so that the complement of officers and men to sub-units of Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery was the same at the three Presidencies.³

1. Home Public letter from Court dated 21 September 1785.
2. Ibid, Para 83
3. Regiment of European Cavalry: 1 Colonel and Captain, 1 Lieutenant Colonel and Captain, 1 Major and Captain, 3 Captains, 6 Lieutenants, 6 Cornets, 2 Quarter Masters, 1 Chaplain, 1 Adjutant, 1 Surgeon, 2 Mates, 24 Sergeants, 24 Corporals, 6 Trumpeters, 6 Hunt Bours, and 324 Privates.
 Company of European Artillery: 1 Captain, 2 Lieutenants, 2 Lieutenant Fireworkers, 4 Sergeants, 4 Corporals, 8 Gunners, 56 Matrosses, 2 Drums and Fifers, and 2 Pukhalis or Watermen. 5 Companies of that strength constituted a Battalion of Artillery with a proportion of field and staff officers: 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, 1 Adjutant, 1 Quarter Master, 1 Surgeon and 1 Mate. An extra allowance was made for 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quarter Master Sergeant, 1 Drill Sergeant, 1 Drill Corporal, 1 Drum Major and 1 Fife Major.
 One Grenadier or one Company of European Infantry consisted of: 1 Captain, 1 Subaltern, 3 Sergeants, 4 Corporals,

An important aspect of the new organisation was complete Europeanisation of the armies by giving the command of natives entirely in the hands of European officers, and the post of Native Commandant was abolished in all the Presidencies. Native Artillery or Golundauze had been completely disbanded on the eve of Sir Eyre Coote taking over as the Commander-in-Chief, but it had been re-raised

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2 Drums and Fifes, 68 Privates and 2 Water Carriers. Two Companies of Grenadiers and six Companies of European Infantry constituted 1 Battalion of European Infantry; which was allowed a proportion of field and staff officers: 1 Colonel, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, 1 Chaplain, 1 Adjutant, 1 Quarter Master, 1 Surgeon, 1 Mate. An extra allowance was also made for 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quarter Master Sergeant, 1 Drill Sergeant, 1 Drill Corporal, 1 Drum Major and 1 Fife Major.

Troop of Native Cavalry consisted of: 1 Subaltern, 1 Sergeant; Natives: 1 Subedar, 3 Jemadars, 4 Havildars, 4 Naicks, 1 Trumpeter, 1 Farrier, 68 Privates, and 1 Pakhali. Six troops of that strength constituted a Regiment of Cavalry with an additional staff consisting of Europeans: 1 Captain Commandant, 1 Adjutant, 1 Quarter Master, 1 Surgeon Assistant and 1 Black Doctor. The senior Regiment of Native Cavalry was commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel, the next in seniority by a Major, and the other Regiments by Captains Commandant. An extra allowance was made for 1 Sergeant, 1 Head Trumpeter, and 6 Linemen.

Company of Native Infantry had own its establishment: 1 Subaltern, 1 Sergeant, 1 Subedar, 1 Jemadar, 4 Havildars, 4 Naicks, 1 Drum, 1 Fife, 68 Privates and 1 Pukhali. Two Companies of Grenadiers and six Battalion Companies of natives constituted altogether a Battalion of Native Infantry with additional European staff: 1 Captain, 1 Adjutant, 1 Surgeon, 1 Black Doctor; there was also an additional allowance made for 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quarter Master Sergeant, 1 Drill Havildar, 1 Drill Naick, 1 Drum and Fife Major.

Company of lascars: Even though the Golundauze had been disbanded, the lascars for the service of Artillery could not be dispensed with and therefore they were retained for cleaning the guns and for carriage of ammunition but did not take part in actual working of guns. Each Company of Lascars consisted of: 1 Serang, 2 First Tindalls, 2 Second Tindalls, 56 Privates and 1 Pukhali

(Home Public letter from Court dated 21 September 1785, Para 82)

to serve during the late wars. Once again, at the time of the new organisation, it was ordered to be disbanded, for it was the intention of the Court that 'none of the natives from the interior of the country of Hindostan, shall be taught the exercise of Artillery.'¹

In the new organisation the new and the most important measure was the formation of a Military Board for administration and coordination of work within the armies. Each Presidency had a separate Military Board with the Commander-in-Chief, the senior officer of the Presidency, the senior officer of Artillery, the Chief Engineer, the Quarter Master General and the Commissary, as its members. The Board was entrusted with multifarious duties- such as examining the state of masters of troops; keeping various corps to full establishment; keeping full information regarding the amount of provisions, ammunition and stores in the Company's forts, grenaries, and garrisons; attending to Artillery, arms and equipment, and providing them at the shortest notice; and advising the Council with respect to the expenditure on military stores.²

The peace establishment of the three Presidencies was fixed. The Bengal Presidency was to have 3 Battalions of Artillery, 6 Battalions of European Infantry, 2 Troops of Native Cavalry, 36 Battalions of Native Infantry and 30 Companies of lascars. The Madras peace establishment was

1. Home Public letter from Court dated 21 September 1785, Para 83.

2. Ibid. Para 18

ordered to be 2 Battalions of Artillery, 4 Battalions of European Infantry, 1 Regiment of European Cavalry, 5 Regiments of Native Cavalry, 36 Battalions of Native Infantry and 36 Companies of Lascars. The Bombay establishment was ordered to be ^{ed} 1 Battalion of Artillery, 2 Battalions of European Infantry, 12 Battalions of Native Infantry and ten Companies of Lascars.¹ At all the Presidencies the Battalions of Native Infantry were formed into Brigades, each consisting of six Battalions of Sepoys with one Lieutenant Colonel, and one Major as the necessary field officers for conducting the military duties and discipline of the Brigade. When the Battalions of European and Native Infantry were commanded to take field for service, they were equipped with two field Artillery pieces each, 2 Tindalls and 28 Lascars were attached for working the Artillery guns, and 1 European Non-Commissioned officer and 8 Privates were allowed for pointing the guns.² For service in the field a Brigade could be detached; the Grenadiers of the Battalions composing the Brigade were formed into two Battalions for covering the flanks of the Brigade and the Battalion guns were attached to each, with a proportion of European Artillery and Lascars. The scale of Artillery, other than Battalion guns, to be allowed in action, was fixed. It is quite evident that Cavalry was not tied down to the Brigades, but it was so kept that its allotment could be made according to the needs of a campaign.

1. Home Public letter from Court dated 21 September 1785, Para 82

2. Loc. Cit.

The re-organisation of 1786 was an attempt at making the three armies similar in their organisation. They continued to be on their peace establishment until the outbreak of the Mysore war in 1790, which necessitated aid to Madras from Bombay and Calcutta. To meet the new emergency the Infantry Battalions had to be increased to ten Companies each.¹ As soon as the war ended in 1792, the Battalions were reduced to their peace establishment of eight Companies each.² But for this appreciable change, the new organisation remained almost unchanged till 1796, when dissatisfaction of officers, rather than any defects in the army machinery, necessitated a complete re-organisation. At the time of the re-organisation, the army of the East India Company was 73,000 strong. Cornwallis in 1794 reported the condition of the Native army, which was the largest portion, as 'good'.³

Thus, between the years 1746 and 1796, a period of only 50 years, the East India Company had raised an army which in those times was a force to reckon with.

1. Home Public letter from Court dated 11 March 1791.
2. General Orders Commander-in-Chief 13 January 1792.
3. Letter from Cornwallis to Dundas dated November 1794, vide PP(microfilm) Vol.54, P.549, Lords 63 of 1812.

STATUS OF COMPANY'S ARMY

The army officers of the East India Company were often employed for civil administration of conquered provinces. Their experience made them assume powers which were unknown to the army officers in England. The sanction of force behind the new empire gave the Company's officers unlimited powers, which did not have, however, the sanction of the British tradition. In England the army had been kept in a subordinate status to the civil government; the Commander-in-Chief's power was greatly overshadowed by that of the civil government. Wars came as the result of political arrangements; the Commander-in-Chief had no concern with such political decisions; his responsibility was confined to being the Commander of an expedition and providing equipment and manpower for service; and the real responsibility rested with the government or the War Minister who was the real Commander-in-Chief in times of war.¹

The status of the Company's army in India was determined partly by the British tradition at home. It is highly significant that of the fourteen Commanders-in-Chief in India between 1792 and 1852 ten resigned before the expiry of their term; of those who did not, two were themselves Governors General. Resignation by a Commander-in-Chief as a result of disputes with civil powers was by no means peculiar to the Indian situation. Sir Ralph Abercrombie had resigned his command in Ireland in 1798

1. Napier, C.J. Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government, London 1853, P.219-20

because of his disagreement with the civil government; General Fox resigned the same command in 1803 because of his differences with Lord Harwick. From the early days of the army of the East India Company, the Court of Directors had noticed disputes between the Governor General or Governors and their Commanders-in-Chief at the Presidencies. In order to put an end to such disputes the Court of Directors had granted in 1774 a special Commission to the Governor General and Governors at the Presidencies, constituting them Governors and Commanders-in-Chief of the fortress and garrison of their respective Presidencies.¹ Orders within the garrisons, excepting those which related to regimental detail and military discipline, were given in the name of the Governor General or Governor; even the other orders were submitted to the Governor General or the Governor for his approval or disapproval. The military authority vested in the Governor General or Governor was allowed to be suspended only at the time of an attack on the fort and garrison and the Governor General or Governor was allowed to be the sole judge in matters of resumption of civil authority on expiry of military action. Even during the suspension of the Governor General or Governor's military authority, the Commander-in-Chief was subjected at all times to the orders of Governor General and Council. The rule did not restrict to the four walls of garrisons but extended over troops within or without the four walls.²

1. Court of Directors' instructions to Governor General dated 29 March 1774, vide Military Proceedings dated 13 November 1829, Paras 40-44

2. Military letter from Court dated 2 March 1831, Para 20

Thus all authority of the Commanders-in-Chief within the towns of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, was taken away from them.¹

In the Council at each Presidency, the Commander-in-Chief held a status next to the civil head by virtue of being a member of the Council next to the civil head; but he was not allowed to assume an independent authority in matters of civil government in the absence of the civil head. When the vacancy of the office of the Governor General or Governor fell vacant, no Commander-in-Chief took over the charge of the government unless he had been officially appointed to fill that vacancy; that vacancy was filled as a rule by the Counsellor next in rank to the Commander-in-Chief.² Thus, the Commander-in-Chief was permanently barred from assuming civil authority unless the government desired him to do so. The subordination of the military head to civil government was clearly intended.

However, though numerous rules and regulations were aimed at making the army head subordinate to civil government, the results could not be achieved without a series of disputes arising from the actual exercise of authority. Major Stringer Lawrence, who organised the Madras army in its infancy and earned the name of the father of

1. Napier, C.J. Op.Cit. P.201

2. Home Public letter from Court dated 17 January 1770, Para 10.

The East India Company Act 1793, dated 11 June 1793 (33, Geo, C52) Section XXX, vide statutes at large from the thirteenth year of the Reign of King George III to the thirty fourth year of the Reign of King George III inclusive. 12th Volume of Runnington's edition and 16th of Ruffhend's edition.

the Indian army, had many differences with the civil authority on the strategical movements of the Madras army.¹ The major's subordination to the civil government was obtained by the Council of Fort St. George Madras by making him obey the orders of the Court of Directors that 'when any military designs and operations are under consideration of the Council', Major Lawrence was to lay before them 'such plans and explanations thereof' as may enable them to give proper order for the more effectual carrying them into execution and that, he was to be governed by such orders as he received in writing from the Court of Directors for the time being and from the President and the Council.²

In subordination of the officers of the Company to the civil government was not to be tolerated. Already on 7 June, 1756, the Court had recorded: 'We hear the military in general have lately started many idle objections and make a doubt whether they ought to obey the orders of the honourable Company's conveneted servants at any of their settlements ...'³ The Court of Directors clearly specified the Company's powers through an order which enforced strict obedience. The management of all the Company's affairs, civil and military, by their constitution was vested in the Court of Directors, and the Court of Directors invested their President and Council at all the several Presidencies with

1. Ruthanaswamy, Some Influences that made the British Administrative System in India, Madras 1939, P.132

2. Loc. Cit.

3. Bombay Government Consultation, 7 June 1757, Public Diary No.30 of 1757, P.194.

absolute powers.¹ The Court made the army a subordinate department of the government, for:²

Without such subordination the entertaining of military force would be useless and dangerous. It would be transferring the government and direction of the Company's settlements and property into the hands of the military. We can not relax or dispense with this condition, we require our strictest attention to it and for that purpose we do order and direct you upon receipt of this to acquaint all the military officers in our pay with these our sentiments, and thus you do ask each of them whether they are willing to continue in our service upon these terms. If any of them refuse to declare our submission thereto, you are, without distinction of rank or person, instantly to dismiss and discharge from our service every such officer who shall not explicitly signify his submission to these our orders. And let the officers you do dismiss be sent home at our expense by the first ship that shall ~~be~~ afterwards sail from your settlements.

The Court also ordered:

If in future any officer of our forces shall refuse to pay all due obedience to your orders of such as act under you, we do require and order you to dismiss and discharge from our service and send home every such officer, and to fill up the vacancies with such other persons as you shall think proper.

Clive, no doubt a soldier first, did not lose sight of the necessity of keeping military of the Company on a subordinate status to the government. He was aware that at the back of Indian empire there must be physical force, but that force was only one of the factors in the foundation of Indian empire. He too supported the principle that the army should be subordinate to the civil power. He ~~want~~^{warned} the civil authorities that if at any time the army should

1. Court of Directors instructions to Presidency Councils, vide Military letter from Court to Bombay, dated 5 July 1758.

2. Loc. Cit.

struggle for superiority, the Governor and the Council must strenuously exert themselves ever mindful that they were the trustees for the Company and guardians of public property under civil constitution.¹ He exercised his superior civil authority when he put down the mutiny of Bengal officers in 1766.²

The first half of the nineteenth century was marked by disputes between the military commanders and the civil authorities. A dispute arose, for instance, between Lord William Bentinck (when he was Governor of Madras) and Major General Sir John Craddock, Commander-in-Chief at Madras, in 1804. The Commander-in-Chief argued that 'military patronage', that is the appointment of officers and their promotion, had nothing to do with the Governor General's powers in the Bengal Presidency, and that those powers had been vested in him merely by virtue of his high position in political matters and for vesting in him a general control over the King's and Company's troops in all Presidencies. Craddock argued that promotions in the Madras army should originate with the Commander-in-Chief, because interference by the civil authorities in these matters encouraged the military officers not to care for the military authority.

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1. Auber, Rise and Progress of British Power in India, Vol. I London 1837, P.151
 2. William Haugh, Political and Military Events in British India, London 1853, Vol. I, P.26

A gross insubordination occurred on account of orders issued on 1 January 1766, that 'Double Bhatta' should cease. Many army officers were court martialed and sent home under the charge of insubordination when they mutinied against government's orders.

This was particularly important because the Governor General could appoint army officers to civil posts without consulting the Commander-in-Chief.¹ The Commander-in-Chief felt so strongly about his own position on this point that he threatened to resign if the patronage was ^{not} taken away from Governor General's hands. The Court of Directors, however, sided with the civil authority and framed rules to enable the Governor General to exercise his superior powers as before.²

In 1809, another quarrel arose at Madras between the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant General Macdowell, and the civil government. General Macdowell had put his Quarter Master General, Lieutenant Colonel Munro, under arrest because 'tent contract', an allowance to officers in field, was discontinued by the government on a suggestion of Lieutenant Colonel Munro.³ The proposed measure of annulling the tent contract was not liked by many officers of the Madras army who requested the Commander-in-Chief to put Lieutenant Colonel Munro under arrest. The Commander-in-Chief put the Lieutenant Colonel under arrest in spite of the fact that the government, having carefully considered the measure, had directed that it should be carried out. The Council at Madras reminded the Commander-in-Chief that the act on which the charges against Lieutenant Colonel Munro had been

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1. Military Consultation, dated 25 July 1805, No.31.
 2. Auber, Rise and Progress of British Power in India, Vol.2, London 1837, P.20
 3. Parliamentary Paper (subsequently abbreviated as PP), (Microfilm), Vol.2, P.85, House of Commons (subsequently abbreviated-Commons) No.300 of 1810

founded, was the act of the government, having been approved and adopted in the most public manner. The government sought the opinion of the judge advocate who opined that he had no doubt of the right of the government to interpose its authority if necessary, by discharging Lieutenant Colonel Munro from arrest.¹ The government recommended Lieutenant Colonel Munro's release, but the Commander-in-Chief refused to release him; he ~~infact~~ charged Munro with the additional offence of having submitted an appeal to the government without the permission of the military authorities. By a resolution of the Council and the Governor, Lieutenant General Macdowell was kept out of seat in the Council, and the government having found the Commander-in-Chief adamant and not caring for their recommendations, ordered Lieutenant Colonel Munro's release. The Commander-in-Chief had to release Lieutenant Colonel Munro, but he issued the following order:²

The immediate departure of Lt. General Macdowell from Madras, will prevent pursuing the design of bringing Lieutenant Colonel Munro, Quarter Master General, to trial for disrespect to the Commander-in-Chief, for disobedience of orders, and for contempt of military authority, in having resorted to the power of the civil government in defence of the judgment of the office at the head of the army, who had placed him under arrest on charges preferred against him by a member of officers commanding Native Corps, in consequence to which appeal direct to the honourable the President in Council, Lieutenant General Macdowell has received a positive from the Chief Secretary to liberate Lt. Colonel Munro from arrest. Such conduct on the part of Lt. Colonel Munro being destructive of subordination, subversive of military discipline, a violation of sacred rights of the Commander-in-Chief, and holding

1. Loc. Cit.

2. General Order Commander-in-Chief Madras Army, vide PP(Microfilm) Vol.2, P.85, Commons 300 of 1810.

out a most dangerous example to the service, Lieutenant General Macdowell, in support of the dignity of the profession and his own station and character feels it incumbent on him to express his strong disapprobation of Lt. Colonel Munro's unexampled proceedings, and considers it a solemn duty imposed upon him to reprimand Lt. Colonel Munro in general order, and he is reprimanded accordingly.

The Council at Madras considered the act of the Commander-in-Chief as one of deliberate disrespect to the civil authority over the military, they decided to remove him from the command of the army, in fact through a general order of the government:¹

It has recently come to the knowledge of the honourable the Governor in Council, that Lieutenant General Munro Hay Macdowell did, previously to his embarkation from this Presidency left to be published to the army a general order dated 28th instant, in the highest degree disrespectful to the authority of the government, in which that officer has presumed to found a public censure on an act adopted under the immediate authority of the Governor in Council, and to convey insinuations grossly derogatory to the character of the government, and subversive to military discipline, and of the foundation of public authority ... Lieutenant General Macdowell is accordingly hereby removed from the station of Commander-in-Chief of forces at Fort St. George.

The Governor also ordered that the general order left by the Commander-in-Chief be expunged from every public record as it was in the highest degree disrespectful to the authority of ^{the} government.²

Again, in 1831, the Commander-in-Chief Dalhousie (obviously not the Governor General Dalhousie) had a difference of opinion with the Governor General on the question

1. General order by the Council of Madras, dated 31 January 1809, vide PP(Microfilm), Vol.2, P.85, Commons 300 of 1810.
2. PP(Microfilm) Vol.7, P.201, Commons 95 of 1810-11.

of military appointments. The question related to Captain Fitzgerald who was at that time a Brigade Major. Reduction took place in the number of Brigade Majors and Captain Fitzgerald was removed from his post, though he was not the junior most officer on the establishment. When questioned by the Governor General as to why the junior most officer did not vacate the office, the Commander-in-Chief explained that he had ordered Fitzgerald back to his Regiment on grounds of incompetency. The Governor General accepted this explanation by the Commander-in-Chief.¹

At about the same time, some vacancies occurred for the appointment of Brigade Major and the Governor General rejected some of the recommendations made by the Commander-in-Chief. He complained that the Governor General had interfered in a department over which the Commander-in-Chief alone had held control; and he considered the interference unnecessary and uncalled for.² The Commander-in-Chief wrote to the Council at Calcutta that his recommendations in making appointments should have been final and the Governor General's approval should have been a mere formality; by rejecting some of his recommendations, the Governor General had diminished the respectability and the authority of his office.

Sir C.T. Metcalfe, the Vice-President in Council, reviewed the representation of the Commander-in-Chief and

1. Military letter to Court dated 21 November 1831, Para 5-8. An enquiry subsequent to Captain Fitzgerald's removal revealed that he was an efficient officer and his removal from the office of the Brigade Major was unjustified (Minute by C.T.Metcalfe, Military Department Consultation dated 13 January 1832, No.58).
2. Military Consultation, dated 13 January 1832, No.57

opined that throughout the course of events, the Governor General's action was well considered and judicious. Metcalfe's own view was that the action taken by the Governor General had in no way diminished the respectability of the Commander-in-Chief's office. He wrote to the Court that though the Commander-in-Chief would like his recommendations to be accepted as a matter of routine, this was not Metcalfe's own view. He wrote:¹

I cannot bring myself to believe that the rules, which established that as a necessary form, were devised for the purpose of its being entirely negatory, or that it was intended that the superior authority should be merely the instrument for announcing the orders of inferior ... If the government is responsible, it must exercise its judgment, and if it is neither responsible nor at liberty to exercise its judgment, it would be better (that) the mere form of submitting recommendations should be abolished. But if any responsibility attaches to the government for what becomes its own act, there cannot it seems to me be any cause of remonstrance on the part of the Commander-in-Chief.

Dalhousie found it difficult to continue in his office in the face of this studied support from the Vice-President in Council to the civil authorities against the Commander-in-Chief. When the case was put up before the Court of Directors, they are also favoured the civil authority.² Dalhousie was obliged to vacate his office.

The new Commander-in-Chief too came to have difference with the Governor General. The office was given to Sir Edward Barnes, who would not yield easily. Soon a

1. Minute by Vice-President in Council Sir C.T. Metcalfe, vide Military Consultation dated 13 January 1832, No.58.

2. Military Consultation dated 13 January 1832, No.59.

controversy arose between ^{the} Commander-in-Chief, Barnes, and the government. The officers of the Company's army were required to pay 'Commission Money' on their promotion to a higher rank and on ^{their} first appointment. Their seniority appears to have been affected by the mode of payment of the Commission Money. The Commander-in-Chief objected to the method of collection adopted by the government as it caused to some officers a loss of seniority and pay. He asserted that the government had no right to interfere, for he had the authority vested in him by a warrant of His Majesty to adopt methods of collecting fees and to grant commissions direct to the Company's officers. The Commander-in-Chief threatened the Council that if they did not agree to his proposals concerning the collection of fees, he would grant his officers King's Commissions from his Military Secretary's office until the government made provisions to grant the same.¹ The Commander-in-Chief went a step farther and declared his intention of resigning if the government did not agree to his proposals:² 'if I should ever be found swerving to the right or the left', he wrote, 'to serve one service at the expense of the other, or sacrificing in any degree the interests of either, collectively or individually, to promote any private interest or sordid views, I shall instantly be

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1. He wrote to the government: 'I trust the government will see the propriety of seconding my views in this respect and relieve me from the necessity of compelling officers to take out their King's Commission from the Military Secretary's office, and at the same time to restrict all officers in the Company's service to the comparative rank with the King's officers which the law assigned to them unless they are in possession of King's Commission. (Military Consultation dated 17 September 1832, No.18).
 2. Military Consultation dated 17 September 1832, No.18).

prepared to surrender into your hands the commission which I have been honoured with by the Court of Directors, and return to England to lay at the foot of the throne that which has been confided to me by the King!

The Council was not to be intimidated in this manner. They re-asserted:¹

they could not allow that there was any matter of public interest in India, over which the government was without control and that the King's troops, the Company's troops, the King's Commander-in-Chief, the Company's Commander-in-Chief forming altogether the army in India were entirely and completely under the power and authority of the government.

Furthermore, the Vice-President in Council, Sir C.T. Metcalfe, made a complaint to the Court of Directors regarding the abnormal and independent posture adopted by the Commander-in-Chief. Eventually, the Commander-in-Chief was dismissed by orders of Her Majesty.² But before the orders of his dismissal reached India, another controversy had arisen between him and the government.

This time differences arose from the Commander-in-Chief's views regarding the mode of correspondence. He wanted his Military Secretary to be the medium of general correspondence with the government.³ The government reminded the Commander-in-Chief of the Court's orders which prohibited the Military Secretary to be the medium of correspondence except on important matters, and desired that all

1. Military Consultation, dated 17 September 1832, No.23

2. Military letter from Court, dated 30 July 1833, Para 1

3. Letter from Sir C.T. Metcalfe, Vice-President in Council to Commander-in-Chief Edward Barnes, dated 27 August 1832. (William Bentinck Papers (Microfilm) Reel 32.

correspondence should be conducted through the medium of Adjutant General, as was the custom and rule of the service.¹ To evade the orders, the Commander-in-Chief commenced an unprecedented mode of correspondence by sending all letters under his signatures, instead of sticking to the mode of correspondence previously in vogue. The Council wrote to the Commander-in-Chief that it could not be conceived that he was superior to the government; if he was subordinate, which they thought was unquestionable, he could not have the right to dictate to the government, or compel its submission to his will. His attempt to do so was, 'subversive of the natural and proper order of things!'² The government rejected all correspondence under the Commander-in-Chief's signatures and ordered it to be sent back to the Commander-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief promptly sent it back to the government for acceptance. This correspondence shuttled between the government and the Commander-in-Chief for some time. The Commander-in-Chief, at last, wrote a conciliatory letter to the government in which he stated that 'being most sensible of the necessity of preserving the best possible understanding with the government, both for the public good, as well as individual gratification, I now enclose remodelled letters, corresponding with those which were originally under my signature, but which are now signed

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1. Military letter from Court dated 26 August 1818, Para 195-200; The letter contains orders prohibiting Military Secretary to be the medium of correspondence except on important military matters.
 2. Letter from Sir G.T. Metcalfe, Vice-President in Council to Commander-in-Chief Edward Burnes, dated 27 August 1832. (William Bentinck Papers (Microfilm) Reel 32).

by the Military Secretary. These, if the government pleases, it can hand to its Secretary in the Military Department, and the original letters can be returned to me, and the whole of the correspondence which has gone through ... but in making this proposal in the full spirit of conciliation I beg that it may be most distinctly understood, that I do not relinquish the right of addressing the government upon any subject I may deem necessary, making myself the judge of the importance thereof, and to receive direct answers thereto from the government'.¹

The Vice-President in Council appreciated the Commander-in-Chief's conciliatory spirit but attacked his right of choosing the method of correspondence according to his wish. He informed the Commander-in-Chief that whilst it always had been the government's endeavour to exercise the utmost consideration towards him, it was his duty to maintain the government's authority, and disallow any attempt at dictation on the part of a subordinate functionary, however high in rank and office; and on these grounds regretted to recognise the Commander-in-Chief's assumed right to alter, and regulate at his pleasure the form of the correspondence.²

The Commander-in-Chief did not care for the Vice-President's communications and resumed to the irregular channel of correspondence. The Council thereupon wrote to the Court of Directors to advise the Commander-in-Chief in

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1. Letter from Commander-in-Chief Edward Burnes to Sir C.T. Metcalfe, Vice-President in Council dated 4 August 1831; vide Military Consultation dated 27 August 1832, No.10.
 2. Military letter to Court dated 30 November 1832, Para 55-61.

the best interest of public welfare to submit to government. But before the Vice-President's complaints reached England, the Crown had already ordered dismissal of the Commander-in-Chief, Edward Burnes, on charges previously preferred against him.¹ The Governor General Lord William Bentinck, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the forces in the territorial possessions of ^{the} East India Company in place of Sir Edward Burnes.²

In Indian government, the status of the Commander-in-Chief was only second to that of the Governor General of India but he felt very strong because in addition to his being the head of the army, he had the Horse Guards behind him. The numerous instances of dispute between the military and civil authorities prove that the Commanders-in-Chief did not very much care for the Governors or Governor General.³ Their struggle could end only if one was made clearly subordinate to the other. Since the military force in the last resort was the final and sometimes the only arbiter in the territories where no orderly tradition of power had yet been established, the Indian government decided to settle the question of supreme authority once for all by ascertaining the status of the army as one of a subordinate department of the supreme government by an Act of Parliament in 1833.

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1. Despatch to Public department in Bengal dated 29 May 1833; vide William Bentinck Papers (Microfilm) Reel 32.
 2. Letter from Horse Guards dated 16 May 1837; vide William Bentinck Papers (Microfilm) Reel 32.
 3. Evidence of Mr. Trvelyn; vide Select Committee on the East India Finance, 1873.

This was confirmed by the Indian Government's Acts of 1853 and 1858, which vested the superintendence, direction, and control of the whole Government of India, civil and military, in the Governor General in Council.¹

Much improvement in civil and military relations resulted from the act of 1833, but it could not stop the struggle. Between 1833 and 1858, there are two classic examples of struggle during the Governor Generalship of Lord Auckland and Lord Dalhousie.

In 1838 Lord Auckland issued some directions with respect to the organisation of the Indian army in support of Shah Shuja for operations in Afghanistan. Sir Henry Fane,

1. Government of India Act, 1833 (3 and 4 Will 4, C 85) dated 25 August 1833; vide the statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with notes and references by N. Simons Vol.13, London 1835. The following articles are important:

Section 39, P.437; The superintendence, direction, and control of the whole civil and military government of all the said territories and revenues in India shall be and is hereby vested in the Governor General of India in Council.

Section 65, P.441; The said Governor General in Council shall have and be invested by virtue of this Act with full power and authority to superintend and control the Governors and Governors in Council of Fort William in Bengal, Fort St. George Bombay, and Agra*, in all points relating to the civil or military administration of the said Presidencies respectively, and the said Governors and Governors in Council shall be bound to obey such orders and instructions of the said Governors and Governor General in Council in all cases whatever.

Section 39 and 65 in effect placed the administration of the Indian army under the Governor General in Council. Articles 73, 74, 75, 78, 79 and 80 also relate to army.

* Provision had been made in the Charter Act of 1833 for dividing the overgrown Presidency of Bengal into two distinct Presidencies of Fort William and Agra respectively, but the enactment was suspended by statutes of 1835 and 1853.

the Commander-in-Chief, regarded these directions by the Governor General as interference with his command, and objected strongly in a letter to the Governor General:

'I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch to require my acquiescence that the civil government shall dictate to me the organisation of a force placed under my command, for a specific object'. He then added, 'I think the principle is so entirely at variance with what is right, and such a precedent once established, so calculated to tend to future evil, that I feel it my duty at once to protest against it.'¹ The Governor General was, however, in a better situation to deal with the problem than previously and reminded the Commander-in-Chief that his position had been elevated to one as representing the supreme government, the legislative^{are} had confided to him the superintendence, direction, and control of the whole civil and military government of India.² The Governor General argued that in directing the organisation of ^{the} Indus army, he had political as well as military points in view and that he would have abstained from giving his directions if the scheme had been military alone.³ The Commander-in-Chief had to submit to the directions and arguments of the Governor General and he agreed to modify the organisation of the force.⁴ This was a decided ^{assertion} ~~victory~~ of the civil

1. Foreign Secret Consultation (subsequently refer to as For. Sec. Cons.) dated 17 October 1834, No.24
2. For. Sec. Cons. dated 17 October 1839, No.25
3. Loc. Cit.
4. For. Sec. Cons. dated 17 October 1839, No.30

over the military authorities and can be attributed to the Act of 1833 as well as to the considerate temperament of Auckland. It was unfortunate that the Commander-in-Chief did not get along well with the Governor General even when a major difference on account of organisation of an operational force had been settled amicably. Sir Henry Fane, who was to have taken charge of the Bengal troops and to have proceeded with those of Bombay to Afghanistan, had to decline the command.¹

There is yet another instance of a quarrel between two renowned personalities of Indian history, Lord Dalhousie and his Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Napier. Napier, was a very strong man and a seasoned soldier, who had been especially selected for the appointment by the Duke of Wellington when during the Second Sikh War, the Company's army had been unsuccessful in many battles and the empire appeared to be at stake. Unfortunately for him, the war ended by a miraculous victory before he assumed the command of the army. He was thus trapped into doing peace-time duties, which were not suited to his temperament. In the first interview on his appointment, Lord Dalhousie told him that he had been warned in letters from England against his (Napier's) endeavouring to encroach upon his (Governor General's) power, and that he would ensure that Napier would not.² Soon after the assumption of his appointment, Napier

1. Evidence of Sir Willoughby Cotton; vide Report of Commissioners, Question (subsequently C) 4584.

2. Holmes, T.R.E. Four Famous Soldiers, London 1889, P.140.

discovered that in making civil and military appointments of army officers he had very little power; two-third of those appointments ~~at~~ ⁱⁿ Bengal had been made by the Governor General or by the civil authority without any recommendation from ^{the} military chiefs, and the rest one-third emanated from the Commander-in-Chief, who however could only recommend.¹ We find Napier making complaints to the Duke of Wellington against Dalhousie's attitude towards him when he had disbanded a Battalion of Native Infantry,² and transferred a Regiment of Gurkhas into the vacancy, without consulting the supreme council at Calcutta, thinking it to be an entirely military matter.³ Even though Napier had taken this step owing to the Native Infantry Battalion having been in mutinous spirit for some time, and he wanted to set an example, the civil government did not view with sympathy the action of the Commander-in-Chief.

Thus for some time tension had been created, ~~and~~ ^{which} ~~it~~ was followed by a severe blow to the idea of the army's superiority or equality with the civil government. The contest arose out of an increase in the pay of troops at Wazirabad by orders of the Commander-in-Chief on the recommendation of Brigadier J.B. Hearsey, commanding at Wazirabad.⁴

1. Napier, Op. Cit. P.259

2. Mowson, Records of Indian Command, Calcutta 1851, P.101

3. PP (Microfilm) Vol.9, P.103, Commons 247 of 1857

4. Letter from Brigadier Hearsey to Adjutant General of army dated 11 January 1850; vide Discussions between Marquis of Dalhousie and Lieutenant General Sir C.J. Napier, London 1854. (subsequently refer to it as-Discussions)

The compensation was granted to make up for the rise in price of the whole rations, which was to be calculated by the Commissariat. The Government of Lord Hardinge had ordered in 1844 that money compensation to the native troops, for high prices of provisions, should be allowed on aggregate of the price of all articles composing the ration of the Sepoy, and not upon each article of food.¹ This order had been violated by the Commander-in-Chief without any reference to the government and without enquiring into the recommendations of Brigadier Hearsey, which ~~came~~^{turned} out to be erroneous;² and the Commander-in-Chief was accused of having assumed the functions of the supreme government. The Commander-in-Chief explained that he had no option but to increase the pay of troops at Wazirabad because the orders of the government had produced an unprovoked state of insubordination in some Regiments and that being confident of support of the supreme government he had undertaken those measures respecting pay.³

Lord Dalhousie did not think it appropriate to reverse the orders of the Commander-in-Chief in view of his explanation of the circumstances under which he had to increase the pay of the troops but he conveyed to the Commander-in-Chief: 'for the future guidance of His Excellency, that the Governor General in Council will not again permit

1. Military letter from Court dated 28 May 1850, vide Discussions.
2. Loc. Cit.
3. Letter from Lieutenant General Sir P. Grant, Adjutant General of army to Secretary to the Government of India dated 20 January 1850; vide PP. Vol.47, P.197, Commons 80 of 1854.

the Commander-in-Chief, under any circumstances, to issue orders which shall change the pay and allowances of troops serving in India and thus practically to exercise an authority which has been reserved, and most properly reserved, for the supreme government alone.¹ The communication of the Governor General was pungent enough and the Commander-in-Chief took it to be a personal insult to have been reprimanded in strong words. He wrote a memorandum, in which he argued in support of the just exercise of his own authority and against the unjust reprimand of the Governor General.² Napier blamed Dalhousie for not supporting him when he was faced with the mutiny of troops and declared that he was not sure of the support of the Governor General if such a situation re-occurred; and on these grounds he gave out his intention to resign from service. The Governor General condemned the acts of the Commander-in-Chief, He argued that there was no mutiny among troops as the Commander-in-Chief had himself circulated the order that 'I have seen most of the armies of the world, and I have never seen one that is better paid and better disciplined'.³ It was evident that there was neither a mutiny nor a pressing need to increase the pay of troops, and his claim as Commander-in-Chief of the army to power to alter the pay and allowances of troops under his command, if conceded, would amount to

1. Minute by Governor General of India Lord Dalhousie dated 13 April 1850; vide PP Vol.47, P.197; Commons 80 of 1854.
2. Memorandum by Commander-in-Chief to Governor General dated 22 May 1855; vide Discussions.
3. General Order Commander-in-Chief dated 16 January 1850.

giving two masters to the empire of India and would render the sure administration of the government plainly impossible.¹ The Governor General also pointed out that he was responsible for the financial administration of the empire and that the finances could not be placed under the control of its Commander-in-Chief and that doing so would mean making the civil government subordinate to the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief.

The Duke of Wellington, though a valient soldier himself, supported Lord Dalhousie and established the supremacy of the civil authority. The Duke remarked that Lord Dalhousie's proceedings were right in giving his directions even when there was a mutiny among troops because it was not unusual to instruct a Commander-in-Chief on the terms offered to the mutineers, and that the Commander-in-Chief had no right to increase the pay of troops without having given such an opinion to the President in Council.² The Duke supported the action of the Governor General and was of the opinion that he had done his duty in expressing his disapprobation of the act of the Commander-in-Chief who had repealed the orders of the government and also recommended to the Crown to accept his resignation. The Court of Directors also supported the action pursued by the Governor General and dismissed the accusation of the Commander-in-Chief that the Governor General did not render the support

1. Memorandum by the Commander-in-Chief for Governor General dated 22 May 1855; vide Discussions.

2. Memorandum of Duke of Wellington dated 30 July 1850; vide Discussions.

required of him.¹ The Crown accepted the resignation of the Commander-in-Chief and thus vindicated the authority of the civil government.

The above mentioned instances established the position and status of the army as one of a subordinate department of the government, which was in no way superior or equal to it. This is not to suggest, however, that the importance of the army of the East India Company was any the less for being technically subordinate to the civil authority. The subordination of the army was not obtained out of jealousy, but the very existence "of a class of men set apart from the general mass of a community trained to particular uses, formed to peculiar notions, governed by peculiar laws, marked by peculiar distinctions poses problems of profound political importance".² Thus, the subordination of the army to the civil authority was regarded as a political necessity. The peculiar position of the East India Company as well as the English tradition dictated this subordination.

However, the army of the East India Company was often given the importance it deserved, particularly in matters for purely military considerations. For example, a difference of opinion arose with respect to the organisation of the armies of India for Afghanistan between the Commander-in-Chief, Fane,

1. Military Despatch from the Court of Directors to the Government of India dated 7 August 1850; vide Discussions.
2. Micheal, E.R. Soldiers and Governments, London 1957, introductory page.

and the Governor General, Auckland. The Governor General wrote to Fane that, had the effect of the Commander-in-Chief's scheme been military alone, he should scarcely have ventured to press his opinion in opposition to that of the Commander-in-Chief.¹ The Governor General implied of course that he did not wish to violate the principle of non-interference in the internal administration of the army; he justified his intervention only on the grounds that the proposed action went much beyond the military sphere. Again, when in the battle of Moodkee, on 21 December 1846, the British were in a critical position after having suffered greatly at the hands of the Sikhs, the Governor General was careful to ensure that he did not interfere with the command of Lord Gough and therefore placed himself second-in-command of the operations.² As the Governor General he could have assumed the command of operations but, by placing himself subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief, Hardinge demonstrated the need of overall control by military chief in a situation which was entirely military in nature. It was on such an assumption that Lord Gough ignored the suggestions of the political agent, while conducting the operations against the Sikh army at Chillianwala.³

1. For. Sec. Cons., dated 17 October 1839, No.25.

2. Parliamentary Debates, Vol.89, London 1848, P.372.

3. Major Mackeson was appointed Governor General's political agent to the Commander-in-Chief. Mackeson was entrusted with the duty of obtaining intelligence and for conducting political negotiations. Mackeson's advice was sure to have weight as he obtained authority direct from the Governor General. But the Commander-in-Chief considered his advice unsafe and rejected his suggestions. (Calcutta Review, Vol.XV, P.292).

Notwithstanding the attitude of the Duke of Wellington with respect to Napier-Dalhousie controversy, he believed that the exclusion of the army from politics could be effective only if the civil government did not interfere with the matters of discipline and organisation of the army.¹ Already in 1812, in a despatch to Viscount Melville, dated 12 March, he had written:² "it is my opinion that all authority civil and military must be vested by the law in Governor in Council. The law must recognise no authority in the state". At the same time he underlined that: "the Company may and ought to instruct the Governor in Council, first to leave all matters of discipline solely and exclusively to the Commander-in-Chief, and to interfere in them in no manner, excepting when the safety of the state should require it".

Thus, we observe that there had been a constant struggle between the army authorities and the civil government and almost every time the conflict ended in dismissal or resignation of the Commander-in-Chief. Normally, however, the Governors General gave liberal powers to the Commanders-in-Chief in matters of entirely military nature. In the early days of the Company's rule the army commanders had extensive powers, for the Company existed on sheer physical force. But by 1833, most of these powers were formally annexed to the office of the Governor General. The subordination of the army to the civil power was always intended and it was actually obtained; but without prejudicing the essential prestige of the army.

1. Micheal, Op. Cit., P.28.

2. Sequeler, J.M. The Wellington Manual from the Despatches of His Grace the Duke of Wellington, Calcutta 1840, P.117.

ORGANISATION

The Governor General, by Pitt's India Act of 1784, was made responsible for all affairs, civil or military, of the Indian Government. But, as already noticed his position in military matters did not become unquestionably superior until 1833 when the entire superintendence, direction and control of the whole civil and military government was vested in him and the Council.¹ The Governor General and his Council were, however, prohibited from declaring war or commencing hostilities or entering into any treaty for making war against any of the country princes or states in India without an authority of the Court of Directors except when hostilities had been commenced against the British.² The Governor General communicated with the Court of Directors on important military matters, and obtained directions to formulate military policy. Orders and notifications relating to military matters in India were communicated through four different channels: the Gazette of India, Governor General's Orders (G.G.O.), the General Orders of the Commander-in-Chief (G.O.C.C.) and the Indian Army Circular (I.A.C.).³

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1. Government of India Act, 1833, Sec 38 (3 and 4 Wil 4, c85) dated 28 August 1833 vide The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with Notes and References by N. Simons, Vol.13, London 1835.
 2. The East India Company Act 1793, Sec 42 (33 Geo 3, C52) dated 11 June 1793 vide Statutes at large from the thirteenth Year of the Reign of King George III, to thirty-fourth Year of the Reign of King George III, 12th Volume of Mr. Ronnington's Edition and 16th of Mr. Ruff Hend's.
 3. Carnduff, C.W.C., Military and Cantonment Law in India, Calcutta 1904, P.XXIV.

The Command of the Army at each Presidency was vested in the Commander-in-Chief, one at each of the Presidencies. The Commander-in-Chief in Bengal was termed the Commander-in-Chief in India; he had control over all the troops of the Crown serving in India; but not over the Company's troops in the other two Presidencies.¹ The Commanders-in-Chief at Madras and Bombay held independent commands and were not in any way under the Commander-in-Chief in India; but when the Commander-in-Chief in India personally visited the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, he assumed the command of the Presidency army for the period of his stay and the Presidency Commander-in-Chief automatically became the Second-in-Command in that Presidency.² This special arrangement seems to have been made for administrative convenience for, because of the great distances involved, the Presidency Commanders-in-Chief did not have enough time and means of communicating with the Commander-in-Chief in India stationed at Calcutta. It was desirable that they should exercise their own discretion in the times of emergency. The troops of the Crown were kept an exception owing to their comparatively small number at Bombay and Madras and it would have been very inconvenient to give their control to three authorities. The arrangements thus made, however, did not prevent the Presidency Commanders-in-Chief from employing the

1. Goodenough, British Empire, London 1893, P.31.

2. Evidence of General Sir Willoughby Cotton, Report of Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Organisation of the Indian Army together with the Minutes of Evidence, London 1859 (Abbreviated as Report of Commissioners).

troops of the Crown in operations.

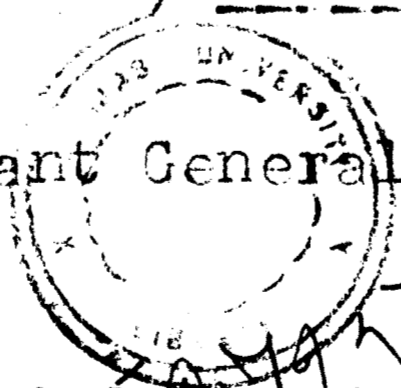
The appointment of the Commander-in-Chief in India as well as that of the Presidency Commander-in-Chief was made by the orders of the Court of Directors.¹ This term of office was originally limited by usage and later by regulations to five years, during which he was precluded from taking leave to Europe.² They were required to obey all orders passed by the Court of Directors and the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India or by the Council at each Presidency on their behalf. At each Presidency the Commander-in-Chief was a member of the Council.³ The appointment could be given to an officer of the Company or to an officer of the Crown and it was required to be approved by the Crown.⁴

The system of separate Presidency Armies, each having its own entity under its own Commander-in-Chief and with its own staff, was the outcome of historical circumstances. Such a pattern was unavoidable in the early days of the Company's rule, owing to the nuclei having been established at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. This system was found so useful that no

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1. The East India Company Act 1793 (33 Geo 3, C52) Sec XXV, vide Statutes at Large from the thirteenth year of the Reign of King George III to the thirty-fourth year of King George III, 12th Volume of Mr. Ronnington's Edition and 16th of Mr. Ruff Hand's.
 2. Cornduff, C.W.F., Military and Cantonment Law in India, Calcutta 1904, P.XVII.
 3. Evidence of Major General Sir Pritzler, Minutes of Evidence p.1222-1224. It appears that whereas the other members of the Presidency Council exercised their authority outside the limits of their Presidency, the Commander-in-Chief's authority as the member of the Council was confined to the Presidency limits.
 4. Evidence of Col. Lighton, Minutes of Evidence, p.2142.

effort was made at uniting the three armies in the organisation of 1796; and when the army was re-organised in 1824 the Court of Directors considered it useless to amalgamate the three armies.¹ Even in 1852, when the armies were transferred to the Crown, the old system of separate armies was allowed to continue in preference to having one army for the whole of India. The three armies were not united until 1895,² when the advantages of the system ceased to be operative because of the improved communications.³ The Home authorities had been reluctant to give sanction to this measure only because of the great advantage of the old system of separate armies. As an army officer put it, there was 'a political safety' in the division of the Indian Army.⁴ The armies if united would have become too strong and they would have been, paradoxically, a constant source of danger to the British Empire in India. The events of 1857 appeared to justify this assumption. During the Mutiny, the troops to be affected belonged to the Bengal army and there was no mutiny in the Bombay and Madras armies. It could be argued that had the army of the East India Company been a single whole, the mutinous spirit would have prevailed in the entire army and jeopardized the Company's position in India.

