CHAPTER III

PARAMOUNTCY AND ITS APPLICATION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE PRINCES

At the very outset let it be clear that the present chapter deals with the socio-economic, honor and foreign affairs of the Princes keeping in mind the British interest and intervention in these matters of the native states. On the other hand, general principles governing interference in their internal affairs were difficult to discover.¹ British relations with the Indian states were not conducted by doctrinaire theorists. However these relations were conducted by practical politicians. Here, it is worth mentioning that every state had its own peculiar problems particularly in their internal affairs. A contemporary British historian himself admitted, “It is impossible to give any definite explanation of what things we do meddle with, and what we do not.”² The simple truth appears to be that, in the earlier stages at least, a constant pressure was kept up by the British against the internal sovereignty of every state. Also the various degrees of intervention exercised by the Paramountcy Power in the internal affairs of different states show only the extent to which any particular state had succumbed to that pressure. It was only during the last two or three decades of the Company’s life that its representative consciously abstained from interference; even interference was perfectly feasible in the case of Hyderabad and Nagpur.³ But this appears to have been

¹ “A rough and ready line was followed of interfering in states where interference was safe and letting alone those who by their strength or by their position were able to withstand such encroachment.” K.M. Pannikar: ‘British Policy towards Indian States’, p. 87.
² Sir George Campbel: 'History of Modern India'.
³ Ibid.
motivated only by the desire to create conditions which would justify annexation later.

In the domain of internal affairs more than anywhere else, perhaps, political practice had far outstripped the provisions of treaties. Most of the existing treaties had been concluded by Lord Hastings or his predecessors, and by 1848, the Company had definitely outgrown its stature of 1818 in power and prestige. Even the treaties of 1818 with the Scindia, or the Rajput states, expressly guaranteed to the ruler the fullest autonomy in internal affairs, and right up to 1848, the majority of the states continued to enjoy this guarantee in theory. There were, of course, several important exceptions, such as Hyderabad, Oudh, Travancore and Cochin, but they had all fallen early preys to the expanding British supremacy. They were not in a position to demand internal autonomy when their different treaties were made.

Even the Rajput states had in 1818 accepted in their treaties the duties of ‘Subordinate Co-operation’ with the paramount Power. As the uninterrupted growth of its power made it increasingly easier for the latter to intervention in the internal affair of the states, the new encroachments on the rulers’ internal sovereignty were justified by an ever expanding liberal interpretation of the term ‘Subordinate Co-operation’. The duties of Subordinate Co-operation were taken to include not only the suppression of social crimes like ‘Sati’ and infanticide, but also to cover British demands for facilities of road-making and tariff reform. Taking the different aspects of internal autonomy one by one, it is found that there was little interference in the relations between a ruler and the members of his family or household. The British realized that, being foreigners, they had no insight into the delicate issues involved in the relationship between a ‘Raja’ and his relatives, including ladies, and so tried scrupulously to avoid any entanglements which might have landed
them into serious difficulties and embarrassments. Only in Oudh they were forced to deal directly with the members of the royal household when King Ghaziuddin Haidar and his successors arranged with the Bengal Government for annual pensions to certain nominated relatives. But even in Oudh the Company took care to involve itself as little as possible.

But where a native chief was in trouble with his feudal nobles, or ‘Thakurs’ as they were generally called, the Paramount power was less reluctant to interfere. In such disputes, there was always danger to the general peace which called for intervention in the interest of security, while there was no fear of being involved in embarrassing complications as was the case with family disputes. Considerations of general peace also led the Paramount Power early to assume the right of setting such disputes, even where it was not provided for in the treaties. In Baroda, for instance, it responded to an appeal in 1805, from the Kathia was feudatory chiefs against the excesses of the Gaekwari Mulk-giri army to arrange for a decennial settlement of the ‘Thakurs’ tributes to the Gaekwar. 4 Similarly after the war in 1818, a large number of feudal chiefs of the Scandia obtained British guarantees which for a long time proved a source of considerable vexation to the ‘Darbar’. Again, in 1824, Maharaja Man Singh of Jaipur was induced to return the ‘Jagirs’ of the ‘Thakurs’ confiscated a few years earlier, ‘although they are not fit objects of mercy, nevertheless, in order to please the British Government. 5 Similar interference between the Maharaja and the ‘Bhoomias’ of Mewar, and between the Jariya chiefs of the ‘Bhayad’ and the ruler of Kutch, were other instances of the policy followed.

4 Lee Warner: ‘The Protected Princes of India,’ p. 34.
5 Ibid., p. 265.
In the appointments of a ‘Diwan’ by the ruler of a native state, the policy of the Company’s Government lacked consistency, or uniformity. In Oudh, Hyderabad, and Travancore, long practice had, by 1848, crystallized into a convention which gave the British Resident a decisive voice in the ruler’s selection of his ‘Diwan’. The right had been acquired by the British when they had powerful foes still un-subdued, and the foremost reason might have been to secure the resources of the particular state even if the ruler was undependable. The letter of Lord Cornwallis to Hussian Raza and Tickait Rai of Oudh, read, “From you I expect every necessary exertion in such matters, responsible as you are to both Government for restoring the country to a flourishing state.” A better example of a ‘Diwan’s utter dependence on the Paramount Power could hardly be found. Again, Russell characterized as undue interference the action of the Nizam in calling for certain accounts from Raja Chandu Lal. This reveals the degree of independence enjoyed at one time by the British sponsored ‘Diwan’ vis-à-vis his sovereign. But with decline of powerful rivals of the Company, the greatest need for such control over the ‘Diwan’ gradually ceased to exist. From the time of Lord Amherst onwards, two conflicting trends were noticeable in British policy regarding the appointment of ‘Diwans’. One trend was shown in a desire to continue the practice of recommending persons for ministership in different states, so as to secure a good administration there. The other trend was revealed in the British desire to leave the selection of the

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6  “As the Nizam’s disposition was sullen and discontented, and too fickle to be relied on, it was rightly judged that any advantage to be derived by the British from an alliance with the Hyderabad State depended on the placing its resources under the control of a Minister who should owe his elevation exclusively to their influence.” Briggs: ‘The Nizam’, Vol. I, p. 89.
‘Diwan’ entirely in the hands of the ruler,\(^9\) holding him responsible for all misrule and resorting to annexation when the climax had been reached. In 1848, the two policies were still contending for mastery in the counsels of