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1. Military Letter from Court, dated 25 November 1823, Para 213.
 2. A handbook to the Records of the Government of India in the Imperial Record Department (1748-1859), Calcutta 1925, P.105.
 3. Paul, F.T., Lt. Colonel, The Imperial Army in India, Calcutta 1902, P.6.
 4. Evidence of Lieutenant General Pullock, Report of Commissioners, ¶.236.



troops: the Crown's troops and the East India Company's troops. The Crown's troops were subject to recall from India to meet emergencies in other parts of the British Empire.¹ It was for this reason that a sufficiently strong European force was maintained exclusively for the Company's service, in addition to the Crown's troops. It did not mean, however, that the European troops of the Company could not be withdrawn under any circumstance. During the Crimean war, for instance, the European troops of the East India Company were withdrawn from India in spite of the Governor General's opinion that 'the consequence of weakening the European force at his disposal, even by a single soldier, would be fatal'.²

The Company's army was literally the army of the Company and it had all the ingredients of a good army of those days. The Crown's regiments were sent to India only for certain periods of service, and they were kept strictly as auxiliaries to the troops of the Company. But in spite of an equal status of the two armies, the Crown's troops in India enjoyed more facilities by virtue of the customs and traditions having established for centuries earlier. For sometime after 1788, when the King's Commissions were first granted to the Company's Officers, they did not hold the high ranks which the Crown's officers held. The 'Order of Bath' was extended to Company's Officers only in 1826.

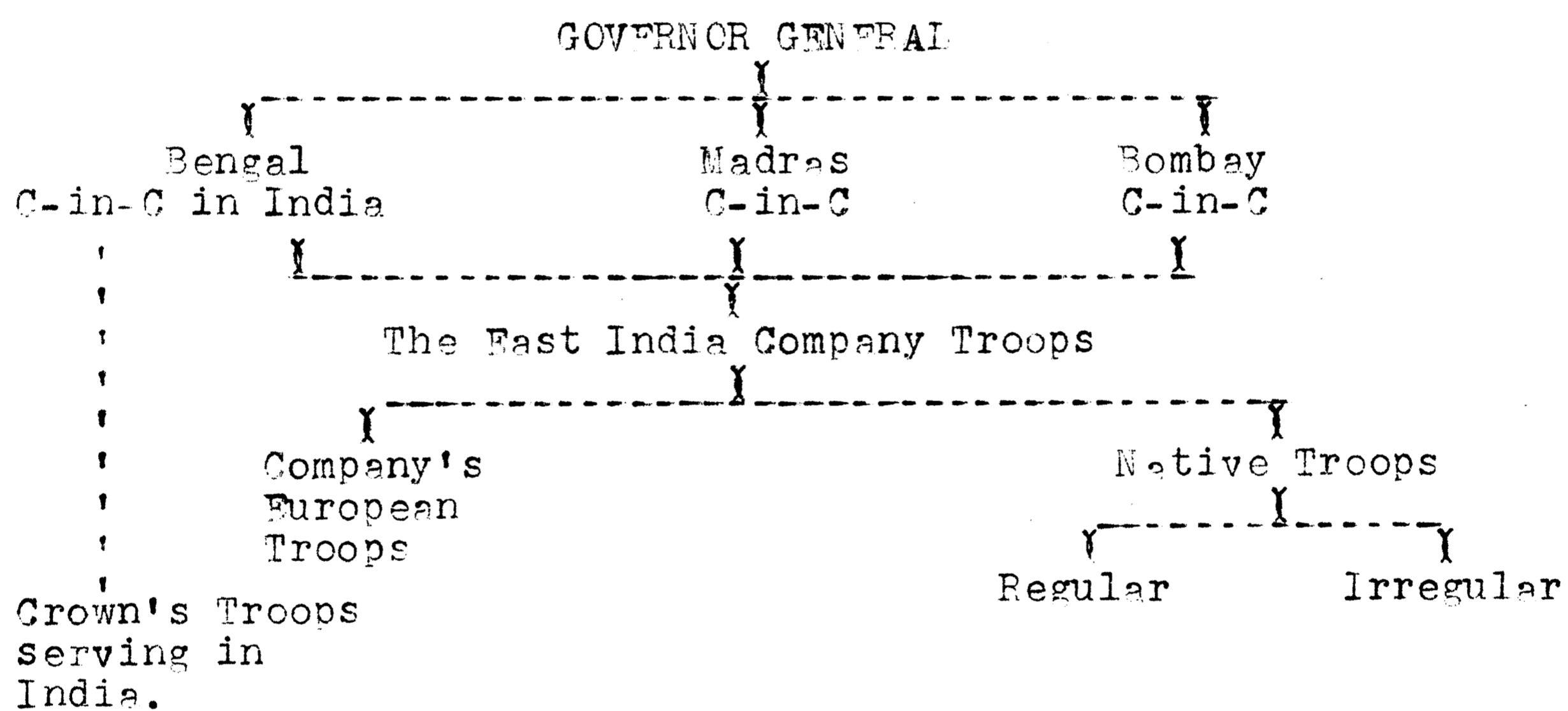
1. Evidence of Major General Robert J. Hussey Vivian, Report of Commissioners, q.3781.

2. Ibid, q.3901.

Brevets for service were granted in 1828, and the rank of General was first given to the Company's service in 1837.

In Europe, ^{rank} of Company's Officers was first acknowledged in 1855. The first Commander-in-Chief ~~ever appointed~~ from the Company's Officers in India was appointed in 1856.¹

The Company's troops were also of two types: Native troops raised from the inhabitants of India and European troops raised in Great Britain for the Company's service. *The* majority of the Native troops consisted of "regulars", but there were some irregular troops also.



The Artillery was never irregular, the Infantry had only a minority of irregulars; the Cavalry was mostly irregular.

Besides the three Presidency Armies, there were the Hyderabad Contingent and the Panjab Force. The Hyderabad Contingent had come into existence in 1798, when the Nizam came under British protection. The Hyderabad contingent consisted of over six thousand troops in 1798 and was armed with firelocks with

1. Evidence of Colonel H.M. Durand, Report of Commissioners, Q.5309.

some artillery manned by Europeans.¹ A treaty was signed in 1800 between His Highness the Nawab Asafjah and the English; he agreed to add two battalions of Sepoys and one Regiment of Cavalry, with their due proportion of guns and Artillery men, to the previously existing force of six battalions of Sepoys, of one thousand each, and one Regiment of Cavalry, 500 strong (with their proportion of guns and Artillery men). The whole subsidiary force henceforth consisted of eight battalions of Sepoys and two Regiments of Cavalry of 1,000 strong, with some artillerymen.² By another treaty, in 1853, the Company agreed to augment the force, when it was named the Hyderabad Contingent, and the force was to consist of not less than five thousand Cavalry, with four Field Batteries of Artillery.³ It was from 1853 onwards commanded by the British Officers fully equipped and disciplined, and controlled by the British Government through its representative, the resident of Hyderabad.⁴

The Panjab Force was raised on the 18th of May, 1849, under the supervision of the Board of Administration, and was, in the following year, placed on the footing of a military corps under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief in Bengal, almost like His Majesty's Troops, and not

1. Letter of Lt. Colonel Cuthbert, Resident of Hyderabad to Lt. Colonel Durand on special duty with Governor General, Inquiries on the subject of Reorganisation of the Armies of India, with Reference to the Fifth Paragraph of the letter from the Honourable the Court of Directors of the Government of India, No.235, dated 25 November 1857 (Subsequently abbreviated as 'Inquiry').
2. Loc Cit.
3. Loc Cit.
4. For fuller details of the Hyderabad Contingent, refer to the book entitled 'The Hyderabad Contingent'.

under any Presidency. It was ordered to consist of five regiments each of Cavalry and Infantry, and was raised for general service in the Trans-Indus Provinces under the British rule; and also beyond these limits, if emergency required it. The Sikhs formed the majority of the Panjab force, and at the time of the Mutiny there were 70,000 Sikhs on the pay roster.¹

The military administration was vested in the Military Board which in each Presidency had been formed by the orders of the Court of Directors in 1786. The Commander-in-Chief was its president, and the senior military officers at each Presidency, the senior officer of Artillery, the Chief Engineer, the Adjutant General, the Quarter Master General and the Commissary General at each one of the Presidencies were members of their respective Military Boards. The Board was assisted by a subordinate department called the military department to help carrying out its functions.² The department was brought into existence with a view to enforcing matters of policy and administration, but important matters continued to be decided by the Governor General's Council and the department performed only what may be called clerical duties. The Military Board as an administrative unit in Bengal issued all general orders to the army; all returns from the army were forwarded to it; so were the plans for the Company's territorial defence and for the distribution of troops. The records pertaining to the regulation of expense,

1. Evidence of Charles Treveleyen, Report of Commissioners, C.3164.

2. For details refer to Bannerji, P.D. History of Military Department, (Printed by Order of E. Collin in Military Department Press) Calcutta 1901.

promotion of officers and several other important matters were kept by the Board; it also undertook to perform the duties of Supply system till 1809, when the Commissariat came into existence. Even after Commissariat came into existence its administration remained under the Board till 1853, when three separate departments were formed, the Commissariat, the Military Public Works and the Ordnance. Some of the departments under the Military Board in 1827 were the Ordnance Department, the Gun Powder Agency Department, the Foundry Department, the Gun Carriage Agency Department. Some of the important functions of the Military Board were the supply of stores from England and their distribution among the Provincial Magazines and Depots, the supply to regiments and Corps of equipment and stores, and the checking up of their expenditure, the conduct of Public Works, civil and military.¹

The Military Board with its numerous military duties could not keep pace with overgrown work at each of the three Presidencies. The difficulties experienced were common in all the Presidencies. The Board in Bengal as early as 1823 had admitted that they were unable to accomplish the duties assigned to them.² In the infancy of the Company's rule when army was small, the assemblage of the heads of the civil and military departments under the immediate direction of the Commander-in-Chief served very well for running the Military Board; but as the immediate duties of those members required more time as a

1. Military Consultation, dated 7 December 1827, No.157, P.3
(Sub Page 4)

2. Military Consultation, dated 29 October 1830, No.1, Para 3.

result of growth of their respective departments, the Military Board came to be neglected.¹ The Secretary of the Military Board was burdened with its work, for the other members, who were holding higher ranks and important departments of their own, could not pay much attention to the Board.² It came to be felt that though the Secretary's duties required him to see all the working of the establishments under the Board, he was not responsible for the resolutions that might be founded on his observations. Similar difficulties were reported by Sir John Malcolm from the Bombay Board.³

Reforms were undertaken by orders of the government by dividing the business of the Board into two departments, Military and Civil, the first comprising all subjects relating to the army and Military Finance, and the second comprehending all civil works and establishments.⁴ The duties of the Board so divided were entrusted to the civil and military members, who were specially employed for the purpose. ~~Subsequent~~^{After} to 1830, small reforms were undertaken in this department, and it continued to function until the Mutiny.

There was some staff allotted for the functioning of the Army machinery. The Governor General's military staff consisted of a private secretary, a Military Secretary and aides-de-camp. The personal staff of the Commander-in-Chief

1. Ibid, Para 4.

2. Minute by C.T. Metcalfe vide Military Consultation, dated 29 October 1830, No.6.

3. Minute by Sir John Malcolm vide Military Consultation, dated 29 October 1830, No.2.

4. Military Proceedings dated 24 December 1830, No.3.

consisted of the Military Secretary, an aide-de-camp and an interpreter.¹ Sometimes the functions of the aides-de-camp and the Military Secretary were combined and given to one person. These officials assisted the Governor General and the Commander-in-Chief in their offices.

Throughout the period under discussion, there existed the departments of the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General. Owing to the presence of the troops of the Crown, the staff was duplicated; besides a full staff for the Indian armies, there was staff for the troops of the Crown, an Adjutant General and a Quartermaster General, with their deputies.² The staff officers of the Crown's army, however, did not possess independent powers, but communicated with the Commander-in-Chief in India through the Staff Officers of the Presidency Army.³ The duties of Adjutant General, when his office was first formed in 1780, included all arrangements and general detail, conformable to the orders of the Commander-in-Chief of all the armies in India, the formation of all general returns of these armies, lists, reports etc. for the Court of Directors, the conduct of military correspondence with higher authorities, with the Military Board and with the other Presidencies.⁴ To these duties, subsequently, the native promotions

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1. Army lists of contemporary period published by order of government in the military department.
 2. Evidence of Surgeon J.R. Martin, Report of Commissioners, p.4472.
 3. Evidence of Brevet Major B. Darlyonple. Report of Commissioners, p.5018-19.
 4. Home Public Proceedings, dated 13 October 1780.

and superintendence of inferior court martial were added.¹ The duties of Quarter Master General's department included arrangement and direction of all that related to marches and movements of troops, including also their distribution of troops and periodical reliefs.² The duties remained so, except that small additional functions were given to these departments subsequently.

There were other important functionaries besides the Adjutant General and the Quarter Master General. The Military Paymaster General looked after the arrangement of disbursements of pay to Military Paymasters, and the Military Auditor General exercised a check on all payments.³ The Judge Advocate General, with his deputies in each Presidency and a deputy for His Excellency's troops, watched over the proceedings of Court Martials, and brought to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief any irregularities in those proceedings, especially in cases of district and Regimental Courts Martial. The Surveyor General's department, commanded by a surveyor general, conducted surveys for the army. Till 1814, each Presidency had a Surveyor General but in that year the office of Surveyor General of India was constituted at Calcutta, with his deputies at Bombay and Madras.⁴ In 1829 the survey departments at Bombay and

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1. Military Letter to Court, dated 20 February 1827, Para 430.
 2. Regulations for the Quarter Master ^{General} Department, dated 28 February 1817, vide General Order Commander-in-Chief 1817.
 3. Military Letter from Court, dated 18 November 1829, Para 51 and 52.
 4. Military Letter from Court, dated 16 January 1833, Para 5.

Madras were closed when the superintendence and control of the whole Survey Department was vested in the Surveyor General and a project of an atlas of India was undertaken.¹

Each presidency had its own specified military area which was further divided into military commands. For instance, after the annexation of the Panjab, the military area of Bengal command, which stretched across the whole of northern India from Calcutta to the Afghan frontier, was organised into seven divisional Commands.² The system of military Commands provided, at the headquarters of the armies, unity and harmony of action, and it prevented division and separation within the armies themselves.³

The Bengal Presidency, though vast, was effectively controlled by the system of military commands. In fact it may be safely suggested that the Presidency was kept as a single unit because of the effectiveness of the military commands.

When the Indian army was re-organised in 1796, the Bengal Presidency was to consist of six general officer's commands, four on the Company's establishment and two on the King's establishment.⁴ In 1813, in the Bengal Presidency there

1. Extract from Military Letter to Fort St. George dated 15 April 1829, General Letter from Court July-December 1829, P.479. The Commissariat Department under the Commissariat General came into existence in 1809, which conducted the business of army supplies (Look up separate Chapter on Commissariat).
2. Micheal Edward, Battles of Indian Mutiny, London 1863, P.23.
3. Evidence of Sir George Clarke, Governor of Bombay, Report of Commissioners, P.1297-1307.
4. Parliamentary Paper, Vol.40, P.283, Commons 80 of 1963.

were the following military commands: Banaras, Cownpore, Dinapore, Meerut, Saugar and Sirhind; in Madras they were Malabar, Canara, Center and ceded districts, Mysore, Northern and Southern Divisions; and in Bombay they were Poona, Surat and Southern Mahratta country.¹ The number of the divisional Commands was fixed at each Presidency, and they were held by officers of His Majesty's service, as well as by the Company's service in the following proportion.

	Held by the King's officers.	Held by the Company's Officers.
Bengal	2	5
Madras	2	3
Bombay	1	2
	5	10

There were some military commands lower in status than the divisional commands. For example, in 1833, Meerut, Calcutta and Sirhind divisions were commanded by a Major General, whereas Eastern Frontiers, Mewar Field Force, Rajpootana Field Force, Agra and Mathura, Malwal, Oude, Dum Dum, Barrackpore, Rohilcund and Delhi, were Brigadier's Commands, and there were one or two Colonel's Commands also.² In establishing the number and priority of commands, there were considerations other than numerical strength. For instance Mysore division in the Madras Presidency in 1835 was termed as key division, and Bangalore was given a similar position because of its favourable climate. It was not as important as Mysore

1. Military Map of India, Minutes of Evidence.

2. The United Services Journal 1833, Part I, London 1853, P.570.

from the military point of view, but its climate favoured establishment of practical military schools of the Madras army there.¹ In 1853, the Gwalior Divisional Command was reduced from that of a Major General to a Brigadier's and at the same time Cawnpore and Oude divisions were amalgamated. The guiding principles in deciding the changes were not numerical strength of line or local troops in India, but economy and minor military considerations.²

The appointment of officers to the Command of Brigades and Divisions was done on the principle of selection and length of service. This was established by an order of the Court of Directors dated 23rd June, 1835; "We have no hesitation in expressing our opinion that officers have no strict right to succeed to the appointment of Brigadier or Brigadier-General on the ground of mere seniority, these being staff appointments, involving both confidence and responsibility, but we must express our firm reliance on the discretion and good feelings of our several governments that the claims of officers to those or any other appointments arising out of length of service, will never be set aside except on public grounds".³ In practice the rule of competency was set aside and seniority became the basis of staff appointments. The rule was slightly changed in its application by Lord Ellenbrough, who with every disposition to give the utmost attention to the claims of

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1. Minutes of Governor General and Commander-in-Chief, dated 28 February 1835.
 2. PP Vol.50, P.211, Commons 467 of 1860.
 3. Evidence of Colonel Henry Marian Durand, Report of Commissioners, ¶.5536.

senior officers, made it a rule that the claims of public service were paramount over everything else, and that the aim was to secure the services of competent officers, the officers who were the fittest for the Command. Thus Lord Ellenborough made selection, rather than seniority, a rule for appointments to the commands.

In 1796 the armies of the East India Company were completely re-organised in all the three Presidencies.¹ The real purpose of the re-organisation was to meet the grievances of officers of the army. Many officers of the Company's army, as senior as in the King's service, had been superceded by the latter.² The supercession was owing to the grant of brevet ranks in the Royal Army, a system which did not exist in the Company's army.³ Among other things, the biggest grievance was that the officers returning to Europe, even those on sick certificate, were obliged to resign, and when permitted to return on duty, they received only a portion of their pay and allowances until occurrence of vacancies admitted them. Those who were too sick to return to India, were given subsistence from Lord Clive's fund which was very small. No pensions were granted whatever might have been the length of service. But

1. The Cambridge History of India Vol.6, Cambridge 1932, P.159.

2. Malcolm, Political History of India, London 1857, Vol.II, P.231.

3. Brevet rank was a rank higher than what was entitled. In the year 1788, by an act of Parliament the officers in India were granted Royal Commissions which removed the inequality in ranks for that time, but no measures were adopted to remove inequality in the prospects of promotion between the Company's and the King's troops.

for the overgrown dissatisfaction of the Company's Officers, the re-organisation might have waited a considerable time.¹

When the officers petitioned to the Court of Directors explaining the disadvantages under which their service was placed, Lord Dundas, His Majesty's Minister for India, requested Lord Cornwallis on 1st September, 1794, to furnish a plan in detail for re-modelling the army in India.² He requested Cornwallis to suggest a plan to prevent the continuance of those discontents and jealousies, which so often manifested themselves between the King's and the Company's troops, and between the Company's troops belonging to the different Presidencies.³

Cornwallis was of the opinion that the Company's military arrangement had not kept pace with the gradual increase in their territories and occasional augmentation of their establishments; the defects in the constitution of the army were of such a nature that unless remedied, they would soon render the officers in general no less discontent with their situations, than until for the discharge of the duties which may be necessary for the protection of the British interest in India.⁴ Cornwallis examined the existing condition of the

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1. Neither the Board of Control nor the Council in Calcutta was interested as to how well the army was administered for the authorities considered finances more important than good administration and it was only when the discontentment of the army officers became a source of danger that steps were taken to re-organise the army. Barat Amiya, The Bengal Native Infantry Its Organisation and Discipline 1796-1852 (A Ph.D. Thesis approved by London University), P.53.
 2. Dundas to Cornwallis dated 1 September 1794 vide PP(microfilm) Vol.54, P.549 Lords 63 of 1812.
 3. Loc Cit.
 4. Cornwallis to Dundas dated 7 November 1794 vide PP(microfilm) Vol.54, P.549, Lords 63 of 1812.

Indian army and was of the opinion that Native Infantry was in good condition, but not the European Infantry. This he attributed to the difficulty of obtaining proper type of men for the service from England. He described the condition of artillery as one deserving his approbation because of its able-bodied men, and engineers on a comparatively bad state owing to a lack of experienced officers. He observed that there was no European Cavalry in Bengal and even native Cavalry was very small. He described the lascars of the Company's army of two descriptions, one attached to the Artillery, and the other employed in Arsenal, in attending^{to} and pitching camp equipage. The Artillery lascars were under the immediate direction of artillery officers, to whose battalions or Companies they belonged, it had not been found necessary to have any additional European officers to command them, and although they behaved well in action, and were principally employed on military duties, they were considered more of labourers.¹

Cornwallis recommended that the whole army should be transferred to the Crown, which meant that no army should belong to the Company as such, though all troops were to remain subordinate to the Government of the East India Company. He also suggested that the officers of the infantry should have the option for either the European or the Native branch of the service, but no exchanges were to be permitted afterwards. The rates of pay and allowances in the three presidencies were to be made uniform, and retiring pensions to be granted, if that could not be done, officers should be at liberty to

1. Loc. Cit.

sell their commissions at certain regulated prices.¹ The Court accepted most of the recommendations of Lord Cornwallis in principle except that they did not approve of transferring the Company's army to the Crown. The Court took into consideration the state of the Company's military establishments in all the Presidencies before determining the new establishment.

AS regards the arrangement of European Artillery they ordered each battalion to consist of five companies, each battalion of 1 Colonel, 1 Lieutenant Colonel and 1 Major, 5 Captains (one for each Company), 5 Captain Lieutenants, 10 Lieutenants, 5 Lieutenant Fireworkers; 20 Serangs, 20 Corporals 40 gunners, 10 drummers and fifers, 280 Matrosses and 10 Puckallies for Bengal; 20 Sergeants, 20 Corporals, 40 gunners 10 drummers and fifers, 280 matrosses and 10 Puckallies for Madras; and 25 Sergeants, 25 Corporals, 50 gunners, 10 drummers and fifes and 310 matrosses for Madras and Bombay. In addition, some staff was ordered, which was to consist of 1 Adjutant, 1 Quartermaster, 1 Paymaster, 1 Surgeon, 1 Mate, 1 Sergeant-Major, 1 Quartermaster Sergeant, 1 Drill Sergeant, 1 Drill Corporal, 1 Drum Major and 1 Fife Major; the staff being the same for all the three Presidencies.²

Each Company of lascars for the service of Artillery, which was employed for dragging and cleaning of guns, was

1. Loc Cit.

2. The details of organisation of 1796 as given in this paragraph and subsequent paragraphs have been obtained from Parliamentary Paper Vol.40, P.283 Commons 80 of 1863.

ordered to consist of 1 Serang, 2 First Tindals, 2 Second Tindals, 50 lascars and 1 Packaly.

As regards European Infantry each battalion was ordered to be formed into regiments of 10 Companies, each consisting of one Colonel, (Junior Lieutenant Colonel and Junior Major were without Companies), 7 Companies of 1 Captain Lieutenant, 21 Lieutenants, 2 ~~Ensigns~~^{Ensigns}, 40 Serangs, 50 Corporals, 22 drums and fifers, 950 privates and 20 Puckallies. The staff for the European Infantry was ordered to consist of 1 Adjutant, 1 Quartermaster, 1 Paymaster, 1 Surgeon, 2 Mates 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quartermaster Sergeants, 1 Drill Sergeant, 1 Drill Corporal, 1 Drum Major and 1 Fife Major.

Native Infantry was ordered to be formed into regiments of two battalions each, with ten Companies in each battalion; the regiments were to consist of 1 Colonel, 2 Lieutenant Colonels and 2 Majors (Junior Lieutenant Colonel and Junior Major were without Companies), 7 Captains, 1 Captain Lieutenant, 22 Lieutenants, 10 Ensigns, 2 Sergeants, 20 Subedars 20 Jemadars, 100 Havildars, 100 Naicks, 40 Drums and Fifes, 1600 privates for Bengal, 1800 for Madras and Bombay. The staff for Native Infantry was to consist of 2 Adjutants (one for each battalion), 1 Paymaster, 1 Surgeon, 2 Mates, 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quartermaster Sergeant, 2 Native Doctors, 1 Drum Major, 1 Fife Major, 2 Drill Havildars and 2 Drill Naicks.

The Native Cavalry regiments were ordered to consist of Six troops each, with 2 Captains, 1 Captain Lieutenant, 6 Lieutenants, 3 Cornets, 2 Sergeants, 6 Subedars, 6 Jemadars, 18 Havildars, 18 Naicks and 6 Trumplers, 420 troopers and 6 Puckallies; and the staff was ordered to consist of one

Adjutant, 1 Quartermaster, 1 Paymaster, 1 Surgeon Mate, 1 Sergeant Major, 1 Quartermaster Sergeant, 1 Drill Havildar, 1 Drill Naick, 1 Trumpet Major, 6 Pay Havildars, 6 Fifers and 1 Native Doctor.

A Corps of Engineers consisting of 1 Colonel as Chief Engineer, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, 4 Captains, 4 Captain Lieutenants, 8 Lieutenants, 8 Ensigns and 1 Adjutant.

The powers of the Colonel were defined in the following words: "The Commanding Officer of the regiment may parade it for exercise, or any other duty whenever he thinks proper, or may order a parade or exercise of either of the Battalions under its Commandant; but as the Commanding Officers of the battalions are answerable for the discipline of their Corps, they are to be allowed to have such parades, and to prescribe such duties, or exercise, consistent with established regulations as may conduce to this end whenever the battalion is not required for general or regimental duty".

After the reorganisation, the army of the East India Company was placed on a footing of respectability which it had not held before. The Command of Bengal Artillery was vested in a Senior Colonel, with a Brigade-Major as his staff officer. In the native infantry the proportion of officers was increased and made equal to what was there prevalent in the Crown's troops. This increased the efficiency of the native corps. With the new promotion system in which rise to the rank of Major within the regiment was provided for, experienced officers could be attached to the native corps and it strengthened the reciprocal confidence and connexion between

the European Officers and sepoy, which was always deemed the most essential principle of the constitution of ^{the} native army.¹

The re-organisation, however, failed to satisfy all the aspirations of the Company's officers. Many promotions occurred in the Army after the re-organisation but it did not please some officers. The Calcutta Gazette recorded: "to learn that some of our officers, instead of receiving the material benefits and advantage held out to them by the new army regulations, with gratitude and respect, had presumed to arraign those regulations in a style of disrespect and intemperance highly unbecoming the situation which they stand in those who prescribed them; that some had even dared to insinuate that we had been actuated by unworthy motives in forming some parts of regulations."²

King's officers too were not happy to be placed under the Company's Commander-in-Chief. The difficulties of status and of jurisdiction over the royal as well as the Company's troops were so great that Cornwallis insisted on the grant to himself of the Commandership-in-Chief, when he became the Governor General, and Lord Wellington and Lord Moire (Lord Hardinge) held the same positions.³ The Governor General as the Commander-in-Chief was acceptable to the King's officers.

1. Malcolm, 'Political History of India 1784-1823', Vol. II, London 1826, P.231.

2. Letter of the Court of Directors dated 6 June 1796 vide Kerr Seton, W.S., Selections from Calcutta Gazettes Vol. III, Calcutta 1868, P.18.

3. Malcolm, The India Office, London 1826, P.189.

Something new to emerge from the organisation of 1796 was the Horse Artillery and the Stud Department. On 19 June, 1797, the Governor General, on the authority of the Court, ordered that an experimental Horse Artillery should be organised with a view to ascertain how far such an establishment would be useful for the service with the army in India.¹ Guns, stores and Horse harness for the use of Horse Artillery were sent from England for the experiment. Some of the Experimental Horse Artillery was ordered to accompany the expedition to Egypt, and it embarked almost as soon as it was raised.² A portion was attached to the Governor General's Body Guard. Horse Artillery was made a strong element by allotment of two guns of Light Artillery to each unit of Horse Artillery, and in due course each regiment of Cavalry also received the same number of guns, by an order of the Court of Directors.³ General Lake was the first to combine the movements of Horse Artillery and Cavalry, by way of exercises, and made Cavalry a real effective arm by using the two in close co-operation.⁴

The Government found it difficult to obtain horses for the Cavalry and Horse Artillery, and those available, were not of required size and strength. A Stud Department was therefore opened by the government at a very heavy expense, with a

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1. Minute by Commander-in-Chief for the Council dated 21st August 1800, Military Proceedings dated 30 October 1800.
 2. Buckle's, E. Memoir of the Services of the Bengal Artillery, London 1852, P.231.
 3. Military Letter to Court dated 11 August 1803, Paras 24-25.
 4. A little more detail will be found in the chapter on Tactics and Strategy.

view to getting the finest type of horses for the service, both for Horse Artillery and Cavalry.¹ The Stud Department improved the breed of cattle for the army beyond expectations. The department was expected not only to produce good breed horses for the army, but to become a source of income for it.² By 1802, the Stud Department had made a considerable progress, The Court wrote: "with respect to the Company's stud, we have the further satisfaction to notice the considerable progress that has been made; that of establishing and extending an improved breed of horses in the Company's territories for supplying the Company's Cavalry!"³ Every effort was made to improve the Stud Department. From time to time well-bred horses had been imported from England to be added to the locally purchased. The horses of ^{the} Stud attracted the native dealers for the purpose of exportation. The quality of horses can be judged from the fact that, to prevent exportation, a duty equal to twenty per/cent. of the cost of the horse was levied on all horses proceeding beyond the limit of provinces.⁴

At Madras there was no Stud Department and all horses were brought down from the Persian Gulf by sea, and were purchased by the Commissary for the army.⁵ In that Presidency

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1. Military Proceedings (Proceedings of Board of Superintendence) dated 14 March 1800.
 2. Loc Cit.
 3. Military Letter from Court dated 12 March 1802, Para 32.
 4. Military Letter to Court dated 11 August 1803, Para 200.
 5. Evidence of Sir T. Pritzler, Minutes of Evidence, C.1154 - 1155 and 1158.

all horses for the artillery were purchased by contract, a certain sum being allowed by the government for each horse; the horses, however, were approved by a confidential officer appointed for that duty; or sometimes a committee of officers was appointed for the same purpose. The horses then selected were sent to the depot in Mysore. The Artillery was allowed to make the first selection, and afterwards the Cavalry.¹

The Stud establishment in Bombay was started in the eighteen-thirties.²

In the early days when there were no studs, horses were supplied by an agency, held by a Captain.³ On the introduction of Studs, the agency system was suspended, but as the demand of Horse Artillery and Cavalry increased, the Stud could not keep pace with the demands. The unmet demands were fulfilled by purchase from native dealers and an appointed agent. As time passed, horse artillery, Cavalry and stud department became prominent parts of the army and the former two came to be extensively employed in Indian warfare.

The wars after the reorganisation of 1796 brought about a number of changes in the army establishment. The

1. Evidence of Colonel J. Limond, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1294, 1296 and 1297.

2. Evidence of Sir J. Malcolm, Minutes of Evidence, Appx. B., P.284.

3. Military Letter to Court dated 11 August 1803, Para 195.

battle of Seringapatam brought about a great increase in the army.¹ The Bengal Army, the artillery in particular, was increased for the protection and tranquility of Oude . Since there was no prospect of obtaining Europeans to complete the required needs of artillery or men to supply the common casualties, Golundauze (the gola-andāz or Indian artillery) was the only substitute for preserving this branch.² A large number of Golundauze Companies were once again raised. Fifteen Companies were raised in Bengal.³ As soon as the wars came to an end, due to short-sightedness the Golundauze were disbanded, excepting the detachments which were on foreign service.⁴ But as soon as the British came to arms with the Marathas, the Golundauze were re-established. They were formed into five companies, increased to 8 companies in 1808, and a Captain was allowed to command in 1816.⁵ When fully organised, in Bengal they were formed into two battalions of eight companies each. Each battalion had a Subedar-Major, 7 Subedars, 16 Jamadars, 64 Havildars, 64 Neicks, 16 Drummers and 832 privates; and a company had a Subedar, 2 Jamadars, 8 Havildars, 8 Neicks, 2 Drummers and 104 privates.⁶ The staff consisted of 1 Adjutant,

1. Military Letter to Court dated 12 July 1802, Para 15.

2. Military Proceedings, Minutes by Commander-in-Chief, dated 27 August 1799, No.2.

3. Military Proceedings, Minutes by Commander-in-Chief, dated 27 August 1799, No.1.

4. Military Letter to Court, dated 11 August 1803, Para 13.

5. Parliamentary Paper Vol.52, P.459, Commons 500 of 1867.

6. Loc Cit.

In Bombay there was one brigade of four troops of Europeans as in Bengal. There was no horse artillery in Bombay and each troop had four six-pounders.¹

The foot artillery of the three Presidencies consisted of battalions, each of 4 Companies. There was 1 Colonel, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, 5 Captains, 8 Lieutenants, 4 Second Lieutenants, 1 Adjutant, 1 Quartermaster, 1 Surgeon; Sergeants 24, Corporals 20, Bombardiers 40, Drummers 8, and gunners 320.² In addition, gun lascars were attached to Companies of foot artillery, each company consisted of Subedars 2, Jamadars 2, Havildars 8, Naicks 8, privates 120 to 160; and the native staff consisting of Subedar-Major, Pay Havildar, Bheestis, Washermen, Native Doctors, Artificers and Sweepers.³

The Golundauze Battalions of Bengal and Bombay were of 8 Companies and in Madras of 6 Companies, but the element of personnel was almost the same in spite of this major difference in basic organisation. Each battalion had 1 Colonel, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, 5 Captains, 8 Lieutenants, 4 Second Lieutenants, 1 Adjutant, 1 Interpreter and Quartermaster, 1 Surgeon, 1 Assistant Surgeon; Native Officer, Subedars 8, Jemadars 12 to 16; Native Non-Commissioned Officers and rank and file; total 552 in Madras, 560 in Bombay and 832 in Bengal.⁴

1. Loc Cit.

2. Parliamentary Paper Vol.13, Page 1, Commons 735 of 1832 (The Appendix on organization page 248 to 256).

3. Loc Cit.

4. Loc Cit.

At all the Presidencies each regiment of Native Cavalry ^{consisted} comprised of six troops. Each regiment had officers; Colonel 1, Lieutenant Colonel 1, Major 1, Captains 5, Lieutenants 8 and Cornets 4; European Staff, Adjutant 1, Quartermaster 1, Surgeon 1, Assistant Surgeon 1 and Veterinary Surgeon 1, Sergeant Major 1, and Quartermaster Sergeant 1; Native Officers, Subedar Major 1, Subedars 5, Jemadars 6 in Bengal, 12 in Madras and Bombay; Native Non-Commissioned rank and file, Staff Havildars 3, Havildars 24, Staff Naick 1, Naicks 24, and Troopers 420.¹

In 1834 the Governor General, Lord W.C. Bentinck, submitted to the Council a plan for re-organising the army in India. The plan was calculated to improve the efficiency of the army, particularly in its Infantry and Cavalry branches, and was expected to reduce military expenditure. The plan did not propose any change in the constitution of the regiments of Infantry or Cavalry or ^{any} decrease in the numerical strength. It was simply intended to raise the complement of each regiment of 640 privates to 800, which had been the average peace establishment of all the Presidencies many years ago and in the Cavalry from 420 to 600 troopers. It was also suggested to reduce two guns in each troop of artillery.

The following tables indicate the advantages expected.²

<u>Prospective Saving</u>		<u>Immediate Saving</u>
29,89,451	Infantry	5,25,055
10,63,337	Cavalry	4,33,455
6,45,952	Artillery	4,22,869

1. Minutes of Evidence, Appx. A, Sub-Appx.49, P.248.

2. Parliamentary Paper Vol.52, P.459, Commons 500 of 1867.

Lord William Bentinck suggested the total abolition of the Bombay army. In his view the Indian army was the most expensive and the least efficient in the world. The Bombay army at any rate was serving no good purpose. He suggested that the Hindoostanee half of it should be transferred to the Bengal army, and the Bombay half should be a Major General's command under the Madras army. He argued that the Bombay army was very small and yet it required all the staff of large armies to conduct its affairs; and this resulted in great loss of revenues. To effect economy, he thought, the measure was necessary.¹

Bentinck's view was not shared by Sir C.T. Metcalfe. Howsoever pressing the financial condition might be, the reduction in the number of regiments (even when not in total strength) was not acceptable to Metcalfe. Reductions had already been effected previous to this plan and any further reduction would have made the system inefficient.² Sir C.T. Metcalfe wrote:³

We have repeatedly been in a state of similar confidence, which has been suddenly disturbed by unexpected war. In 1802, a large reduction of the army took place, under the expectation of continued peace. This was followed by a war in 1803, which lasted to 1806, requiring all our energies, and exhausting our resources. Before the Goorkha war we despised our enemies, and

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1. Minute by Governor General W.C. Bentinck dated 13 March 1835; Also Kaye, J.W. The Life and Correspondence of Charles Lord Metcalfe, Vol.II, London 1858, P.128.
 2. Bengal army was reduced from 1,70,000 men to about 90,000 by Bentinck after the Burmese war vide Evidence of Colonel Salmond Minutes of Evidence, Q.575.
 3. A Minute by Vice President and Governor General in Council, C.T. Metcalfe dated 19 April 1835.

thought them utterly powerless. Nevertheless, they proved to be best soldiers. The Marquis of Hardinge, whom that war unexpectedly greeted on his arrival in India, left this country in a state of peace, little supposing he had bequeathed to his successor another war, the most expensive that we have ever had. There cannot I conceive, be a greater mistake than to imagine that our situation in India is without danger.

Metcalfe did not accept the sweeping statement of Bentinck that the Indian army was ^{the} most expensive and ^{the} least efficient in the world and that any appreciable financial gain would result from abolishing ^{the} Bombay army. In a famous minute he said: "Is it not proof of efficiency that it has conquered all India? Is it no proof of efficiency that India is more universally tranquil owing to our Indian army than it even was under any Native Government or Governments that we ^{send} send off? If our Indian army be so expensive, why do we not employ European troops alone to maintain India? Why but because Europeans are so much more expensive that we could not pay a sufficient number? If our Indian army be so inefficient, why do we incur the expense of making soldiers of the natives? Why do we not entertain the same number of undisciplined people who would cost much less? Why but because then we should lose the country from the inefficiency of our native force?"¹ The plans of re-organisation were not carried into effect and the army organisation as ordered in 1324 continued as such till the year 1858. Infact the army as a whole made speedier progress and in years to come it proved to be ~~about~~ the best army in India.

1. Kaye, J.W. The Life and Correspondence of Charles Metcalfe Vol.II, London 1858, P.128.

Between 1796 and 1858, attempts were made to introduce a measure of uniformity into the organisation of the armies of the East India Company. For the organisation of 1796, the Court of Directors had ordered the same organisation for all the Presidencies. However, the old institutions could not be changed all at once. They therefore had allowed slight changes from Presidency to Presidency in the application of their orders, to suit the convenience of each Presidency. Once put on correct lines, the armies swelled in numbers, though there were occasional reductions after wars. In 1796, European soldiers including the white soldiers of the Company were about 13,000 strong, the Native troops about 57,000, the Madras and Bengal armies had 24,000 each, and Bombay 9,000.¹ In 1805, the strength of the army rose to 154,000 out of which 24,000 were British and 1,30,000 Natives.² The Indian army was 2,00,000 approximately in 1813; its strength became 2,76,000 in 1826, and this was the highest figure between 1813 and 1830. In 1830 it was 2,23,000 approximately.³ In 1849 the strength of the army was 3,00,000 fighting men, while there were 400 field pieces besides those mounted on forts. Out of the total strength, 1,58,659 were in Bengal; and this force was considered enough for guarding the Indian Empire.⁴ In 1856 the army was

1. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford 1907, Vol.IV, P.333.

2. Ibid, P.335.

3. ^{Appendix} Approx A(I) to Minutes of Evidence P.195 relating to 'The Amount force maintained in India at each Presidency and the dependent settlements and in each year from 1813 to 1830.

4. PP. Vol.29, P.1, Commons 219 of 1857.

estimated at 3,23,823 which consisted of 1400 Drogoons (British Cavalry), 24,000 Royal Infantry, 2,660 Horse Artillery, 4,044 Foot Artillery, 6,215 officers of the Company army, 9,000 Company's Infantry, 700 veterans and 300 ordnance, warrant and non-combatant staff, making a total of 43,519 European Officers and soldiers; 275,304 Native troops including 2,569 sappers (Engineers), 4,480 Foot and 440 Horse Artillery, 9,450 regular and 2,37,80 irregular Cavalry, also 1,70,000 regular and 81,150 quasi local or irregular infantry; and 516 guns were on service, 138 being horse artillery.¹ At the time of ^{the} Mutiny, the Bengal army formed by itself more than half of the Indian army² and on 1st January, 1857, the number of Native soldiers in the army of Bengal including irregulars of all descriptions, amounted to 1,70,000 men, and the European force consisted of 15,750 men; and the queen's forces were, Royal Artillery 2,686; Royal Engineers 200; Cavalry 2,962, Royal Infantry 44 battalions or 37,828.³ Thus we see that between 1796 and 1857, the army had become four times its size, that is, from 7,3000 in 1796 to 3,00,000 in 1857.

We also observe that irregular force had increased during these years with equal steadiness. Irregular Infantry was never the elite of the Nstive army, but irregular Cavalry was certainly so. In point of organisation and pay some of the

1. Calcutta Review Vol. XXVI, P.184.

2. Chattopadhyah, Haraprasad, 'The Sepoy Mutiny 1857', Calcutta 1857, P.90.

3. Minute by Major General Mansfield, Inquiry.

irregular corps were on the same footing as the Native Corps, or even the corps of the line.¹ The Ferozepore and the Goorkha Regiment, for instance, were as well organised as the Native Corps.² It was not uncommon for irregulars to proceed on foreign service. For example, the 4th Sikh Local Regiment went to Burma during Burmese War. But in spite of all their capabilities, the irregulars had a lower status than the regular Native troops, both in times of war and peace. In war the Irregulars proved less disciplined and less efficient as compared to the regulars.³ In time of peace, civilian officers considered Native Irregulars ^{as of} at a very different standard ^{from that of the} than Native Regulars. There was never ^{an} Irregular Artillery, but the Native Artillery was treated no better than Irregulars. Among the British rulers of India there remained a lingering fear that teaching the use of artillery to the natives was dangerous. This sentiment was explicitly stated after the Mutiny. The

1. Reply of Major General Birch, Inquiry.

2. Evidence of Major General Harrington, Report of Commissioners, Q.1385. At the time of mutiny there were the following Infantry Corps viz:

1 Khelat-i-Ghizil	3 Goorkha Corps	4 Sikh Local
2 Sikh Corps (Joodianah & Ferozepore)		Infantry
6 Corps Panjab Irregular Infantry or North West Frontier		
1 Guide	5 Oude Locals	6 Gwalior
Infantry	1 Bhagalpur Hill Rangers	1 Harriannah Light
		1 Ramgurh Light Infan-
		try

3. Reply of Lieutenant General Sir H. Somerset, Commander-in-Chief Bombay Army, to Lieutenant Colonel Durand: Inquiry.

Governor General wrote:¹

'in no way in future should the natives of the country be entrusted with British Artillery, nor should any native in India be instructed in the use of such dangerous weapons. The native drivers are good horsemen, and the gunners most excellent; and in proportion as they are most valuable to the government they serve, so are they more formidable when they choose to be rebellous.'

A Commander-in-Chief,² believing that 'there was in the heart of every blackman, an inherent dislike of the white-man',³ advocated that the natives should not be taught the use of artillery. It was felt indeed that artillery should be the one arm in which an unquestionable superiority should lie with the British so that the subject peoples did not count upon success in revolt.³ Nevertheless, the British rulers of India raised Golundauze battalions for two reasons. Firstly, European Artillery was very expensive and Native Artillery could be raised at a much less expense; secondly there were not enough artillerymen available in England for service in India.⁴ Golundauze battalions were often raised only to serve in a war and disbanded or reduced immediately after its termination. Artillery could never be completely dispensed with and the

1. PP. Vol.90, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

2. Reply of Lieutenant General P. Grant Commander-in-Chief Madras Army. Inquiry.

3. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government of India, Military Department, Inquiry.

4. Colonel Limond's Evidence, Minutes of Evidence.

and the employment of natives in the artillery could not be avoided. They quite often tried to recruit in England officers and men for this branch, but the deficiency could not be met.¹ Added to this was the difficulty of obtaining recruits and officers when in time of emergency augmentation became necessary. They were, however, employed on unimportant stations, in stations where European artillery could not be provided and on forts, with the result the European artillery were made available for more important employments.²

The Engineers department of the army was very small.³ Wars brought out the dangers of neglecting this important Corps, but they were forgotten with the return of peace.⁴ In 1805, at the siege of Bharatpur, the weakest link was the Engineers and the Commander-in-Chief wrote to the Court of Directors;⁵ "Howsoever zealous my engineer officers were, neither their abilities, knowledge nor experience were adequate on the occasion, and this course had doubtless considerable influence in preventing that success which had hitherto attended every operation of my army."

1. PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859. Also Military Letter from Court dated 15 July 1857, No.123.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Calcutta Review Vol.II, London 1844, P.41.

4. Memorandum regarding the Employment of the Royal Engineer Corps in India, submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General with suggestions for modifying the Organisation of the Public Works Department (no date). This document is available in the Library of National Archives of India, New Delhi.

5. PP(Microfilm) Vol.II, Page 63, Common 176 of 1806.

When we remember that the best officers went to the Engineers, their inability to fight in wars can be attributed to their having been employed, too often, on civil duties, which prohibited them from getting army experience. Barrack Building and repairing were the main jobs on which they were employed.¹ The role of pioneers and sappers and miners,² which was given to them suddenly in the time of war, could not be efficiently played.

Until 1856, the Barrack Department was not separate from the Engineer Department; the Executive Engineer of military division was also the Barrack Master, and there was no difference between the two functions. From the earliest days of the Company's army, Barrackmasters were appointed in Bengal for the custody of military buildings. The Corps of Engineers which in the beginning of the 19th century, numbered about 30 officers, was employed either in the field in survey duties, or in the construction of new works. The Chief Engineer, the senior officer of the Corps, was stationed at Fort William and had permanent charge of works there, in addition to his duties as a member of the Military Board. A minute of Council, dated April 27, 1789, defined his duties and that of Barrack Master.³ Things remained in that state until the year 1818, when a regular

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.II, London 1844, P.41.

2. Minute of Evidence, Appx. A, No.4.

3. The Sketch of Engineer Department has been summarised from 'Memorandum regarding the Employment of the Royal Engineer Corps in India submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General with suggestions for modifying the organisation of the Public Works Department.'

Barrack Department was formed consisting of District Barrack Masters for the general duties of the department. These District Barrack Masters were placed under the orders of two officers, styled Superintendents of Public Buildings in the Field and Lower Provinces, respectively. The general control of the department was vested in the Military Board.

In 1824, when the army was re-organised, the term Barrack Department was replaced by the 'Department of Public Works. It was provided by a general order, dated 12 April, 1824, that the Barrack Masters were to be replaced, as vacancies occurred, by the Executive Engineers who were to be responsible for fortifications, and buildings (both Civil and Military), bridges, canals and surveys. The department at that time was very small. It was intended, that the department should be officered entirely from the Corps of Engineers, and the employment of any other officer was held exceptional. In 1839, the Court of Directors expressed their desire that the Department of Public Works and Survey should be wholly officered by Engineers and for that purpose some augmentation was done in the department in the following years.¹

The department provided barracks for the residence of European officers and men. No accommodation was provided for the Native troops. When Stationary, the Infantry regiments were quartered in ~~the~~^tatched huts.² In front of each row there was a

1. Military Letter from Court, dated 20 March 1839.

2. Chattopadhyay, Haraprasad, 'The Sepoy Mutiny', Calcutta 1957, P.74.

small place for storing accoutrements of which a Havildar was incharge. Even till 1858, the Department of Engineers was virtually a Barrack's Department.

Before 1764, medical duties were performed by civilian doctors and the department came to be organised into a regular service only in that year.¹ The Army Medical Department was separated from the civil in 1796 but again united in 1798, and it continued to be so till 1824, when it was again organised into a separate department.²

In 1796, the Medical Department was put under a Medical Board, with at least two members appointed by the Commander-in-Chief.³ The Board was responsible for the management of the department and was answerable to the Commander-in-Chief for the conduct of persons employed in the department. The civilian gentlemen of medical profession, on option, were given employment in the army, The rank in the army depended on their status in the civil employment. An Inspector-General of hospitals, or a Deputy Inspector-General of hospitals was appointed in each Presidency.⁴

European Doctors were employed for European troops, but Native doctors were also allowed on the establishment of all

1. Malcolm, The India Office, London 1926, P.213.

2. Loc Cit.

3. PP Vol.40, P.283; Commons 80 of 1863.

4. Minutes of Evidence, Appx. B, No.18, P.469.

native battalions.¹ The proportion of medical officers allowed to European and Native Corps was three to one.

The medical officers received certain allowances from the government, which was worked on the establishment strength, and they in their turn were required to provide the necessary treatment. If Regimental Surgeons could not cure the patients, they were transferred to General Hospitals, which were under the charge of Medical Inspectors or Superintending Surgeons.²

Hospitals also existed for sick women, and women hospitals were more for prevention than cure, where women suffering from venereal diseases were admitted, and were cured, lest the soldiers came in contact with them and contracted venereal diseases. 'In some' hospitals and sanitoriums formed a part of the medical department and there were many 'insane' hospitals and sanitoriums in all the Presidencies. Some of the functions of the Medical Department were: maintenance of good sanitary conditions, removal of filth from cantonments, supply of pure water by way of water carts from deep tanks in the vicinity of cantonments, inspection of buildings for their fitness for living, ensuring cross-ventilation in barracks, especially in case of new construction. Introduction of Medical treatment to the troops raised the physical standards and reduced progressively the casualties which occurred for reasons other than war.³

1. Military Letter from Court, dated 31 August 1804.

2. Loc Cit.

3. PP Vol.38, P.467. Commons 329 of 1865.

Sir Alexander Tullock who studied the casualty returns of European troops in India of 39 years, from 1817 to 1855, inferred that mortality of army in India during a series of years, was 70 deaths per thousand every year, and only 10 deaths were owing to war.¹ That shows how important a part the Medical Department was to play in peace, besides its duties on the battle field.

For the conduct of operations accurate survey was most important and the army became the pioneer of Indian Survey. Captain Raniell was the first surveyor of India and all officers appointed under him were army officers. Raniell undertook the work of surveying the province of Bengal and finished the Bengal Atlas in 1781. Armies on their march by order of the Governor General, were required to maintain journal of field book² in which bearing of places and objects, with their estimated distances were put down. The objects selected were prominent landmarks like forts, hill forts, towns, villages, rivers, rocky or broken ground, and the distances were computed by the time taken to cover them. These books were, by standing orders of 29 September, 1788, and 19 January, 1804, required to be transmitted to the Quartermaster General, who immediately on receipt sent them to the Surveyor General.³ The firsthand information obtained from the field books was a remarkable contribution to the Indian Survey.

1. PP Vol.40, P.553, Commons 324 of 1865.

2. Karr Seton, W.S. 'Selections from Calcutta Gazettes, 1798-1805, Vol.III; Calcutta 1808, P.141.

3. Ibid, P.142.

It was in 1817 that topographical staff was added to Quartermaster General's branch, which formed the regular department of survey.¹ The officers of the new department accompanied the armies in their operations and collected valuable topographical information. In peace time the staff was employed on geographical or other surveys—as land and river surveyors, for instance. In the beginning the staff allowed for the topographical department consisted of 2 Quartermaster's General, 2 Assistants, 4 Deputy Assistants Class I, 3 Deputy Assistants Class II and three Deputy Assistants Class III.

In 1818, trigonometrical survey of India was undertaken. Triangulation, the new system of survey, gave most accurate results. Colonel John Everest, introduced the Gridiron system into the operation of triangulation and earned fame in survey work, and he gave his name to the proud mountain peak.

Right from the early days, the army played a prominent part in civil affairs. Sir John Malcolm once remarked that in the various situations, civil and political, which the military men had been called upon by emergencies to fill during the days of extension and consolidation of the Company's forces in India, they had rendered greatest services.² Army was very often employed on two duties, revenue and police. The reason given by high authorities for employing army officers for such duties

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1. General Order by the Governor General, Fort William dated January 1st, 1817 vide Sandeman, H.D. Selection from Calcutta Gazettes 1816-23, Vol. 5, Calcutta 1869, P. 11-12.
 2. Letter of Major General Malcolm dated 13 February 1832, Minutes of Evidence. Appendix B.

was the inability to get sufficient men to meet the demands of service. In Madras Presidency, 8 Battalions had been raised before 1790, and six more in that year, for the purpose of revenue collection.¹ The Madras system, however, did not interfere with the army because these battalions were exclusively employed for collection and assessment of revenue and no regular troops were ever called to perform these duties. In Bengal no separate revenue battalions were raised, and whenever necessity arose, army officers were employed for the purpose.

The army was very often employed on police duties. The Sepoy and Native Cavalry regiments performed the duty not only of guarding the country from foreign aggression, but also of putting down riots or local opposition, however petty.² The guarding of fairs and festivals, escorting treasures and many other matters of internal administration were committed to them. Whenever a new territory was conquered by the army, it was given to army officers to rule, who were required to maintain law and order. The army did multifarious duties as police and it was not uncommon to see army personnel employed as police force. In fact in Bengal, there were in the beginning of the nineteenth century certain regiments called 'provincial battalions', attached to the police, which performed the duties of military police.³

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1. Williams, 'History of Madras Army Vol. II (Madras 1882), P.180 and P.237.
 2. Memorandum of William Muir, Secretary to Government, North West Provinces. Inquiry.
 3. Minute by I.J. Holliday, vide Report of Select Committee on Indian territories 1853.

On the other hand, there were "police corps" only in name, for this was another name given to a virtually standing army. The largeness of the Bengal Presidency native army was owing to its having been employed not only for legitimate purposes of an army, that is for the maintenance of general peace of the country, but also for carrying on to a great extent the civil administrative functions, which in contemporary Europe were performed by the Civil Police.¹ For instance, guarding of public offices, gaols or jails and treasuries, and furnishing treasure parties were some of the duties performed by the army.²

In 1843, Lord Ellenborough introduced Police Battalions into some of the districts of North West Provinces. The entire police duties were entrusted to this force, guarding of jails, treasuries and Tehsildarees etc.³ Detachments were posted at Thannahs. The men comprising these battalions were regular soldiers, though officers were ex-police officers.

Sir Charles Napier strongly supported the idea that army and police duties should not be intermixed. In one of his famous memoranda,⁴ he remarked that the great principle to follow in India was to have a large, well organised police to do all those duties for the civil branches of the government

1. Evidence of Mr. C.F. Trevelyan, Report of Commissioners, Q.3056.

2. Loc. Cit.

3. Thompson's Despatches, vide Inquiries.

4. Memoranda by Sir C.J. Napier, Commander-in-Chief, dated 27 November 1849.

that required armed men, such as occasional guards for civil servants, ^{for} by escorts of treasuries, putting down robbers, arresting men by order of civil power. This he thought would leave the military to do its own duties, and thus the troops could be concentrated in large bodies, ready to move upon the enemy. It was with ^{the} such idea that he undertook to raise Scinde Police, and it was the first body of its kind organised in India, and it had the support of Lord Ellenborough.

The Scinde Police was organised into two branches, called the Rural Police and Mounted Police. The Rural Police was a body of drilled Infantry, whose functions were purely protective.¹ They guarded prisoners, jails and wherever permanent guards were required. The Mounted Police was a body of Police Horse, some of them armed and equipped like the Irregular Cavalry.² Their functions were partly protective and partly detective.

Like the Scinde Police, battalions of police were introduced in the Punjab after the annexation. The idea was to have a smaller body of troops. It was also expected that the presence of a smaller military force would be effective, indirectly, in keeping the people calm. The so-called police battalions of Scinde and the Punjab were in no respect inferior to native battalions of the army. They did the same duty, carried the same arms and had a similar training.³ In the opinion of Major General Mansfield, it was not possible to

1. Letter of HBR Frare, Commissioner of Scinde, Inquiry.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Minute by Major General Mansfield, Inquiry.

separate the police of British India from the constitution of its army.¹ The police force had included in its organisation an element of Cavalry and Artillery in addition to Infantry. At the time of the Mutiny, the strength of Bengal Police contingents was 44,570, and 25 guns.²

The status of the Governor General in relation to military matters was exactly what Elphinstone had desired it to be: 'If there is one thing which must be laid down as a principle not to be departed from our military arrangements in India, it is the entire subordination of the army both European and Native, to the Government of India.'³ The troops of the Crown's regular army while serving in India were all subject to the authority of the Indian Government. The principle of complete subordination of the army to the civil government was observed even when the army was transferred to the Crown: the Governor General in Council remained the supreme head of the army.⁴

The Commander-in-Chief in India was given vast, but not unlimited, powers. This ensured a better relationship between him and the Governor General on the one hand, and with the Madras and Bombay Commanders-in-Chief on the other. Provision was, however, made for the three armies to form an efficient force

1. Loc Cit.

2. A return attached to Inquiry.

3. Opinion of Lord Elphinstone, Report of Commissioners, p.5499.

4. Report of the Special Commission appointed by His Excellency the Governor General in Council to enquire into the Organisation and Expenditure of the army in India, Simla 1879, P.37.

in the field. There was no dispute among the Commanders-in-Chief themselves. The Commanders-in-Chief had an adequate staff and the various departments, combined together, gave the Company's army the shape of an efficient modern army. With small changes, the same status of the Commanders-in-Chief was allowed even after 1858.

A great requirement of the day was a decentralised army, and its usefulness had been demonstrated by several mutinies. The process, though evolutionary, served well for the British Indian Empire. The armies were distinct and separate from one another, with a distinct esprit de corps. When the mutiny of 1857 came, only Bengal was affected; Bombay and Madras remained quiet. The usefulness of decentralised army was well proved and ^{The} Presidency armies were allowed to continue even after mutiny.

Each Presidency's division into military commands had two effects: decentralisation and better administration. In those days, when the means of communication were ^{not easy} scarce, the system of military commands served very well in obtaining efficient administration. It would have been impossible for one Commander-in-Chief to look after the whole Presidency army.

In each Presidency the army was composed of Europeans and Natives, and in deciding their proportion the demands were conflicting: safety and financial economy. In effect, the Europeans remained ~~an~~ ^{to} auxiliary of the sepoy corps.¹

1. Minute of Major General Mansfield vide Inquiry.

But the natives were well commanded by the Europeans. Sir Thomas Munro remarked: ¹ Native Troops are quite orderly and easily managed; the Native Officers are well acquainted with all their duties, and expert in their execution. They conduct almost all the interior details and leave but little for the European officers to do. They are, however, apt to grow insolent and careless when left to themselves and European officers are therefore absolutely necessary to direct them but not many. One to a Company is quite enough for a useful purpose.² In fact for commanding ^{the} natives one officer per Company became a rule. As regards the rank and file, the consideration in deciding the number was to obtain ^{the} maximum efficiency and ^{the} best control.

From this brief analysis of the organisation of the army of the East India Company, it may be evident that, whatever its defects in comparison with the modern armies, in the early nineteenth century it was easily superior to the organisation of any ^{other} Indian army.

- 1 Military Letter from Court dated 21 December 1825, para 33.
- 2 Military Letter from Court dated 25 November 1823, para 69-76. For Commanding natives, before 1781, the allotment of Europeans officers depended on availability, but in 1786, when Battalions of 8 Companies each were formed, 8 Subalterns were provided, at the rate of one per Company. Again in 1796, a regiment of twenty Companies was allowed 30 Captains, so that there was at least one Captain present with each Company, making an allowance for those on leave and sick etc. In 1824 the aim was again to provide each Company with at least one officer at any one time, provision having been made for those on leave or on sick list.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION
and
TERMS OF SERVICE

The good or bad government of India is mainly a question of money, and, therefore, a question of War or Peace.¹

Financing the army was a major problem with the East India Company. The income of the Company was limited and there could be little rapid extension. The Home Government was not prepared to spend from her treasury for the Indian empire, and indiscriminate borrowing could not go on. In the budget of the East India Company, military charges were the heaviest portion.² Inelastic economy was therefore bound to effect the army structure.

The effects of limited financial resources were much aggravated in the absence of carefully prepared estimates of the probable cost of the defence forces and the government pressed for finances, ordered assembly of committees to "retrench" whatever was in their power; and in order

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration of the East India Company, London 1853, P.161.

2. Letter of HBR Frare, Commissioner of Bombay; vide Inquiry. The following statement gives a general idea of the revenues of India over a number of years:

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenditures</u>	
Land	14.25 millions	Civil charges	4.75 millions
Custom	2.00 "	Ordinary Military charges	11.00 " Y
Salt	1.25 "	Extraordinary	" Y*
Opium	2.50 "	Military charges	0.75 " Y
Miscellaneous	6.00 "	Interest-Debt	2.50 "
	<u>26.00</u> "	Miscellaneous	7.00 "
			<u>26.00</u> "

* This is exclusive of the cost of European stores sent out from England, and charged to the Home Accounts. The extraordinary military charges included the cost of additional Commissariat supply, extra allowances two troops, Batta and some other allowances. (Kaye, Op.Cit., P.147-155)

to meet financial crises, these Committees often lost sight of their real purpose and resorted to curtailment of military establishment.¹ Such hasty measures eventually produced unforeseen difficulties, because if a war occurred after a retrenchment had been undertaken, it often resulted in greater expense as a result of the necessary increase in the forces. For instance, the armies of India were greatly reduced after the Mysore Wars, but Maratha wars required immediate augmentation, which was followed by further reductions.

The financial resources to a great extent determined the constitution and the size of the force maintained for the empire. Financing native troops was much cheaper than financing the European; and troops of the Crown were even costlier.² The difference of expenses was very considerable. Taking all military charges into account, the average cost to the state was 185 £ in England and 36£s in India.³ The native troops were indeed much cheaper but they were not as "dependable" as the European troops. On arguments of safety, an army consisting of Europeans alone would have been the ideal. But considerations of safety clashed with the considerations of economy.⁴ Thus a compromise between finances

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.10, P.370

2. One European cost as much as three natives ; Evidence of Major General Low, vide Report of Commissioners, ¶.326

3. Evidence of Lieutenant Colonel Baker, vide Minutes of Evidence, Appendix B, No.16, P.443.

4. Minute by Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, vide Inquiry.

that 'we have repeatedly been in a state of similar confidence, which has been suddenly disturbed by unexpected war. In 1802, a large reduction of army took place, under the expectation of continued peace. This was followed by a war in 1803, which lasted to 1806, requiring all our energies, and exhausting our resources. Before the Coorkha war we despised our enemies, and thought them utterly powerless. Nevertheless, they proved to be the best soldiers ... The Marquis of Hardinge, whom that war unexpectedly greeted on his arrival in India, left this country in a state of peace, little supposing he had bequeathed to his successor another war, the most expensive that we have ever had.'¹

We find Lord William Bentinck in 1830 very keen to reduce the expenses of the establishments in important public offices of the army and pressing the heads of department to suggest how expenses could be curtailed. Important departments like the Military Board, the Medical Board, the Quarter Master General, the Adjutant General, the Military Auditor General, the Commissary General and the Judge Advocate General, were all pressed to reduce their establishments.² Lord William Bentinck recommended great reductions both in numbers and pay of troops.³ To put these

1. A minute by Vice-President and Officiating Governor General in Council, dated 19 April 1835. (vide PP, 1847; A Volume at the Asiatic Studies Library, Town Hall, Bombay).

2. Military letter to Court dated 30 September 1830, Para 265-273

3. The suggested reductions were unwelcome, as a Subedar of the Company's army wrote, 'There came a new Lad Saheb (The Governor General) to India, who was much disliked by all officers. He wished to reduce their pay and Sahebs nearly mutinied ... This Lad Saheb was sent by the Company Bahadoor (The Court of Directors) to save money, as from the great expensive wars, they said they were very poor.' (Sitaram Subedar Sepoy to Subedar, Calcutta 1911, 3rd Edn., P. 624)

measures into effect, Lord William Bentinck appointed two Committees, one military and one civil to investigate into the whole expenditure and to report what reductions could be made. A large number of reductions were suggested in the military establishment of the three Presidencies.¹

But in the mean time Lord Bentinck vacated the office and Sir C.T. Metcalfe who officiated as the Governor General, opposed the measures of reductions, for in his opinion 'there can not I conceive, be a greater mistake to imagine that our situation in India is without danger'.² Metcalfe's opinion had its due weight and no reductions were undertaken. That in fact marks the beginning of a period when wars were not followed by reduction of the army establishments. For instance we hardly notice any reductions after the conclusion of the war in Afghanistan and after the Sikh wars; we find, instead of reduction, a new Panjab force being raised. That may be largely attributed to the Company's improved finances on account of extension of frontiers which fetched more revenues.³

When the army was organised in 1736, to each Regiment or Battalion one of the officers, under the rank of field officer, was appointed Paymaster with fixed allowances.⁴

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1. Balger, Lord William Bentinck, Oxford 1897, P.61
 2. A minute by Vice-President and Officiating Governor General in Council, dated 19 April 1835. (vide PP, 1847; A volume at the Asiatic Studies Library, Town Hall, Bombay).
 3. This is, however, not suggested that the change in policy was attributed to finances alone. There were new threats on the North West Frontiers and not even the Afghans were any more friendly. The Russian danger in the far was on the increase.
 4. PP, Vol.40, P.283, Commons 80 of 1863.

In accordance with the practice in the Crown's army, the appointment was made by Colonel, or by the majority of votes of field officers and Captains. The institution of the Paymaster had existed even before 1796. In the earliest days of the Company's army, the Governor of Bombay used to appoint one of the Company's conveneted servants to be military Paymaster, who at the beginning of each month paid each Captain or officer commanding the Company the pay of the Company which was issued weekly to the Non-Commissioned officers and Privates.¹ The muster rolls of each Company were signed by the Captain and Subaltern, and certified by the Governor of Bombay and then they were laid before the Council for approval before the next payment.² A similar system of weekly payment by Captains under the guidance of Paymaster had been adopted at Madras and Bengal too.³

On the mode in which the pay department was managed, during the period under study, Colonel Salmond says that 'the pay master general (who was for the whole Army) made a calculation of what was required for military disbursement every month, and that calculation was handed over to the auditor-general to check, and according to his opinion issues were made to the Pay-master General. The Pay-Master General issued the money to the Pay-Masters of stations, who

1. Accompaniment to Court's letter to Bombay dated 17 June 1748, Para 17
2. Ibid, Para 19
3. Bombay Government Consultation, 11 March 1760, Public Diary 317 of 1760, P.123

paid to the Captains of Companies for the men in Bengal'.¹
 In Madras the money was paid to the Paymaster of Regiments
 in the first instance, and by him to the Captains of the
 Companies for the men.²

Though the organisation of 1796 ordered Paymasters
 for each Regiment or Battalion for all Presidencies, in the
 Bengal Presidency Paymasters were allowed only in the Regi-
 ments of the Crown; regimental munshees³ were appointed to
 the native corps.⁴ That accounts for the difference in the
 mode of making payments to troops in Madras and Bengal
 Presidencies. At Madras, for sometime after the orders of
 1796, the duties of Paymaster were incorporated with the
 office of the Regimental Quarter Master.⁵ In 1830, the
 system in the three Presidencies was assimilated by the
 appointment of regimental munshees, ^{was} as the custom in Bengal.⁶
 The Paymaster was now meant for the station as a whole and
 could therefore cover more than one ⁴ Regiment.

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1. Evidence of Colonel Salmond; Minutes of Evidence, ¶ 624-26.
 2. Loc. Cit.
 3. Military letter to Court, dated 30 September 1830, Para 9.
 4. In the Bengal army, in the arrangement of 1765 by Clive no paymasters were authorised. In the very first month it became apparent that some separate arrangements were necessary for the payment of Brigades. Clive laid before the Council a minute on the subject, in consequence of which a paymaster and a Commissary of musters were appointed to each Brigade, who were civilians. This system inspite of some defects continued till 1796.
 (Calcutta Review, Vol. XIV, P. 533)
 5. Military letter to Court, dated 30 September 1830, Para 10.
 6. Ibid, Para 13.

The Paymaster General or his deputies accompanied the troops when they proceeded on field service. While on field service, by an agreement made in 1799, the formality of handing over to the Auditor-General all accounts for checking, previous to payments, was abolished.¹ The Paymaster General was authorised to retain in his hands a balance of cash sufficient to ensure the expected demands of operations.²

Every officer making payments used to prepare a statement of the salary bills to be submitted to the Auditors General's office through the Paymaster. In due course the bills were audited and, in case of any discrepancy, the officer concerned was debited or credited through the Paymaster. The system ensured the proper disbursement of payments.³

The employment of the Crown's troops in India raised a financial question with respect to the responsibility to pay. Until 1781 no claim had been made upon the Company for the expense of sending the Crown's troops to India. But in 1782, when 4 British Regiments were sent to India by the Board of Control, the Indian government was asked to pay for them.⁴ The Directors argued that they should not be

1. Military Proceedings, dated 11 March 1799.

2. Loc. Cit.

3. Military letter from Court, dated 4 December 1822, Para 7.

4. Seton, The India Office, London 1926, P.189.

required to pay as the Regiments had not been sent at their request. But the government of Great Britain did not accept this argument because they thought that the Company could not be the judge of the requirement of a force in its colony. The British government, however, could not completely ignore the validity of the argument given by the Court of Directors. A compromise was reached. The Crown was not to charge the Indian revenues the cost of more than 8,000 King's troops. At the same time the Company was required to maintain 12,000 European troops *in its own service*.¹

In 1799, the Crown undertook to recruit European troops for the East India Company and the King's troops were given the option to transfer their service to the Company. The British troops, belonging to the Crown's army but serving in India, came to be paid by the East India Company.² It was agreed that the Company would repay the British government everything expended in India in respect of Regiments serving in India. In 1823 it was enacted that all sums issued by the Paymaster General of His Majesty's forces serving in India, or for raising and supplying recruits, shall be repaid by the Company, and that the actual expenses which were incurred for the support and maintenance of the troops were to be borne and defrayed by the Company.³ In

1. Loc. Cit.

2. Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad The Sepoy Mutiny 1857, Calcutta 1957, P.64.

3. PP (Microfilm) Vol.1, P.411, Commons 460 (Bill) of 1823.

practice, a good deal of difficulty was found in carrying that principle into effect, and it was arranged in 1824, between the Lords of Treasury and the Court, that an officer on the part of the Crown, and an officer on the part of the Company, should meet and consider all the items of expense, and report upon the subject.¹ The two officers made a report and an easy way was devised for making payment by the Company to the Crown's treasury for their troops serving in India. The system served well till 1858, when the whole army was transferred to the Crown.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the officers of the Crown's forces in India were paid their dues in two parts: the monthly amount of 'subsistence' and the 'arrears' to be paid at some later date. The amount of the subsistence consisted of a particular percentage of the total pay of an officer. This mode of payment was introduced for field officers (Majors and above), Captain and Surgeons in 1797 and quarter Masters and Subalterns in 1799. There was no time limit fixed for the payment of arrears.² The system was inconvenient to officers because certain deductions were made from their pay on account of certain institutions and hospitals. So the amount of subsistence, which was ~~further~~ ^{thus} reduced, created difficulties for officers of junior ranks, who often went under heavy debts. The situation of

1. Evidence of J.C. Melvill, Minutes of Evidence, p. 2140.

2. Military Proceedings, dated 23 April 1801.

the Crown's officers, however, was improved by a Warrant of His Majesty that Subaltern officers, field officers and Captains of Dragoons and Infantry be paid full pay without any deductions.¹

The pay and allowances of European Commissioned officers consisted altogether of six distinct items : pay, gratuity, tent allowance, house rent, horse allowance and batta.² An officer ordinarily received pay, gratuity, house rent and half of batta; he received tent allowance, horse allowance and an additional half of batta while serving in the field. The pay was according to the rates which were in force in His Majesty's service and was given at rupees per month of 30 days, Gratuity was an allowance peculiar to the rank of Captains and Subalterns, which was paid at a fixed rate. It was granted by the Court of Directors and was carried into effect by a minute of the Council as far back as 5 August, 1789. House rent allowance was allowed in 1814, but it was carried into effect in 1824. It was drawn by the officers who were stationed in cantonments and were not receiving full batta. That portion of the batta allowance, which had been appropriated to the officers pay termed half batta; this allowance was made general throughout the service by the arrangement of 1796. The Bengal officers had been in receipt of this allowance even before 1796 at the stations of lower province of Bengal; but the officers of Madras and Bombay previous to that drew

1. Military Proceedings, dated 23 April 1801.

2. Evidence of Campbell, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix B, P.501.

batta only when marching or were in the field. The 'Tent Allowance' was meant to cover the expenses of an officer incident to the provision and carriage of camp equipment. The officers of European corps were, however, only in receipt of half tent allowance, except at remote stations, where they were liable to be called upon suddenly to move, and had therefore to provide themselves with means of carriage. Officers of the native corps, being always liable to move on emergency, were constantly provided with tents and the means of conveyance, and were consequently in receipt of full tent allowance. Horse allowance was peculiar to the officers of mounted corps, and field officers of other corps, while in actual performance of regimental duties. Officers of inferior rank when actually in command of corps and adjutants of corps were also permitted to draw horse allowance. The horse allowance of field officers was equivalent to the maintenance of four horses, that of the Captain equivalent to three, and of the Subalterns to two horses.

The European troops received their pay in twelve equal monthly payments.¹ Their pay was increased by His Majesty's warrant on 25 May, 1797, and accepted by the Court of Directors' order of 28 May, 1798. The former pay of European Private was 8 rupees monthly and one rupee increase monthly, over his previous pay, was made by the new pay regulations. An increase was also made in the pay of the Non-Commissioned officers. This pay does not appear to have

1. Military Proceedings, dated 14 March 1800.

undergone a change. All ranks of the European troops received a gratuity and a soldier got Rs.3 in addition to Rs.8 per month; thus with the new increase his total emoluments came to be Rs.12. It was a custom with the Europeans in the Indian army in all the Presidencies to get several items extra to their pay.¹ This practice was introduced with a view to rendering their situation more comfortable and respectable in a foreign country and to compensate for bad climate. They were allowed beef and bread at certain reduced rates, together with some other items including Arrack (native liquor).

British rates of pay for the European horse and foot Artillery were higher than those of the Company's troops of the same description.² The Royal Artillery personnel serving with the Company got British rates of pay. The Royal Artillery was allowed a higher rate of pay because they were required to pay extraordinary and constant attention to their regimental duties, which deprived them of the occasional advantages arising from being employed too often on various odd jobs.³ This difference in pay was removed only on transfer of the army to the Crown, when it was ordered that officers of the Royal Artillery, Horse and Foot, will receive the same pay and allowances as the officers of the

1. Military Proceedings, dated 17 December 1799.

2. PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

3. Proceedings of a special Committee of Artillery Officers, assembled at Meerut, under the instructions from government, communicated in General Order, dated 10 November 1859.

corresponding rank in the Horse and Foot Artillery of the Company's service.¹ Some additional allowances were paid to the officers of Pioneer corps.²

The Cavalry rates of allowances were very considerable and, consequently, their pay was much more than that of the Infantry. These allowances were given on account of additional expense of horse and accoutrements.³

There was at times a pay difference between the same ranks in different Presidencies. The pay of the troops was given at rates prevalent in the Presidency in which the troops served, if they were higher, and the rates were paid from the date the troops landed in that Presidency. The European troops, however received the same amount of pay and allowances throughout India. Though the military pay and allowances of Europeans were some times responsible for their dissatisfaction, they appear to have been near levish. This specially so in case of jobs outside the army.⁴ Even within the army large allowances compensated for small pay. For example in 1841, a Lieutenant Colonel of His Majesty's service got Rs.1157 over and above his British pay which was

1. Letter from Military Auditor General, dated 3 November 1857, vide PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.
2. Military letter from Court, dated 12 July 1805.
3. Military letter to Court, dated 17 April 1802, Para 61.
4. Colonel Pottengir and Captain Burnes both of Bombay army got Rs.3448 and Rs.224 respectively against their pay in the army of Rs.248 and Rs.124; while they were employed as Political Agent in Foreign Department. (Foreign Political Consultations, dated 7 November 1836, No.13).

between Rs.349 and Rs.366. A Major got Rs.229 over and above his pay, which ranged between Rs.292 and 309; a Captain got Rs.563 over and above his pay of Rs.221; and a Lieutenant received Rs.365 over and above his pay which ranged between Rs.136 and Rs.151.¹ In the case of Non-Commissioned officers of the Crown, the Indian pay and allowances amounted to much more than the British pay.²

There were numerous allowances allowed to the Company's officers and the more important were always attracting the attention of authorities. In Bengal Presidency an allowance called 'table allowance' was allowed at the rate of Rs.500 per month to the Colonels of Regiments for the occasional entertainment of officers of their Regiments. No such allowance was allowed at Bombay and Madras. This allowance, in Bengal was allowed from a custom prevailing in the British Regiments in olden days when there were no messes. The Colonels of the Bengal Army continued to get table allowance until 1805 when the Court of Directors ordered that the officers in the service of the Army should live in messes.³ For the introduction of messes, the Court allowed six months and ordered a discontinuance of this allowance altogether subsequently and it was replaced by the 'mess allowance'.⁴

1. PP (Microfilm) Vol.14, P.235; Commons 428 of 1841.

2. Loc. Cit.

3. Military letter from Court, dated 12 July 1805, Para 242.

4. PP (Microfilm) Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

An allowance termed 'Off Reckoning' was a great source of income to officers or Colonels of Regiments who were paid fixed sum per head to clothe their men. Since the actual expenditure incurred on men was always liable to be less than the total amount sanctioned, because of lower cost of clothing and the Regiments being under-strength, the Colonels saved substantial amounts from this allowance.¹ By a regulation of 1788, while the total allowance sanctioned was calculated according to the actual strength in case of European Artillery and Infantry, in regard to the native force, the establishment strength itself was taken into consideration. The surplus of the Off Reckoning was not required to be returned to the government; it became a part of the Colonel's income. The surplus was of a great magnitude and Colonels, therefore, made great profits. The Court observed the great profits ~~that~~ ^{which} the Colonels made and, therefore, in 1803 ordered that the Off Reckoning shall be calculated upon the effective strength of all the corps.² But since the Off Reckoning allowed by the government was far greater than the price of clothing that the Colonels were required to provide, the surpluses were again very considerable. The Court ordered that the Colonels of Regiments ⁱⁿ all the Presidencies from the regular corps of Artillery, Infantry and Cavalry will deposit the surplus in a general fund. A list of the retired general officers and Colonels was obtained from all the Presidencies; and they were allowed

1. Military letter From Court, dated 20 April 1803.

2. Loc. Cit.

a fixed sum per annum from that general fund. The remainder of the Off Reckoning fund was to be divided among the Colonels of the ~~R~~egiments of Infantry and Cavalry and of the Battalions of Artillery. The Bengal Presidency was contributing more to the Off Reckoning fund than any of the other two Presidencies;¹ but the Colonels of the Bengal army received only an equal share with the Colonels of Madras and Bombay.² This allowance continued to be enjoyed by Colonels until the Mutiny.

The Colonels and Generals also received a heavy sum of what was called 'Command Money'.³ At each Presidency an officer in command of a Division obtained Rs.40,000; officers commanding subsidiary forces obtained Rs.12,000; officers in command of stations and Brigades obtained Rs.2,000; and officers in command of Regiments, Battalions or Brigades of Artillery got Rs.4,200 as Command Money over and above the pay. A general officer when employed on staff in Bengal received an allowance of Rs.4,000 per month besides his share of the Off Reckonings. A Colonel Commandant of artillery got an allowance of Rs.1,000 per month; the senior officer of Cavalry got Rs.4,000; and the Military Auditor General got Rs.40,000 per annum.⁴

1. Evidence of Colonel Watson, Minutes of Evidence, p.1018.

2. PPP Vol.40, P.223; Commons 80 of 1863.

3. Minutes of Evidence, Appendix A, Sub-Appendix 64.

4. PP Vol.40, P.223; Commons 80 of 1863.

Passage money was an other allowance given for passage between England and India.¹ The rates were fixed for each rank. It was customary for the Honourable Court of Directors to pay for the passage of European soldiers, who had served their time in India. Captain and Lieutenants going to Europe on account of bad health were given passage money too.²

Though allowances for senior ranks were very high and numerous, the younger officers did not have ^{large} ~~large~~ allowances allowed to them and they were often in debt.³

1. Letter of Military Auditor General, vide Military Proceedings, dated 14 January 1799.
2. Military letter to Court, dated 17 April 1802, Para 69.
3. Carey, Honourable John Company, Calcutta 1906, P.233.

It is not being suggested that the small salaries alone were responsible for the debts incurred by the army officers. One has to go beyond the position of salaries and allowances, perhaps into the personal habits of the officers concerned, in order to fully appreciate the situation which led to their indebtedness. It may not be out of place here to mention that in the Bengal Presidency banking facilities were made available to army officers. The Military Bank was opened for the purpose of furnishing the officers of the army with remitting and accumulating portion of their monthly allowance. The bank was established in 1821; it was put under the management of 12 Directors; three of whom were appointed by the government, that is, the Adjutant General, the Military Auditor General and Accountant Military Department; the appointment of these Directors afforded every facility to communicate with the pay department of the army and the Commander-in-Chief. The Paymaster arranged remittance of money for European Commissioned, Non-Commissioned, Staff and Warrant officers of all descriptions. An application was made by individuals to the Paymaster concerned, who on receipt of the pay bill and abstract monthly remitted the aggregate sums to the Secretary of the Bank at Calcutta, by a bill of exchange to the Accountant General drawn in favour of the Bengal Military Bank.
(General Order Governor General, dated 23 December 1820).

Nevertheless, the army officers of all ranks could afford basic necessities and comforts.

As already pointed out the native troops were far cheaper than the European. During the period under study, upto 1825, Subedar was the highest rank to which a native could attain. In that year the rank of Subedar Major was introduced as a substitute for the rank of Indian Commandant. The pay of Subedar of the Regiment in the regular army was 67 rupees a month, with an additional allowance of 25 rupees. Thus 92 rupees was the highest pay enjoyable by an Infantry soldier; there being very few vacancies for the post of Subedar Major.¹ The pays of the Jemadars, the Non-Commissioned officers and the Sepoys were all very low. Some of the British officers themselves felt that the temptations of pay were not worth the name. The pay of the native soldiers underwent no change for a number of years.² The Private Sepoys received seven rupees per month in all stationary situations, and eight rupees and a half while marching on the field, exclusive of half a rupee per month allotted to the Off Reckoning fund. With this allowance ~~he got~~, the Sepoy had to provide everything required for food. Apparently

1. Calcutta Review, No.CCVI, London 1856, P.196.

The post of the Indian Commandant was abolished in 1785 at all the Presidencies and the highest rank obtainable was that of a Subedar. Even though the rank of Subedar Major was introduced in 1826, the prestige and pay attached to his office was no patch to that of the Commandant and even the new rank could be attained by negligible percentage.

2. William, Captain History of Bengal Native Infantry, P.261-262; vide PP Vol.62, P.271, Commons C1698 of 1877.

the Sepoy was very low paid, but he was content.

The Sepoy received batta when he marched or proceeded on field service, money for his quarters, increments, pension when worn out and pension for wounds.¹ But all these allowances were very nominal. Perhaps the only consolation with the native soldier was that his pay and allowances were better than those paid by the contemporary native princes to their soldiers. An allowance called good conduct pay in the native army was a misnomer. It was at times thought to be a privilege of a soldier granted for his service rendered over a number of years, but in reality it was simply length of service pay, and a man could not be deprived of it except by sentence of a Court Martial.² The good conduct pay was allowed to a maximum of two rupees a month after twenty years service.

The pay scales were not the same in the three Presidencies. The Bombay and Madras Sepoys received more pay than ^{the} Bengal ^{sepoys}. The difference occurred owing to local circumstances, at the time when the Sepoys were first employed by the government of the three Presidencies. For example, in Madras, an increased pay was allowed to attract more recruits. Bombay adopted Madras rates of pay. Bengal pays remained low because of cheapness as compared to the other two Presidencies. When the Sepoys of one Presidency had to

1. Minute by Governor General, dated 14 June 1850.
2. Reply of Brigadier Hill of Hydrabad Contingent; vide Replies.
3. Evidence of Colonel Watson, Minutes of Evidence, p. 950.

go and fight in the territory of another Presidency, the rates of pay admissible were those paid in the Presidency in which they served, if they happened to be higher.

From the earliest days the pay of the troops of the native army underwent no change. Compensations, however, were paid at times to troops for dearness, for example, in the year 1821, in consequence of dearness of provisions in the western parts of the country, the grant was confined to 'atta'.¹ Lord Ellenborough in the year 1844 extended the compensation to several minor articles.² These compensations do not appear to have kept pace with the rise in prices.

One of the best known allowances to the army of the East India Company was batta. The passions, and subsequently controversies, it aroused oblige us to pay a special attention to it. Before the re-organisation of the army in 1796, the batta³ was known only to the Bengal army. The Directors resolved that 'double full batta', along with several other allowances, was to be discontinued even in Bengal. At the same time, 'half batta', a new allowance, was allowed to all the Crown's and Company's troops in all the three Presidencies. The Colonels were still allowed to draw full batta, which was the higher allowance.⁴ There was

1. Military letter from Court, dated 7 August 1850.

2. Loc. Cit.

3. Batta is a Hindi and Marathi word meaning extra or additional pay.

4. PP Vol.40, P.283, Commons 80 of 1863.

another exception made to the general rule of half batta: the officers of the Bengal army, serving in the Nazir's dominions, could be given full batta by the Governor General.¹ Before 1796, the Nawab of Oudhe used to pay an extraordinary allowance called 'double full batta' to the British troops serving beyond the British Indian frontier.²

There were several reasons for which the allowance had been initiated. Batta was meant originally to be a special allowance for being on active service. This was all the more desirable for ^{the} pay scales being low. The batta in a sense compensated the army personnel, who were prevented ^{from} indulg^{ing} in private trade. A very interesting aspect of the batta was that it became an easy method of extracting money from the native princes, to satisfy the officers without having to pay from the government treasury. The individuals who took part in war were not allowed to share the booty. The allotment of batta was a civilised way of compensating the troops for not sharing the booty.³

The 'double full batta' was reduced to 'full batta' when the Company, in place of the local princes, was required to pay this allowance. Full batta was originally meant to provide for field equipment and extra expense which the officers incurred when marching. However, the original intention was lost in Bengal when full batta continued to be paid

1. PP Vol.40, P.283, Commons 80 of 1863.

2. Evidence from question 529-531, vide Minutes of Evidence.

3. Military letter to Court, dated 30 April 1804, Para 191-93.

to officers even in cantonments. The practice of full batta was continued in Bengal, in spite of arrangements of 1796, which introduced 'half batta'. It must be pointed out, however, that the argument in favour of 'full batta' was a financial one: it was calculated that the provision of quarters to the troops in Bengal, along with half batta, would be more costly than the continuation of full batta. Nevertheless, in practice the army officers continued to obtain both full batta as well as quarters. The full batta took the form of a regular monthly allowance and virtually became a part of the pay.¹ In the early nineteenth century the Bengal army was thus distinguished from Bombay and Madras armies, who did not received full batta.

This unfortunate distinction was attended, according to some opinions of the day, with a very bad moral effect in the other two Presidencies.² The Bengal troops excited jealousy, which prevented cordiality and even ^{coordination} ~~unanimity~~ between them and the troops of the Bombay or Madras, whenever they were required to serve together. From high allowances a sense of superiority arose among the Bengal troops, which was very offensive to the feelings of their fellow-servants of other two settlements. Even in the Bengal Presidency the effects of the practice were not good. The Bengal officers, being generally in receipt of full batta in peace as well as in war, came to believe that they met additional

1. Military letter from Court, dated 14 June 1803, Para 77.

2. The United Services Journal 1828, Part 11, London 1829, P.755.

expense of operations, for the expenses were necessarily greater in the field than in garrison or cantonment.¹ The fact was that these officers had adjusted their living in peace on the salary meant for the days of operations and felt the pinch of operations inevitably involving additional expense.

In 1828, the expenses of the Company exceeded the receipts by more than a crore of rupees or one million sterling.² The batta question was therefore the first which attracted the eye of Lord William Bentinck and he undertook to deal with it as his first step of solving the financial question. Lord William Bentinck found that objections to the reduction of allowances were numerous and he referred them to the Court of Directors. The Court of Directors listened to no excuses and Lord William Bentinck was ordered to carry out the reduction of batta allowance to one-half at certain stations of the Bengal army.³

The new orders on batta caused a great commotion in the army in all ranks. As a result of the order, an Ensign lost rupees twenty, and a Captain rupees forty from his pay.⁴ This reduction may appear small, but the expenses which the officers specially of the subordinate grades were in the habit of incurring, made it difficult for them to

1. Evidence of Sir J. Nicolls, Minutes of Evidence, p.53.

2. Boulger, Lord William Bentinck, Oxford 1897, P.56.

3. The United Services Journal 1829, Part I, P.763.

4. Carey, Memorable John Company, Calcutta 1906, P.245.

make both ends meet. The sentiments of the officers were aired in a contemporary journal.¹ The reduction of batta was 'really like thunderbolt to the army', it was said, and the officers found it 'exceedingly difficult' to make both ends meet. The resentment of the officers reached England through an official letter signed by the Military Secretary passing into the hands of the press; the press criticised the decision of the government of Bengal to curtail the allowances of officers in very strong terms.² The Court took a very strong objection to such a letter passing on to the press in England and ordered the dismissal of the Military Secretary. The Bengal government was not in favour of a measure which meant curtailment of allowances and they did not dismiss the Military Secretary,³ but referred the case to the Court for reconsideration. The Court of Directors withdrew the dismissal orders but not the orders reducing the batta to half, and the allowance continued to be paid till the Mutiny.

Since the Company's early days, it was thought necessary that the widows of the soldiers and army personnel (other than the native) who got wounded and disabled should be looked after by the government. But the financial condition of the Company did not permit of any such measure. *Already in*

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1. The United Services Journal 1829, Part 1, p.760.
 2. Military letter from Court, dated 28 October 1829.
 3. Military letter to Court, dated 11 June 1830, Para 1 to 7.

had written
1755 the Court ~~wrote~~ to Bombay:¹

We are very desirous that a provision should be made for the relief of the widows of such of our military officers who are left in indigent circumstances, as likewise for sick, wounded and disabled officers, and private men on Bombay establishment. We therefore most earnestly recommend to you to consider of ways and means for setting a fund for so good a purpose. Among other good effects a fund will prevent the application of many unhappy objects when we know not how to relieve, as having no fund for such purposes.

A great credit goes to Clive, for it was he who for the first time made arrangements for pensioning the widows of the officers of the army and made rules identical with those laid down *in* the British service.² He opened a fund for the purpose and named it 'Lord Clive Fund'. The fund came to have an interesting history. Mir Muhammad Jafir Khan, the Nawab of Bencal, bequeathed five lacs of rupees (£, 63,000) to Clive, who made it over, together with another £, 37,000 given by the succeeding Nawab, to the Court of Directors in trust, to be devoted to providing pensions for the service of the Company and the widows.³

A number of soldiers, officers, and their widows were in receipt of pension from Lord Clive's fund at fixed rates. The daily rate of pension had been fixed for officers and soldiers of every rank. Pensions were also fixed for the army widows and their rates depended on the ranks held by their husbands in the army. Invalids also got a due

1. Court to Bombay, dated 26 March 1755, Para 135; Public Department Court's letters, Vol.4 of 1752-1756, P.232.
2. Malcolm, G.C. The India Office, London 1926, P.206.
3. Loc. Cit.

share from the fund. All Corporals and Privates discharged as unfit on account of broken health and constitution, having served fourteen years, were allowed nine pence a day. If wounded and totally unable to earn livelihood, after 21 years service, one shilling and four pence a day were allowed. No soldier was allowed the benefit of fund under 21 years service, unless his discharge contained a recommendation for the pension under whom he served. Even till 1842 a number of officers were pensioned by this fund, when there were other facilities existing for the purpose.¹

It may be interesting to note that the trust deed of the fund provided that if the Company ceased to employ a military force, they should repay to Clive or his representatives the full sum.² When in 1858 the Company ceased to exist, Clive's grandsons and other relatives fought a case and got the amount.

Lord Clive's fund was by no means an answer to the problem of pensions. The principle of granting pensions to the widows of officers had been established and it was confirmed by custom. Though it was not an authorised regulation, it was not easy to ~~avert~~ ^{refuse} the demand of widows and disabled soldiers. Consequently, Bengal Military Fund was instituted in 1806.³ It was an institution to which living subscribers, subscribed towards the benefit of widows and

1. PP Vol.35, P.11; Commons 35 of 1843.

2. Loc. Cit.

3. PP Vol.29, P.123; Commons 166 of 1857.

and families, and to a limited extent for their own benefit. The benefits granted to subscribers while alive were restricted to grants of 'passage money' and 'subsistence' upto a limit of rupees 700 while proceeding to England on sick leave, and these were granted at the discretion of the directors of the fund.¹ The other class, namely the widows of the deceased subscribers, were absolutely not dependent on the decision of directors; but were solely controlled by resolutions. The widows of the subscribers automatically received annuities at fixed rates.²

The Presidencies of Madras and Bombay soon had their separate military funds, the former was instituted in 1808 and the latter in 1816. The principle on which these two Presidencies formed the funds were not different than those of Bengal and, except for annuities grantable to the widows being of slightly different rates ~~than Bengal~~, there was no other difference.

The institutions were in part financed by the government. The Madras Military Fund got an aid of ₹12,212 per

1. The East India Register and Directory for 1831, 2nd Edn, London 1831, P.(Bengal) 108.

2. The following figures will give some idea of the extent of benefits to widows as allowed in 1831; though they differed but very slightly at Bombay and Madras::

	In India per month			In England per annum		
	Rs.	A.	P.	£	S	d
Widow of a Colonel or Lieutenant Colonel Comdt.	228	2	0	342	3	9
Widow of Lieutenant Colo- nels.	182	8	0	273	15	0
Widow of Major and equals	136	14	0	205	6	3
Widow of Captain and equals	91	4	0	136	17	6
Widow of Lieutenants	62	8	0	93	15	0
Widow of Cornets, Ensign, and Second Lieutenants.	50	0	0	75	0	0

annum and the Bombay Military Fund, of £46,113 per annum from the East India Company.¹ The Madras and Bombay Presidencies had the underlying purpose of benefiting the widows, but they included in their functions a provision for the orphans of their brother officers.² In Bengal, the orphan branch was managed by a separate institution, under a distinct set of laws and regulations and provided for a large number of children of the deceased officers of the Company's army.

Regarding the financing of the Bengal Military Fund, the Government of India gave an authority to the Paymasters of Bengal army in August, 1805, to receive donations and subscriptions at some stations of the army, and the amount was remitted to the treasury at Fort William. The government also undertook to finance the fund by a direct grant of Rs. 24,000 a year or £5,123 per annum and by indirect grant in the shape of additional interest on all balances deposited in the government treasury, and by a higher rate of exchange than was generally procurable in the open market.³ Army officers were required to pay contributions towards the

1. PP Vol. 29, P. 123; Commons 166 of 1857.

2. Calcutta Review, Vol. XIV, P. 78.

3. Letter from the Director of the Bengal Military Fund to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, dated 7 September 1855.
(vide PP 1847; A compiled volume at the Library of Asiatic Studies, Town Hall, Bombay)

fund at fixed rates.¹

The fund in 1853 showed assets of Rs.1,39,900.

Whereas in Bombay and Madras the Military Funds financed the widows and orphans, in Bengal there were separate institutions performing these functions, at least for some time. The Court of Directors allowed the Bengal government in 1811 to establish a Military Widows Funds for which they made a donation of Rs.30,000 from the government.² The fund was a benevolent institution and was formed for the purpose of providing adequate maintenance for the widows of officers of the Bengal establishment, whose husbands died without the means of making provisions for them. A fourth of the pension of the widows was paid from Lord Clive's Fund and the rest, from the Company's bounty. The fund also provided the passage money to widows if they could not afford it. To create a fund of a magnitude which could cope with its aims, every officer was expected to subscribe three-days pay towards this fund.

The Bengal Orphan Fund was instituted in 1782.³ It had two branches, the lower school and the upper school. The lower school was appropriated for the education of soldier's children, and was supported by the Company. The upper school derived no direct donation from the Company,

1. Lieutenant Rs.1229; Captain Rs.2,046; Majors Rs.3,654; Lieutenant Colonels Rs.5,171; and Colonels Rs.7,570. The officers also paid a lump sum when they got married, that is, Lieutenants Rs.150; Captains Rs.240; Majors Rs.420; Lieutenant Colonels Rs.540; and Colonels Rs.750. All officers on promotion made donations: Captains Rs.90; Majors Rs.180; Lieutenant Colonels Rs.120; and Colonels Rs.210. (PP 1847; A compiled volume at the Library of Asiatic studies, Town Hall, Bombay)
2. PP Vol.29, P.123; Commons 166 of 1857.
3. Loc. Cit.

but received it indirectly from conducting the printing business of the Bengal government, and partly from the unclaimed shares of Rohilla Prize Money.

The widow and the orphan funds were both deficit about the years 1820-1824.¹ The mode of making up the deficit was studied by an order of the Court of Directors and it was discovered that in Bombay and Madras the pensions were much smaller than the those granted to widows in Bengal. As a result of deficit an increase of subscriptions was ordered in Bengal, but it was not welcomed by the subscribers. In 1824, the Court of Directors finding that more efficient funds had been established at Madras and Bombay, for some years embracing the grant of benefits to sick Subalterns children and others, besides mere pensions to the widows, and their affording more general advantages to their respective armies than in Bengal, gave instructions to the government of Bengal to call on the army to frame a new fund similar to those ⁱⁿ at the other Presidencies, and intimated that the government will withhold its donation and ^{the} high rate of interest of 8 percent, unless the measure was carried out. The members of the Widows Society had, therefore, no choice but to submit to orders to merge into the Bengal Military Fund.²

In 1843, doubts arose in the minds of the Bengal army as to the correctness of the calculations forming the basis of the fund. On checking, it was discovered that Martindell, the Secretary, had been misappropriating the

1. Military letter to Court, dated 11 March 1825.

2. Calcutta Review, Vol. XIV, P. 82.

funds for thirty years.¹ The Secretary had maintained two ledgers, one for official and the other for his private use. Whenever an officer wanted to know his accounts, Martindell gave out details from his private book, but in official ledgers he did not make all entries. No one suspected him and the fraud was discovered only after his death. The fund was insolvent.²

In order to save the situation, the army proposed an increase in its own subscriptions and a decrease in the pension of widows in England.³ But in spite of all the measures the state of the fund could not be much improved and ^{the} directors of the fund requested the government that it should take over the management. But the Court of Directors did not accept the measure as it had only a financial support from the government, but was by no means an institution of the government.⁴

When the Company's rule was replaced by the Crown's, the Court of Directors ordered the managers of the fund to transfer the assets, liabilities and the management thereof to the Secretary of State for India in Council and the same was ordered in respect of funds at Madras and Bombay.⁵ When the assets, liabilities and management were transferred to

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.XIV, P.82.

2. Ibid, P.74.

3. PP Vol.29, P.123; Commons 166 of 1857.

4. Despatch from the Court of Directors to Governor General, Financial Department, dated 8 April 1855; No.32; vide PP Vol.29, P.123, Commons 166 of 1857.

5. PP (Microfilm) Vol.2, P.469; Commons 75 of 1860.

the Secretary of State, all subscribers of the institution were entitled to the benefits out of Indian revenues in the same manner, as previous to the Mutiny.

It is interesting to note that the Military Funds were the only institutions contributing towards pensions of any type. A Military Retiring Fund was, however, introduced ~~by~~ ^{with} a grant by the Court of £57750 yearly and the number of annuities granted in each year were 12 in Bengal, 8 in Madras and 4 in Bombay.¹ Provisional contributions had also been accepted over a number of years,² but the Court pleaded that since retiring regulations of 1835 and 1837 catered for officers retiring on full pay, there was no reason why retiring fund should be introduced.³ The plan was finally abandoned.

Furlough was the term used for army officers' leave for which regulations were framed in 1796. By these regulations the Company's European officers were allowed to be absent on furlough; but at no time the proportion of the absentees was to exceed one third in the case of Lieutenant Colonels and Majors, one fourth of Captains, and one sixth of Subalterns.⁴ The period of furlough in Europe was three

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1. Military letter from Court, dated 6 March 1832; also PP. Vol.38, P.195; Commons 275 of 1862.
 2. PP Vol.40, P.283; Commons 80 of 1863.
 3. Military letter from Court, dated 10 November 1847.
 4. PP Vol.40, P.283; Commons 80 of 1863; also PP (Microfilm) Vol.43, P.469; Commons 226 of 1876.

years, but no furlough was allowed for the first ~~ten~~ years of service except in cases of sickness. The importance of these provisions may be apparent from the fact that in early days, leave to be spent in Europe could not be obtained or it could be enjoyed only by resigning the service; and even for leave in India, no regulations existed. Even till Cornwallis' time no officer, even if compelled by bad health, was allowed to return to Europe without resigning his service.¹

In Bengal, there were no fixed periods of leave for the natives. Whenever a native wanted leave of absence, he reported to an officer who forwarded the request to the commanding officer. The commanding officer had little power of granting leave and they only applied to the Brigadiers for permission to send individuals on leave. Even for the smallest period of leave, the sanction of the Brigadier, commanding the troops, was absolutely necessary in all cases, because it was not allowed that any individual could leave station without the knowledge of the Brigadier.² In Madras and Bombay no such difficulty was experienced, obviously because the leave of the natives there was provided for in the regulations.

In 1854, new furlough regulations were introduced, when all officers then in service were given the option to be guided by old regulations or the new regulations. By the

1. PP Vol.40, P.223; Commons 80 of 1863, also PP (Microfilm) Vol.43, P.469; Commons 286 of 1876.

2. Evidence of Colonel Edmund; vide Report of Commissioners, P.3752-59.

new regulations 2 years furlough after 10 years, and 2 years more after 20 years service, was permissible.¹ Furloughs were not commulative, but officers who took furlough after 20 years service in India, could get their additional furlough after an additional service of five years from the date of their return on duty. In the new regulations the pay obtainable while on furlough was fixed and was termed as furlough rates of pay. Leave of absence on sick certificate was also introduced, for eighteen months, whether it was in Europe or in India.² It could be extended by another eighteen months on the recommendation by the medical authorities. The rates of pay obtainable while on sick leave were different than the furlough rates of pay. Advance of pay and allowances was made for three months from the date of embarkation. The rates of exchange were fixed annually for the balance of payment in Europe. Furlough rates of pay were paid on per diem fixed rates of pay and these rates were higher for Cavalry than for Infantry and Artillery.³

Officers going to England on furlough were required immediately to report their arrival to the Directors. On the expiry of leave they were required to return, in some cases furlough could be extended on health grounds.⁴ The

1. PP Vol.30, P.669; Commons 96 of 1823.

2. Loc. Cit.

3. Military letter from Court, dated 25 November 1823.

4. Military letter to Court, dated 30 April 1804.

officers in such cases appeared before a Medical Board, on whose recommendation the leave was extended upto five years;¹ after which he was automatically dismissed from service. By a new order of 1823, extension of furlough even on medical grounds was not granted without a very strict medical recommendation of two reknowned doctors. The strictness was necessitated by an unusually large number of applications for the extension of furlough.

Till 1796 there appear to have been no rules regulating the retirement and pensions. Pensions were granted to the Sepoys in cases of wounds, disabilities and some times rewards were given for length of service to all ranks.² Under the Bengal Presidency regulations, the Sepoy was entitled to invalid pension after 15 years of service, By a regulation of 1837 in Bengal, the unfit, after fifteen years to thirty years service, got a fixed rate of invalid pension. Large numbers of men were consequently eager to get invalided after fifteen years service. The pension establishment in Madras pensioned off invalids on half pay; and sometimes on full pay, in which case they were required to do garrison duty.³ At Bombay there was a graduated scales for the unfit: after 15 years service, after 20, under 25, under 28, under 30, and for 30 years and for thirty years

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1. Military letter from Court, dated 10 September 1823,
 2. Evidence of Colonel Salmon, Minutes of Evidence, C.1894-1902.
 3. Evidence of Colonel Watson, and Colonel Scot respectively Minutes of Evidence, C.991 and 1449.

and above; this was an incentive to Sepoys to serve longer. ¹
~~then in General.~~ Sometimes the Sepoys and Junior Commiss-
 ioned officers were given financial and land awards for
 long and meritorious service. No invaliding pensions were
 given to men below the age of 50 years. ²

The institution of pensions was a useful instrument
 in the hands of the East India Company. In none of the
 princely states in India did this institution exist and
 men were naturally attracted towards the army of the Company
 which, thus, had the opportunity to pick and choose the best
 men for service in their army.

There were two systems, existing side by side, for
 the retirement of European officers. According to the
 regulations of 1786, every officer after 25 years of service
 in India inclusive of the three years for one furlough,
 was allowed to retire with full pay of the rank that he
 held at the time of his retirement. ³ The regulations of
 1786 were modified in 1835; every officer who had served
 for 23 years was allowed to retire on the pay of the Captain,
 whether or not he had attained to that rank. If the service
 was 28 years, the retirement pay awardable was of the Major;
 in case of 33 years service, the full pay of the Lieutenant
 Colonel was allowed; and in case of 38 years, the full pay
 of the Colonel was allowed. ⁴ Two years later, the qualifying

1. Reply of Major General Reddington, vide Replies.

2. Calcutta Review, Vol. XXVI, P. 204.

3. PP Vol. 40, P. 283; Commons 80 of 1863; also PP (Microfilm)
 Vol. 43, P. 469; Commons 286 of 1876.

4. PP Vol. 30, P. 669; Commons 196 of 1883.

service to pension for the ranks of Major and above was reduced.¹ Changes were again introduced in the minimum qualifying service in 1854, when a Captain was allowed to retire on full pay after 20 years service, a Major after 24 years, and a similar reduction was ordered for the higher ranks.²

The second system of retirement was termed 'the purchase system'. By this the officers of junior ranks obtained an early retirement of a senior officer by voluntary contributions paid to that officer.³ Thus they bought out seniors, with a view to accelerating promotion. In 1798, the officers were prohibited from indulging in purchased retirements. All officers by the regulation on retirement were required to take an oath that they had not received any pecuniary considerations for retirement.

However, inspite of the Court's and the government's efforts to stop the purchase system by introduction of oaths, the practice continued. It was officially brought to the notice of the Court of Directors in 1829 and 1832 and a considerable correspondence ensued. In 1837 the Court expressed their view that there was no necessity for them to interfere with the arrangements which the junior officers of the Regiment made in individual cases for adding to the comforts of senior officers on their retirement from service.⁴

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1. Military letter from Court, dated 20 September 1837.
 2. General Order Governor General, dated 17 November 1854.
 3. Military letter from Court, dated 29 November 1837.
 4. PP Vol.10, P.247; Commons 116 of 1857.

The Court thus gave an almost official sanction to the system. The Court ordered that the oath which was previously taken by officers at the time of retirement was not necessary. Many officers thus contributed considerably with the hope of being benefitted one day. The system worked well indeed.

The system of promotion in the Company's service was not very much different from that in the Crown's service. In the Royal Service, the Captain rose regimentally to the rank of the Lieutenant Colonel, whereas in the Company's service there was the intermediate rank of the Major. In the Royal Service there were two grades of Captains, the first and the second Captains, whilst in the Company's service there was only one grade. In the Royal Service there was only one grade of Subaltern, whilst in the Company's service there were two grades, Second Lieutenants and Lieutenants.¹ The promotion in the Royal Service was by purchase and selection; in the Company's service the rise was given by selection and service seniority.² In the Company's service officers rose to the rank of Major regimentally, then in line. The senior Lieutenant Colonel got the first vacant Regiment. At each Presidency, there was maintained what were known as gradation lists, one each for Artillery, Engineers, Cavalry and Infantry, which indicated the exact order in which the officers had become or had

1. PP Vol.19, P.73; Commons 216 of 1859.

2. Evidence of Colonel Salmond, Minutes of Evidence, p. 539-540.

meetings took place at the three Presidencies, and the grievances were conveyed strongly to the Court of Directors. These petitions were not considered, and the officers deputed one of their number from each Presidency to England with further representations.¹ On their arrival in England a committee was formed, whose protests were so powerful that a need was felt to re-organise the whole army, and that became a principal cause for the re-organisation of 1796. In order to prevent jealousies between the two services, Sir Henry Dundas, one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, recommended to His Majesty to give every officer of the Company the King's commission of the same date as he had received from the Company.² Based on this recommendation, the Company's officers were granted further concessions by the grant of general brevet promotions as in the Royal army.

In the Company's service, as in the service of the Crown, supersession was closely linked with ~~recruit~~ ^{promotion}. The senior officer of Artillery to the Chief Engineer, the Colonel Commandant, officer for command of Cavalry, and all general ranks were filled by selection, and competent officers only were appointed. The officers who were superseded, in consequence of being unfit to command, were allowed to retire with the pay of a Lieutenant Colonel of Infantry.³

1. Carey, Honourable John Company, Calcutta 1906, P.219.

2. PP Vol.40, P.283; Commons 80 of 1863.

3. Loc. Cit.

There were some posts reserved for officers of the Company's service: the general commands, the staff of the Crown's forces in India and the officers in divisional commands. This restriction was often taken away owing to the non-availability of officers of merit.¹

AS regards the promotion of natives, in the Bengal army, a man secured his promotion by seniority so long as he avoided any public crime; merit and fitness were not the criterion.² Competent knowledge of reading and writing in at least one character was a pre-requisite except that in cases of gallantry, this regimen was waved. When an individual was superseded, the commanding officer required to publish his name along with the reasons for supersession.³ As a result of promotion by seniority, very old men formed the senior group in Bengal. This system of promotion was adopted on the assumption that it ~~keep old~~ was safe to *keep old* and inactive men at the top and the young energetic soldiers in the junior ranks.⁴

In Bombay and Madras promotion was by merit. In Madras, the Junior Commissioned officers were promoted from the efficient Non-Commissioned officers with due regard to seniority but not by seniority alone. In Bombay, younger men were promoted to the Junior Commissioned ranks even

1. PP Vol.47, P.195; Commons 513 of 1854.

2. Evidence of Major General Low, Report of Commissioners, p.417.

3. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government, Military Department Bengal, vide Replies.

4. Calcutta Review, Vol.XXVI, P.195.

than those ⁱⁿ at Madras.¹

In Bengal, the promotion to the Non-Commissioned ranks also was by seniority and not by merit. In Madras the system was based on selection. The selection for the lowest rank, namely the lance naick or lance corporal, was by selection which rested with ^{the} Company's officer. The first promotion having been made by selection, further promotion was by seniority unless there was something adverse on an individual's record.² Selection to the rank of Havildar from Naick was by selection and not ^{by} seniority.³

In the Irregular Corps, particularly in Irregular Cavalry, young native officers were found, because they were not generally promoted by seniority, but by selection and merit.⁴

1. Evidence of Colonel Watchman, Report of Commissioners, p.430.
2. Evidence of Major General Sandamore, Report of Commissioners, p.2216.
3. Ibid, p.2218.
4. Evidence of Major General Mereweth, vide Report of Commissioners, p.1570 to 1586.

SUPPLY SYSTEM (COMMISSARIAT)

No army can function without a well regulated supply system, especially in war when the needs are great, sudden and unexpected. Therefore a regular supply of ammunition, materials and food is absolutely necessary. No fighting force can dispense with it for any appreciable length of time.

The development of the Company's Supply System was gradual. In India there were no big towns and bazars, which posed considerable difficulty for the Indian soldier who had to find his own food and supplies and the army had to find its own 'Commissariat'. In early stages the absence of regular supply system can be attributed to two reasons; the first, that the finances did not allow a well organised supply system and the second, that there was no pressing ^{need} ~~requirement~~ for it. Most of the early battles of the Company in the eighteenth century were fought near the nuclei of their settlements, that is Bombay, Madras and Calcutta where garrisons could be kept well supplied by the navy. The battle grounds were not very far from these garrisons and the lines of communication were short. Victories transferred the battle grounds from near the coast to places farther into the interior. This change in general posed problems of supply for which resources were mustered at short notices. The armies had to find their own Commissariat and were accompanied by a ^{large} ~~great~~ number of non-Military followers. An Indian Army's description by Malcolm as a nation in migration guarded by its troops than like a

military force appears justified.¹ The followers greatly outnumbered the fighting force.² The difficulties of mustering a requisite number of men and cattle for supply trains as they were then termed on ad hoc basis and the uncertainty and unreliability of the persons enrolled, posed the need of a regular supply system, guided by rules and regulations under the authority of the government and controlled by officials paid by it.

The regular Supply System came into being in 1809, when the old system in vogue was abolished. In 1775, a Board of Ordnance had been formed in the Bengal Army but it was mainly required to meet the needs of Artillery and Engineers. In Bombay and Madras too there existed Military Boards, which issued instructions regarding supply procurement from time to time.³ To the Bengal Board "all returns of Ordnance and military stores were made by Commanding Officers of garrisons and Cantonments artillery officers, and all other incharge, all contracts for the supply of stores, proofs of ordnance and powder, plans for new construction of ordnance, reports

1. Letter of Sir John Malcolm dated 13 February 1832, Appx. 'B' Vide Minutes of Evidence.

2. (a) Where the force consisted of 1000 soldiers, the followers numbered about 10,000 non-combatants. Vide Majumdar 'A Study of Indian Military History', Delhi 1963. P41

(b) In early campaigns the native followers that accompanied the army outnumbered the fighting men by at least five and frequently ten to one. At Seringapatam for example, the fighting men numbered about forty thousand, and the followers about two lakhs, and covered a front of three miles and depth of seven miles. Fortesque John, The Early History of transport and Supply, London 1929, P.16, 17.

3. A Council of Governor General and Sir A. Clarke, the Commander-in-Chief Vide Military Proceedings, dated 3 April 1800.

of powder works, laboratory and arsenal, were to be submitted; in short the general control of stores for the army was vested in this Board." ¹ It is clear that the Board was concerned with ^{the} supply of technical equipment; the supply of food and clothing were excluded. Moreover the military Boards at the three Presidencies only issued instructions and appear to have done clerical work rather than the actual handling of supplies.

The system of agency was employed for supplies in early days but was discovered to be expensive and unsatisfactory and therefore in 1800 it was replaced by contract system.² Contracts were given for victualling the European troops, the supply of elephants, camels, bullocks and other animals and also for feeding them; but no contracts were given for other needs. Even the requirements of the animals were not met fully³ and the incompetence of the Board in this respect posed difficulties in manoeuvring an army, because when animals were required to fit out gear for war, an acute shortage was experienced. Moreover the animals provided were not of good quality and breed and were wasted out and replaced by contractors prematurely which resulted in a great loss to the government and huge profits to ^{the} contractors⁴. Efforts were made to eradicate

1. Buckle, F. Memoir of the Services of the Bengal Artillery, London 1852, P.41.

2. A Council of the Governor General and Sir A. Clarke, The Commander-in-Chief vide Military Proceedings dated 3 April 1800.

3. Military Proceedings dated 8 March 1799.

4. A Minute in Council vide Military Proceedings, dated 17 April 1799.

this defect by the introduction of a system of inspection of all animals coming in service to discharge the unfit animals. The introduction of branding and inspection of animals must have considerably improved the system of animal supply. In spite of the improvement, the innumerable duties that the Board was expected to perform rendered it incompetent, for the growth of army demanded a well organised system of supply. The campaigns against Hyder Ali and Tipoo had proved the need of a regular supply system, but as soon as the war came to an end, its need was forgotten. The demands of the Maratha wars, however, precipitated the need of a regular system.

In 1809, the system of victualling the European troops, and providing and maintaining the army cattle by contract was abolished, and the Commissariat¹ was placed entirely under directions and control of Commissary General, assisted by a deputy and a requisite number of subordinate officers. The mode of supply was left to his discretion; advances of money were made by him as far as possible; the expenditure of the department was left to his discretion, for he was made the sole judge of expenditure and disbursement.² In 1815 a separate accounts branch was opened which relieved its officers from the laborious details of accounts and enabled them to pay more

1. Minute by Honourable F. Millet dated 1 March 1845. vide Report of Commission to Enquire into the System of Army Commissariat. (Hereafter refered to as Report Army Commissariat)

2. Loc Cit.

attention to their executive duties, that is superintendence of all public cattle, public buildings, preparation of army equipment, victualling European troops and storing supplies of all kinds.¹ The new office was placed under the general superintendence of the Deputy Commissary General permanently attached to the Commissariat Department. To him the native agents of several divisions furnished their accounts, which after examination and checking, were forwarded to the Commissary General.

Until 1821, the entire control, executive and financial over the department, was vested in the Commissary General. The system did not work well. Although the executive officers had no responsibility of accounts, they could not devote a wholehearted attention to their own work as they could not without adequate means check the charges of native agents; and thus, the financial and Commissary Generals worked without harmony.² These defects necessitated re-organisation of the department, and in 1821 the Commissary General was freed from the charge of accounts; he could now move at the army headquarters and exercise at all times personal supervision of the department. The duties of checking ^{the} ~~and~~ ~~correctness~~ of accounts was made the responsibility of the Military Board. On the Re-organisation of the Military Board in 1830, it was vested with a general control over the Commissariat Department, by the exercise of which the functions of the Commissary General

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1. Letter of the Deputy Commissary General dated 21 June 1815 vide Report Army Commissariat.
 2. A Minute by Lieutenant Colonel F.S. Hawkins vide Report Army Commissariat.

became very much circumscribed.¹ After 1830, some changes were introduced in the department, but with little appreciable change on the whole.

The chief duty of the Commissariat was to supply food for men and beasts.² It entered into contracts not only for ^{the} army, navy and police service, but for all services required by the government; for other services than ^{the} army and navy, the duty, however, was restricted to entering into ~~the~~ contract. In the purchase of Commissariat supplies contracts were advertised in the newspapers and the lowest price and the best quality was obtained in open competition.³ If two or three tenders were sent at the same rate, the man with the best security was preferred; or, if a man had previously entered into a contract and performed it satisfactorily, he was given ⁴ the contract.

Generally, contracts were entered into for twelve months but in some cases they were for a longer period. As a rule they were renewed annually.⁵ At times when it became difficult to enter into contract because no contractors came forward, the Commissariat had full liberty to go into the market and get the articles in the best way he could; for this purpose he established the price to be paid by taking a tender

1. A Minute by Honourable F. Millett vide Report Army Commissariat.
2. Evidence of Sir S. Petric, Director General of Commissariat vide Report from the Select Committee on contracts for Public Department, Q.1485, published in PP Vol.7, P.117 Commons 362 of 1856.
3. Ibid, Q.1473 and 1474.
4. Ibid, Q.1480.
5. Ibid, Q.1481.

for the articles in writing, and he then obtained the approval of the officer commanding for its acceptance.

At times the Commissariat made purchases without a tender, especially when the army was in the field; they made the best purchases they could and supported the reasonableness of the price by two merchants; or, they occasionally employed an agent, and allowed a customary commission to them. But these were only exceptions, the rule being the tender and the contract.¹

The system of contract was also employed for the erection of works and buildings for housing and sheltering the soldiers. Every work was put to unlimited competition; a drawing was made of the work, a specification was prepared and an advertisement was published in the leading papers.² The system was employed for the execution of all extensive works, whether they were new buildings, or considerable additions,^{cc} repairs^f or alteration ^{in the} ~~to~~ existing buildings. There was another class of contracts which ~~was~~ ^{were} made for ordinary current repairs, such as repairing roofs, walls and so on. The current repair contracts were entered into for three years. It was done by establishing a list or schedule of prices at which the contractor was to engage to provide material and workmanship for all works required of him during the three years, and tenders were required for the performance of these works during these years,

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1. Evidence of Sir S. Petric, Director General of Commissariat vide Report from the Select Committee on contracts for Public Department, Q.1489,
 2. Evidence of Captain Laffan to Q.1532 vide PP Vol.7, P.117, Commons 362 of 1856.

at a fixed percent profit.¹

By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the supply system was well organised, but there was no provision as yet made to supply the Irregular Troops of which Irregular Cavalry formed the largest part. The Irregular Troops had no bazars from where they could obtain their supplies and the government was not in any way concerned with how they obtained supplies.² They were, however, authorised to obtain their supplies like camp followers from bazars closeby, which was rather an abstract facility than an authorised system of obtaining supplies.³ Even in times of war the government was not responsible to furnish ^{any} carriage for Irregulars and they provided their own carriage, for which some allowances were given.

In the Camp there was what was called a Sudder Bazar, which was for the supply of the regular army, but the irregulars also could make use of it. Each man carried a day or two's food of some kind, which rendered him independent in some degree of what he could obtain through ^{the} regular system.⁴ The supply of rations to these bazaars ^{was} were not regular, but as and when required the bazaars were supplied. It was not binding on Irregulars to buy from bazaars ^{even} if they were closeby,

1. Loc. Cit.

2. Evidence of General Bullock vide Report of Commissioners.
 ¶.121 to 125.

3. Ibid, ¶.134.

4. Report of Colonel Bacher vide Report of Commissioners.
 ¶.654.

~~but~~ ^{for} they were at liberty to procure their supplies from a source which they chose.¹ The aggregate number of fighting men and registered followers was considered before arrangements were made by the department.

The system outlined above remained in operation so long as a force operated within the Company's frontier but beyond the English frontiers the regulars were provided with no better facilities than the irregulars; they too had no claim on the government for supplies beyond the frontiers.²

Even though the Commissariat was there in 1809 and replaced the Military Board as an institution of supply, the duties of providing saddles, bridles, harness and horse appointments of Horse Artillery, Horse Field Batteries and Native Cavalry, devolved on the Military Board.³ The Commissariat undertook these important duties at a very late stage. All harness and saddlery were issued, in the first instance, from the Government Stores, and afterwards maintained complete in all respects from the contract allowance issued monthly to officers in command of troops and batteries, who were responsible to the superior authorities⁴. When an officer was appointed to a troop or battery to fill a vacancy, he was required to purchase, such of the stock ordered to be kept up as may remain in store, the property of his predecessor; and whenever an

1. Ibid, p.656.

2. Ibid, p.658-664.

3. Minute by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief Sir P. Grant dated 21st November 1856 vide PP Vol.19, P.73 Commons 216 of 1859.

4. Loc Cit.

officer was removed from a troop or battery, the horse furniture and stores were surveyed by a Committee, and he was called upon, previous to his departure, to make good all deficiencies according to an adjustment, which was determined by the Regimental Commanding Officer.

A good supply system was considered an essential requirement in operations, especially in sieges where the success or failure was largely determined by this single factor. The siege operation began with a supply sufficient for the first week or ten days, when the train and animals employed in transferring the stores were sent back to depots for fresh supply. This went on until the place was reduced.¹

A siege was, however, not commenced, until all the depots for siege material were fully established and ample means secured for supplying the materials for vigorous attacks. The distance and position of these depots depended entirely on the nature of the country and the relation in which the besieging army stood with the government and the inhabitants.² Any suspension of the operation was naturally taken advantage of by the enemy to repair the defences of the place, and the besiegers had to recommence the work of destruction; it was therefore of great importance to the success of a siege that the supplies suffered no interruption.

When the siege was on an extensive scale, it was

1. Hector Streith, Treatise on Fortification and Artillery Vol.1, 1st Edn, London 1852, P289-291.

2. Loc Cit.

usual to form one great depot for each service from where smaller depots in the immediate neighbourhood of the scene of operation could be supplied.¹

In the early stages, there was no well organised system of supplying clothing. Ananda Ranga Pillai records in his diary the post of 'Chief Dubash', about 1748: The most important functions of his office consisted in managing the merchants who supplied cloth for the Company.² About 1760, agents were appointed in Madras and Bengal by Captains Commanding the Companies for regular uniform and clothing, and this system was subsequently adopted by Bombay too.³ Subsequently all ranks of Cavalry were clothed, armed and equipped by the State in Bengal; but that does not appear to be the case with other arms.⁴

The system adopted in about 1800 for the supply of army clothing was by contract. The contracts were advertised by the Military Board and they were undertaken for a period from 1 to 3 years at the directions of the Governor General.⁵ The contractors were not at liberty to purchase any cloth from any other source than from ^{the} Company's stores, except

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1. Papers Compiled for the use of Gentleman Cadets at the Royal Military Academy Woolwich, London 1861, P.73.
 2. Dodwell, The Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai, Vol.V, Madras 1917.
 3. Bombay Government Consultation 11 March 1760, Public Diary 34 of 1760.
 4. Calcutta Review Vol.XXVI, P.557.
 5. Military Proceedings, dated 6 August 1801.

when there was not sufficient cloth in the Company's stores, and even under such circumstances approval of the Commander-in-Chief or the Commanding officers of the forces was necessary, which is evident from several advertisements published from time to time and recorded in Military Proceedings. The clothing after stitching was inspected by a Committee of officers, who gave a certificate of goodness in quality and workmanship. To enable the contractor to fix the contract, an advance was paid to him - 15% for European clothing ~~(fifteen)~~ and 10% for native clothing. The contractor was required to supply the uniforms in three distinct sizes - large, medium and small, in equal proportion. When the largest size did not fit a man, the contractor supplied special clothing for him.

There were some clothing provided free of charge by the State, but for certain items of clothing a certain rate of stoppages was recovered from the individual.¹ Rules regarding the amount of stoppages, and also their payment at one time and their non-payment at another for certain items had been changing. For example, Bombay Native Soldier after 1816 had to pay for some items of clothing which were previously given free of charge,² whereas in the Bengal Native Infantry certain clothing ~~were~~^{were} purchased by the soldier at 5 rupees stoppage, which from 1825 onwards came to be provided by the state, free of charge.³

Clothing allowances called off-reckoning were advanced to Colonels of Regiments who provided clothing to men under their Command.⁴

1. PP Vol.7, P.117 Commons 362 of 1856.

2. Military Letter from Court dated 28 October 1814.

3. General Order Commander-in-Chief dated 25 March 1815.

4. Refer to Chapter on Financial Administration, Section on

A separate Army Clothing Department was formed in 1855. The department was responsible for the procurement, storage and delivery of clothing to all units according to requirements and authorisations, and to keep account of such clothing.¹ When the regiments wanted clothing, requisitions were made direct by them to the war office, where the Deputy Adjutant General of Clothing examined and sealed the pattern and sent them to the regiments after comparing them with standard patterns. The Deputy Adjutant General of Clothing was in communication with the Store Department and he arranged new supplies of clothing and equipment.² The regiments on receipt of any clothing and equipment, held boards for inspection and demands were forwarded and receipts obtained in due course.³ This system ensured supply of good quality cloth to the army.

The Government made contracts for the cloth of the army, and after the cloth had been procured it was examined by the inspectors, and then another contract was made for making up the rejected clothing, and when made up it was delivered into the stores, and then sent to the headquarters of each regiment. The patterns were fixed by the Commander-in-Chief with the consent of the Governor General.⁴ It was a practice

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1. Evidence of C.D. Ramsay, Q 161 of Report of Select Committee on Contract for Public Department, vide PP Vol.7, P.117, Commons 362 of 1856.
 2. PP Vol.13, Page 1 Common 269 of 1857; Evidence of Deputy Adjutant General of Clothing vide Q.5, 4 and 6.
 3. Ibid, Q.16.
 4. Report of Select Committee on Contracts for Public Department, evidence of Ramsay Q.181-184 vide PP Vol.7, P.117, Commons 362 of 1856.

in the army of attaching a certain number of tailors to units who were expected only to do alteration in clothing that became necessary.

The manufacture, supply and conveyance of artillery equipment was not easy in those early days in the absence of mechanical transport. Indeed, transport presented the biggest problem to the Commissariat.

There existed at Cossipore the Company's gun manufactory from where all Presidencies obtained their brass pieces. But all iron pieces were obtained from England.¹ Even the shot and shell for iron pieces were obtained from England. At each Presidency there was an agency, conducted by an officer of the army and generally of artillery, where gun carriages were manufactured.² The gun carriages were made of teak wood almost entirely and the weight of standard field gun carriage, that is six-pounder, was about 14 cwt, with limber and ammunition in boxes, about 1 ton. Though the principle of making gun carriages was the same at the three Presidencies, the Bengal carriages were heavier than ^{those of} the other two Presidencies.³ Thus, on account of the ammunition and various other equipments required to be carried with each gun, ^{transportation} became a major problem.

1. Evidence of Lieutenant Colonel Hopkinson vide Minutes of Evidence, p.1349.

2. Ibid, p.637-39.

3. PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

An important part of artillery equipment, besides guns, were howitzers, carronades and mortars. Before the middle of the 19th century, smooth bore weapons of low velocity were used and the use of modern Artillery dates only from 1855, with the invention of William George Armstrong, gun which was capable of loading at the breach and was rifled.¹ All guns prior to that date were muzzle loading and usually threw round balls, which were solid mass and extremely heavy and the carrying of ammunition alone was a big problem. Since the new gun, capable of throwing light elongated projectile, was adopted only in 1859, throughout the Company's period solid iron round shells and grape shots were used during operations. Carronades were short iron guns with no trunnions, which had been introduced in 1779,² and were scarcely carried in field role and were often employed on ^{the}coasts. Howitzers were used mixed with guns and were specially useful at sieges. Mortars were short pieces of ordnance and threw shells at high angles of elevation.³

The ordnance was classified as light or field, and heavy or siege. Field pieces were intended to accompany an army constantly, and were capable of being handled by men from place to place with rapidity.⁴ Those used generally were 3, 6, 9

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.2, P.396.

2. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.16, P.857.

3. Philips, "The Book on Fortification Etc", London 1892, P.10.

4. Portlock, Papers compiled for the use of Gentleman Cadets of the Royal Military Academy Woolwich, London 1861. P7

and 12 pounder guns, and the 12, 24 and 32 pounder howitzers. All field pieces were made of brass. The heavy artillery gun made of iron was capable of firing 400 to 500 rounds in 24 hours,¹ and the problem of carrying ammunition was still greater at a siege, where heavy ordnance was employed.

In the attack of fortresses, the ordnance having generally to be brought from long distances, lightness was desirable but field pieces being too feeble to destroy huge walls, and even for other purposes of siege, heavy artillery was required. Horses were very often employed for the purpose of draught. For a six pounder battery of horse artillery the following complement of horses was employed:²

4 guns	24 horses		
2 Howitzers	12 horses	Spare draught	18 horses
6 Amn Waggon	36 horses	Spare for Riding	74 horses.
1 Forge Waggon	6 horses		
2 Store Carts	8 horses		

For heavy pieces of ordnance the scale of horses provided was as follows:³

Nature of Piece	Horses to Draw the Piece	Horses to Draw 1000 Rds Amn
18 Pounder Gun	8	43
24 "	10	57
10 Inch Howitzer	8	188
10 Inch Mortar	6	188

1. Loc Cit.

2. Proceedings of a special Committee of Artillery Officers assembled at Meirut, under instructions from Government; communicated in General Order dated November 1859 (Subsequently ref. as Special Committee of Artillery Officers).

3. Loc Cit.

When the horses started fresh, they could if the roads were not bad, advance 2 miles in half an hour; four miles in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, 8 miles in 4 hours; and 16 miles in 10 hours-- as a rough guide. The average march of foot artillery, with their cattle establishment in 1832 was about the same as that of the infantry, that is, about 15 miles a day.¹

The war establishment of draught animals was in fact never too rigidly fixed at any time and each case required special sanction of the government.² As a guide, in Madras and Bombay 230 horses were allowed for a troop,³ whereas in Bengal 178 horses was the accepted figure.⁴ This difference was allowed because of the differences of equipment from Presidency to Presidency. The Bengal armament of a troop of horse artillery was five 6 pounders and one 12 pounder howitzer, whereas in Bombay and Madras the proportion was four guns and two howitzers.⁵ Moreover in Madras and Bombay horses of draught were not ridden (the system was called detachment system) whereas in Bengal there were no detachments and every horse in draught carried a rider.⁶

1. Evidence of Colonel Hopkinson to Minutes of Evidence.
p.1347-48.

2. PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

3. Loc Cit.

4. Special Committee of Artillery Officers.

5. PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

6. Loc Cit.

The artillery equipment too was not standardized which caused a difference in the number of draught animals required to carry it. Assimilation was tried from time to time but for some reasons complete assimilation was never achieved. Approval of the Governor General for constructing six pounder carriages was obtained only in 1800 for all the three Presidencies.¹ Further assimilation in artillery equipment was brought by the orders of Sir Henry Fane, the Commander-in-Chief in 1836, on the recommendation of a board and another Committee assembled in 1853 for the purpose of assimilating equipment.² In spite of the best efforts at assimilation of equipment, small differences continued to exist which account for the difference of draught animals employed for carriage.

The small arms used by the Company's army were light weapons and every individual carried his own personal weapon on person and there was no problem of carriage. Replenishment was, however, the Commissariat's problem. The arm used generally by a soldier of infantry until the year 1853 was a percussion musket and bayonet.³ The musket was 4 feet 7 inches in length and weighed 10 lbs 2 oz, which was an easy weight to carry on person. The balls were made of lead. The bayonet projected 1 foot 5½ inches beyond the muzzle, and weighed 1 lb 1 oz,

1. PP Vol.19, P.73, Commons 216 of 1859.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Portlock, Papers compiled for the use of Gentleman Cadets of the Military Academy at Woolwich, London 1861. Pl.

making the total weight 11 lbs 3 oz. The sepoy army commonly used matchlocks or firelocks.¹ quite easy to carry, the weapon had a broad and massive butt, to distribute the weight of recoil. Rifles were tried in the Sutlej campaign but the army preferred matchlocks to rifles² and it was not till a decade afterwards that rifles were used. The enfield rifle which was approved for the use of the army about the time of the Mutiny was 6 feet 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Carbines were supplied to Cavalry, Artillery and Engineers; handgrenades weighing 1 lb 13 oz each were also used. Thus we see that almost all small arms were capable of being carried on the person of a soldier, and posed no problem of carriage.

From the above account it appears that the system of supplies and Transport in the Army of the East India company was quite satisfactory.

1. Phythian, The Madras Regiment (1758-1958) Wellington 1958. P 284
2. Evidence of Captain Brown vide Report of Commissioners p. 957.

RECRUITMENT, CLASS COMPOSITION AND TRAINING

Recruitment of officers was the Company's major problem. In the early years of the nineteenth century, due to Napoleonic Wars in Europe, no number of officers and men met the actual demands. The problem of recruitment of men was not so acute, however, because of the availability of the natives; but a minimum indispensable number of European Officers in each unit did create problems.

In the opening decade of the nineteenth century, the East India Company opened its own Military College at Addiscombe. Before 1786, direct Commissions were given to young Englishmen in India, and that had been the only method of recruiting officers. In that year, however, the Court of Directors succeeded in getting some cadets trained at the Woolwich Academy. But even in 1793, the Company could not have more than forty cadets at Woolwich trained at its own expense. Meanwhile the demand for officers had been increasing and the Addiscombe establishment had become a necessity.¹

At first training at Addiscombe was imparted to the cadets of Artillery and Engineers alone, but in 1816 the cadets of Infantry were added. The college trained, from 1809 to 1861, in all about 3,600 military officers, many of whom played a great part in the history of the British Indian Empire.²

1. Seton, Malcolm CC. 'The India Office', London 1926, P.192.

2. Loc Cit.

Before 1816, the cadets of Infantry and Cavalry had no specific training and they learnt either on their own, or in their regiments after they became officers. Before the Military College at Addiscombe came into being, some cadets were procured from private academies in England, where some military training was imparted.¹ The cadets trained by private academies were examined by 'proper officers' at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, who after examining them reported if they were 'qualified for Commissions in the Company's service'. One of such academies was the Royal Military College at Marlow, where training for Infantry and Cavalry was given and this academy had supplied the bulk of cadets for these two services before 1816.²

Cadets for the Company's force at Addiscombe were taken between the age of 15 and 22.³ The age of admission ranged between 15 and 17 at the Royal Military Academy, at Woolwich.⁴ The procedure at Addiscombe for establishing the initial seniority of cadets for the Company's service was the same as at Woolwich, that is, the cadets took their rank when they attained the age of fifteen and a half years, except in the event of their not being reported duly qualified after continuing at the College for two years and a half, in which case they lost one year.⁵

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1. Military Letter from Court, 16 January 1805, No.4.
 2. Military Letter from Court, dated 3 July 1805, No.12.
 3. Calcutta Review Vol.II, London 1844, P.127.
 4. Ibid, P.148.
 5. Military Letter from Court, dated 10 April 1805, No.6.

At Addiscombe the duration of course was two years. An entrance examination was held and candidates came to compete in large numbers. On passing the entrance examination a cadet's name was registered in the books; a number was given to him; he was allotted to a certain squad, to a certain mess; and a certain barrack was assigned to him.¹ The cadets underwent four equal terms of six months each. At Woolwich too, entrance was by a competitive examination. Sons of civilians could be admitted into that academy who had to pay large amount of fees, whereas the sons of army officers paid restricted fees, ranging according to their rank.²

Purchase of Commission was never legalised or regulated in the armies of the Company as it was the case in the Crown's service.³ The men who purchased their commission on large payment in the Crown's service, when ordered for service in India were generally allowed, with exceptions, to remain in England. Commissions could be purchased in as high a rank as Lieutenant Colonelcy, which posed difficulties of command in India. By an order, officers of His Majesty's service were always considered senior to the officers of the Company's service. So, a Lieutenant Colonel who had purchased his commission in that rank, no matter how long his previous service might have been, and no matter how obtained, at the time of promotion got a promotion to the rank of brevet Colonel, thus superseding

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.II, London 1844, P.127.

2. Ibid, P.148.

3. Evidence of Major General Mansfield; vide Inquiry.

numerous others who had served for a number of years in junior ranks.¹ This was the greatest evil posed by the system of purchased Commissions.

The ranks of Junior Commissioned Officers were peculiar to the Indian Service and were attainable only by the natives who, consequently, were termed the 'native officers'. There was no direct recruitment for those ranks, and men rose to them only after serving in junior ranks. There had been times when natives had been given 'lucrative commands'² under the designation of Commandants, but in 1785 that rank had been abolished. Subsequently, Subedar was the highest rank obtainable in the army, at least till 1824 when the rank of Subedar Major was introduced. Thus, the army of the East India Company did not have a single Commissioned Officer during the entire period of our study.

There was no training worth the name given to Cavalry Officers in their profession.³ From the beginning of the century to the Mutiny, all commissioned appointments in the regular Cavalry were conferred by the Court of Directors on their relatives and friends without reference to training and qualification, although the service was one that more than any other required special aptitude. Before 1797, officers of Infantry were asked to volunteer for Cavalry units without any

1. Evidence of Sir Robert Soot, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1454.

2. Malleon (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny, London 1888, P.161.

3. Calcutta Review, Vol.XXVI, London 1856, P.581-582.

training. In 1797 Cavalry was made a distinct Corps and no officer of Infantry was subsequently allowed to join, except as Junior Cornet.¹ But even these cornets had no training. So, a Cavalry Officer was appointed without selection, and in the regiment he underwent a very light test in drill and riding.² He then passed an easy examination in a native language and that completed his training. With those qualifications and training these officers commanded a troop or a regiment and finally took command of a brigade or a division. When in the winters the units went on exercise for combined training, the officers picked up some knowledge of regimental movements, but they rarely had the opportunity of seeing several regiments brigaded together except on active service. After this meagre training the cadets of Cavalry were reported qualified to perform the duty of an officer, and they were given the rank of ensign.³

At Woolwich⁴ cadets were imparted instructions in the use of drawing instruments, construction of scales, and geometrical drawing, as indispensable preliminaries to the representation of works of defence, then the remarks on the arms in use were read, and explanations were given as to the effects of different missiles, each of which was shown and made familiar to the students. Instruction was then given in the theory and practice

1. This was a rank in Cavalry, equivalent to that of a Second Lieutenant.
2. Calcutta Review, Vol. XXVI, London 1856, P. 583.
3. Military Letter from Court, dated 20 November 1804, No. 75.
4. Portlock, A.F. Papers for the use of Gentlemen Cadets at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, London 1861, Preface page.

of Field Fortification, with the assistance of a standard book and models, so that a thorough knowledge of the modes of executing all kinds of temporary defences was acquired; notes were taken and drawings were made to serve as guides in the field. Descriptive Geometry was also taught at the same time to facilitate the operations of 'defilade' and the application of works to irregularities. After this the cadets read the papers on Permanent Fortification, its principles were explained to them by means of short lectures, diagrams and models, and sets of lithographed plates were supplied to each cadet. They also drew a number of plates, to impress upon their mind the construction of works both of attack and defence, including the layout of mines, and wrote notes on details of execution etc. under a constant supervision of the instructor; the object in view was to teach the student to reason out in each subject, and to apply the principles of fortification practically, rather than merely to learn the theoretical details of a proposed system.

As at Woolwich, so at Addiscombe in the beginning instruction to cadets was imparted only for Artillery and Engineers. There were generally about 150 cadets under instruction at that seminary, and about sixty annually were despatched to India.¹ The education was imparted in a very effective manner and, on their arrival in India, it was followed up.

The subjects taught at Addiscombe were mathematics, fortifications, ~~the~~ military drawing, surveying, and Civil (or

1. Evidence vide q.640, Minutes of Evidence.

landscape) drawing.¹ All these different studies had a special value attached to them and the rank of a cadet in the class was determined by his proficiency which was judged by the respective value of each study added up to form the total. There were at Addiscombe, as at Woolwich, four terms but five classes.² So, there was one extra class, to which honorary promotion was made, which took place according to the proficiency of the cadet in four terms. The final position of a cadet in a class was ascertained from the instructor's report every month. By the merit list thus made was decided a cadet's seniority.³ The best cadets went to Engineers, the second best to Artillery and the other average to Infantry (i.e. when Infantry training was imparted). The greatest drawback of the system of education of the Military Academy (Addiscombe) was that the future of military officers was judged on academics rather than on performance of military duties. The system of instruction was improved in 1839 ~~in 1839~~ by imparting instruction by sand modelling. Sand models were made on which tactics were discussed. In all Presidencies, Depots of instruction were established at the Artillery Headquarters, where training of young officers was undertaken, before they joined the units.⁴

Like the cadets of Cavalry, the Infantry cadets too did not have any training worth the name. No particular education had been prescribed for them in England, but the officers sent

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.II, London 1844, P.136.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Ibid, P.138.

4. Evidence of Colonel Limond; there was a depot each at Madras and Bombay, Minutes of Evidence.

for this service were very well qualified to enter upon the general duties of military service, both in education and habits of life.¹ In early stages Infantry Officers were sometimes attached to European Corps and, consequently they got some Infantry training. Later on a cadet company was openedⁱⁿ which all Infantry cadets were detained for a considerable time.² Theseⁱⁿ company imparted instruction in military duties and native languages before their appointment to their units. The plan of cadet company did not prove very successful, and this system was replaced by posting cadets temporarily to such corps as were thought likely to prove the best schools for teaching them their duties.

There is very little material available with respect to the training of troops of the East India Company. Perhaps there was much stress on practical training for the lower ranks and theoretical part was considered unimportant. That might account for the lack of materials on training in the ranks.

Foot drill and handling of small arms appear to have been the two main aspects of the soldier's training in the Infantry. Foot drill was the same as with British Regiments, and has undergone very little basic change even till today, and requires little elaboration. In Madras the small arms training, or ball firing as it was then called, was a simple

1. Evidence of Sir J. Malcolm, Minutes of Evidence, C.696.

2. Military Letter from Court, dated 20 June 1804, Para 75.

affair; neither men nor officers were bothered with theoretical instructions or about trajectories or position drill; the recruit was taught to hold his musket straight, to aim at a sand bag tripod, and then to learn priming a blank cartridge and firing with ball from fifty to a hundred and fifty yards.¹ The main aim of all Infantry practice was to teach the men when in line to fire straight to their front, so that their shots might take full effect upon the enemy's ranks at a 100 paces.²

For Artillery training there were schools at the Artillery Headquarters at each Presidency where instruction was imparted to the recruits. According to Major General Sir Archdate Wilson, who had been 39 years with the Bengal Artillery, all Artillery recruits went through their Infantry drill first of all, they then learnt the gun drill, the aim of which was to work the guns with ^{the} greatest accuracy in ^{the} smallest time, and they then went through a laboratory course.³ The recruits became efficient after a year of regimental experience. To achieve the best efficiency on a standard field gun a detachment of five individuals was needed. Two men were taught to ride with the gun and three were disposed with the limber. The gun drill, as ordered in 1801, has been described for a standard field gun, in a letter from the

1. Phythians, 'The Madras Regiment', Wellington 1858, P.285.

2. Ibid, P.286.

3. Evidence of Major General Archdate Wilson, Report of Commissioner , 2.5624.

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court.

Like the Infantry and Artillery, the Cavalry went on exercise in cold season every year for combined training.² From the point of view of a Cavalry man the combined training appears to have been of immense use.

In the Company's early days, there was no standard method employed for the recruitment of soldiers. A man, or a group of men, came forward with the necessary capital for raising, training, arming, and equipping a body of soldiers.³ From 1781 to 1799 the Honourable Company enlisted its own

1. Military Letter from Court, dated 11 February 1801, No.7; Memorandum respecting method of working guns.
"Those with the gun may be called 1st and 2nd Gunner. As soon as the gun halts to prepare for action, all dismount except one who is to take care of horses. The 1st and 2nd unlimber the 3rd unlocks the ammunition and the 4th assists the 1st and 2nd to draw the gun to the place of action. The tumbrill will draw to a convenient distance in the rear. The first and second place themselves to the right and left in the rear; the left in line and then load as follows:

The 4th having received a round of 3rd opening the mouth of the cartridge places it in the muzzle of the gun takes away his hand and turns up the gun on its trunnions as perpendicular as it will go, when the gun is up, he takes out the cartridge drops in a shot or canister a deflected /by 1st/ turns down the gun and steps on one side. The first gunner opens pan, inserts a fuze primer with a little loose powder, elevates or depresses the gun directing the 2nd to trail right or left as the case may require. When the gun is layed right for the object the 1st locks, directs all to stand clear, steps on one side and by means of a string to the lock discharges the piece, as soon as fired the 4th having received a fresh round of ammunition inserts his cartridge while the 1st half-cocks then as before."
2. Military Letter from Court, dated 20 November 1804, No.75.
3. Fortescue, 'The British Army', London 1905, p.3.

European troops and were authorised to keep in depot in England 2000 men in war time and half that number in peace.¹ Before 1781, the Company had enlisted its men anywhere it could. The European element of the army was composed of Europeans of almost every nationality. After 1799, the system of recruitment of Europeans for Indian Service was better organised. A request was made by the Court of Directors to His Majesty for permission to recruit the Company's European army in the same manner and with the same privileges as was done for the British army. The request was granted and the system of recruiting stations and depots came into being in 1799.² The recruitment was undertaken at four recruiting stations: London, Liverpool, Dublin and Cork, from each of which the recruiting officer was allowed to send ten men per mensem to the Company's Depot.³ The Company's Depot was located at Chatham; and the Company's European regiments were kept complete by receiving a certain number of recruits from them annually.⁴ Sometimes volunteers from His Majesty's regiments on retirement list were received for the Company's service.

Before 1858, the Company had the power of raising only 12,200 European Troops to be kept in India, and 2000 at home

1. Goodneugh, 'British Empire,' London 1893, P.31.

2. PP Vol.40, P.283, Commons 20 of 1863.

3. United Services Journal 1832, Part II, London 1832, P.251.

4. Evidence of Major General T. Pritzen, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1230.

in depot. In the year 1853, it was determined to add to the establishment three regiments of Infantry of the aggregate strength of 2,2772 and as this addition was in excess to the stipulated number standard, it became necessary for a revision of the law. It was proposed to raise the maximum to 20,000 in India, and 4,000 at the Depot, thus allowing a margin in the future for additions when required. The Parliament gave it approval and the strength was increased to 20,000 in India, and 4,000 at home.¹

European recruits were sent between the age of 20 and 30.² They were engaged to serve for ten years after their arrival in India, and at the expiration of that period, they were at liberty to return to England at the Company's expense, unless they chose to re-enlist in the Company's service for a further term of five years.³

From the year 1842 to 1845, the Company raised recruits at five stations, Edinburgh having been added to the previous four.⁴ London district supplied the largest portion of recruits, that is 52 %. In 1846, two new stations, Bristol and Nowry, were established. During the years 1842 to 1857 the men enlisted were subject to the provisions of the Mutiny Acts for the Crown's Forces whilst they remained in India.⁵ The

1. Evidence of Major General Sir Robert, J. Hussey, Report of Commissioners: Q.3258-3261.
2. Evidence of Colonel Hay, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1656.
3. Military Letter from Court, dated 23 October 1805, Para 5.
4. PP Vol.42, P.101; Commons 201 of 1852.
5. Loc Cit.

Court appointed their own officers and Sergeants to enlist the men. To enable ^{the} officers of the Company to conduct recruitment in England, they held Commissions from the Queen, and the Sergeants were enlisted to assist those officers. The whole recruitment was carried on under the provisions of Annual Mutiny Act, and Articles of War, and under the orders of the authorities of the Horse Guards. The rules were laid down for the guidance of recruiting parties, being applicable to Her Majesty's and the Company's Officers, Unless the Company's service was specially excepted.

For the recruitment of natives, parties were sent out to recruit in districts with the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief.¹ Native Officers and men had instructions when proceeding on furlough to bring with them recruits for enlistment in the Company's service. The recruiting parties for enlistment consisted of European or Native Officers, chiefly the latter, detached from the Headquarters of a Regiment or from Recruiting Depots in India. The Officer-in-Charge of a recruiting party, on arrival at a particular district, generally broke his detachment into smaller parties, or sent out intelligent men singly into different villeges. Candidates were presented before the recruiting party, and were examined by a Medical Officer; and if they passed the tests he entered their names in a role showing the recruit's age, height, chest measurement, caste, colour,

1. The procedure for Recruitment has been summarised from Replies.

particular appearance, marks, scars etc., native country and village. Men pronounced fit were considered enlisted from the dates of examination, and these rolls were forwarded monthly to the Regiment by the recruiting officer. At times when medical officer was not available at a station, the candidates were examined at the nearest station where a medical officer was found.

If the recruiting party was under a European Officer, his selection of recruits was final, but if the party was not under a European Officer, the recruits were taken to the nearest Commanding or Staff Officer for approval, and were considered as enlisted from the date they were provisionally entertained.

In Bengal, Native officers were required by the regulations to take each recruit after enlistment to the tehsildar in whose jurisdiction the village of the recruit was situated, so that the tehsildar could inquire and verify that his name, caste, parentage and residence had been accurately stated. Lists with the tehsildar's signature were shown to the district officer and handed to the recruiting officer for delivery to the Commanding Officer of his regiment. In Bombay, recruits registry was filled up from his own description. He was then taken before the patel of his village, who verified the registry. The patels of village were bound to keep a register of all men who enlisted from their village. Sometimes when men were brought by native officers after they returned from ^{leave} to a regimental Headquarters for enlistment, no particular precautions were taken to verify, beyond ascertaining their physical fitness for service.

During the wars of 1803 and 1804, and subsequently during operations till 1806, a depot was maintained for the purpose of keeping the regiments in the field always complete, with well trained and efficient soldiers.¹ In regard to the number the object was effected, but as regards class composition the system, as we shall see later, was an utter failure and was abandoned after the war.

An important feature of early recruitment was the emergency recruitment of Irregular forces. They served temporary purposes, were cheaper, and were easy to disband after an operation was over. Lord Lake had raised certain Irregular units for service in the First Maratha War, which were disbanded by Lord Cornwallis. During the same period immediate measures were adopted for obtaining troops for the performance of the general duties of Bengal Presidency. This object could be attained at less expense by increasing the Corps of Calcutta Native Militia rather than the Regular Corps; orders were therefore given for increasing the corps of Calcutta Militia from twelve to sixteen Companies.² Similarly Skinner's Horse was re-raised, after having been disbanded for sometime, and served very well at the siege of Bharatpur. The Rohilla Corps and Scinde Horse of Colonel Jacob are some other examples of the same type. In fact, Irregular Corps was an accepted part of the army system, and for a long time, the British had no regular cavalry at all.

1. Foreign Secret Consultations No.24 of 14 August 1839.

2. Military Letter to Court, dated 14 August 1803, No.116.

AS a rule Bengal always recruited men from within Bengal whereas in Madras and Bombay, recruitment outside the Presidency limits was not uncommon. From early times a considerable difficulty had been experienced in procuring recruits in Madras, and desertions were frequent, which induced the Madras government, with the sanction of the Court, to increase the pay of the native troops in Madras.¹ No amount of inducements and concessions could easily solve the recruitment problem in Madras. It therefore became a normal method of recruitment by a small party of native commissioned and non-commissioned officers to accompany a recruiting officer, for recruitment outside the Presidency.² Great encouragement was given to the natives of Bengal provinces to enlist in the army of the Presidency of the Fort St. George.³ In Bombay, the recruitment problem was similar to Madras, though not as acute. In that Presidency, during the war of 1817-18, there was a difficulty experienced in obtaining sufficient number of recruits from within the Presidency, and many were enlisted from Bengal.⁴

Extra inducements given in Madras and Bombay created problems for Bengal. The Bengal government was obliged to represent that the additional inducement lured men to the armies of the other two Presidencies and this created problems of recruitment in Bengal itself. It was on this representation

1. Evidence of Colonel Munro, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1034.
2. Military Proceedings, Fort St. George Madras dated 26 June 1800.
3. Military Letter to Court, dated 30 September 1802, Para 8.
4. Evidence of Colonel Aitchison, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1705-12.

that in 1821 the Court of Directors appreciated that the troops of the three Presidential^{cy}~~ial~~ establishments should be kept as distinct as possible, and that recruitment for each Presidency should be, as far as practicable, confined to the respective territory of each Presidency.¹ The Court of Directors also remarked that the system of recruitment which brought different Presidencies in contact with one another was unnecessary and inexpedient.² The Court of Directors in 1823 ordered that the cantonments of several Presidencies should be kept as distinct as possible, and the system of recruiting the Madras army in Bengal provinces was to be altogether discontinued.³ The order applied to Bombay also.

In spite of the Court's very strict orders of 1821 and 1823, the Bombay Presidency, and to some extent Madras, had to depend for their recruitment on Bengal. Lord William Bentinck in 1835 appointed a Committee to enquire how the orders of 1821 and 1823 restricting the recruitment of each of the three armies to the limits of its own Presidency, had operated.⁴ The Bombay Government reported that the Court's orders had been totally inoperative, because, though no recruiting parties had been sent to Bengal, the Bengal men voluntarily presented themselves for enlistment and they had been engaged for ever. Based on the report, recruitment outside the respective Presidency was officially stopped, but as an emergency measure, permission was

1. PP Vol.62, P.272, Commons C1698 of 1877.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Military Letter from Court, dated 25 November 1823.

4. PP Vol.43, P.123, Commons 129 of 1858.

given to Bombay and Madras to recruit outside ^{their} ~~its~~ Presidency limits.

All recruits in Madras on enlistment were required to take an oath, swear or affirm in the name of Almighty God, to serve the government with truth and loyalty, to obey orders of all officers and never to abandon the colours but to defend them with their life.¹ In Bombay, in addition to the terms of Madras, they swore that in case they failed in any part of their duty as such, they would submit to the penalties described in the Articles of War.² In Bengal a similar oath was taken. In the Punjab and Hyderabad contingents, the oath contained an additional clause which did not occur in any other Presidency; the soldiers swore to march to wheresoever ordered.

By the regulations of 1796, no sepoy in Bengal was to be entertained who was not 5 feet 6 inches, who was under 16 or above 30 years of age unless, in the latter case, he had served before.³ In Madras the standard was lower, that is 5 feet 4 inches; it was raised to 5 feet 6 inches in 1829 for Horse Artillery and Cavalry, and to 5 feet 6 inches for Infantry. Before 1829, the standard of all branches was 5 feet 4 inches. In Bombay, the lowest standard for Cavalry was 5 feet 6 inches, age 24 years; for Infantry 5 feet 3 inches, and age not exceeding 22 years.³

1. Reply of Lord Harris, Governor of Bombay, Replies.

2. Reply of Lord Elphinstone, Replies.

3. PP Vol.52, P.459, Commons 500 of 1867.

It is quite evident that Bengal troops were more robust and more powerful than a native soldier from Madras or Bombay. A Hindustani (as a soldier from Bengal was styled) sought service in the armies of Madras and Bombay and in the contingent forces, and was very soldier-like. That a Hindustani soldier was physically better than any other Presidency soldier will be clear from the following table which gives the average heights and weights:

	Average Height		Average Weight
	(feet)	(inch)	stones
1. Bengal Infantry	5	7.82	8, 08
2. Madras Infantry			
Madrassesees Recruited	5	6.34	8, 1.10
Hindoostanees Recruited	5	6.59	8, 5.28
3. Bombay Infantry			
Konkanees	5	5.5	8, 9.25
Deccanees Recruited	5	5.5	8, 9.25
Hindoostanees Recruited	5	6.5	9, 0.5

The physical standards of recruits laid down for the European Regiments in the Company's service, were higher than those laid down for the natives; but they were lower than those laid down for the troops of the Crown. In England, no one, in ~~no~~ ^{any} corps, below the height of 5 feet 8 inches was recruited,¹ whereas that standard was maintained in the Company's Artillery alone; the Infantry standard was fixed at 5 feet 6 inches.² During emergencies, the fixed standards were not followed very

1. The United Services Journal, London 1829, P.119.

2. PP Vol.42, Page 101, Commons 201 of 1858.

rigidly. For instance, the standard age for the Company's European service was from 20 to 25 years; on any demand in case of emergencies caused due to war, the standard height was reduced, and men were accepted upto 30 years of age.

The Company's European troops were physically more robust than the native troops; but the latter had more endurance and stamina than the former. A European was considered fit for service in India for about 12 or 15 years, and a native for 20 to 25 years.¹ In some situations, the native troops were better calculated for employment than European troops; in others, Europeans proved better than the natives.² The European Artillery was far superior to the Golundauze, owing to better energy and intrepidity resulting from better physical standard.³ On the other hand, in the Cavalry, the native troops were in an excellent state of efficiency and were as good as the Europeans.⁴

The officer class was all European, ~~to the~~ Junior Commissioned Officers were appointed ^{to the} native regiments; they had a status ~~in~~ between that of the British Sergeant Major and of the Commissioned Officer. In the rank structure of Europeans, there were no Junior Commissioned Officers; there was instead

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1. Evidence of Sir Robert Scot vide Minutes of Evidence, p.1422-23.
 2. Loc Cit.
 3. Evidence of Colonel Salmond vide Minutes of Evidence, p.1273, 1301, 1302, 1303.
 4. Evidence of Colonel Munro vide Minutes of Evidence, p.1998 & 1999.

a larger number of Non-Commissioned Officers who carried out the same duties as the Junior Commissioned Officers.

Opinions differed on the usefulness of the Junior Commissioned rank. In the opinion of Sir P. Grant,¹ it was a great mistake to institute the Native Junior Commissioned Officer. Lieutenant General Sir M. Cubbon, described the grade in itself as a most useful one, both for the discipline and the interior economy of regiments. He was also of the view that the native officer was a great aid to the European Officers of the Company as a channel of communication with his men.² Major General Birch was of the opinion that native officers were found to be extremely useful when the European officers started taking interest in their corps.³ Brigadier General John Jacob was of the opinion that the organisation of Native Commissioned Officers greatly weakened the moral power of the English officers; but he did believe that the Native Officers, under a proper organisation, could be the very nerve of the whole body, of which sepoy formed the bones and muscles, and European gentlemen the brains.⁴ Whatever the opinions, the rank structure was allowed to remain even after the Mutiny, and exists even today. This may be a sufficient proof of the usefulness of the native officers in those days.

1. Reply of P. Grant Commander-in-Chief Madras Army vide Replies.
2. Reply of Major General Cubbon, Commissioner of Mysore, Madras Army, Replies.
3. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government, Military Department Bengal Army, Replies.
4. Statement of Commander, Scinde Irregular Horse, Bombay Army, Replies.

Generally speaking, there were separate regiments of natives and Europeans. Only rarely were the regiments composed partly of natives and partly of Europeans. In 1809-10, the Commander-in-Chief gave the order to assemble eight regiments composed of Europeans and natives under Major Mensell.¹ A mixture of natives and Europeans was, however, very common in the Artillery; they were entirely mixed up even in a single battery.² His Majesty's troops employed in India were composed solely of Europeans, and differed in no respect from the British army, of which they were detachments, and they were never mixed with the natives.³

European and Native regiments were, on the whole, like water tight compartments; but they were very often employed together on various duties both in war and peace. A mixed force of natives and Europeans combined (in full units) was most efficient. In campaigns, employed in the ratio of one European to three native fighting men made an excellent force. The experience of General Lark in the Maratha War of 1803 suggested that for every single European battalion, four native battalions combined with it would be the most efficient force.⁴ Sir Charles Napier was of the opinion that a force mixed in such proportions, and led by European Officers, was superior in

1. Evidence of Lieutenant General Pullock, Report of Commissioners, p.164.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Malcolm, Major General 'Political History of India, 1784 to 1828, Vol.II, London MDCCCXXVI, p.201.

4. Haugh, 'Political and Military Events in British India, Vol.1 London 1853, p.243.

Asia to an equal number of any European troops, except the French and the English.¹ He was convinced that any General with that proportion in pitched battle, all other things being equal, could beat an equal number of Austrians, Prussians or Spaniards.

The proportion, however, varied in different arms. In the Artillery, the re advantage was a greater in having larger proportion of Europeans, because there the British wished to maintained their superiority over the native force. During the emergencies, however, the proportion of the natives generally increased. In the Cavalry the advantage of employing Europeans was the minimum, and a very small proportion of Europeans sufficed. Another important reason for a smaller proportion of Europeans in the Cavalry was that the European Dragoons could never dispense with grass-cutters and other followers who were necessarily on foot, and thus Europeans as cavalrymen lost much of their superior celerity and independence. It was deemed advisable to employ the equally efficient but the less costly natives in the Cavalry.²

The Native Infantry too was more useful than European Infantry. This had been discovered in the Mysore War of 1790-92 when two companies of Royal Infantry, were directed from Europe, and joined the army in Mysore, under Lord Cornwallis, but on reaching Seringapatam they were reduced by sickness and death,

1. Letter of HBE Frere Commission of Scinde, Inquiry. or Report

2. Loc Cit.

to be almost unfit for that war.¹ Henceforth Europeans were never kept to the required proportion in the Infantry.

Another factor in deciding the composition of troops in respect of the proportion of Europeans to natives was the British apprehension from the natives. Sir Thomas Munro in 1823 remarked that 'a large proportion of European troops is necessary for our security'.² Sir William Bentinck recorded his view in one of his most notable minutes, dated 13 March, 1835; "in the native army alone rests our internal danger and this danger may involve our complete subversion. But the fidelity of our native army, though wonderfully great, and deserving of high confidence, cannot be considered exempt from the possibility of seduction, and that an adequate European force is the sole security against this, the greatest evil that could befall us."³ It was believed by others that the British had nothing to fear so long as they felt concerned about the welfare of Indians, preserved their social and religious institutions, and did not interfere with their laws of inheritance and adoption, which were part and parcel of their religion.⁴ But this was easier said than done. In the army it is not always possible to cater to religious needs, specially during the operations. For example, the Indians were for religious

1. Evidence of Major General Worsley, Minutes of Evidence Annex B, No.15.

2. PP Vol.52, P.459. Commons 500 of 1867.

3. Minute by Governor General Lord W.C. Bentinck vide PP Vol.52, P.459, Commons 500 of 1867.

There is no doubt that whatever danger threatened India, the greatest was their own native troops (Calcutta Review, Vol.II London 1844, P.52).

4. Haugh, Political and Military Events in British India, Vol.1, London 1853, Introductory page.

sentiments reluctant to go overseas, but service required their appearance in overseas expeditions. Such occasions gave rise to disaffection among the native troops.¹ Therefore keeping the European and native soldiers and officers in right proportion was a real problem and not an imaginary one. To obviate the internal danger, Europeans employed with natives in a certain proportion could serve the purpose, and within each of the Presidency armies, the British wished to ensure that the class composition was of such diverse races that conspiracy was not easily possible.

To obtain the fidelity of native troops it was necessary to recruit men from a variety of tribes and nations.² The Calcutta Review once remarked about the composition of the Bengal Army: "Our sepoy's come too much from the same part of the country, Oude, the lower Doonab and Upper Behar. There is too much of clanship among them, and the evil should be remedied."³ The remedy suggested of course was recruitment from various other places, so that the sense of clanship amongst the new diminished. Charles Metcalfe once remarked that the Native Infantry was composed too much of men of one class, actuated by one common feeling, and that it was expedient to have a variety, in order that one description, in case of necessity, may be used to maintain order in another.⁴ An examination of the class

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.II, London 1844, P.52.

2. An officer of F.I.C. 'Historical sketch of the Princes of India', London 1832, P.21.

3. Calcutta Review, Vol.II, London 1844, P.51.

4. Keye, J.W. The Life and Correspondence of Charles Lord Metcalfe, London 1858, P.129.

composition of ~~various~~^{the} armies of the Presidencies, would show how wide a variety of people ~~was~~^{were} recruited. In Bengal where recruitment was restricted to a particular class or classes of people, the object was not well achieved. The great disaffection in 1857 in the Bengal Army may partly be attributed to this situation.

Before 1796, the Madras Army was composed only of Pajouts, Musalmans and the three Telugu castes—the Kamma Veru, the Razu and the Velama Veru. The weavers and cultivators, who were seldom found to make staunch sepoy, were excluded from the ranks of the Madras Army.¹ Subsequently, it was proposed by the Madras Council that each sepoy battalion should be formed of men of the same caste and religion—either Musalmans, Malabars or Gantur; but the proposal fell through. If the proposal had been accepted, the army would have become an organisation of several small clans, and a ground for disaffection. Thus the composition of the various Madras Sepoy battalions depended entirely upon the accidental caste of the recruits who presented themselves for enlistment in the various regiments. By a general order ~~of~~ the Commander-in-Chief in 1839, it was laid down that all natives were eligible for enlistment without reference to caste, provided in all other respects they were perfectly fit for service. Later, when recruitment was restricted to Tamils, Telugus, Musalmans and men of lower castes, they were not sent to a particular regiments but were divided equally in all the regiments.² In the Madras Army it was not easy to find any

1. Dodwell. W. 'Sepoy Recruitment in Old Madras Army, Calcutta 1922, P.14.

2. Ibid, P.15-16.

very considerable number of men belonging to a single clan or caste in any of its regiments.¹ The men composing the Madras Army were perfectly distinct in their habits and feelings.

Indeed, the Madras Army was composed of diverse races: a few Rajputs families which had settled long ago in the south of India, a few Bengalis or men from Oude and the North West Provinces, Gantas, or those who used Telugu language and Malabars, or those who used the Tamil language. The Hindus altogether formed about two-thirds of the army, the remaining one-third being Musalmans. The recruits were taken from far off districts. The Gantas, or those who spoke Telugu, came from the Northern Circars. The Malabars came from the Southern Districts; Chingliput, North and South Arcot, Trichnopoly, Salem, Madura, Tanjore and Tinnevelly, comprising those portions of the country which were at times called the southern Polingars. The Muhammadans were also drawn from all parts. No race, tribe or caste had been excluded from enlistment by regulation. The object was to maintain a due proportion so that no one caste could predominate over another.² An order was published sometime before the Mutiny fixing a caste proportion, which included all castes in the existing constitution of the Madras Army.

The Bombay Army like the Madras Army was also composed of a variety of races. The Hindustani were 38.75%; Koneances, 47.6 %; Deccanese, 9.5%; Madrasis, 1.71 %; Malabar, 0.82 %; Panjabis, 0.45 %;

1. Parliamentary Paper 1847, P.191 (A compiled and bound volume at Asiatic Studies Library, Townhall- Bombay).
2. Reply of Honourable Lord Harris, Governor of Bombay vide Replies.

and Sindhis, 0.01 %.¹ The Irregular Corps also had a variety of races included in them; the Deccani, 27.3 %; Hindustani, 24.4%; Madrasis, 5.8%; Concanis, 10%; Gujratis, 8.8%; Kutchis, 3.9%; and Bhils, 0.9%. The Bombay Native Infantry was composed of men with heterogeneous religious beliefs. No particular race or tribe or caste was excluded from enlistment in the Bombay Native Infantry either by regulation or ⁱⁿ practice, with the exception of hangmen, sweepers and scavengers.² The traditional policy of the authorities of the Bombay Army to avoid having a large majority of men of one particular race or caste in a particular regiment was never lost sight of and in spite of some discretionary powers given to Commanding Officers to recruit for their regiments from the races they wanted, the policy was not completely set aside or even ignored. This was not true of the Cavalry and Artillery, but their number was too small to be dangerous.

The Bengal Army, unlike the Madras and Bombay Armies, was always difficult to handle because of the high caste men, Brahmans and Rajputs.³ On the Bengal establishment, low caste men were completely excluded from the army, because they were employed only on menial jobs and were not allowed to mix with the high caste Hindus.⁴ The sepoys who fought for Clive were

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1. Minute by Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, Enquiry on Peers
 2. Chattopadhyaya Haraprasad, 'The Sepoy Mutiny', Calcutta 1957, p.82.
 3. Roberts, History of British India, 2nd Edn, Oxford 1938, p.365.
 4. Gupta, The Days of John Company, Vol.6, Calcutta 1958, p.139 Selection from Calcutta Gazettes.

chiefly low caste. The Bengal Army did not become Brahmanised by any order of the government, but simply through the recruiting officers, over a series of years, confining their choice to the largest, handsomest, and cleanest looking men, who were undoubtedly of high caste.¹ Gradually they came to predominate, and to exercise their influence to keep away all low caste people; and finally, the custom became a rule.

Lord William Bentinck observed this defect in the Bengal Army and ordered that the recruitment was open to all men belonging to respectable classes.² But the order did not open recruitment to low classes; it only increased the field of recruitment to respectable or high classes and middle classes. Special care continued to be taken to reject all men of the inferior castes, such as Bengalis, Kbhets, Nais, Tailis, Thomolis, Gurreres, Iadhas, Bhaioahs, Kahans, Moorarces, Kanders, Melis, Kachi and any other employed in menial occupations.

Sir Charles Napier was the first to strongly object to confining the recruitment to high classes in Bengal. He wrote to the Duke of Wellington on 15 June, 1850; 'the last and most important thing which I reckon injurious to the Indian Army is the immense influence given to caste, instead of being discouraged, it has been encouraged in the Bengal Army. In the Bombay Army it is discouraged, and that army is in better order than the Bengal Army. In this latter (Bengal Army) the Brahmins have been leaders in every mutiny, in the last mutiny about pay, and which

1. Reply of Major General Grant, Cude Force, vide Replies.

2. PP Vol.43, P.123, Commons 129 of 1852.

I may say, was general throughout the Bengal Army, though it appeared in six regiments only, all appeared to be governed by Brahmins.¹ The spirit of exclusiveness in favour of high castes which operated to the full on officers and sepoy alike, created an atmosphere which is always the forerunner of mutinies in all armies. "A subserviency of officers generally to the feeling of high caste, which gave them handsome and intelligent men, was appreciated in all its strength by the sepoy, played with the fears of their Brahminized Colonels, and instead, in many instances, on the observance of certain customs even in the presence of an enemy, to which they were perfectly indifferent under really intelligent and energetic command".² Thus was the germ of resistance to authority and discipline fostered, and Commanding Officers openly admitted the presence of a power superior to discipline. It was the germ which finally became the cause of the Mutiny.

1. PP (microfilm) Vol. 9, Page 103, Commons 247 of 1857.

2. Minute by Major General Mansfield vide Replies.

SYSTEM OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the principal factor that ensures a distinctive and unquestioned leadership, and implicit subordination, which facilitates the tasks that an army is expected to perform. Mainly on account of discipline, acts or omissions which in civil life do not constitute an offence, in the army do. A Military Code therefore is always severer than a Civil Code, and applies to all soldiers in addition to the Civil Code. That is so because a soldier does not cease to be a citizen.

In the army of the East India Company its code emanated from tradition and customs of war. The rules that operate in actual state of war are called customs of war, and cannot be defined for they vary in their application with the circumstances.¹ Tradition acts as rules in times when there is no war. Kicking and abusing one's wife in those days was considered a military crime.² Contracting venereal diseases, excessive gambling, going under debt, dwelling, drunkenness and numerous other acts, which even though personal, constituted military offence. The Military Court of request, a special Court, tried army officers in most cases of personal nature. Soldiers were required to respect the sacredness of the places of worship of all religions and a disrespect thereof was a military offence.³

1. Cornduff, C.W.F. Military and Cantonment Law in India, Calcutta, 1904, P.LXXXV.

2. Carey, 'Honourable John Company', Calcutta 1906, P.251.

3. Letter from Principal Chaplain to the Forces relative to the performance of Ecclesiastical duties vide Military Letter from Court dated 17 October 1833.

Absence from daily prayers too was an offence. In the early days of the Company, there were no codes to define offence and a great latitude was given to the Commanding Officers, who relied on their own judgment with regard to offence and made laws according to circumstances.¹

Offences of military nature were ^{for} first time classified vide "Rules for Mutiny and Desertion" in ^{the} 25th Year of the reign of King George II (1752) and these were revised from time to time. During the Company's rules they were enlarged and revised on 27 May, 1823, and the following were considered offenders.²

"... any person who shall begin, excite, cause or join in any mutiny or sedition, in the land forces, ... or shall not use his utmost endeavour to suppress the same, or coming to the knowledge of any mutiny or intended mutiny, shall not without delay give information to his Commanding Officer, or shall misbehave himself before the enemy; or shall shamefully abandon or deliver up any garrison, fortress, post or guard, committed to his charge, or which he shall be commanded to defend or shall compel the Governor or Commanding Officer of any garrison, fortress or fort to deliver upto the enemy, or to abandon the same, or shall speak or use any other means to induce such Governor or Commanding Officers or others to others to misbehave before the enemy, or shamefully to abandon or deliver up any garrison, fortress, post or guard committed to the respective charge, of which he or they may be commanded to defend or shall leave his

1. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government Bengal Army vide Replies connected with Reorganisation of the Armies of India.

2. PP(microfilm) Vol.1, P.309, Commons 392 of 1832.

post before relieved, or shall be found sleeping on his post, or shall hold correspondence with or give advice or intelligence to any rebel or enemy of His Majesty, or the said Company, either by letters, messages, signs or tokens in any manner or way whatever, or shall treat or enter upon any terms with such rebel or enemy, without the licence of the said United Company ... at any of the Presidencies, or without the licence of the Governor or Chief Commander, or shall strike or use violence against his superior officer, being in the execution of his office, or shall disobey any lawful command of his superior officer, or shall desert the said Company's service, all and every person or persons so offended in any of the matters ..."

Soldiers who mutinied, or deserted the Company's service, or were guilty of crimes and offences to the prejudice of good order and military discipline, were brought to exemplary and speedy punishments.¹ For these severe offences, General or other Officer Commanding of forces in India, and also Commanders-in-Chief of respective Presidencies, were authorised to convene court martials, and this power was allowed to be delegated to Majors and above by the authorities concerned.

Among some of the miscellaneous offences were mustering on giving false certificates, false or untrue mustering of men and horse and mustering by wrong names.² Paymasters, Officers Commissariat Department, who were required to deal with finances, provisions, forage or storage who if misappropriated them, were

1. PP(microfilm) Vol.5, P.265, Lords 202 of 1857; Also PP(microfilm) Vol.6, P.1, Lords 186 of 1849.

2. PP(microfilm) Vol.1, P.309, Commons 392 of 1823.

considered big offenders and were punishable by General Court Martial.¹ For similar offences, officers were dealt more severely than non-commissioned officers and soldiers.

Discipline of a Corps mainly depended upon the influence of Commanding Officer and the officers of the Companies.² The Commanding Officers were assisted by adjutants, through whose medium they enforced orders, and among native troops a great assistance was provided by native officers in that respect. So long as the Commanding Officer and the Company Officers had direct influence on troops, the discipline was good, but as soon as this personal influence was lost, the discipline was impaired.

We can study the Company's Army discipline under two phases; the first from 1796 to 1824 when the influence of Commanding Officer and Company Officers was paramount; and the second from 1825 to the Mutiny when fresh rules and regulations had reduced a Commanding Officer, the main channel of discipline, to impotence.

The Commanding Officer in the earlier phase was the law and he could do anything according to his judgment. He could make new laws or break them according to the circumstances. Many of the offences could be punished by him and only the offences of a serious nature had to be sent for court martial.

1. Loc Cit.

2. Reply of Lord Clyde, Sir Somerset and Sir P. Grant Commanders-in-Chief of Bengal, Bombay and Madras Armies respectively, vide Replies.

In the court martial itself, when the Commanding Officer used to preside, he had a good deal of power.¹ However no sentence of a court martial in which the Commanding officer of a regiment presided, could be executed till the garrison Commander or the Governor had confirmed it; in actual practice this confirmation was seldom withheld.² But in the year 1818, forms of procedure were rendered more exact and general officers commanding divisions were authorised to set aside the sentence of a court martial confirmed by ^{the} Garrison Commander. This surely was a measure which indirectly weakened the Commanding Officer's powers.

By an order of 1824, the powers of Commanding Officer in the Artillery of Bombay were greatly reduced. By a warrant of His Majesty, King George the Second, dated 22nd April, 1736, the Commanding Officers had been authorised to appoint Subalterns as they wanted but after the orders of 1824 all subalterns were included in the general list for promotion. This took away from the Commanding Officer the power to appoint officers as he pleased.³

Upto 1828, before there were regulations compiled for the guidance of officers, the Commanding Officer often exercised such powers as dismissing native soldiers and reducing Non-Commissioned Officers, awarding Corporal punishments,

1. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government, Bengal Army, vide Replies.

There was hardly any restriction on the punitive powers of Commanding Officers for the only rule in that respect in 1796 provided that 'every Non-Commissioned Officer and soldier shall retire to his quarters or tent at beating of retreat, in default of which, he shall be punished according to the nature of offence'.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Evidence of Major General J.G. Griffith vide Q.3425, Report of Commissioners.

awarding extra drill and duty, refusing furloughs for offences committed by their men.¹ These powers were considerably curtailed.

The year 1824 brought a great change in the organisation of the Company's army. Every regiment of two battalions became two separate regiments and the officers with original corps were appointed alternately to its two parts. By the new arrangements, a large number of Company Officers were detached from their men with whom they had served for years.² The bad effects of the new arrangements were revealed by the mutiny at Barrackpore, for the officers who were responsible for discipline were not with their men. In the particular corps in which the mutiny occurred, there was only one officer present who had been sometime with his Company, and it was only that officer's Company ^{which} ~~who~~ refused to join the mutineers.

With the new organisation of 1824, there started in the Company's Army a new phase. The officers responsible for discipline were taken away from their corps; and their powers were curtailed. On 1st September, 1828, standing orders for the Bengal Native Infantry were compiled by orders of Lord Cambermere, the Commander-in-Chief, which took away such powers from Commanding Officers as dismissing native officers and reducing Non-Commissioned Officers, and limited their powers to discharge the sepoys who, from bodily defects sickness or accident, might become incapable of performing the duties

1. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government, Bengal Army, vide Replies.
2. Malleon (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny, Vol.1, London 1888, P.193.

of soldiers, and who were not entitled to the benefits of invalid pensions. Such recruits who from awkwardness at the drill were unlikely to become smart soldiers, were also liable to dismissal by Commanding Officers. But in all other cases of unfitness for service, the Commanding Officers had to apply to the Commander-in-Chief for discharging the sepoys.¹ This implied that the Commanding Officers could not dismiss men as a punishment for some offences committed.

The Governor General, Lord William Bentinck, ordered on 25 February, 1835, against the use of 'ratten' in the sepoy army, as he considered a sepoy's character unsuited to corporal punishment.² This gave a rude shock to the powers granted to the Commanding Officers in November, 1832, by Sir Edward Barnes, the Commander-in-Chief, of carrying into effect all sentences, including corporal punishments without referring them to the General-Commanding the division previous to execution.³ Another order of the government, dated 30th August, 1845, limited the infliction of corporal punishments ^{to} ~~for~~ mutiny, insubordination, violence or using or offering violence to superiors, drunkenness on duty. By another circular, of 1846, the maximum number of lashes awardable by any court martial was restricted to 50, regardless of seriousness of the offence.⁴

The Articles of War of 1845 sanctified² a practice by which no Commanding Officer, except by a sentence of a court

1. Reply of Major General Birch, Secretary to Government, Bengal Army, vide Replies.
2. PP Vol.40, P.449, Paper 319 of 1836.
3. Evidence of Major General Birch, vide Report of Commissioners.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 25 February 1849, No.1.

martial, could discharge as punishment a Non-Commissioned Officer or a soldier.¹ The Articles of 1847 enacted further that "no Non-Commissioned Officer shall be reduced to the ranks by the sentence of a Court Martial, or by order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Presidency to which the offender shall belong".² The revised Code of regulation, published in 1855, took away from the Commanding Officer even the power to discharge men physically unfit for service, which the regulation of 1824 had granted. All cases even of physical disability subsequently were required to be referred to the Commander-in-Chief for orders.³

Thus, a Commanding Officer was made ineffective between the years 1824 and 1857. The state of things had so deteriorated that the Commanding Officers did not really 'command' their regiments, because they had no power to punish. A senior officer of the Company's army once narrated his experience as a Commanding Officer: "if a Commanding Officer were to say to a sepoy, 'you have committed a fault, you will go for drill for seven days', the man would have power to turn round and say, 'I do not go to drill for seven days. I will be brought to a Court Martial', the Commanding Officer has not the power to prevent it, I say with system like this it is impossible to command a regiment."⁴ The only way a man could be punished was by a Court Martial and even in that case the Commanding Officer,

1. Reply of Major General Birch vide Replies.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Loc Cit.

4. Minute by Major General Mansfield vide Inquiry.

if a Presiding Officer, could use very little discretion as he was bound by numerous formalities. Many a times, on account of defects in the forms of procedure, individuals could avoid sentences recommended by Court Martials. General Pullock ordered a Court Martial against one individual for 17 charges of serious nature, but owing to some informality in proceedings the confirming authority at the division pardoned him. The General then on his own authority discharged the individual, but the individual again came into army service after making a petition to the Adjutant General's office. Defects of Court Martial procedure coupled with the right to make a petition direct to the highest military authority, by passing all military channels, contributed to further weakening of a Commanding Officer's powers.¹ It was also by regulations that returns were required to be filled up by inspecting officers on inspection of Corps and the inspecting officer was supposed to ask the troops whether they had any complaint to make; this concession was abused by soldiers.² By way of direct petition and inspection report of Corps, the lowest ranks had an access to the highest military authority, and though the grant of these privileges was excellent in intention, they led to ^{the}weakening of the authority of the Commanding Officers.

Incompetence of the Commanding Officers themselves had often been considered to be the reason for reduction of their power, which resulted in withdrawal of authority from the

1. Loc Cit.

2. Evidence of Lieutenant Colonel Wyllie vide Report of Commissioners, Q.600.

Commanding Officers.¹ By rules the men who succeeded to Lieutenant Colonelcy, were placed in Command of Corps, unless something very serious prevented it. An officer, even if incompetent, was thus placed in responsible position; therefore his authority was curtailed. The Commander-in-Chief Fane wrote to C.T. Metcalfe in 1837 that 'in the event of war with the Punjab, our great difficulty would be in the want of young active, capable Commanding Officers'.²

Towards the close of our period, it appears that the Commanding Officers of the Company's army were old men with a little authority.³ A Commanding Officer's authority, on whom the whole fabric of discipline depended, whether with or without a Court Martial, was very feeble. It is evident that constant reduction of ^{the} authority and power of ^{the} Commanding Officers resulted in bad discipline in the Company's army. This became a potent underlying cause of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.

Trial of offenders in the Company's army was guided mainly by 'Rules of Mutiny and Desertion' issued in the 25th year of the reign of George II (A.D. 1752) and revised and enlarged in 1823. Besides that there were no written rules of conduct for the army of the Company. Each Presidency had from time to time given out circulars, orders and regulations for

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1. Evidence of Sir George Clarke, Governor of Bombay vide Report of Commissioners, Q.1235 to 1241.
 2. Kaye, J.W. Life and Correspondence of Charles Lord Metcalfe, Vol.II, London 1859, P.183.
 3. Evidence of Sir George Clarke, Governor of Bombay vide Report of Commissioners, Q.1235 to 1241.

the guidance of officers conducting trials. In 1835, for the first time, it was determined that one code should be established for the whole of ^{British} India.¹ Before the enforcement of the code great latitude was given to Commanding Officers to rely on their own judgment in ^{the} trial of offenders. A combined Code for His Majesty's troops as well as the Company's troops was made in 1840, entitled 'Rules and Articles for the better government of the officers and soldiers in the service of the East India Company from the 1st day of January 1841'.² The provisions of this document were quite comprehensive.

Among the nat^{ive}~~ives~~s, some times 'Panchayat System' was very favourably employed for trial.³ The system had unwritten official sanction and the natives employed a certain number of judges among themselves; no native officer under the rank of Subedar could be president, and no one under the rank of Jamadar could be a member of any Native Court Martial.⁴

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1. Minute by Governor General dated 16 February 1835 vide PP Vol.40, P.449, No.319 of 1836.
 2. Military Department Consultation dated 3 February 1841, vide Military Letter from Court dated 4 November 1840, No.11. This had seven Sections and 126 articles. Section I contained articles of Divine worship numbering 1 to 3; Section II consisted of Crimes and Punishments with articles 4 to 65; Section III contained rules for Court Martial and had articles 66 to 92; Section IV had articles 93 to 107 containing miscellaneous duties and obligations; Section V consisting of articles 108 to 113 related to rules for Returns and Accounts; Section VI had only one article which related to rank, and the last section of articles 115 to 126 gave guidance on application of articles.
 3. Evidence of Major General Low vide Report of Commissioners, p.394 to 398.
 4. By Europeans, it was popularly styled as 'Native Court Martial' Wilson, History of Madras, Vol.2, Madras 1882, P.182.

The Panchayat System was in force in ^{the} contingent forces and the Irregular Corps of Cavalry even upto the Mutiny, but the system was never ordered for regular service. Infact in Irregular Corps, all matters of debt were tried by a Panchayat of five members. The Court, though formed and convened by orders~~s~~ was merely a private court among the natives and it was not 'tacitly' admitted, yet the decision was usually binding on both ^{the} parties.¹ The members of the Panchayat courts were selected by the Commanding Officer from a regular roster of Junior Commissioned Officers: but there were no rules guiding a Panchayat other than the rules of common sense. The Panchayat recorded their findings and recommended sentence to the Commanding Officer, but the recommendation did not include Corporal Punishments, which could however be awarded in addition by the Commanding Officer in case of disgraceful ~~crimes~~ offences.

Some times officers were brought to trial before a special court called the 'Court of Request', which tried cases like debt and gambling. These courts assembled ^{every} monthly at big military stations, and the offenders had to appear before them periodically.²

For trial of soldiers, a Commanding Officer had certain summary power which varied from time to time. For trial of certain offences, a Commanding Officer was 'as a rule' forced to convene a Court Martial after about 1824. For example, if in the judgment of a Commanding Officer, the punishment deserved

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1. Evidence of Major General Lowe vide Report of Commissioners, p.399 to 404.
 2. Evidence of Major General Robert Alexander vide Report of Commissioners, p.2368-69.

by a native officer was dismissal from service, after 1828 he had no alternative but to order a trial by a Court Martial, for the power of dismissing native officers was taken away from the Commanding Officer.

Before bringing an accused for trial before a Court Martial an inquiry was made by the senior officer on the spot by order of the Commander-in-Chief, for the purpose of investigating the grounds of the complaint, the results of which were forwarded to the General Officer Commanding of the Division, who directed further investigation to be made, if he considered the information defective or inadequate; and, when in possession of the circumstances of the case, he exercised his discretion in forwarding the charges and the result of the enquiry to the headquarters of the army.¹ The accused was released, if he was considered not guilty after the inquiry.

A General Court Martial was the highest Court Martial and consisted of not less than thirteen Commissioned Officers, except when it was convened in any place out of the Company's territories.² This court had the power to sentence any officer or soldier to suffer death, transportation, penal servitude, or any other punishment awardable by army regulations.³

1. United Services Journal 1829, Part I, London 1829, P.514.

2. PP(microfilm) Vol.1, P.309, Commons 392 of 1823.

3. PP(microfilm) Vol.6, P.1 Lords 184 of 1849; also PP(microfilm) Vol.5, P.265, Lords 201 of 1857; Also PP(microfilm) Vol.4, P.293 Commons 322 of 1849.

All witnesses were required to take a oath. And each member of the Court also took an oath. "I will duly administer justice according to the rules and articles for the better government of the officers and soldiers in the service of the Company, and according to an act of the Parliament inforce for the punishment of offences, without partiality, favour and affection, and if any doubt shall arise, which was not covered by the Articles of Parliament, according to conscience, the best of understanding and the custom of war in like cases;"

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A District or a Garrison Court Martial, which came next in priority, consisted of not less than five Commissioned Officers and such a Court Martial had the same power as a General Court Martial to sentence any soldier; however, it could not try a Commissioned Officer, nor could pass any sentence of death, nor transportation nor penal servitude.¹ The lowest form of a Court Martial was a Regimental or Detachment Court Martial which consisted of not less than five officers, unless it was found impracticable to assemble that number, in which case three were accepted. This Court Martial had the power to sentence any soldier to Corporal Punishment, or to imprisonment or to forfeiture of pay.² For offences committed on line of march or on board a ship, a Regimental or Detachment Court Martial's sentence could not be confirmed because of the absence of confirming authority. In such situations, in cases of mutiny and gross insubordination, the officer in immediate command of troops was authorised to confirm and carry into execution the sentence, provided it did not exceed that which the Regimental Court Martial was competent to award.³

The President of a Court Martial was appointed by the convening authority, but he was not to be the officer who was to confirm the sentence, nor his rank below that of a Field Officer (Major). The convening authority also appointed a

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and they further swore that, "I will not divulge the sentence of the Court until it shall be approved by the General or Commander-in-Chief, or the person or persons by whose warrant or authority the Court Martial is held."

1. Loc Cit.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Loc Cit.

representative of the Judge Advocate who assisted the President with legal advice.¹ For the trial of Europeans, the King's and the Company's officers sat in conjunction, but for the trial of Sepoys the Court Martial was composed of native officers, directed by a European Officer who acted as Judge Advocate.² No one below a Field Officer was empowered to convene a Court Martial and no one could be tried a second time for the same offence, unless in case of appeal and no sentence by a Court Martial was liable to be revised more than once.³ Any person accused of capital crime or violence and offence against the property of either Presidency was delivered to the Civil Magistrate for trial; and in such cases, the person or persons concerned were usually cashiered by a Court Martial. Offenders, while in custody, received no pay.

As soon as a Court Martial was assembled, the names of all the members of the court were read out in the hearing of the accused. The accused was then asked if he had any objection in being tried either by the President or by any of the members. If the accused objected to the President, the objection was referred to the decision of the authority by whom the President was appointed; but if the objection was to an officer; the President decided the objection. If objection, in either case was accepted, a new President or member was appointed to

1. Loc Cit.

2. Evidence of Sir T. Pritzler, Minutes of Evidence.

3. PP(microfilm) Vol.1, P.309; Commons 302 of 1823.

whom the accused had no objection. If the objection of the accused, was overruled, he was required to accept the court.¹

The proceedings of General and District Court Martial were transferred to the Judge Advocate General of the concerned Presidency, within 3 months of the Court Martial in India, and within 6 months if beyond the seas. No officer or soldier who had been acquitted or convicted of any offence was liable to be tried/^asecond time by the same or any other Court Martial for the same offence.² No ~~judgment~~^{sentence} of death, by a Court Martial was passed unless at least two-thirds of the officers at the court concerned consented to award the punishment. ~~Judgment~~^{Sentence of} for death could be commuted for transportation for life or other punishment.³

All the servants of the Company, civil or military, were liable to dismissal.⁴ The Government of India Act of 1833⁵ (Section 74) laid down: "It shall be lawful for His Majesty, by any writing under his signed manual, to remove or dismiss any person holding any office, employment or Commission, civil or military under the said Company in India, and to vacate any appointment or Commission of any person to such office or employment." But before the removal of any one from an office,

1. PP(microfilm) Vol.4, P.293; Commons 382 of 1849.

2. Loc Cit.

3. PP(microfilm) Vol.6, P.1, Lords 184 of 1849 also vide 'The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with notes and references by N. Simons, Vol. XIII (London 1835), P.442.

4. PP Vol.40, P.283, Commons 30 of 1863.

5. Loc Cit.

he was acquainted in writing with the charge preferred against him, so that he could prepare his defence. The proceedings of dismissal were conveyed to the Court of Directors.

A General, Garrison or District Court Martial could sentence any soldier to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, and could also direct that such offenders shall be kept in solitary confinement for any portion of imprisonment, in no case exceeding fourteen days at a time.¹ Any Court Martial could sentence any soldier to corporal punishment, for disgraceful conduct, misbehaviour, or neglect of duty to the extent of fifteen lashes.² No Court Martial could easily demote a Havildar or Non-Commissioned Officer. Non-Commissioned Officers could be demoted only by the officer specially appointed by the Governor in Council to command the corps (i.e. the Divisional Commander), but on every such occasion a report was made to the Commander-in-Chief, setting forth the reasons for the proceeding.³ Until about 1830, a Commanding Officer could demote a Havildar; he was deprived of that power subsequently.⁴

Corporal punishments were indiscriminately awarded to the soldiers till 1832. In that year, the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Edward Barnes, took away from the general or other officers commanding the division, the power of sanctioning corporal punish-

1. PP Vol.5, P.265, Lords 202 of 1857.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Wilson, "History of the Madras Army", Vol.II, Madras 1882, P.182.

4. Evidence of Colonel Greenhill, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1538.

ment, and instructed the officers convening the Court Martial to award Corporal punishments according to the nature of the case. A Committee sat at the three Presidencies to discuss whether or not Corporal punishment should be entirely abolished. The Committee in Bengal was not in favour of a total abolition of Corporal punishment; the Madras Committee shared the apprehensions of the Bengal Officers, respecting the total abolition of Corporal punishment, but evinced a strong desire to restrict its infliction, on account of its 'moral influence' on the soldier.¹ The Governor General, Lord W.C. Bentinck, added to the report of the Committees that "though Corporal punishment had diminished a hundred, perhaps a thousand fold, discipline has decidedly been improved and soldier treated like a rational being, and not as a mere brute; that my own prejudice and that of the others, have given way ... Upon full conviction of the expediency, safety and true policy of the measure, I recommend to Council the immediate total abolition of Corporal punishment in the Native Armies of India".²

Corporal punishments were considerably curtailed, as a result of strong recommendations of the Committee, supported by the Governor General. Corporal punishment was considered unsuitable to the docile character of the natives; the soldiers who underwent this punishment were in fact obliged to leave the army. An Act of 1839 empowered the Court Martials to sentence Native soldiers to imprisonment with hard labour, and provided

1. PP Vol.40, P.449, Paper 317 of 1836.

2. Loc Cit.

that all men so sentenced for any period or sentenced to ordinary imprisonment, exceeding six months, should be dismissed from service, provided all such sentences received the sanction of the General Officer commanding the Division.¹ There was a resolution of the Government under Lord Hardinge, dated 30th of August, 1845, framed in connection with the articles made in that year, which laid down rules for corporal punishment for offences such as mutiny, insubordination, violence or using or offering violence to superior officer or drunkenness on duty.² In due course, it was realised that natives required no corporal punishment, but rules were allowed to remain as previously and a circular was issued ^{from the} in Adjutant General's office in 1847 which read that: "Officers and men of the Native Army require neither austerity of manner nor severity of treatment; but at the same time it is indispensable to the maintenance of discipline that authority should be exercised with a firm though gentle hand".³

Among minor punishments awarded by a Court Martial was: forfeiture of pay when prisoner of war until inquiries were made, when convicted of desertion or of absence without leave and for drunkenness.⁴ Stoppages could be made from the pay of men as a punishment for loss or destruction, or damage, or injury to any government property by wilful or negligent misconduct. False

1. Reply of Major General Birch, Replies.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Evidence of Major General Birch vide Replies.

4. PP(microfilm) Vol.4, P.293, Commons 332 of 1849.

mustering of men and beasts was punishable by a General Court Martial and punishment awardable was cashiering. Punishment for inducing or assisting in desertion was fine or imprisonment, or both.¹ All offences relating to the army authorities, even if apprehension of offenders was effected by the civil ^{authorities}, were tried by the army.

There are conflicting opinions on the discipline of the Company's army. Colonel Salmond, who had served the Indian Army for over a quarter of a century, had the best possible opinion in that respect. He described the discipline of the Indian Armies as 'perfectly good'.² Another experienced officer, General Sir Robert Scot, was of the opinion that the spirit of the army had in general been everything that was desirable, but affected in small degree at different times by particular circumstances; its efficiency was equal to calls made on it; its discipline was very good, though it varied from particular circumstances.³ Sir Charles Napier, the Commander-in-Chief during the time of Dalhousie, remarked that he had seen many armies of the world, but he had not seen an army better disciplined and better paid than the Indian Army.

Nevertheless, the history of the Indian Army between 1796 and 1858 is marked by numerous mutinies, mostly among the native troops. This is likely to give the impression that the army of the Company could not be called disciplined. The real

1. Loc Cit.

2. Evidence of Colonel Salmond; Minutes of Evidence.

3. Evidence of Major General Sir Robert Scot; Minutes of Evidence.

standard of discipline in the Company's army would be difficult to establish without going into the causes of those mutinies.

In the Bombay army, there never occurred a mutiny and even in 1857 that Presidency remained unaffected. The Bombay army, however, in 1769, was on the verge of a mutiny when the Muslim sepoys objected on religious grounds to wear boots, which were supposedly made of the abominable pig leather.¹ A petition was submitted that the new Christian clothes and boots which they were ordered to wear were contrary to the injunctions of Islam. In fact they were afraid that they would be excluded from their caste and from their relations, wives and children; and they appealed that the orders be withdrawn.² The petition was entertained, the opinions of the Qazi and other principle persons of the faith were collected; and the Commanding Officers were allowed to make small alteration in the boots. A timely inquiry and a politic attitude averted the mutiny.

On the other hand, there are several instances of mutinies occurring because of particular circumstances. For instance, in 1764, the 9th Battalion of the Bengal army mutinied because, after the battle of Patna, they were kept idle; the Tellicherry Mutiny of 1780 was attributed to the violation of repeated promises of 'relief'; the Vizagapatnam Mutiny of 1780 occurred because the troops were forced to cross the sea, which outraged their religion feeling. Mutinies in Madras during 1781-86 were owing to the continuous non-payment to troops in that

1. Bombay Government Consultation 15 August 1769; Public Diary 54 of 1769, P.621.

2. Loc Cit.

Presidency, when the troops had not been paid for more than half a year. Lord Cornwallis connected the fact of mutinies with the non-payment of arrears and took steps to remedy this volatile situation.¹

In 1806 occurred a mutiny at Vellore on a considerably larger scale than ever before in the army of India. The immediate cause of this mutiny was the orders to troops to wear a new turban.² The order for the turban had been notified to the troops in garrison in May that year and one of the native Infantry battalions resented the new turban as it was objectionable, firstly because its shape resembled the European hat and secondly because it contained a leather cockade, which was objectionable to both Hindus and Muslims. The grounds for mutiny had thus been prepared previously and dissatisfaction increased when certain alterations in dress were introduced in sepoy corps by an order of the Commander-in-Chief, dated the 13th March, 1806, which entailed that a soldier shall not mark his face to denote his caste, or wear earrings when dressed in uniform and that on all parades, and on all duties, every sepoy of the battalion shall be clean shaven on the chin. The order also entailed that uniformity shall be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the upper lip, as far as practicable.³

1. Webelzene, B, De 'The English in India', London 1883, P.7.

2. PP Vol.42, P.689; Commons 284 of 1861.

3. Loc Cit.

In making these alterations, there is no doubt that much consideration was paid to the pipe-clay¹ traditions of the European armies and very little to the prejudices and sentiments of the soldiers. The dissatisfaction of the Madras sepoys was not long concealed. When the orders regarding wearing the new turban came, the battalion of Native Infantry, which was dissatisfied, refused to wear the new turban sent for their use. An open act of mutiny occurred. The ill considered action of the authorities was the cause of the insubordination of the hitherto well conducted and distinguished Corps.² The men of the battalion were severely punished, which increased the trouble still further. Many more native battalions revolted.

It came to be believed that the Mutiny was the outcome of instigation of the late Tipoo Sultan's sons, who were residing at that time in the fortress of Vellore; but the Committee which reported on the mutiny, highlighted the late changes in dress and appearance of the sepoys as the principal cause of the mutiny. The Committee's considered view was set forth in the following words:³

'The article of dress is both with the Hindoos and Mohemmedans an indication of their caste, and a badge of their respective distinctions and place of society and when it is recalled how abstinately the Indians of all descriptions adhere to their customs, and with what difficulty the natives were brought to adopt many parts of their present military dress, it

1. Boulger, Lord William Bentinck, Oxford 1897, P.31.

2. Loc Cit.

3. PP Vol.42, P.689; Commons 284 of 1861.

will not appear surprising that some of the late innovations in that respect were offensive to their feelings'.

"The sepoys appear to have felt that the wearing of the new turban would make them come to be considered Europeans, and would have removed them from their society and intercourse of their own caste."

"In this country the prejudices of the conquered have always triumphed over the arms of the conqueror and have subsisted amidst all the revolutions and shocks to which the empire has been subjected. Any innovation, therefore in that respect, must be calculated to call forth their feelings, and the more trivial the object required to be sacrificed, the stronger, in our opinion, would the reluctance be to make it. Nothing could appear more trivial to the public interests than the length of the hair on the upper lip of sepoy, yet to the individual himself the shape and fashion of the whisker is a badge of his caste, and the article of religion."

From the Committee's report we conclude that the Vellore Mutiny occurred because the religious sentiments of the native soldiers were disregarded. It is obvious that officers on the spot were poor judges of their men's sentiments who in turn lost confidence in them. No politics could have changed the loyalty of sepoys, if religious prejudices had not come in their way.¹ The following comment^s in connection with this mutiny will show that the officers managed their men poorly: "there are officers in our service, who never trouble themselves about their men,

1. Sen, S.N. 'Eighteen Fifty Seven', Government of India Publications, Delhi 1957. P. 3.

never go near them, and never allow them to come and detail their complaints. The sepoys are keen observers and excellent judges of their officers; and when they are kind and just to them, the sepoys love and are proud of them."¹ But in the case of Vellore the officers had not understood their men, which caused disaffection.

In 1815 a small mutiny occurred at Java and the native battalions murdered their European Officers.² The men responsible for the mutiny were severely punished. An inquiry into the causes revealed that by a General Order of the Commander-in-Chief, dated 12th December, 1810, it was stated that after an expiry of three years the volunteers will be permitted to return to India. The soldiers had been volunteers since 1810, and had been absent from India for four and a half years. No intimation had been given to these men that they would be required to serve for more than three years. Thus the failure of the government to keep its promise to recall volunteers from foreign service in Java after 3 years service in that land became the cause of a mutiny.

The year 1824 saw a major mutiny on the eve of the Burmese war.³ The Bengal sepoy from terms of enlistment did not bind themselves to undertake a journey by sea. But when the Bengal sepoys were ordered to march to Chittagong, they refused

1. United Services Journal 1833, Part I, P.87.

2. Haugh, 'Political and Military Events at British India', London 1853, P.362.

3. Gupta, 'The Days of John Company' 'Selections from Calcutta Gazette 1824-1832, Vol.VI, Calcutta 1959, P.35.

to march owing to the belief that from there the regiments would have to embark. This feeling was aggravated by the fact that the government Commissariat, having failed to supply bullocks for baggage, ordered that all sepoy's would provide their own bullocks.¹ This order was felt to be unjustified because there was a scarcity of bullocks which had been purchased already by the government and the prices had risen very high. In any case, it was the government's responsibility to provide conveyance for baggage. The native soldiers thus came to have a strong grievance and they expressed it quite respectfully; but the officers refused to give redress, or even to enquire into their grievances.²

Under the circumstances, when orders were given to the 62nd Regiment of the Native Infantry at Barrackpore, they refused to march to Chittagong. This was an open act of mutiny. The mutinous troops were ordered to ground their arms which they refused to do. They were thereupon blown by cannons on the parade ground.

The mutiny of Barrackpore may be attributed in its origin to the officers not understanding their men. In the particular corps in which the mutiny occurred, there was only one officer present who had been sometime with them, and it was only that officer's Company that refused to join the mutineers.³ The newly appointed officers did not understand their men and it

1. PP Vol.62, P.271, Commons C1698 of 1877.

2. Roberts, P.E. History of British India, 2nd Edition, Oxford 1939, P.299.

3. United Services Journal Part I, London 1833, P.87.

was these officers who were to command the men in war in Burma. It was known several days before, that dissatisfaction was prevalent among the men; and these officers took no notice of that, even when petitioned. When the troops explained their difficulty of procuring bullocks for baggage, the officers did not care even to listen to their difficulties. The lack of understanding on the part of the officers triggered off the mutinous sentiments of the men, who from the beginning had not liked the over-sea voyage and resented the failure of ^{the} supply system.

Mutinies could be avoided by a politic action, or non-action. In 1852, war was declared against Burma for the second time and once again the sepoys were required to go overseas. One battalion of the Native Infantry refused to undertake the sea voyage and Lord Dalhousie very wisely refrained from taking any strong action. There was no mutiny.

“There is nothing,” said an experienced officer¹ after the Mutiny, “but our own mismanagement to prevent natives of India being as good soldiers, and as loyal to us, to their foreign masters, as they have ever been. It depended upon army officers what native troops became. With good officers, who understood and managed them well, they produced the most exemplary results”. Captain Macan, who was one of the two officers who conducted the blowing up of the mutinous troops at Barrackpore in 1824 with cannons, thought that “we shall always have good troops if we can command their affection and fidelity”.² The same officer

1. Letter of H.B.E. Frere, Esquire, Commissioner of Bombay, vide Inquiry.

2. Evidence of Captain Macan, Minute of Evidence, Q.2176.

believed that, though the system of discipline was rather against the habits of the sepoys, they had assimilated it.¹ A system of discipline formulated to cater for the habits of Europeans could not succeed with the natives, and the yard stick formulated for Europeans was sure to bring about mismanagement. Non-payment of arrears of pay, ordering troops to undertake sea voyage, when the terms of enlistments did not bind them to do so; officers not understanding their men and playing with their religious and personal sentiments; mismanagement and failure of supply system in times of war—these were some of the ~~notant~~ causes of the various mutinies.

The principal cause of several mutinies appears to have been the British officers' disregard of the religious sentiments of their men. Whenever they failed to regard religious sentiments, they paid a heavy penalty. There was no uniformity or consistency in the attitude of British officers in these matters. In Java, for instance, some soldiers of low caste died and the officer commanding argued that his men being of high caste, could not bury the dead because the dead belonged to low castes.² On the other hand, a mutiny was invited over the question of the size of whiskers and the type of turban to be worn by the troops. On the one hand it was accepted on religious grounds that the sepoys of Bengal were not obliged to cross the sea; on the other, their resentment was often repressed ruthlessly. This sort of religious policy a sepoy

1. Ibid, p. 2186 to 2188.

2. Evidence of Major General Iow, Report of Commissioners p. 355.

could not understand.

From even a cursory analysis of mutinies in the army of the East India Company, it is evident that they did not arise from any basic or major defect in the organisation. The general spirit of the army was good. It was only under a particular set of circumstances that mutinies occurred. If there is one general statement that can be safely made about these mutinies, it is this that the inevitable conflict between certain requirements of discipline and certain religious sentiments of sepoy sparked off a tense situation into a mutiny.

TACTICS AND STRATEGY

Tactics or the technique of fighting,¹ change from time to time depending upon not only the personality of the commander but also the organisation of a fighting force, weapons, the ground of operation etc.

The British tactics in the nineteenth century underwent a great change, so far as grouping of force was concerned. No Cavalry had been employed during any of the Company's wars before 1765; and even afterwards, it did not become very important. During the Mysore Wars, however, the British had to contend with large 'Risalahs' of enemy cavalry and, it was felt that cavalry as a supporting arm could not be dispensed with. It was during the wars with Tipu Sultan that cavalry came to be employed extensively in battles and came to share a place of importance along with artillery as a supporting arm. When General Lake came as the Commander-in-Chief in 1801, he paid special attention to the tactics of cavalry.² He attached two light six-pounders to each regiment of cavalry; these guns came on the establishment of cavalry regiments rather than remaining a part of artillery batteries. It was at about this time that Horse Artillery came into existence.³ During the exercises, Lake combined the movements of cavalry and artillery with perfect skill and invented a new

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.21, P.737.

2. An Officer of Bengal Staff, Essays and Lectures on Indian Historical Subjects, London 1866, P.40.

3. Refer to Chapter on Organisations.

technique of fighting in which cavalry played an important role.¹ That marked a great change in the development of tactics, for the employment of all the three arms - Infantry, Artillery and Cavalry made the wars of the Company's army really 'modern'.

All battles invariably commenced with Artillery Cannonade, with the object of 'softening' the enemy. There are, however, a few instances when Cavalry commenced an operation, but that was due to the whim of the generals.² The Infantry was formed into Columns and the guns were kept fairly to the forward, on account of their early employment. In the battle order, the Cavalry did not occupy any specific place, but it much depended as to how the Commander planned to fight a battle and whether or not the ground was suitable for employing Cavalry. Cavalry was, however, employed extensively in pursuing a fleeing enemy, and sometimes an enemy was chased for miles. At close range, file formation was attained against a fleeing ^{enemy} and extensive use was made of musketry fire to inflict casualties.

A sense of strict fire discipline on the part of British Infantry and Artillery was instilled into all ranks and there were very strict orders not to open fire without orders even in

1. An Officer of Bengal Staff. Essays and Lectures on Indian Historical Subject, London 1866, P.40.

2. At the Battle of Iaswaree on 1 November 1803, Lake was in pursuit of fleeing enemy and he had with him only Dragoons and Native Cavalry. His Artillery had been left behind. He decided to launch his attack without Artillery and Infantry.

numbers. In almost all battles the British had comparatively much smaller number than their enemies.

An expert use of small arms by Infantry was coupled with an extensive use of bayonet with utter ruthlessness which made a British Indian soldier achieve what he could not achieve otherwise. All other things being equal in a battle, it was often the British superiority of bayonet charge which won them the day. By an explicit discipline and obedience to orders, utter ruthlessness had been instilled in the soldier's mind on the parade ground and when he faced an enemy at close quarters, he pierced his bayonet through him. A contemporary journal remarks: "British bayonets are of such character, so entirely to be relied upon, that it is no wonder that British Generals will dare risk much. The doubtless valour of the Infantry rectifies the errors of the Commanders, and carries them through, what would otherwise be inevitable defeat and disgrace"¹. In an other volume the Calcutta Review remarked: ~~that~~ "that action (Buxar) like the majority of these that have succeeded it in this country, was mainly won by the indomitable courage and formidable bayonet of the Infantry."²

A Commander started operation by obtaining maximum possible information about the enemy. This was done mainly by intrigue and bribe. This, coupled with reconnaissance by Commanders on the spot, gave very good results. The Commander ascertained the weakest points of the enemy and visualised

1. Ibid, P.276.

2. Calcutta Review Vol.IX, London, 1848, P.422.

which one would out of them gave him most effective results. He organised his force according to the plan. No major change on the spot, however, was possible and therefore a Commander had to depend upon forethought in his deployment plan.

Sometimes the attack plans had a very close resemblance to those employed on European battle fields, and this was obviously owing to a large number of British officers having gained their initial training and experience on European soil.¹ Attacking an enemy's flank and enveloping techniques which were often employed on Indian battle fields by the Company's armies bear a close resemblance to German and French techniques. The technique of Counter Attack on an enemy was very often employed on a battle field, which entailed attacking an enemy with the help of a reserve force, usually of Cavalry, when he attained certain amount of superiority in the course of fighting.

The grouping of a force was done most carefully to ensure a balance. A battalion in action was the smallest unit capable of independent action. In the organisation of Infantry battalion, two guns had been allowed on the establishment, which gave it sufficient artillery support for a limited time. A larger tactical unit, a brigade, was carefully grouped, composed of a requisite portion of artillery, infantry and cavalry, which was self-contained for a certain time, and was capable of fighting independently longer than a battalion. Both a battalion as well as a brigade were so provided that they could set aside a reserve force out of their resources so that

1. Commenting on Goughs attack Plan at Chillianwala. The Calcutta Review in Vol.XV, P.278 says "The attack as planned, would have done credit to a Frederick, and was in his style..."

the whole force did not make contact with the enemy at the first instance and a certain percentage of fresh troops was available for launching counter attack. The reserve could also be employed at the discretion of the Commander to cover the movement (by fire) of the remaining body, whether in case of attack or defence.

Ground plays a very important part in all tactics and the British were not neglectful of this factor in tactics. It was a point with all British Commanders to choose the ground of battle, where enemy's movements were "channelised" and the enemy was fought on a ground selected for the purpose. At times an enemy, who had advantage of fighting defensively at the outset, was lured to abandon his defensive position, and whenever the enemy ^{was} thus lured his defeat was almost certain. In the Battle of Delhi the enemy was very strongly entrenched; Lake advanced his Cavalry and then made a retreat which tempted the enemy to come out of the trenches to convert a retreat into rout and in their attempt to do so, they came far forward to meet Lake's Infantry on a ground which he had chosen for the purpose.¹ At the Battle of Assaye, the British chose their own ground of action.²

Rest to fatigued troops even in the middle of the battle was organised by Commanders at the highest level and

1. Despatches dated Camp Delhi Ghat September 12, 1803 vide Notes Relative to Transactions in Mahratta Empire, London 1804, P.68; Also Ludlow, J.W. British India, Its Races and Its History, Cambridge 1858, P.248.
2. Basu, The Rise of the Christian Power in India, Calcutta 1931, P.461.

it made the men better fitted to fight future actions. It was not uncommon to see a Commander giving his troops time to cook their meals and eat before proceeding to battle. Whereas tactical requirements and human comforts are often conflicting, the British Commanders compromised these requirements and achieved the best results.

The Artillery of the Company's army was an excellent force and provided various types of artillery fires, such as direct, oblique, enfilading, flanking, grazing, plunging or reverse fire.¹ Direct fire was obtained by laying guns direct on the target by sights provided on the guns. Oblique or indirect fire was obtained by elevating a gun at an angle and firing by calculations. Enfilade fire meant the sweeping by fire, of a target from one end to the other, whether it was a line of Cavalry or Infantry or whether it was the face of a fortified work. Flanking fire was that directed along the front of a position or work and merely parallel to it. Grazing fire was that provided close to the surface of a defensive position. Plunging fire was the one directed from a position considerably above the object fired at. Reverse fire was the one directed in the enemy's rear. Ricochet fire was the technique of destroying objects invisible from the exterior. This was done by projecting a missile with low velocity, so that after falling inside the invisible area, it made several grazes thus increasing the possibility of hitting the target at more than one place.

1. Portlock, Papers for the use of Gentleman Cadets at the Royal Military Academy Woolwich, London 1861, P.10.

This fire was normally employed against field fortifications. In case of very large crests in front of enemy position, the technique of vertical fire was employed. The descent of the missile was so nearly vertical in this type of fire that it was possible to throw a shell almost immediately behind an intervening or covering body, and thus to injure and alarm troops when fully protected.¹

Artillery preparation for an Infantry attack was almost an indispensable feature of every engagement. The guns were extended over as large a front as possible, and to achieve this requirement the batteries were thrust up into the Infantry columns. The task of Artillery did not cease when Infantry advanced, but in those days the range of guns being short, they had to be moved for a considerable distance along with ^{the} advancing Infantry, before they got into a suitable range. During movement, the guns lost to the force, the Infantry had to rely on its own small arms. In well planned battles, this difficulty was removed by supporting the attacking flank for the duration of the movement of its own guns, with ^{the} guns of an adjoining flank.

There were two important principles observed in the employment of guns. The first was to ensure that they did not mask the fire of each other and the second was that the gun

1. Foreign Secret Consultations, 26 December 1846, No.405, Governor General to Council dated 16 February 1846.

"The difficulties were great considering the strength of the enemy's works and his superior numbers accustomed to fight behind walls and entrenchments but vertical fire of twenty pieces of heavy artillery surmounted all impediments and has led to most important results.

powder must be protected from dampness and water.¹

In those days, the powder gave out tremendous smoke which made concealment of guns impossible. As a result as soon as the guns of the attacker opened, the defender being in a position to spot them, an artillery duel followed.² Sometimes, a small number of guns was detached from the rest of the guns and taken to a suitable position to give direct fire with greater precision, and this often gave very good results.

As regards the Cavalry tactics, it was a combination of the old and the new. The usefulness of shock tactics of Cavalry was giving way as times advanced, but the employment of Cavalry for a sudden charge of a few squadrons at the moment when the assaulting Infantry were wavering, often exerted a decisive influence upon the course of an engagement, and that shows that shock tactics were not completely out of date. At the same time, the employment of Cavalry in battles on the flanks along with Artillery and Infantry, rather than for independent action is an indication of modernisation of Cavalry tactics.³ While operating against enemy flanks cavalry achieved wonderful results. Their great mobility enabled them to execute turning movements in a short time, and they also achieved most magnificent results for warding off enemy's counter-movements.

1. M.P. Singh, Captain "The Artillery in the Army of the East India Company", Artillery Journal, Vol.XVII, Devlali 1966, P.107.

2. Callwell 'The Tactics of Today, 6th Edn, London 1901, P.11.

3. Ibid, P.19.

In the study of operations we find shock tactics more often employed during the Maratha wars, whereas employment of Cavalry on the flanks is more pronounced during the Sikh Wars. The change appears to be owing to a progress in armament which took place with the advancement of time. Lances or hussars were replaced by carbines. For effective use of the latter, the rider had to dismount from his horse. Another reason for the change could be the range of galloper guns. During the first decade of ^{the} nineteenth century, the effectual range was 600 yards whereas by the time of Sikh Wars, it was 800 yards.¹ Greater range meant a bigger circle of operation.

Mounted troops were most suited for pursuit operation. The combination of horse artillery and cavalry was ideal for carrying out pursuit of a fleeing enemy and Lake had trained the army during exercises to conduct pursuit operations well. But there was a great limitation ^{on} to this operation, as the guns owing to short range could not give fire support without having to deploy again and again. The horse artillery could not keep pace with ^{the} Cavalry.

Cavalry was at times employed to do the job of scouts when the armies moved to make contact with ^{the} enemy. The force thus employed was termed advanced piquets, and were the eyes of an advancing column.

During the period under consideration, we find that with the advancement of times, there was a progressively increasing

1. Gough & Innes 'The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars', London 1877, P.67.

need to employ sound tactics. Whereas the early battles of our period were won by sound leadership and valour alone; later on battles could not be won unless valour and leadership were coupled with sound tactics. According to Roberts, Clive's *method was to* "seek the enemy, and, on finding him, to attack with head long valour. This seems to have been his 'guiding principle', and his successes were due rather to 'his personal intrepidity, and his power of inspiring large masses of men with confidence, than to studied plans or dexterous manoeuvres'.¹ This view of Clive's tactics, perhaps a little simple, appears to be substantially accurate.

The Mysore wars too were no great tactical battles. In 1798, the siege of Seringapatam was not conducted strictly according to the system of parallels (to be described later), though the battle was decisive in its results.

The choice of resorting to parallels no doubt depended on whether or not there were adequate resources to undertake a siege on the parallels technique, but when resorted to, it gave very positive results. For instance Lake at the siege operation of Bharatpur in 1805, did not have the resources of digging parallels which resulted in great loss of men and material, whereas in 1825 when Cambermere conducted the operations on the system of parallels, he won a victory. In 1805 after having made three attempts and having suffered a loss of 3000 men, Lake was compelled to give up the enterprise,² whereas

1. Roberts P.E. History of British India, 2nd Edn, Oxford 1939, P.16.

2. Annual Register 1826, Vol.LXVIII, P.220.

in 1825, Cambermere was crowned with success as he annihilated the boasted pretensions to impregnability of the fortress,¹ by resorting to the technique of parallels.

Even the battles fought by renowned generals like Wellesley and Lake were guided merely by their leadership than by any sound tactical plans. The battle of Assayee, fought on 23 September, 1803, where Wellesley was in Command, has been described by Malleon as indeed 'a general's battle'.² The Marathas had taken a very strong defensive position on a triangular piece of ground between the junction of two rivers.³ Wellesley, who was in pursuit, with his army divided into two parts, one under him and the other under Stevenson,⁴ unexpectedly met the enemy and decided to go into action without waiting for Stevenson to join him.⁵ The enemy numbered more than 50,000 and Wellesley's troops were only 4,500. Wellesley did a reconnaissance of the area and decided on the point of attack on the left flank which was the weakest.⁶ Wellesley crossed a ford on the river under ^{the} enemy's fire. He formed his Infantry in two

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1. Thornton, Edward 'Modern History of British India', London 1840, P.537.
 2. Malleon, G.B. The Decisive Battles of India, 2nd Edn, London 1885, P.276.
 3. Herbert, Campton, A Particular account of the European Military Adventures of Hindustan from 1784 to 1803, London MDCCCXCII, P.322.
 4. Ludlow, J.W.. British India, Its Races and its History, Vol.1, Cambridge 1858, P.247.
 5. Thompson, Rise and fulfilment of British Rule India, London 1935, P.221.
 6. Letter of Arthur Wellesley to Governor General, dated Assayee 24 September 1803, vide English Records of Mahratta History, Vol.10, Edited by Raghubir Singh, Bombay 1951.

lines, with Cavalry as a reserve in a third, and from the apex of the triangle formed by ^{the} rivers, wheeled down upon the foe, who brought terrible fire of guns. During the battle Wellesley's Artillery went out of action owing to animals getting killed, on occurrence of which he ordered the attack to be launched without artillery support. But in the mean time, the enemy charged with his Cavalry, whereupon Wellesley led an attack in person with his dragoons, attacked 115 guns of the enemy and silenced enemy guns by a bayonet charge. No artillery support was available throughout the battle of Assaye and Wellesley dominated the scene with his leadership without which the battle would not have been won.

In the battles of Delhi and Laswaree, Lake's personal leadership rather than tactics won him the day. At Delhi on 11 September, 1803, the operation commenced by reconnaissance of the ground and enemy dispositions by Lake,¹ and he found his enemy on a defensive position which he had selected with great care, each of his flanks covered with swamp and his front by a line of entrenchments. The enemy had concealed his guns in the high grass of the jungle and Lake's two regiments of Cavalry with him at the time of reconnaissance were exposed to terrible fire. The enemy was so strongly posted in defence that it was difficult to dislodge him and Lake decided to draw him on a more level ground.² To achieve this object, he ordered

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1. An officer of Bengal Staff, Essays and Lectures on Indian Historical Subjects, London 1866, P.52.
 2. Herbert Campton, A Particular Account of the European Military Adventurers of Hindoostan from 1784 to 1803, London MDCCCXCII, P.311.

the Cavalry to withdraw, which gave the enemy an impression of retreat. The enemy came out of the trenches and pursued the retreating Cavalry. The Cavalry, according to a pre-arranged plan opened from the Centre, and the Infantry marched through, and advanced towards the enemy. They were led by the Commander-in-Chief and they did not open fire till within one hundred yards of the enemy. The fire was very effective, It drove away the enemy.¹

At Iaswaree on November 1, 1803, Lake was in pursuit of ^{the}fleeing enemy with his dragoons and Native Cavalry; his artillery had been left behind. He decided to launch his attack without his Infantry and Artillery. He placed himself at the head of his army and 'displayed his qualities of leadership as a man of action in the boldest sense of the word'.² The charge on the enemy's left was very successful, but since there was no Infantry, the success could not be consolidated, and after considerable casualties, Lake withdrew his Cavalry till the Infantry came up.³ When the Infantry arrived, Lake formed his force into battle order, and formed them in two columns, the first column to be employed to turn ^{the}enemy's right and the second to support it. Like the Infantry, the Cavalry was divided into two portions. By bayonet charge and by

1. Despatches dated Delhi Ghaut September 12, 1803, vide Notes Relative to transactions on Mahratta Empire, London 1804, P.68.

2. Herbert Campton, Op Cit., P.318.

3. Despatches; Op Cit.

Cavalry counter attacks under the personal leadership of Lake, the battle was won.¹

Lake was not a tactician, and he had no liking for management. According to his biographer 'his principle of war was to ascertain where the enemy was, then to close with him quickly and rapidly, never to let go his hold till he had beaten him. He had all the natural qualifications for a general of this class'.²

On the other hand, Lord Ellenborough had no confidence in his Commander-in-Chief Gough because he was not a good tactician. He, in a military letter dated Calcutta, April 20, 1844, wrote to Wellington, "I ought not to conceal from you that the anxiety that I feel to be called too suddenly into the field is much increased by a want of confidence in Sir Charles Gough, who with all his personal courage and many excellent qualities, certainly does not appear to possess the grasp of mind or prudence which is essential to the successful conduct of great military operations ...". Before the commencement of Sikh Wars, it was felt by many that leadership and valour alone, as in some previous Indian battles, was going to win the day. Cunningham, in this respect writes: 'It is, indeed certain that English officers and Sepoys equally believed they were about to win battles by marching steadily and the discharge of a few artillery shots rather than by skilful dispositions, hard fighting

1. Loc Cit.

2. An officer of Bengal Staff, Essays and Lectures on Indian Historical Subjects, London 1866, P.38.

and prolonged contest^s.¹ But this was not true. The futility of headlong valour without sound tactical dispositions, characteristic of the old ways of fighting, was demonstrated too well; firstly in the first Sikh War, when unsound planning on the part of Gough led to initial disaster and again in the initial stages of the Second Sikh War. It was not until a particular attention was paid to tactics along with sound leadership and valour, that the wars could be won.

In the first battle of the Sikh War at Moodkee on 18 December, 1845, the British did not meet ~~the~~ enemy to fight a defensive battle. The British suffered a heavy loss of 872 men, and yet the battle was not decisive, quite unlike the victories the British were used to in India.² A further action was not undertaken until reinforcements were obtained, and Gough accepted the assistance of Lord Hardinge, who brought to the army a great accession of strength, for in calm, cool and clear judgement on the field of battle he was surpassed by no one then in India.³ The Plan of attack at Ferozeshah was more sound than that of Moodkee, but both these battles demonstrate more valour than science, both as regards tactics and strategy.⁴ The time of attack chosen at Ferozeshah was ^{the} evening and when the attack was delivered, it resolved itself into series of disconnected assaults. The Junior Commanders were not told about the plan of attack, with the result that initiative on their

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1. Cunningham, History of Sikhs, Edited by Garrett, Notes by Sethi, Delhi 1955, P.261.
 2. Thompson and Garrett, Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India, London 1935, P.371.
 3. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 26 December 1846, No.241.
 4. Barton, The First and Second Sikh Wars, Simla 1911, P.26.

part was curbed.¹

The last two battles of First Sikh War, at Aliwal and Sobraon, reveal particular attention to minor tactics. The methodical and skilful conduct of operations at Aliwal offer a contrast to the tactical methods which characterised the other battles of this campaign.² There was perfect cooperation between the efforts of the three arms of Artillery, Cavalry and Infantry which, coupled with the skill of the Commander, brought about the defeat of ^{the} enemy.³

Thus a series of battles of the First Sikh War demonstrated that sound tactics coupled with leadership and headlong valour was finally to win the day. But unfortunately the British Commander did not learn a lesson; during the Second Sikh War ^{the} importance of tactics was once again ignored, which necessitated more than one battle and it was not until sound tactics were employed that the war came to a successful termination.

Speaking of the first battle of the Second Sikh War at Ramnagar, Malleon says, "Lord Gough belonged essentially to a fighting caste. In the presence of an enemy, he could think only of how to get at him. At times of supreme excitement all ideas of strategy, of tactics, of the plan of the campaign, vanished from his mind..."⁴ The same author speaking of the last battle of the Second Sikh War, at Gujrat says that⁵ Gough

1. Ibid, P.23.

2. Ibid, P.36.

3. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 26 December 1846, No.356.

4. Malleon, G.B. Decisive Battles of India, London 1885, P.399.

5. Ibid, P.438.

at the outset of the campaign, committed as many faults as his opponent, but ~~he~~ redeemed them towards its close; at Guzerat he adhered steadily and wisely to a well considered programme. At Ramnagar^{agar}, the ground factor which forms a major factor in tactics, was ignored. The Artillery in an excitement to inflict casualties on the enemy, went deep into the Sandy Channels, from where it was difficult to remove the guns once the enemy opened severe fire.¹ In the third battle, Lord Gough did not stick to a plan which he made for the conduct of operations and a departure from it brought about a catastrophe. The last battle, the battle of Guzerat, was skilfully planned and was a decisive engagement.²

From the above scrutiny, it is evident that in early days, head long valour and sound leadership without sound tactics won for the British victories on Indian soil, but as ~~it~~ times advanced the employment of sound and well considered plans and techniques occupied as important a place as ^{the} other factors.

A special technique was employed for capturing fortresses which entailed a systematic attack or a regular siege.³ The technique consisted in thereughly investing a fortress by forces superior in number to the besieged, so distributed on the outskirts of the fortress as to confine the garrison, and

1. Calcutta Review, Vol. XV, P.262.

2. Burton, The First and Second Sikh Wars, Simla 1911, P.127.

3. Philip, Col. Text Book of Fortification, London 1892, P.197.

by excluding all supplies of men and material from without, The besieger, constructed parallels and zig zags upto the fortress by way of which he approached ^{the} enemy's defences. This was followed by affecting a breach in the walls of the fortress, where the attack was directed.

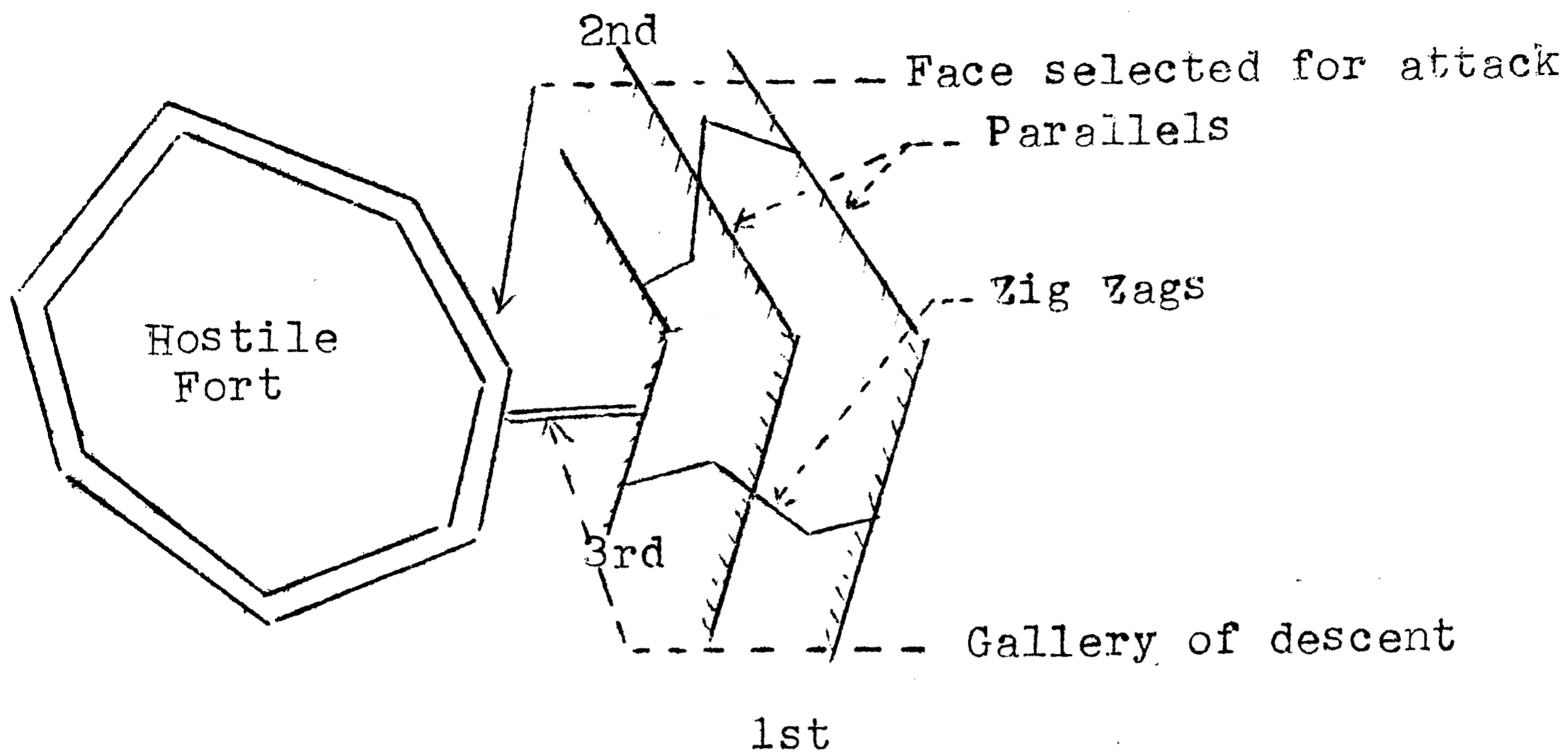
Before commencing a siege operation, a secure supply system was established. Uninterrupted supplies were very important and at times a force had to be employed to ensure security of the supply line. The position of the source of supply was termed the 'base of operations', and the line of communication from it to the army was called the 'line of operation'.¹

The operation commenced with a thorough reconnaissance of the place of attack as closely as the fire of the enemy permitted. Surprise at this stage was vital and efforts were made to keep enemy guessing the probable side from which attack was intended. At times some demonstrations were made on a particular side so as to direct the garrison's whole attention there and thus to make the enemy neglect the real point of attack.² This technique was called 'false attack'.

Artillery Commander with the help of the Engineer Commander drew up a plan of attack, and the plan was submitted to the Commander of siege operation, who improved upon it if necessary. An estimate was made of working parties and material

1. Portlock, R.F. Papers compiled for the use of Gentleman Cadets at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, London 1861, P.68.

2. Ibid, P.69.



ATTACK ON FORTS

required. At the commencement of an operation, the whole force was divided into two parts, one force was employed for protection from enemy activities and the second portion for carrying out the siege operation. It was for this reason that the besieger had to be in much more superior numbers as compared to the garrison.

The siege operation was divided into three distinct periods, which were marked by the trenches that ran parallel to the outline of the fort; these were called parallels.¹ During early operations of the British, only one parallel was established and then the enemy was approached by zig zags unsupported by parallels. Vauban, a famous tactician, introduced the technique of enveloping parallels. The new system afforded the approaches not only a good close fire, but a strong guard at hand, to deal with enemy sorties sent to interrupt the work of siege.

1. Straith, Hector, Treatise on Fortification and Artillery, Vol.1, London 1852, P.294.

The first parallel was constructed at an approximate distance of 600 yards from the fortress and it consisted in the excavation of a trench for the reception of troops parallel to the fortification of the place. Zig zags were made to communicate from the first parallel. It was the duty of the Artillery Commander to deploy his batteries at the first parallel, as soon as possible, so that the fire of the defences could be checked and subdued by various types of artillery fire.¹ It was impossible to make progress at this stage until the Artillery fire of the enemy was subdued by the superior fire of the assailing force. The first parallel thus formed the base, where all artillery batteries were deployed. The size of artillery park erected against any place depended upon the frontage presented by the fortress. As a rule one battery was necessary to cover by Artillery fire every face of the work that could interfere with the besieger in his approach.² Based on these principles a Commander decided the number of guns required for a siege operation. The number of pieces of ordnance required for the attack of fortress had not so much reference to the number of pieces with the enemy on ramparts, as to the construction of works themselves which the enemy intended to defend.³

When the approaches had been extended half way from the first parallel to the fortress a second parallel was constructed

1. Ibid, P.306.

2. The United Services Journal, London 1829, Part I, P.173.

3. Portlock, R.E. Papers compiled for the use of the Gentleman Cadets at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, London 1861, P.75.

before proceeding any further, otherwise the attacking force will be very close to the enemy ^{to present} and ~~in excessive~~ danger, The second parallel being normally within 300 yards of the fortress, the besieger did not attempt to construct it till his enemy's artillery was more or less silenced. The second parallel was dug in the same way as the first parallel.

When the approaches reached very close to the outer walls of ^{the} fortress, trenches were pushed out to the right and left, which were extended till they met, forming ^{the} third parallel. If there was a need, more parallels were constructed. After the construction of the last parallel, an assault was undertaken if the garrison was weak, but when the enemy was strong, covered approaches to the foot of the garrison were excavated. Guns were brought to the last parallel for causing a breach in the walls. When there was a ditch surrounding the fortress, the gallery of descent was constructed to assemble a force on the other side of the ditch. An open assault was launched to obtain an access to the fortress. After getting into the fortress the vital points of the enemy were attacked and destroyed and the besieger being in much larger number than the besieged, soon overcame and destroyed them.

Strategy involves principles stretching from political sphere to the direction of warfare in the main theatres of operation. It calls for a short examination of diplomatic relations as they affected defence of India and also their

co-relation to principles of strategy.

Till 1756, the British were merely traders and there were no problems of strategy. It was between that year and 1760 that Clive made the British supreme in Bengal. The French and ^{the} Dutch lost all political power and the Nawab was only a shadow. The problems of Indian Defence and strategy became the problems of the British in India. After the battle of Buxar, Shah Alam II granted the British the Diwanee of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, but beyond that the policy remained restrictive. Clive in his second administration followed a policy of non-intervention and ^{the} problem of Indian Defence was limited in scope.

Warren Hastings broke Clive's restrictive policy and he started to undertake a strategic defence of India. This aim, he achieved by his efforts to create buffer states around Bengal, which were militarily strong and made Bengal safe. This was done by entering into alliance with ^{the} neighbouring states and 'Bengal was indirectly protected'.¹ Such an alliance with Oude averted the danger ^{from} ~~against~~ Maratha encroachment. The British made arrangements with Oude whereby they stationed large forces in that Native State. The arrangement furnished a strong defence for the Northern Frontier and added to the internal security of Bengal and Behar.² In making the arrangement of buffers, principles of Rapid Mobility, Concentration,

1. Weitzmen, Warren Hastings and Philip Francis, Manchester 1929, P.83.

2. Military Letter from Court, dated 11 February 1801.

Coordination and Economy of Force' were observed. The force was stationed on various places in such a manner that an army could be readily drawn together in the field if an occasion arose. Economy of force was achieved indirectly because a smaller force was required to be stationed at Bengal and Bihar than would have been normally necessary. Moreover Oude was not annexed for a long time because that measure would have brought the British frontier immediately in contact with the Marathas and ^{with} Nepal, which would have involved them in collision with these powers,¹ and that would have entailed the requirement of a greater force.

Warren Hastings also entered into a defensive alliance with the Raja of Berar, where he stationed a number of Sepoy Battalions which were annually relieved, ostensibly for the protection of the Raja, but in reality to strengthen their own power at the Maharaja's expense. The plan of Hastings, besides providing military strength, secured the friendship and support of those powers, who might otherwise be enemies or become a greater danger if won by a hostile power.

With the rise of Napoleon, a new cloud of danger to India's security was forming in the horizon. From Cairo, Napoleon wrote to Tipoo that he had full desire of delivering the Indians from the Yoke of the English, and desired that some representative of Tipoo should discuss with him the scheme to achieve that end.² The Court of Directors was, however, convinced that

1. PP Vol.25, P.1, Commons 225 of 1859.

2. Letter of Napoleon Bonapart vide Annual Register Vol.LXI, London 1799, P.371.

Napoleon could not attack India without the aid of some Indian power; they established that power to be no one else but Tipoo. A great forethought was exercised in taking simultaneous measures to save India from Napoleon's expected attack of India, firstly by destroying Tipoo's power¹ and by ordering possession of the Island of Perim,² where naval fight was suggested, in case Napoleon triumphed in Egypt. The destruction of Tipoo at Seringapatam and the removal of the danger of an attack on India by Napoleon's defeat in Egypt secured peace and safety of British possessions in India.

In 1798, the British entered into arrangements with the Nizam and stationed a considerable force with him, whereby they made him subordinate to the British influence and military force,³ securing thereby an advantage against the Marathas.

A great point about British strategy in India was the "maintenance of objective", whether against the Marathas or the Sikhs or any other power. Their final aim was to destroy their enemies. They resorted to an enemy's segregation so long as they found it feasible, but at a ripe moment achieved their objective of destroying him. For a long time the British had avoided a direct collision with the Marathas, and they undertook to break their power firstly by diplomacy and only afterwards by war. They therefore undertook to affect an arrangement in 1802, which could obviate a union of the Maratha

1. Ibid, P.367.

2. Ibid, P.368.

3. Governor General's Narrative vide PP (microfilm) Vol.9, P.1, Commons 116 of 1803.

States. The opportunity came when the Peshwa found himself threatened by Holkar, with no support other than the British, and signed the Treaty of Bassein.¹ The treaty brought the British in^{to} conflict with Scindia and Holkar^a. For the final destruction of the Marathas the British continued to maintain their objective by long drawn fights, the Maratha War of 1803-1805 and finally the war of 1817-1818.

The capture of Delhi during the Maratha Wars of 1803 - 1805 extended the limits of North West frontier, which involved the establishment of first line of defence. In the subsequent years of the Company's rule this frontier continued to occupy a place of importance. Though most strategic considerations demanded that the Indus should form the first line of defence, the political considerations prevented it. Delhi was at a striking distance from Panipat, and a victory at Panipat would mean a victory at Delhi. So, not ~~Delhi~~^{Panipat}, but somewhere in the Panjab ought to be the place of British stand in case of war.² But no interference with Panjab was to be allowed owing to the danger of its joining the French. Moreover lines of communication would have become too long, and difficult to maintain in those days. The principle of 'economy of force' could be exercised if Ranjit Singh was left to guard the Indus and the British forces were stationed at the banks of the Satlej. Even when Ranjit Singh had not come into power, the Earl of Morington had written to Major General Sir J.H. Craig on 16 September, 1798, that the most useful barrier against the invasion of

1. Military Letter from Court, dated 11 February 1803.

2. The United Services Journal, London 1833, P.82.

Zaman Shah in the first instance would be the resistance of the Sikhs and Rajputs.¹ ^{The} British were, therefore, quite keen to see in the Panjab their immediate buffer on the North West Frontier, a buffer which would take a major shock at the first instance and give a cushion effect to the safety of the Company's territories. It was on such strategic considerations that ~~the~~ ^{the} Satlej was accepted as the boundry between the Panjab and ~~the~~ British India, and the Indus was made strong by encouraging the power of Ranjit Singh. The principle of 'maintenance of objective', the final destruction of the Sikh power, was not overlooked as we know that the British never allowed the Sikh State to become too strong to handle, and timely action was taken to destroy its overgrowing power when it did become dangerous.

A great forethought was exercised in ensuring ^{the} safety of the North West Frontier. Between the Sikh Frontier in the South and the British frontier in the north lay the protected Sikh States. They could not be counted as a real source of strength to the British frontier; nevertheless, sufficient force was stationed at military stations closeby which could be rapidly mobilised and concentrated on that frontier. The possibility of French danger was excluded by entering into a treaty with the Amirs of Scinde on 22 August, 1809, and by article IV of that treaty, the Government of Scinde was prohibited from allowing the French establishment in Scinde.² The

1. Haugh, Political and Military Events in British India, Vol.1, London 1853, P.190.

2. PP Vol.8, P.235, Lords 32 of 1839.

Government of Bombay further ensured the safety of this frontier by entering into a treaty on 9 November, 1820, with the Amirs, and by article III, precluded the entry of any Europeans or Americans on the soil of Scinde.¹ The 'objective' was, however, not lost sight of, as we find Sir Charles Napier annexing Scinde twenty-three years later.

It was on account of the safety of the North West Frontier that the British did not lose sight of the activities of the Russians and the French who were considered ^apotential danger to the frontier.² In overcoming this danger the British resorted to creating buffers beyond the Panjab. A treaty was signed on 12 March, 1809, with the King of Persia who agreed to drop all connections with Europeans that he had made till then and promised not to permit any European force to pass through Persia, either towards India or towards her ports.³ This treaty was revised on 25 November, 1814. Three months later the British concluded a treaty with the government of Kabul.⁴ By the terms of this treaty, the Afghan government agreed to exert ^{itself} ~~themselves~~ in every way in preventing the passage of a French and Persian army, and agreed not to permit them to cross into British India.

The treaties gave the British two buffers on the North West Frontier, and the usefulness of the buffers was based on

1. Loc Cit.

2. Haugh, Political and Military Events in British India, Vol.1 London 1853, P.202.

3. PP(microfilm) Vol.50, P.89, Commons C174 of 1839; Also PP Vol.40, P.159, Commons 100 of 1839.

4. PP Vol.40, P.159, Commons 100 of 1839.

economy of force and other vital principles of strategy as discussed for other buffers before. No European force, intercepted on the way by Persia and Afghanistan, could have possibly maintained the lines of communication to fight in India.

After 1830, the North West Frontier became more important and Sir John Malcolm strongly suggested that the Indian Empire could be threatened by the Russians.¹ The Russians had developed their military power and they were united and well organised, while their own country was impregnable from its extent and barrenness, any number of troops could be poured into the neighbouring countries, and the Indian riches could serve as a lure.² The Russian ambition was no more limited to Europe.³ Persia had Russian's support as Russia had promised her financial ~~ing~~ help to deal with Ranjit Singh.⁴ The force which was to be fitted out for the invasion of ^{the} Panjab was promised every kind of help by ^{the} Russians.⁵ The general policy of the British was to interpose between them and Russia powerful countries whose interests would be different ^{from} ~~than~~ those of the Russians. The Afghans could form the bullwork, whatever road the enemy took,⁶ and the Afghans had already been won by a treaty. Thus it was again the usefulness of buffers which came to be ^{prized} ~~accounted~~ for the defence of India.

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1. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 20 August 1830, No.1-3.
 2. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 25 November 1830, Nos.7-10.
 3. Marriott, The English in India, Oxford 1932, P.138.
 4. PP(microfilm) Vol.40, P.131, Commons C167 of 1839.
 5. Letter of Amir of Cabool from Shah's agent at Tehran vide PP(microfilm) Vol.40, P.131, Commons C167 of 1839.
 6. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 25 November 1831, Nos.7-10.

In 1834 Lord William Bentinck reviewed the military position of India and ~~established~~ ^{believed} that the only danger with which the English could be threatened was from the North West and suggested that all measures ought to be taken on that line of operation. Ranjit Singh and the Afghans, he estimated, presented no cause of danger to India, because the former was a friend and the latter was militarily weak, as had been demonstrated in their war against the wretched ^{of} army of Shah Shuja. Dost Mohammad Khan was gaining strength. Persia without the help of Russia was no good. The latest accounts from Kabul had stated that the Russians were building a fort between the Caspian and Khive, which was their best line of operation against India.¹ Bentinck appreciated a danger from the Russians to the frontier, but according to him it was not of an immediate nature. The line of operation for a Russo-Persian army to advance upon Herat was to involve a march of 1,189 miles, from where a crusade could be proclaimed against British India.² Since there was no immediate cause to worry, Bentinck did not take any extraordinary steps to strengthen the frontier, and thus exercised economy of force.

Lord Auckland came to India with new ideas. He had on him a great influence of Palmerston who was profoundly impressed by the danger threatening India, on account of Russia's ambitious designs.³ The Commander-in-Chief advised the Governor General

1. PP Vol.52, P.459, Commons 500 of 1867.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Marriott, 'The English in India', Oxford 1932, P.138.

that it was wisest to refrain from extending dominions to the west,¹ and suggested that ^{from the} in military point of view, the frontier was ^{the} most perfect that the British could possess, and it was impracticable for any force of any nation to cross the Indus and to penetrate the countries on the eastern side, below the junction where the five rivers met. The only risky border was the Satlej, from where the British Empire could be endangered. But the natural position of Satlej, according to the Commander-in-Chief, provided a strong defence on account of mountains about the Cantonment of Sobathe^a on the North West, which was well enforced and no force could advance eastward without the risk of having its communications cut off and being itself surrounded.² The strategic location of the frontier would have kept the lines of communication short and armies easy to maintain. The lines of ^{the} Jamuna and ^{the} Ganges provided the Indian Army not only ample strategic points of supply for the army, but abundant depots for stores and ammunition and water carriage by which all resources could be brought up. The British also had a choice of battlefields, for if they chose to wait to fight near the frontier, they had the protected Sikh States to use as battle-field. The Commander-in-Chief appreciated the natural position of the frontier to be strong and ordered obstacles to be imposed from Satlej to Agra by stationing a sufficient force of Cavalry and Horse Artillery, which could meet a sudden eventuality.³

1. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 10 July 1837, No.1.

2. Loc Cit.

3. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 10 July 1837, No.5 & 6.

Thus we see that all strategic considerations dictated that the war on the North West frontier should not be fought on a battle field beyond the Satlej and not beyond the Indus on any case, for it entailed maintenance of very long lines of communication. A deviation ^{from} of this principle was ^{the} a strategic blunder of sending an army to Afghanistan, because the lines of communication became unduly long. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Henry Fane, had given his opinion against marching an army beyond the Satlej, as he felt it would lead to military weakness.¹ Sir Charles Metcalfe the Vice-President in Council too advised Lord Auckland the usefulness of the policy of non-interference in the internal system of states beyond ^{the} Indus and his biographer Kaye is of the opinion that if Metcalfe remained supreme in India, not a man would have been moved across the Indus.² ~~The~~ disaster of the army that followed ^{the} strategic blunder is too well known to require a mention.

In the ~~Security~~ of the frontier, a factor of ^{great} importance was the suitable disposition of military stations. Based on ^m Military strategy, Ludhiana was the nearest military station to Satlej, in 1835.³ Next was Karnal, distant about 140 miles. Ferozepore, Ludhiana and Rupar were important stations from the military point of view, and all three were located on the south bank of the Satlej. Ferozepore, which had become a military

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1. Adye, John, 'Indian Frontier Policy', London 1897, P.7.
 2. Kaye, J.W. The Life and Correspondence of Charles Lord Metcalfe, Vol.II, London 1858, P.86.
 3. Parliamentary Debates, Vol.LXXXIV, London 1847, P.409.

station ⁱⁿ ~~about~~ 1824, was excellent for pursuit of peace or operation of war,¹ and was an excellent depot for ammunition of war, but it was neglected for a long time. Sir Charles Metcalfe was in favour of strengthening and occupying Ferozepore with as much Infantry as possible, because Ludhiana was very much away from Karnal which made it weak. Lieutenant Cunningham planned fortification around it and made it strong.² Ferozepore became, in due course, of such military importance that it became the depot of stores and the base of operations for the army for the Afghan War of 1839-42.³

Thus, Ferozepore and Ludhiana became the most important military stations on North Western Frontier, with Karnal in depth. Ruper was not neglected as it gained enough strength owing to the positioning of large troops at Ludhiana and Sabath^uoe.

Soon a new station of importance was selected at Ambala, which substituted Karnal. Forces at Ambala were fifty four miles nearer the military border than Karnal, from where force could move for the relief of Ferozepore and Ludhiana with ease.⁴ On account of Ambala being close to Ruper, the latter was secured. In the selection of military stations for strategic defence of India, careful considerations decided their location. The underlying principle was the system of triangulation,⁵ based

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1. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 10 July 1837, No.5 & 6.
 2. Foreign Secret Consultation dated 9 January 1839, No.59.
 3. Foreign Secret Consultation dated 6 March 1839, Nos.2-3.
 4. Parliamentary Debates, Vol.LXXXIV, London 1847, P.409-410.
 5. Memorandum on Security of Cantonements vide Inquiry on the subject of the Reorganisation of the Armies of India. At Bombay this system was employed in the selection of military stations.

on a sound military practice of the Company. The system had been extensively employed and consisted in so stationing troops in cantonments that they could be re-inforced ^{at} in the troubled spot in a short time. In places which were isolated and were incapable of mutual support, the troops were massed as much as possible to make the garrison strong enough, so as to be able to exist independently. The system of triangulation facilitated 'rapid mobilisation', 'concentration of force' at desired place and 'economy of force' for not all military stations were to have a very big force, in view of the fact that troops could be rapidly mobilised ^{to} in troubled places.

The usefulness of the system of triangulation was demonstrated at the time of the First Sikh War. The frontier between Ferozepore and Ropar, presented a line more than a hundred miles and it was not possible to ascertain from where the enemy would effect crossing. The forces were stationed at Ferozepore and Ludhiana and a force was kept at Ambala to reinforce them both.¹ At the commencement of the First Sikh War, when the Sikhs crossed the river near Ferozepore, troops were rapidly brought from Ambala to meet them.

In mobilising force to meet the Sikh threat, Hardinge observed principles of secrecy and surprise. He selected a season of the year when general reliefs periodically took place and it was with complete secrecy that Ferozepore, Ludhiana and Ambala were greatly strengthened. The following table will show how the forces stood when Hardinge arrived in India in July 1844,

1. Parliamentary Debates, Vol. LXXXIV, London 1847, P.410.

and when the Sikh War broke out the following year.¹

At Ferozepore	July	1844	4,596 men	12 guns
	December	1845	10,472 men	24 guns
At Ludhiana	July	1844	3,030 men	12 guns
	December	1845	7,235 men	12 guns
At Ambala	July	1844	4,113 men	24 guns
	December	1845	12,972 men	32 guns

The First Sikh War changed the old traditional frontier between the British and the Sikh State from the Satlej to the Beas. The Second Sikh War extended the frontier still further and the natural boundry of North West Frontier of India became the frontier of India. Ranjit's troubles on that frontier became the problems of the British. When Sir Charles Napier became the Commander-in-Chief, he ascertained that it took six months for a body of troops to travel from the Indus to the Brahmaputra. The Bolan Pass was immediately open to invasion from Afghanistan. To meet this danger the Commander-in-Chief considered the military strength at each Presidency.² The Punjab was most dangerous because the British were not sure of the loyalty of Gulab Singh, and he could rally the whole lot of disarmed Sikh soldiery behind him. For this reason Delhi was reinforced, and provided for immediate reinforcement in case a danger arose. Massuri, Landour, Almorah and Bareilly were reinforced to meet

1. James Grant, Cassell's Illustrated History of India, Vol.II, London 1891, P.147.

2. Memorandum of Charles Napier, dated 27 November 1849.

danger on the northern frontier, from Nepal. Peshawar was the new cantonment that guarded Khyber and formed an advanced post for the Jullundur Doab. Jullundur became an important military station because if it was lost the line of communication would have been cut between the Punjab and the Indus. To meet an army of Gulab Singh, Simla was to provide a strong body of troops which was to form the right flank of the army marching against Jammu, or in case of war with Nepal, it was to reinforce the left flank of the force marching from Delhi. In case Gulab Singh and Nepal formed a collusion, the forces from Simla were to effectually cut off the communication between Nepal and the territories of the Maharajah.¹

Thus we find that the military position of India was throughout our period kept strong by way of buffers and by way of stationing forces in cantonments, and in doing so, the most strategic considerations were observed, and India was secured from time to time from external aggression.

To intrigue, to play one against another and to buy off the key personnel of an enemy formed a part of British strategy in a broad sense. They employed the technique on innumerable occasions which achieved for them an easy victory over their enemy. This technique worked very well where the enemy was weak for his weakness could be thoroughly exploited.

General Wellesley, it is on record in the Ahmednagar Gazetteer, was advised by Raghurao Baba, the Deshmukh of Bhingar to attack on the eastern face of the fort of Ahmednagar, and

1. Loc. Cit.

for this the latter had received a bribe of £400 (Rs.4000).¹ It is no wonder that a strong fort like that of Ahmednagar should have surrendered so easily. Wellesley, in his despatch to the Governor General had informed him that Ahmednagar fort was the second strongest fort then in India.

The treaty of Bassein was nothing else but a big intrigue. The treaty broke the Maratha confederacy, and was particularly humiliating to Sindhia and Holkar that the claims of the Peshwa upon the Nizam and the Gaikwar of Baroda should be subject to British arbitration.² The British were not true even to the Peshwa; they restored him to his masnad, but at the same time entered into intrigue with his ministers by bribing and corrupting them, with the object of bringing more territories under their power.³ Before Lake's operations in the north, the Governor General made a clever move, inviting all British officers to quit their service under the Marathas. Some officers resigned, but Parron, out of jealousy, dismissed the remaining British officers too.⁴ At the battle of Aligarh there were six of those officers who fought on the British side, and Lucan out of them rendered the most valuable service by disclosing the enemy's weak side for attack.⁵ Lucan gallantly undertook to lead Colonel

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1. Basu, B.D. 'Rise of the Christian Power in India', Calcutta 1931, P.457.
 2. P.F. Roberts, 'A Historical Geography of the British Dependencies, Vol.VII, India (Oxford MDCCCXXI), P.255.
 3. Basu, B.D. 'Rise of the Christian Power in India, Calcutta 1931, P.460.
 4. Herbert Campton, 'A Particular account of the European Military Adventurers of Hindustan, London MDCCCXCI.
 5. By an officer of Bengal Staff Corps. 'Essays and Lectures on Indian Historical Subjects, London 1866, P.51.
'The advance of our troops was much facilitated by the guidance of an adventurer, Lieutenant Lucas, who had quitted the service of Scindia on the declaration of war.'

Manson to the gate of the fort and pointed out the road through the fort and Colonel Manson received ~~an infinite~~ ^{great} benefit from his services.¹

At times the British generals tempted the Commanders of the opposing armies by giving them big hopes and the latter brought about the catastrophe and completely ruined their own army. The instances are numerous. Just before the commencement of Lake's operations, Lord Wellesley wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, Lake, the necessity of tempting the Maratha Commander, Perron, in the following words: 'It would be highly desirable to detach Perron from Scindia's service by pacific negotiations, M. Perron's inclination certainly is to dispose of his power, to a French purchaser. I should not be surprised if he were found to be ready to enter into terms with Your Excellency, provided he could obtain a sufficient security for his personal interests. I empower Your Excellency to conclude any agreement for the security of M. Perron's personal interests and property, accompanied by any reasonable remuneration from the British Government, which shall induce him to deliver up the whole of his military resources and power, together with all his territorial possessions and the person of the Mogul and heir apparent into your Excellency's hands.' So, when Lake advanced with his army to Aligarh, he wrote to Perron to send a confidential officer to the British Camp to discuss terms which the Governor General had proposed.² Perron, however, did not send his confidential officer to Lake but asked Lake to send one instead. At

1. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 2 March 1804, No.68.

2. Foreign Secret Consultation, dated 2 March 1804, No.42.

that time the matters dropped but soon after the fall of Aligarh Perron requested Lake for British protection and the British happily extended it to him. Perron's retirement from Scindia's force had certainly been induced by Lake, and its immediate effect was a diminished confidence of the native powers in the fidelity of the French officers in their service.¹

The intrigue with the Sikh Generals is well known. Recent researches confirm that the Sikhs "fought heroically but the commanders betrayed them".² The British had depended upon intriguers and traitors, whom they had raised on the camp of the Sikhs, to ensure their own success.³ Peter Nicholson, the Assistant Political Agent at Ferozepore wrote: "The Rajah himself has induced the troops to march in the hopes of his so doing being considered a recommendation of him by the British Government".⁴ Indeed, it is quite likely that not only Rani Jindan, Lal Singh and Tej Singh but several other chiefs sought the destruction of the army, and they all played "a dubious role". Commenting on the battle of Sobraon, Captain Cunningham says:⁵ "the views of either party were in some score met by an understanding that the Sikh army should be attacked by the English, and that when beaten it should be openly abandoned by its own government

1. Fore Sec. Cons., dated 2 March 1804, No.87.

2. Bal, S.S. Cunningham's History of the Sikhs, Bengal Past and Present, Journal of the Calcutta Historical Society, July-December 1963, Vol.LXXXII (Part II), P.113.

3. Basu, B.D. Rise of the Christian Power in India, Calcutta 1931, P.874.

4. Bal, S.S. British Policy Towards the Panjab, 1844-49, (Ph.D. thesis), London University 1963, P.94-95.

5. Cunningham's History of Sikhs, edited by Garrett, Notes by Sethi, Delhi 1955, P.265.

and further that the passage of the Satlej should be unopposed and the road to the capital laid open to the victors. Under such circumstances of discreet policy was the battle of Sobraon fought". Lal Singh was in communication with Henry Lawrence through a 'confidential agent', who gave all the intelligence which helped Lawrence to prepare "a rough sketch of the position and strength of the enemy at Sobraon on the night of 7th February for the transmission to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief".¹

In the army of the East India Company, there was no mobilisation in the modern sense.² But quickness in assembling troops was achieved through government assistance and a good Dak System.

The regulations for the assistance of marching troops were not very comprehensive; they nevertheless served the purpose in those times. By a regulation of 1806, great assistance in matters of supplies and means of transport was provided to marching troops, and for giving compensation for any material damage caused to crops thereby.³ By the order, the Commanding Officer of a body of troops when marching through the Company's territories by land or water gave notice to the collectors of revenue of the districts through which the troops were to pass, with the estimated time of arrival in those districts. During operations by the army as a whole, on receiving

1. Hardinge to Ripon, dated 3 February 1846; quoted Bal, S.S. Op. Cit., (Ph.D. thesis), P.99

2. Gough and Innes, The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars, London 1827, P.81.

3. Cornduff, C.W.F. Military and Cantonment Law in India, Calcutta 1904, P.70.

instructions to prepare for war, the Commander-in-Chief was instructed to liaise with collectors to ascertain the extent of assistance that could be provided for marching troops.¹ The Collectors, on receiving notice from the Commanding Officers made temporary bridges on nullahs coming on the way of the marching army. The Collectors informed the land holders, farmers and Tehsildars or other persons incharge of lands through which the troops were to pass, for providing the supplies required, and for making any requisite preparation of boats or temporary bridges, or for enabling the troops to cross rivers or nullahs without impediment or delay.² The Collector also provided an officer to accompany the troops through his jurisdiction for the purpose of procuring the necessary supplies and for facilitating the march of the troops. By enlarged regulations of 1825, if the persons including land holders, failed without sufficient reason to make the necessary preparation for the troops, they were liable to be fined upto a sum of one thousand rupees.³ Like the Bengal Presidency, the Bombay Presidency too provided for facilitating a speedy march of armies.⁴ Whenever a body of troops exceeding 200 Infantry or and one hundred of

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1. Military Letter to Court, dated 15 May 1794, Para 1-3; Foreign Secret Consultations dated 12 November 1803; No.29. The Commander-in-Chief before the Mahratta wars directed the Collectors to furnish statements of the number of bullocks and quantity of grain which their districts could supply for the public service, This shows that even before the regulation of 1806 came into force the civil authorities provided assistance for the march of armies.
 2. The Bengal Troops, Transport and Travellers Assistance Regulations, 1806, vide Cornduff, C.W.F. Military and Cantonment Law in India, Calcutta 1904, P.70.
 3. The Bengal Troops Transport Regulations 1825, Cornduff, C.W.F. Cit Op., P.80.
 4. Bombay Regulation XXII of 1824, P.31, Op Cit.

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Cavalry marched, the Commanding Officer intimated the District Magistrates the type of assistance he required, while passing through territories under the jurisdiction of the latter.

It is worth noting that locals were extensively used to facilitate the march of troops to obtain rapid mobility. The news of the march of troops, the direction and probable strength was intimated to the Zamindars! This could militate against the principle^{of} security, which was another important principle of military strategy. There is nothing to preclude the possibility of the enemy being in communication with the locals. It is therefore evident that rapid mobility was achieved by sacrificing secrecy and surprise.

Another important factor that contributed to rapid mobility was the 'dak system' in field, which was organised efficiently. By a regulation of 1800, in times of war, small detachments from the army in the field marching along regular dak route delivered their correspondence to the Addadar of the nearest dak station by whom they were received and forwarded as bearing postage.¹ When a large body of troops moved in the field, the Deputy Post Master of the station accompanied it and the Commander in the field issued direct instructions to that officer on the subject of Post in the field.² Peons were employed under the control of an official called Mutsuddy, who arranged receipt and delivery of postage under the protection of a small detachment which the Commander of force fixed.³ All

1. Military Proceedings, Governor General's despatches dated 3 April 1800, No.59.

2. Ibid,

3. Ibid.

letters in the army, whether private or public, for the Grand Army in the field, consisted of a small slip of paper whose dimensions were not to exceed a specification laid down by orders, and the slip was rolled and not folded.¹

From the foregoing account, it is quite evident that both in times of war and peace the British in India kept in view some of the most vital principles of strategy, such as Rapid Mobility, Concentration, Coordination, Forethought and Economy of force, Maintenance of objective and intrigue.

1. Kerr Seton 'Selections from Calcutta Gazettes (1798-1805), Vol.III, Calcutta 1868, P.25.

LIFE IN THE ARMY

Almost all the military officers in the Company's days were of British origin. The majority of them had their training as cadets at the Company's military seminary at Addiscombe. Some purchased their commissions in the Crown's service and came to India with their regiments, and such officers were often much younger than those who came after military training at the training establishments. For instance, Sir John Malcolm got his commission when he was twelve and the Duke of Wellington when he was a little over fourteen. There were no fixed rules in early days respecting the age at which commissions might be held.¹ Thus the young cadets prepared themselves for embarking the Company's ships usually at an age when they could be moulded to suit the Company's regiments; their minds were still tender and flexible, to suit the Indian environments, and they were anxious to enter into a new life and a promising career. Before embarking, perhaps every officer of the Company's army felt like Conran: 'some natural tears I shed, but wiped them soon; the world was all before me'.²

The voyage in the early days was very dangerous and six to ten months were spent round the Cape; but towards the end of our period under study by the opening of Red Sea Route, it was reduced to one month and it was made comparatively comfortable.³ The officers were paid passage money at fixed

1. Kaye, J.W. Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm, Vol.1, London 1856, P.7.

2. Conran, H.M. Autobiography of an Indian Officer, London 1870, P.24.

3. Napier, C.J. Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government, London 1853, P.251.

sliding scales, varying from £s.250 for a Major General to £s.95 for a cadet, from which all expenses of the voyage were met;¹ but this allowance was considerably reduced with the shortening of the period of the voyage. The recruits were allowed free passage at the Company's expense. On the opening of the new route, the troops went from India to Alexandria where they disembarked; then they travelled through Egypt to reach Suez where they re-embarked in the Mediterranean Sea.² From time to time rules and regulations were made for the good conduct of both the passengers and the ship's officers and all passengers were acquainted with these rules before getting on board. According to one rule, dated 17 January, 1799, the time of extinguishing candles at night was nine O'Clock on the decks and ten in the cabins; the hour of dinner was fixed not later than two O'Clock; "when the commander retired from table, either after dinner or supper, the passengers and officers of the ship retired also; anyone offending against good manners and known usages and customs will and on representation to the Court, be severely noticed"; at the same time the Captain of the ship was obliged to pay due attention to the comfortable accomodation of the passengers.³ The ships moved in groups in those early days; for amusement, the travellers had angling facilities and indoor games; and they could

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1. Hardy, H.C. Register of Ships of East India Company from 1760 to 1819, London 1920, Appx. 72-5.
 2. Evidence of Colonel Alex Murray, Report of Commissioners, Q.4661.
 3. Hardy, H.C. Register of Ships of the East India Company from 1760 to 1819, London 1920, Appx. 130-1.

move from ship to ship.¹ There were sometimes some women on board, as the practice of sending girls to India to find husbands had come into vogue from the middle of the eighteenth century; their presence 'produced more than one duel' at the first landing place.² This necessitated a good deal of advice from the parents and guardians of the young ladies, before they embarked. "In case of your coming out", says one anxious adviser, "I entreat you will be as careful of your conduct on board the ship as possible ... It requires prudence even in young ladys of good families and friends to guard against the ruin of their reputation. You will I hope excuse the advice I give you; but as you have no experience of wily men, you may find this and all you get on this head necessary; and if you was worth £s.20,000 and lost your character, you will be despised for ever".³

The cadets on their arrival in India reported at the Presidency Headquarters. In Bengal, after reporting arrival at Fort Williams, the cadets were sent to Baraset, fifteen miles from Calcutta, where there was a college for the cadets. After 1811, however, the college was closed due to mismanagement and subsequently an officer was appointed to receive cadets, who acted as their Commanding Officer until they were attached to regiments for training.⁴ The East India Company

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1. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.42.
 2. Dodwell, Henry The Nabobs of Madras, London 1926, P.4.
 3. Loc Cit.
 4. Dower, Douglas In the Days of the Company, Calcutta 1920, P.192.

treated their cadets excellently, says an officer in the 1840s, and he found "both a capital mess and very comfortable quarters".¹ The regimental routine for the cadet was often tough, at least initially; once he was posted to a regiment as an officer, not even the Commander-in-Chief could remove him from there, unless the officer himself wished to change his regiment. The young officers in due course became so attached to their regiments that they began to look upon them as their 'homes'.² Consequently, an officer was seldom removed from his regiment until an alteration of rank made it unavoidable. However, the ties of attachment to the regiments appear to become loose as we move towards the end of our period. In the early days when intercourse with Europe was rare and difficult; few thought of going on leave; and there were few things other than regimental details which occupied the minds of British officers.³ Every night, thirty to forty of them used to sit down to mess to form "a convivial and happy party".⁴ There were no English women to occupy an English officer's time, or mind. It is true that English women had been allowed to come to India, but their number was very small.⁵ An officer spent most of his time conversing with his men, entering into their feelings and thinking of their welfare; this resulted in great intimacy and under-

1. Harris, J.T. China Jim, London 1912, P.2.

2. Military Consultations, dated 23 January 1832, Nos.11-13.

3. Malleon (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny, Vol.1, London 1888, P.187.

4. Harris, J.T. China Jim, London 1912, P.3.

5. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.12.

standing between officers and men. Later, however, when intercourse with Europe became easy, there was an influx not only of English news and English books but also of English women; they became the charm of the cantonments.¹ This added some zest to the personal life of the British officers. But it prevented them from mixing with their men.¹

Indeed, European officers became very exclusive.² In the olden days an English officer would welcome the native officer to his bungalow and by informal talk get to know the gossip of the lines, the grievances of men, and various small regimental details, which proved useful. There were some officers who still preferred serving with the natives rather than with Europeans; but this was confined to service in the Artillery.³ Generally, however, there being no regulations for officers to know their men, many young officers were ignorant about many things concerning men under their own command.⁴ Thus, there was no contact between the British officers and the natives; they met only on parade and that was hardly a social contact.

Among the British officers themselves there were jealousies due to differences in the conditions of service between the Crown's and the Company's troops. In the Crown's service the officers lived entirely by themselves, in their

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1. Malleon (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny, Vol.1, London 1888, P.188-189.
 2. Evidence of Sir George Clarke, Report of Commissioners, Q.1261-62.
 3. Evidence of Colonel Henry Durand, Report of Commissioners, Q.5351.
 4. Evidence of Sir George Clarke, Governor of Bombay, Report of Commissioners, Q.1262-1270.

own circle of friends.¹ The native officers and men who took delight in being spoken to were at times neglected, except in the Irregular Corps, where the officers took a personal interest in keeping themselves informed regarding everything concerning their men. The indifference of European officers towards the native soldiers was observed by many contemporaries. In this respect Sir Charles Napier tells us that when he was a Captain any men could speak to him at any time about his affairs, but that by the time he became the Commander-in-Chief, the soldiers did not get the advice and encouragement from their officers.² Sir Thomas Munro observed that younger officers kept aloof from native officers and strong attachments were missing between the Europeans and the natives.³

A British officer's life towards the close of our period was a continuous round of dependence on others. The Calcutta Review of 1856 gives a very graphic account of an officer's life: 'Hundreds of officers, especially of the Royal Army in India, with every opportunity, go through their career, live and die, in the most childish helplessness. They have no object, or at least the very smallest, to a worldly mind for exertion. They are accustomed to have everything done for them. To be fed, clothed, barracked, encamped all without a thought on their part; when therefore a necessity

1. Evidence of Major Balcarres Dalrymple, Report of Commissioners, Q.5066.
2. Napier, C.J. Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government, London 1853, P.254.
3. Ibid, P.250.

for using their senses arises, they are like babies.¹ The officers depended for most of their personal day to day things on their servants, and a Captain in garrison had a fleet of about thirty servants to look after his affairs: for instance, a cashier, a house steward, a market man, two waiters, a cook, a gardener, eight bearers for palankeen, women to clean the house, porters at the door and numerous other servants.² Even in the early years of the nineteenth century, the position of the officers in this respect was probably not much different. During the Mysore wars, for instance, a Captain was accompanied on a campaign by a dubash (steward), a cook and a boy, a housekeeper, a grass cutter, a barber, a washerman and fifteen to twenty coolies to carry the baggage.³ The luggage consisted of items like a large bed, mattresses and pillows, camp stools and chairs, a folding table, shades for candles, six to seven trunks with crockery and cutlery and a stock of linen, some dozens of wine, brandy and gin, tea and sugar, a hamper of live poultry, a goat and an extra tent for excess of luggage and servants.⁴ It may be noted, however, that this unduly large kit was necessitated on account of the non-existence of officers messes; but once officers messes were authorised to be accompanied with regiments and became a part of their establishment the kit carried by officers was reduced considerably.

1. Calcutta Review, Vol.XXVI, London 1856.

2. Carey, W.H. Honourable John Company, Calcutta 1906, P.217.

3. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.85.

4. Loc Cit.

An officer of the Bengal Army generally kept a much larger number of servants than an officer in Madras and Bombay. This was due to the caste consciousness of servants in Bengal. Of course the Bengal officers spent more in consequence.¹ In spite of the best efforts to reduce camp equipment during military manoeuvres, the camps became very large and unwieldy on account of a very large number of followers and animals. According to one account, when the Commander-in-Chief moved on his tour of a particular area, his ordinary establishment was eighty to ninety elephants, three to four hundred camels, and the same number of bullocks, with men to attend to those animals, and three hundred and thirty two tent pitchers.² The camps looked like canvas palaces and it was believed that great pomp and show produced a great respect in the minds of the Indian peoples.

In the early days, even when there were no wars, big army camps were located at suitable places; in due course, houses were built, and the camps changed into cantonments.³ This change from army camps to cantonments was not sudden but slow. All cantonments were placed under the department of Quarter Master General who decided on the layout of the cantonments. When considerably developed, these cantonments became the hub of major activity and some of the cantonments became big markets.

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1. Military Letter from Court, dated 6 January 1825, Para 11.
 2. Napier, C.J. Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government, London 1853, P.35.
 3. Evidence of Major General Robert Alexander, Report of Commissioners, Q.2417.

In the cantonments, officers were not lodged in barracks but in bungalows; they received money to build them and lived there in an impressive style. The first bungalows were temporary one-storeyed thatched buildings made of kacha or sun-dried bricks and were called 'Garden Houses'.¹ By the beginning of the nineteenth century, new bungalows were constructed with low verandahs for shade. Tatties made of bamboos were hung in the verandahs and kas-kas wetted with water was applied to doors of the bungalows to keep them cool.² Swinging Pankas, hung to the roofs and drawn by a string, were used to keep the air cool. The bungalows were thus made comfortable for living.

The first officers who erected bungalows in the cantonments went without many things like meat, poultry and vegetables; they used to dine at mid-day.³ It appears from various accounts that the day started between eight and nine, followed by a meal called tiffin, followed by dinner at about three in the afternoon.⁴ Tea, was drunk in the evening, and late meals, termed supper, were arranged on very rare occasions. The nights were spent in drinking and gambling. By 1800 Lord Cornwallis had made great improvement in cantonment life, both as regards comfort and manners.⁵ As more and more women appeared in cantonments, manners improved. Dinner came to be eaten late in the evening and drinking was cut down considerably.

1. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.49.

2. Ibid, P.26.

3. Ibid, P.88.

4. An officer's Diary 'War and Sport in India 1802-1806, London (no date) P.474.

5. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.89.

There was an attempt to prevent the cantonment bazaar from becoming over-crowded. Europeans were located in such a manner that they could defend themselves if necessary. Some portion of troops was usually held in readiness for emergencies at all Indian stations.¹ Every magazine and arsenal was a fortress, and for the security of gun factories and gunpowder factories, troops were deployed all around them. The civilians having been excluded from the limits of cantonments and proper security having been obtained, the Europeans lived in their "islands" of European culture.

The cantonment life was not without amusement, for there was racing, gambling and big game hunting. Durand mentions dancing, cards, smoking hookah and drinking brandy as his amusements of a camp life.² By the end of the eighteenth century most of the cantonments had their annual race meetings.³ In the camps and on the march the soldiers revelled in unlimited hunting and shooting. Big game hunting was, however, for only a few, for it had to be conducted on elephants and from 'machans'. Some of the wild game available in India in those days were neal_gao (wild black cow), boar, deer and tiger; the duck and the partridge were favourite objects of shooting sport.⁴ A few officers spent their leisure in the study of

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1. Wakeham, Eric The Bravest soldier Sir Rollo Gillispie, London 1939, P.105.
 2. A Durand, H.M. The Life of Sir Henry Marian Durand, Vol.1, London 1883, P.14.
 3. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.89.
 4. An officer's Diary War and Sport in India 1802-1806, London (no date), P.84.

books on diverse subjects.¹ Some of them became writers and authors, as for example Sir John Malcolm. But intellectual pretensions or literary activities were no part of an average British officer's life.

Some officers spent their leisure with the native women. There was scarcity of European women, more so in the Company's early days, and the Europeans often had unions with the native women which, except in a few cases, were often irregular.² Major Conran observed that "the weak charactered" among Europeans found an easy way to learn the language, customs and character of the natives by 'illicit companionship with native females'.³ Nevertheless, in the 1840s only twelve per cent. of men in European regiments were allowed to marry.⁴ This new situation must have affected the emotional life of those who could not marry. The opportunities of getting married were prized all the more for their rarity. Lieutenant Colvert refers to his wife as the widow who 'came to Madras with her daughters, the last of which is married to a Captain in the Company's service, and I have married the mother'.⁵ In Bengal, an officer got married to a woman who had been kept in succession by a Colonel and then two Captains.⁶

1. Macpherson, William Memorials of Service in India, London 1865, P.35.

2. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.62.

3. Conran, H.M. Autobiography of an Indian Officer, London 1870, P.143.

4. Ibid, P.136.

5. Dodwell, Henry The Nabobs of Madras, London 1926, P.199.

6. Ibid, P.202.

One can understand what frustration the Europeans in India must have experienced on account of scarcity of European women. Even though by the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a considerable number of European women in the cantonments, there were many who could not have an associations with them - temporary or permanent. The scarcity of women often led to quarrels among young men, both on board the ship and in cantonments. Evan Cotton narrates that once a quarrel arose among three gentleman passengers on account of a young lady, for all of them professed to have fallen in love with her. However, they came to a compromise: all agreed that she could marry them in turn. And she did.¹ Some women who could not find husbands in Europe came to India, for suitors were easily available here. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, therefore, the problems of marriage of European officers were not so acute.

It has been observed that women were allowed to come from Europe to India, and among other reasons, to prevent unlawful union with country women and to reduce the temptation of soldiers marrying the Portuguese Roman Catholics.² There was a great enthusiasm for nauch, partly because there were no facilities for European dancing; this gave the Europeans an opportunity of mixing with native women and the authorities were aware that the presence of English women was necessary.

In many cases over indulgence in amusements was a reflection of frustration in their lives. Disillusion often

1. Cotton, Evan East Indiaman, London 1949, P.65.

2. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.12.

led to frustration. Europeans as a whole appear to have been frustrated mainly on account of the difference in what they had expected to find in India and what they actually experienced. A young Cavalry officer wrote:¹ 'if the allusion be not simply to curry the rice, the origin of the expression, luxury of the East, is to me an enigma'. Even the best of English officers found a subtle dissatisfaction in their Indian career. Thomas Munro once wrote to his sister in England:² 'you seem to think that (Indian Officers) live like those satraps that you have read of in plays; and that I in particular hold my state in prodigious splendour and magnificence - that I never go abroad unless upon an elephant, surrounded with a crowd of slaves - that I am arrayed in silken robes, and that most of my time is spent in reclining on a sofa listening to soft music, while I am fanned by my officious pages, or dreaming like Richard under a Canopy. But while you rejoice in my imaginary greatness, I most likely am stretched on a mat, instead of my royal couch; and walking in an old coat and ragged shirt, in the noonday sun, instead of looking down from my elephant, invested with my royal garments'. Major General Durand once wrote to a friend:³ 'the luxuries of the East have certainly never abtruded themselves on my organs of sight ... you enjoy more luxury, incomparably more comfort, in your vicrage parlour than would be found in any part in India.'

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1. Macpherson, William Memorials of Service in India, London 1865, P.8.
 2. Dodwell, Henry The Nabobs of Madras, London 1926, P.186.
 3. Major General Durand to Joe dated 6 May 1833 vide Durand, H.M. The Life of Major General Henry Marian Durand, London 1883, P.30.

Staff jobs were more lucrative and were considered to be more honourable than the common regimental duty.¹ They consisted of appointment in the civil departments and in the administration of new provinces, appointment in the public works department and with Irregular Corps. The natural feeling of an officer joining a regiment in India was to get through his regimental drill as rapidly as possible to get to a staff job.² This attitude militated against discipline and control of the regiments. Nevertheless British officers were keen for staff appointments; they felt tired and wearied of commanding active units.³ There were instances of officers remaining ten, fifteen and twenty years away from their corps.⁴ Major General Harrington regarded this a fault of the system.⁵

European Officers were not happy with their pay and allowances in the regiments and looked forward to staff appointments which were not only softer but also more paying. About his financial condition Sir Thomas Munro had once written to his sister in England:⁶ "you may not believe me when I tell you that I never experienced hunger or thirst, fatigue or poverty, till I came to India - since then I have frequently met with the first three, and the last has been my constant companion".

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1. Malleon (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny, Vol.1, London 1888, P.190.
 2. Evidence of Captain Brown, Report of Commissioners, Q.1085.
 3. Ibid, Q.1086.
 4. Ibid, Q.1092.
 5. Evidence of Major General Harrington, Report of Commissioners, Q.1403.
 6. Dodwell, Henry The Nabobs of Madras, London 1926, P.186.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, an officer of the Company wrote to the Court of Directors:¹ 'with all the care and attention I could give, I was considerably out of pocket'.

In some cases financial difficulties were increased by the personal habits of the officers. We find an ensign deserting the service because he feared imprisonment for being in debt; an officer requesting a money lender to conceal the fact of his being in debt.² This financial difficulty was caused by drinking and gambling. Duelling put the surviving families of the deceased soldiers and officers to excessive financial distress.³ The allowances given were not enough to meet the expenses which military men generally incurred through custom and habit; among them there was an urge to have comforts which they believed were essential to the health of Europeans in the Indian climate.⁴ The greatest expense arose from the self-imposed obligation to keep a large number of servants. For instance, as a junior officer Durand considered six servants 'as the very least you can do with'.⁵ These servants were individually cheap but collectively quite costly. The officers spent a great part of their pay in giving feasts, some of them going into heavy debt on account of gambling; and, though it was unlawful for army

1. Ibid, P.58.

2. Ibid, P.70.

3. Forrest, G.W. Sepoy Generals, Wellington to Roberts, London 1901, P.150.

4. Military Letter to Court, dated 6 January 1825, Para 11.

5. Durand, H.M. Life of Major General Sir Henry Marian Durand, Vol.1, London 1883, P.14.

personal to gamble, the practice could never be stopped completely, and there were still others who lost large sums on the race course.

At all the Presidencies, officers were considered offenders if they went into debt and all officers in debt were brought before a 'Court of Request'.¹ The Court of Request was a special army court where officers were tried, and were sometimes sentenced to severe punishments like dismissal from service for being in debt. Offenders appeared before this court every month, for it was a standing order throughout India that a Court of Request shall assemble at every military station every month. Many officers resorted to borrowing money from the pay-havildars to avoid trial.²

Duelling, which was a major cause of ruin of some families, was quite common. Subedar Sita Ram tells us that the British had very curious custom about izzat or honour, and if they were insulted they fought or they were never again spoken to by their brother officers.³ Quarrels often arose over trifles. Subedar Sita Ram himself witnessed a pistol duel at a private party between two officers of his regiment who quarreled because of the arrogant attitude of one towards the other. The duel resulted in the death of the host.⁴ Major General Rollo Gillispie, whose name is

1. Evidence of Major General Robert Alexander, Report of Commissioners, Q.2368-69.

2. Sitaram Subedar, From Sepoy to Subedar, 3rd Edn., Calcutta 1911, P.53.

3. Ibid, P.47.

4. Ibid, P.53.

connected with the mutiny of Vellore, as a young officer quarreled with Major Barrington who called him a coward living in a regiment of cowards. Gillispie's biographer narrates that 'Gillispie, in extreme rage, whipped out his handkerchief, held one end and himself, and offering the other corner to Barrington, engaged to fight at point blank range. Both fired simultaneously. The cock of Gillispie's pistol was knocked off by his opponent's ball. Barrington was shot through the heart and carried to the neighbouring cabin'.¹ Another duel arose when a Captain, Brown, called a young officer officer, Grant, 'a child'; Grant sent a challenge, they met and fired together and Brown was shot dead.²

In due course, the Government was obliged to take notice of sad consequences of duelling. By an order of Her Majesty the custom was stopped. Napier took a determined action to put down duels. In 1850 he awarded severe punishments by a Court Martial to two young officers of a battalion of Native Infantry, who had assisted as seconds in a duel. The punishments were exemplary in their effect and that was the last recorded case of duelling.³

The soldiers were by regulation required to follow the teachings of their faith. It was considered desirable that their spiritual education should keep pace with their

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1. Wakeham, Eric The Bravest soldier Sir Rollo Gillispie 1766-1814, London 1937, P.20.
 2. Forrest, G.W. Sepoy Generals Wellington to Roberts, London 1901, P.69.
 3. Ibid, P.152.

military duties. In fact in some of the regiments Commanding Officers took very keen interest with regard to this aspect and some of the reknowned soldiers, such as the Lawrences, Nicholson, Edwardes, Montgomery, Havelock and many others had earned for themselves the title of 'good soldiers of Jesus Christ'.¹ By a regulation, any officer or soldier who spoke against an article of the Christian faith, was liable to be delivered over to the Civil Magistrate for trial.² All officers and soldiers were required to attend Divine Service and sermon at a place fixed for the assembling of the Corps to which they belonged. For absence from prayers an officer could be brought before a General Court Martial and the punishment awardable was public reprimand; and a soldier could be tried by a lower court and could be sentenced to suffer a loss of pay.³ Roman Catholic soldiers were, however, exempted from compulsory attendance at the Church service.⁴ Soldiers were by regulation expected to uphold the sacredness of a place of worship. In fact the securing of a proportion of spiritual services to all classes of European forces in India was always considered of highest importance both by the authorities in London and in India. For the provision of these services, there was in India what

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1. Block, William A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock, 4th Edn., London 1858, P.2.
 2. Military Department Consultations dated 3 February 1841, No.5; vide Military Letter from Court dated 4 November 1840.
 3. Loc Cit.
 4. Marshman, John Clark Memoirs of Major General Sir Henry Havelock, London 1860, P.40.

was called Ecclesiastical Establishment.¹ The chaplains of the church of England had been appointed to the different stations in India. Church services were also extended to the schools for the children of Europeans and for the sick soldiers. Chaplains attended the troops in the field and imparted spiritual consolation to the soldiers slain in battle and performed the last rites according to the Christian faith.

The Chaplains conducted Divine Service for the troops every Sunday and gave a short discourse on the moral and intellectual habits of a soldier. The sick were visited by them because it was believed that it was in a hospital that the moral character and conscience of the soldier was known, because his mind was then open to conviction on consequences of vice and intemperance; and it was there that the soldier looked for something more than human support. Major Conran wrote from his experience that there came to be a kind of tacit understanding that the hospital was the 'neutral ground for many a soldier, who in health, whilst occupied in active duties, and encouraged by his comrades, defers conviction, and throws off, like early dew, all the influences exerted in his behalf, is brought by the mysterious experience of a sick-bed to listen to your exhortations and even to long for your visits, as he that watcheth for the morning.'²

It was believed that certain amount of education was necessary for soldiers; even for promotion to the lowest

1. Letter from Principal Chaplain to the Forces relative to the performance of Ecclesiastical duties vide Military letter from Court, dated 17 October 1833.

2. Conran, H.M. Autobiography of an Indian Officer, London 1870, P.94.

appointments it was expected that soldiers attained to some minimum educational standard. His Royal Highness, the Duke of York, was the first person who introduced a regular system of Regimental schools, where soldiers and their families attended in large numbers and learnt to read and write.¹ The regiments were provided with libraries, where in each five to six hundred chosen books were kept, and some leading newspapers were provided. These libraries served in relieving educated soldiers from the tedium of barrack life.² Army schools were authorised for various European Regiments, depending upon their strength. As a matter of religious tolerance in schools, the Roman Catholics were exempted from attending regular prayers, which was said before the commencement of the school. There were no female schools before 1832, and the first female school was opened at Fort William in that year.³ Subsequently separate female schools were provided and the young boys received instruction in female schools until they were six. In addition to education the female schools imparted instruction in knitting, sewing and other household occupations.

The schools were free for soldiers of lower ranks and their children above four years of age were required to attend schools by compulsion.

1. PP Vol.40, Page 449, Commons 319 of 1836.

2. Evidence from Q.146-148 vide Minutes of Evidence.

3. Military letter to Court dated 27 September 1832, Para 43-48.

The customs and traditions of one's regiment were often a part of the emotional life of the individual as a member of the regiment. For example, once when a regiment mutinied, twenty eight men who were most guilty were court martialled and sentenced to death. Eight of the culprits were ordered to be blown away from guns. As they were on the point of execution, three soldiers stopped forward and claimed to be blown away from the right hand guns, because these men in their regiments had fought on the right. They wished to uphold the tradition even in the face of death.¹

With the Company it was customary to carry colours and these represented a regiment's spirit and were the epitome of their history. Battle honours were borne on them. Standards, or distinguished flags were issued to squadrons of native cavalry as early as 1779.² There is a record of a Body Guard standard in 1800 when the Marquess of Wellesley presented colours to the corps at the Couchington on his review of the body guard, In the Bengal Army, in 1825 Oak leaves and Ocorus became the distinctive feature of its colours, and it remained so upto the Mutiny.³ In the Bombay Presidency, the practice of the British Army was followed; on all the colours of the Bombay Army union wreath was embroidered.

The Colour of a unit was its life and it was most

1. Macleod, On India, London 1882, P.82.
2. Viceregal Establishment in India, Printed by Governor General's Press, New Delhi 1948, P.16.
3. Bullock, Indian Infantry Colours, Bombay 1931, P.15.

respected. It was regarded as a great honour to possess the old superannuated colours. Many Commanding Officers kept old Colours in their possession in spite of prohibitory orders. An instance of the strength of custom is provided by the Bengal Army battalions paying the highest respect to colours even when they mutinied. On the eve of recruitment all recruits took an oath to remain true to the colours. When a rebel leader found that one of the battalions proved to be insubordinate to him as a rebel, he deprived the battalion of its colours for this insubordination.¹

Customary military awards were given both to Europeans as well as natives. Order of the Bath was the term used for gallantry awards.² The most important and honourable military order of the Bath was composed of three classes, differing in their dignity. The first class of the order was worn upon the left side of upper vestment and could be conferred on no officer less than the rank of Major General in His Majesty's service. The second class was awardable to officers not below the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The third class was awardable to officers holding commissions in His Majesty's service. These orders were subsequently allowed to the officers of the Company's service.

There were two other kind of gallantry awards: the 'Order of Merit' and 'the Order of British India'.³ The

1. Ibid, P.22.

2. The Annual Register of 1815, London 1816, P.135-137.

3. Calcutta Review Vol.XXVI, London 1856, P.198.

order of Merit was divided into three grades. The first was obtainable by those who had already won by individual gallantry the third and the second grades. The badge of the first grade was a gold star with the inscription: 'The Reward of Valour'. The decoration of the other two classes was of silver, with a similar motto. All were suspended on the chest with a dark blue ribbon with a red edge. Double pay was attached to the first grade, two-third increase to the second, and one-third to the third.

There were two classes of the 'Order of British India'. The maximum number of awards in each class was one hundred. The first was restricted to Subedars and Rissaldars who were given also the title of Sardar Bahadur with an additional pay of two rupees a day; the second was awarded to native officers of lower rank with the title of Bahadur and an increase of pay of one rupee a day. The decoration was a gold star, pendent from a blue ribbon. Though awardable for good service, it was virtually the reward for old age, and invariably the wearers were pensioners.¹ Some times awards of land and the use of palki were allowed. This was regarded by the sepoy as the highest honour.

The climate of the plains was not suited to the British and they were susceptible to many an acute disease like jungle fever, dysentery, inflammation and abscess of liver, epidemic cholera. These diseases were responsible for premature deaths in the European forces located in the various provinces; the

1. Calcutta Review Vol.XXVI, London 1856, P.198.

British soldier suffered from physical deterioration which very often resulted in permanent disability or some organic disease. A few years of residence in the plains were sufficient to spoil the blood and tissues of the Europeans. And when the liquors of the bazaar was easily available, the deterioration of their health was still more. Not many could live long enough to get acclimatised or 'salted'; those who did, in spite of an epidemic or an unlucky duel, were of an unusually strong constitution.¹ A regular relief system and the climate of hills were meant to obviate physical deterioration or disability. Families of European officers often went to these hill stations during summers to live in comfort.

However the climate of India was not wholly responsible for a very high death rate among the Europeans; eating and drinking habits, rather than heat or cold, sent many a European to the grave.² In fact the evils of drinking were many. Towards the beginning of the period under study, Dodwell tells us that at Madras an intoxicated officer on duty marched off the guard. The son of William Robertson, the historian, in a state of intoxication, beat a man to the effusion of blood; another drunk officer insulted even his Commanding Officer and drew his sword over the shoulder of another officer.³ Sometimes an entire regiment was found drunk even at a critical hour. For instance, once suddenly

1. Cf. Dodwell, Henry The Nabobs of Madras, London 1926, P.110.

2. Calcutta Review Vol.XXVI, London 1856, P.177.

3. Dodwell, Henry The Nabobs of Madras, London 1926, P.71.

apprised of the near approach of the enemy, Sir Archibald Campbell hastily ordered the men of a particular corps to occupy at once the prescribed post. But the men of that regiment were found to be so intoxicated as to be unfit for duty.¹ Measures were adopted from time to time to eradicate the evils of drinking. For instance, liquors were served in the mess only to those who asked for them; those who did not, got compensation in money. However, according to Conran, the anticipated good result was neutralised by the easy and uncontrolled availability of liquors in the canteens.²

Casualties could be attributed to the unhygienic condition of the barracks as well as to climate and the drinking habits of the European soldier. Bungalows provided an excellent accomodation. But this was meant only for the officer class. The soldiers lived in barracks and the barracks were very unhygienic. A great number of casualties occurred owing to this. In Bombay in particular, where the barracks were extremely bad, there occurred an appalling mortality. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that, on the recommendation of Sir Charles Napier, construction of new barracks with adequate ventilation and good drainage was undertaken.³ Now, 1,100 cubic feet were allowed to a man lodged in the barracks. At about the same time the space allowed to a soldier in Bengal was 1,200 cubic

1. Brock, William A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock, (4th Edn.), London 1858, P.39.
2. Conran, H.M. Autobiography of an Indian Officer, London 1870, P.220.
3. Court of Directors Despatch to the Government of Bengal, dated 21 August 1850.

feet.¹

In every cantonment, land had been provided for bazaars and the Commanding Officer was empowered to make such general regulations as he thought fit respecting the tenure or occupation of shops and houses, for the land belonged to the government.² Not only a brigade but also each battalion had its own bazaar for a constant supply of food and grain and fodder. These bazaars accompanied the formation when it went on active service. Each bazaar had its own authorised establishment, with a Chaudhry and a mutsuddee; some additional officers were allowed for conducting the management of the bazaar of a brigade of foot artillery.³ Duty was levied on articles like liquors, tobacco, intoxicating drugs; this brought large profits. In the early days of the Company's army, officers of a certain rank used to obtain a large share of these profits. Subsequently, however, when the bazaars were taken over by the government, they contributed to the government's income.⁴

There were numerous privileges given to the soldiers. A Non-Commissioned officer or a soldier was entitled to send or receive letters by paying only a nominal amount. Hospital facilities, though not entirely free, were a great boon to

1. Loc Cit.

2. Foreign Department Political Consultation, dated 3 December 1832, Nos.4-5.

3. Military Letter to Court dated 20 February 1827, Para 36.

4. Evidence of Mr. Russel, Minutes of Evidence, Q.2240.

the soldiers; their treatment, and of their families, was undertaken on a very nominal payment, called the 'hospital stoppages' (which were recovered from their pay). Venereal diseases were common among European soldiers in those days and there were hospitals at certain selected stations where the suffering soldiers were treated. As a preventive measure, the country women suffering from those diseases were also treated in these hospitals.

There were excellent arrangements for the evacuation of casualties in the field. When a European corps of 1,000 men took field, 100 'doolies' were attached to it, for the carriages of its sick and wounded and to these 'doolies' was assigned an establishment of 630 hired bearers.¹ Experiments were carried out from time to time to improve the 'doolies' so that patients could be evacuated without discomfort. Field hospitals accompanied the force in the field and the sick accompanied the baggage train, which trailed behind the main force. Privileges of sick leave were given to soldiers and officers to enable them to restore their health in Australia, South Africa or Mauritius.² There were asylums for the orphan at Calcutta and Madras, both for the children of the officers and the soldiers.³ The Orphan Society and the Widow Fund were the two benevolent institutions to take care of the families of the deceased soldiers.

1. Military Department Consultation dated 16 October 1846, No.89.

2. Temple, Richard Men and Events of My Time in India, London 1882, P.4.

3. Spear, T.G.P. The Nabobs, London 1932, P.63.

Those who became unfit for field service, either owing to physical deterioration or age or disability, were allowed to enlist themselves in the 'veteran battalions' which were employed in cities on internal duties.

The social status of a sepoy in the Indian Society was very high. In England an Englishman joining the army was forgotten by his family; it was no great source of pride to an English family to know that one of its members was serving in the ranks of the army of the East India Company.¹ In India, it was a thing of great pride to join even the ranks; and the boast of many a family was that generation after generation they had "eaten the salt" of the Company. This pride was connected also with the fact that the sepoys, generally speaking, belonged to one or another of what were known as the martial castes or classes. The profession of arms was thus almost a hereditary profession.² "Inferior" classes were excluded from joining the ranks, and the martial classes were generally the superior castes. Pride and tradition resulted in "honourable" conduct.

However, caste consciousness had its bad effects. On parade, a Sipahi stood side by side with another Sipahi, but in their huts a wide gulf separated them, if one of them

1. Malleon (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny, Vol.1, London 1888, P.185.

2. An officer of East India Company Historical Sketch of the Princes of India, London 1833, P.20.

happened to be a Brahmin. Huts were constructed keeping in view the castes of companies; they were arranged in rows caste-wise, and men of low caste were not allowed to enter the huts of the sepoys of the superior castes.¹ Obviously, there were no barracks for the sepoys. It may also be noted here that the government was not responsible for providing food to them and, generally speaking, they were undernourished.

There was a wide gulf between the privileges enjoyed by the Indian sepoy and the British soldier. Whereas the soldiers had an excellent arrangement for education both for themselves and their children, the sepoy was deprived of such benefits, because it was considered dangerous to teach him. Only a very elementary education was imparted to a sepoy which enabled him to carry out his day to day duties.

The treatment given to the sepoys by the British officers was not very humane. Abusing and striking the sepoys on parade were common practices.² By an order of the Court of Directors, in 1813, the officers were prohibited from maltreating the natives; they were liable even to dismissal from service for such a misconduct;³ but it is doubtful if this order produced any uniform or considerable effect. The attitude of the European soldiers towards the Indian officer was equally overbearing, almost insulting. Kaye and

1. Major General David's evidence, Report of Commissioners, Q.3636.
2. Sen, S.N. Eighteen Fifty Seven, New Delhi, 1957, P.23.
3. Court of Directors Orders regarding Treatment of Sepoy dated 14 April 1813 vide Military letter from Court dated 10 April 1832.

Malleson tell us that: 'a Sipahi on duty always presented or carried arms to an English Officer, but an English soldier suffered a native officer to pass by without a salute. Even an English sergeant commanded native officers of the highest rank. On parade, the English officers made mistakes, used the wrong word of command, then threw the blame upon the Sipahis and reviled them. Even native officers, who had grown grey in the service, were publicly abused by European striplings. On the line of march native officers were compelled to live in the same tents with common Sipahis, and had not, as in the armies of native potentates, elephants or palanqueens assigned to them for their conveyance how great soever the distance which they were obliged to traverse. And if they rode horses or ponies, purchased from their savings, the English officers frowned at them ... the concubines of the English gentlemen were better paid than the native officers and their grooms and grass cutters better than the native soldiers, that the English officers could import into their Zenanas the most beautiful women in the country, whilst the natives hardly dared to look at the slave girls.'¹ Kaye and Malleson were looking at the situation with an eye on the causes of the Mutiny and one may be tempted to discount their observation. But, without doubt, there was a marked difference between the life of the Europeans and the natives in the armies of the East India Company.

1. Malleson (Ed.) Kaye's and Malleson's History of the Indian Mutiny, London 1888, P.160-161.

There were some important differences in the private life of the native sipahis in the three Presidencies. The most glaring of these was that, whereas the families of the Madras sepoys followed their regiments, those of the Bengal sepoys remained in their native villages.¹ The Madras sepoy entered the service very young and his regiment became his permanent home and he had no other ties or views than passing the rest of his life in service; when he got married, his wife, mother and sister all lived with the corps and each regiment formed a sort of colony.² Each regiment of native infantry comprised of an aggregate of from 3,500 to 4,000 souls. When a regiment made a move the families also accompanied it. In Bengal, the soldier could not think his regiment to be his home for he always looked forward to furlough to visit his family.

A native officer formed a link between the European officer and the sepoy; he watched men in their lines, and he tried to know all that went on in the lines, of which the European officers had no idea. The native officers were consulted in all matters of caste and religion.. Every officer who got commissioned, often got the advice to pay particular attention to the learning of native languages. Officers were examined by Committees appointed at various stations, and if they did not qualify they were liable to be removed from their

1. Ibid, P.213.

2. Minute by Marquis of Tweeddale, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Madras of the 6th Day of March 1845; vide PP 191 Commons of 1867.

appointments.¹ By a general order of 1822, officers were prohibited from taking charge of troops and companies unless they had made sufficient progress in the Hindustani language to explain orders to those placed under their command.² By such measures, on duty, the European and native officers were in daily communication; but there was little social contact between them. This was perhaps owing partly to the fact that native officers were prevented by their own religious sentiments from attending dinners or parties thrown by the European officers.³

Thus, there was a wide gulf of privileges enjoyed by officers, European soldiers and Sipahis and each class lived separately and there was hardly any social contact between them. On the whole, however, the absence of a social contact between the natives and the Europeans in the armies of the East India Company was, among other things, a reflection of the wide gulf in the privileges enjoyed by them.

1. Evidence of Colonel Dickson, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1563.
2. United Services Journal Part II of 1829, London 1829, P.113.
3. Evidence of Colonel Dickson, Minutes of Evidence, Q.1588-90.

CONCLUSION

In retrospect, it appears that by 1796 the army of the East India Company had become the strongest in India. The Commander-in-Chief had been given already in 1770, a place in the Council of each of the Presidencies, and his position was next only to the Governor General or the Governor. This status was enjoyed by the Commanders-in-Chief throughout our period. But the status granted to the Commander-in-Chief was to be reconciled to the principle of keeping "our military power in subordination to the Civil".¹

Though perhaps the most important department, the army was meant to be kept subordinate to the civil government. The army could not be given an equal authority with the civil government; and the entire period under study witnessed a series of contests, which often resulted in the resignation or dismissal of the Commander-in-Chief. It can be safely concluded that the subordination of the army to civil authority was always intended and actually obtained. Thus the ultimate military authority was vested in the Governor General who was made responsible for both civil and military affairs.

However, the military authority of the Governor General was decentralised in the hands of the Commanders-in-Chief, who used it largely and effectively within their respective Presidencies. They exercised command and control through the divisional and brigade commanders; each with a specified

1. Inger, Colonel 'Democratization of the Army' National Herald, dated 15 August 1968.

military area under him. The military authorities, with their various departments, exercised command and control effectively within each Presidency.

This system of the Presidency armies, each under a Commander-in-Chief, assisted by subordinate officers, was aimed at giving 'political safety' to the British in India. This safety was further ensured by maintaining in India a certain percentage of European troops on the Company's establishment and also by employing the Crown's troops. The system of the contingent and the subsidiary troops gave the Company an additional security. The command, at all stages, was ~~entrusted~~ ^{vested} in the hands of the Europeans, irrespective of the cost of their maintenance. By 1859 the army had grown to four times its strength in 1796; the horse artillery, the Stud Department and the Commissariat or the Supply Department were added to the army. The practice of raising and disbanding the Golamandaze and the Irregular Cavalry according to the exigencies of times is not noticeable from the time Lord C.T. Metcalfe acted as Governor General in 1836. It is not generally realized that the problem of finance exerted a greater influence on the constitution of the army. Not only the practice of retrenchment but also the position in which a majority of natives comprised ^{used} ~~comprised~~ the army owed itself to this very problem, for the maintenance of Europeans was four to five times as costly as the maintenance of natives. The institutions of pay, allowances, retirements, pensions and leave too had a very intimate connection with finances, and for sometime the government excused itself from

the responsibility of some of those and some other benevolent institutions. It is noticeable that the military funds, which were only partially supported by the government, were mainly responsible for running some important institutions.

The finances, however, were not so dictating with respect to officers. Even though the cost of their maintenance and initial training was high, they could not be dispensed with. In fact the Company trained her cadets at the military academy at Woolwich at tremendous cost ^{til} ~~the~~ 1809, when the Company started her own military Seminary at Addiscombe.

The cadets were taken by selection; they were generally well trained to conduct the affairs of the Company efficiently. The natives, who could only rise to be Junior Commissioned Officers, were well trained by virtue of having served for long years in the ranks; there was no direct recruitment to those ranks. The European part of the army was recruited in ~~the~~ United Kingdom and the system served well. The system of recruitment of natives was also very satisfactory as large bodies of men came forward to seek employment with the Company, out of which physically robust persons were selected after a medical examination; and their muster rolls were so elaborate, and the channels of recruitment so well specified, that deserters could not easily escape apprehension.

The Bengal Presidency provided a larger portion of soldiery than the other two Presidencies, for a larger number of warlike races, resided in Northern India. Bombay and Madras who could not get suitable soldiers from within their Presidencies, resorted to recruitment from Bengal. In spite of the

best efforts of the authorities, recruitment in Bengal by other Presidencies could not be stopped. But from the physical standards in Bengal, it appears that the Bengal Army had more robust troops than the other two Presidencies, which ultimately gave rise to a feeling of superiority among the Bengal troops. Since the more robust types could be found only among high castes, the lower castes were excluded from being recruited in Bengal. Thus the Bengal native army was a clanship of high caste sepoys. The fact that the majority of the Bengal troops were recruited from the higher castes appears to be extremely relevant to the military uprising in Bengal in 1857. Infact, the caste distinction and certain other religious sentiments of Sepoys sparked off many a mutiny during the Company's rule.

Clanship of higher castes, however, was not the only cause, for after 1824, we find that the authority of the Commanding Officers, partly from their incompetence, was greatly curtailed. In minor cases the Commanding Officers before 1824 exercised their authority and judgement with great liberty. But with the advancement of times, the Commanding Officer's authority was taken away, and discipline could not be enforced as effectively as previously. This was a great underlying ^{cause of} ~~factor for~~ the Mutiny.

Nevertheless, the system of discipline was quite good. There ~~were throughout~~ rules for dealing with mutiny and desertion, and with major offences. The system and method of trial by Court Martial was well laid down and the limit of punishment for each type of offence was also specified. There were, however, alterations made by the confirming authority in the ~~amount of~~

punishments awarded. Among other punishments, award of Corporal Punishments was popular before the time of Lord William Bentinck, but subsequently, their award was considerably restricted, for it was considered desirable that soldiers should be given a humane treatment so long as they were soldiers or should be dismissed from service if they were ^{so} as bad as to be dealt by Corporal Punishments. The system of discipline being satisfactory in the Company's army, backed by an efficient organisation and administration, the troops could take the field like a well disciplined force.

Nevertheless, there was an increasing need ^{for} to employing good tactics and well considered plans for deployment of troops on the battle field. For example Cavalry as a supporting arm was neglected ~~for~~ quite sometime and it was not till the Maratha Wars that Cavalry took a place of importance, as a supporting arm, with Artillery. Artillery cannonade at the commencement of most battles at all stages of the period under study was a common feature and various types of fire could be provided for supporting infantry. But the time and place of employment of Cavalry in battle was often changed; it made use of both the old and new tactics. The Infantry, however, achieved major surprises mainly by strict fire discipline and by force of bayonets. Whatever the combination of force fitted out for war at various stages, with the advancement of times a well considered tactical plan for a battle, and not sound leadership and valour alone, came to be considered indispensable for a battle to be successful. This was true both of sieges and battles on open fields.

The strategy of the British in India throughout this period was displayed in obviating unnecessary conflicts, and their tactics improved with the advancement of times. Lord Wellesley was the first man who thought of ruling India by stationing large bodies of troops with the Native Princes. Throughout the period under study, there were buffers, both within and without to take shocks of attacks by alien powers. The North West Frontier was made safe by a system of alliances and counter alliances, and in doing all that, important principles of strategy were displayed, such as, economy of force, maintenance of objective, rapid mobility, concentration and co-ordination, ~~rapid mobility~~ and intrigue. The British were indeed good strategists.

The success of the British in India in all their wars and nearly in all their battles was not a series of coincidences but a result largely of the fighting machinery which they had skilfully evolved to ~~meet~~^{met} the demands of an ~~an~~^a expanding dominion.

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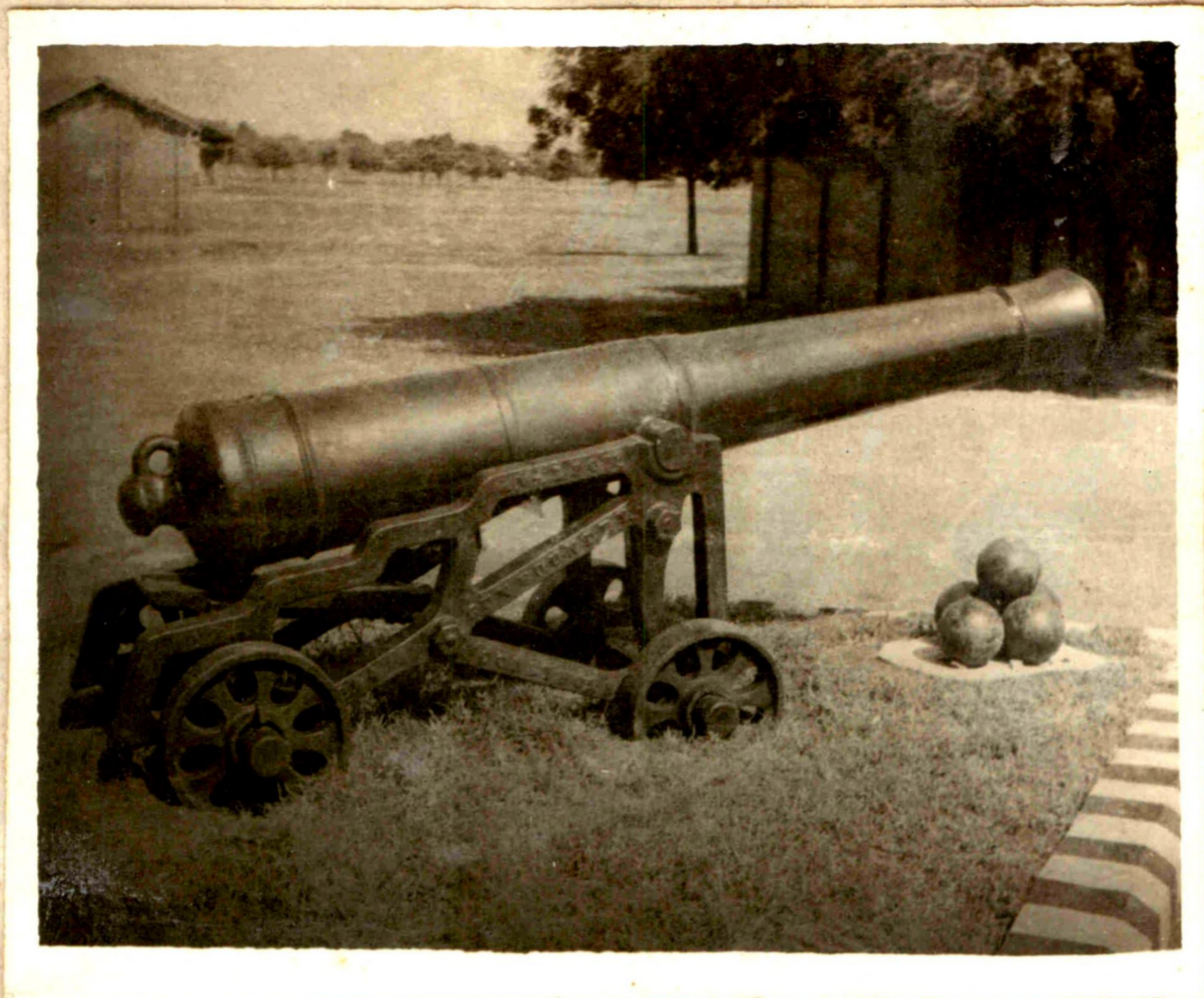
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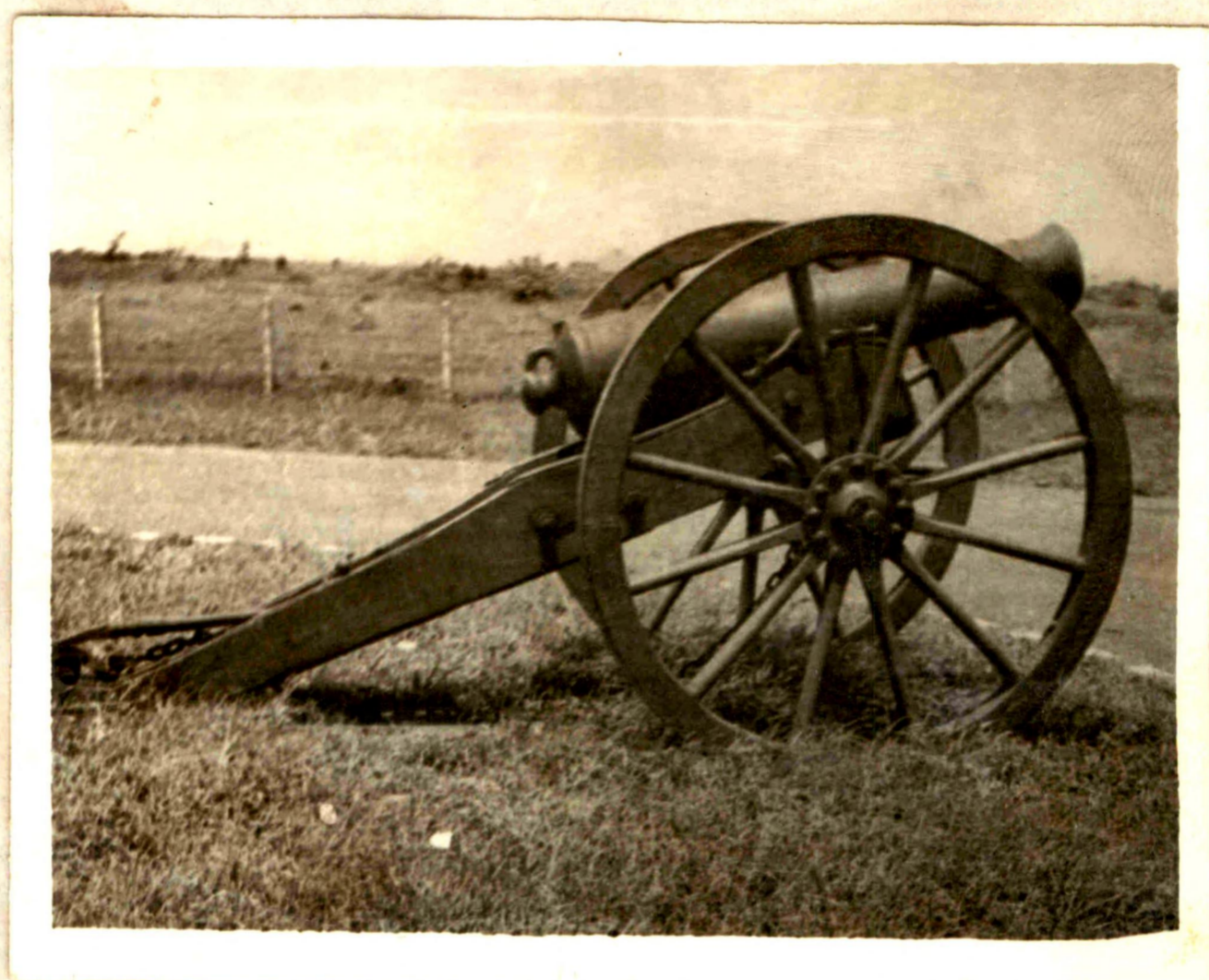
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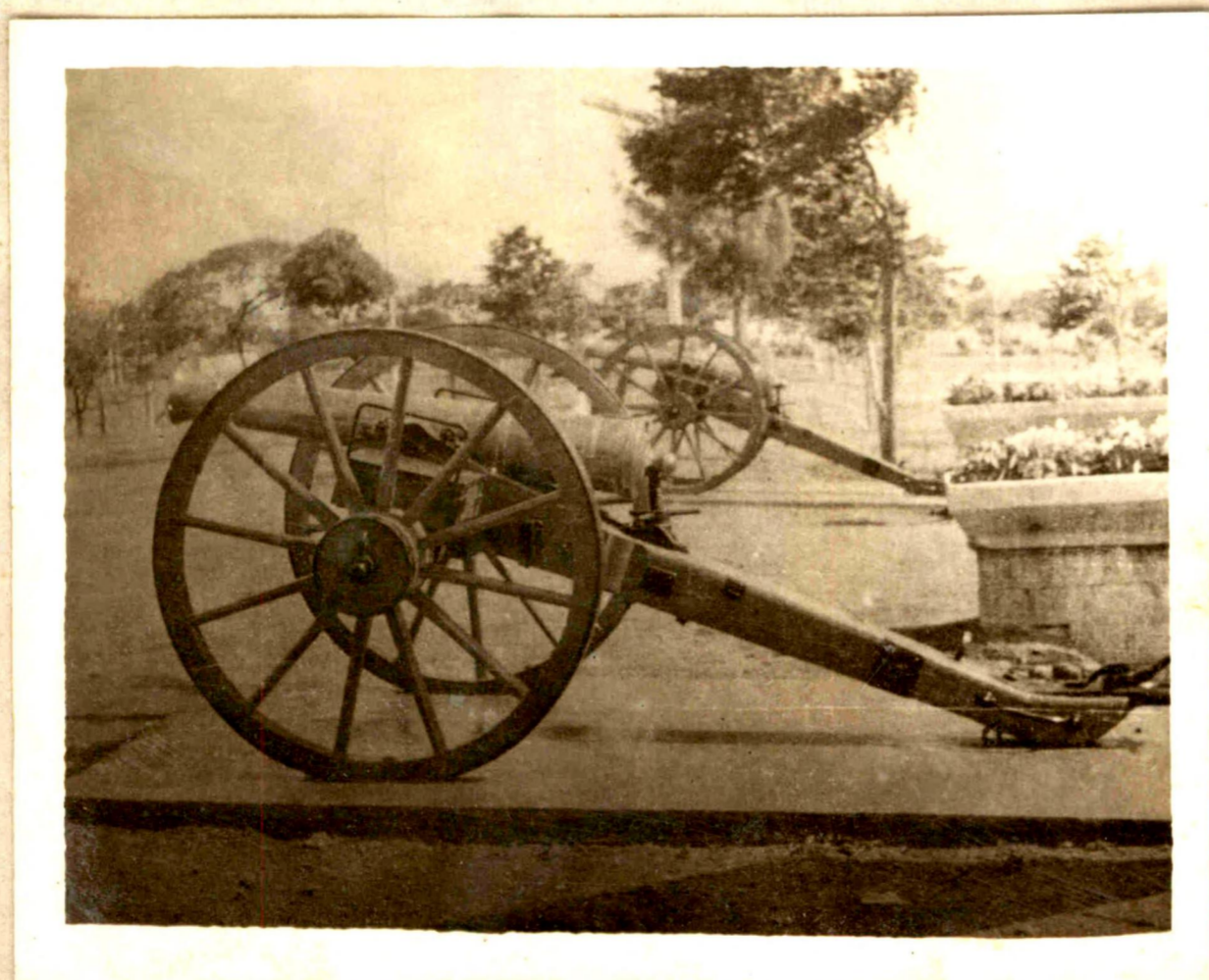




12 POUNDER (IRON)
(Siege Artillery)



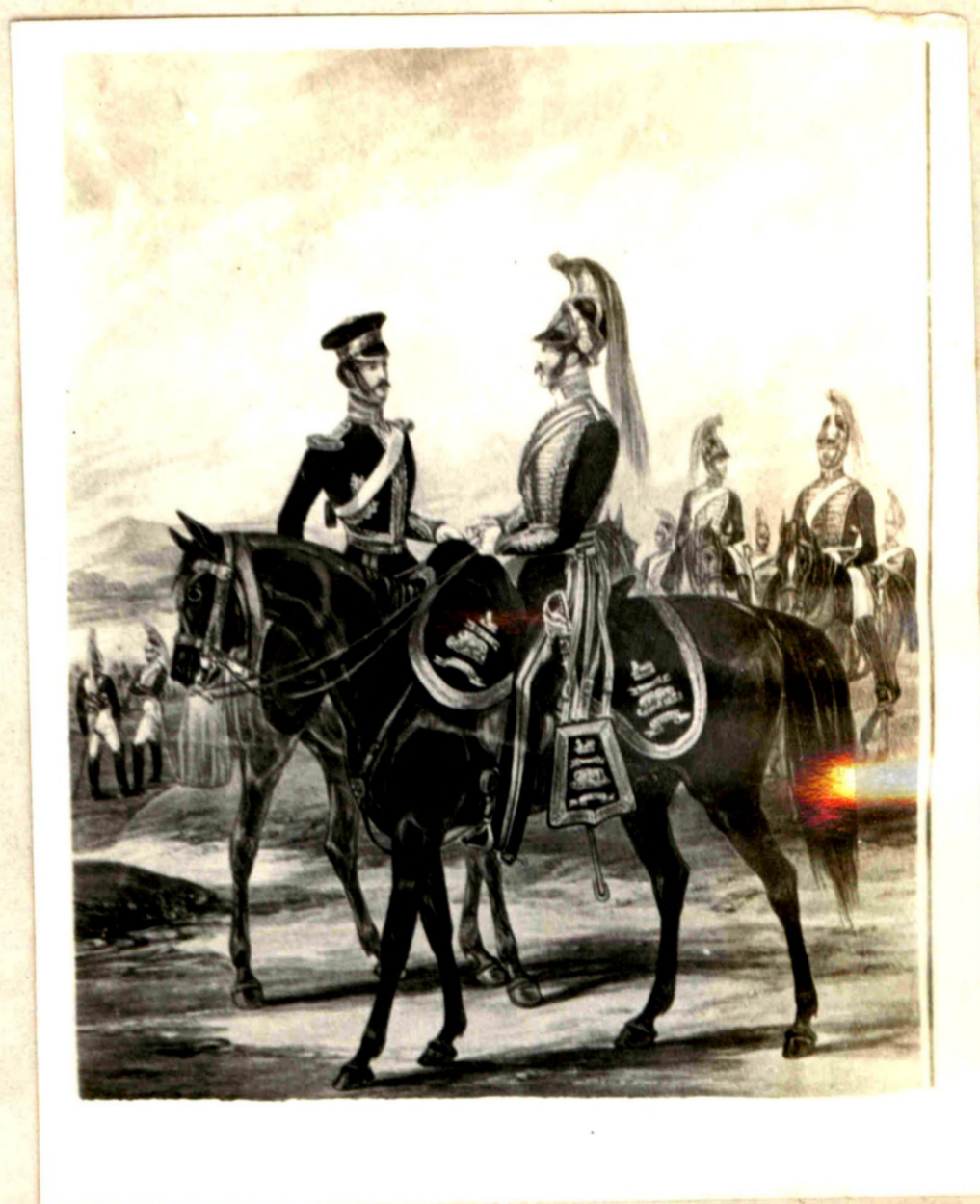
6 POUNDER (IRON)
(Field Piece)



9 POUNDER (BRASS)
(Field Piece)



BENGAL FOOT ARTILLERY
(1846)



BENGAL HORSE ARTILLERY
(1846)



GUN LASCAR (MADRAS)
(1840)



MADRAS CAVALRY
and
HORSE ARTILLERY
(1846)



MADRAS NATIVE INFANTRY
(1799)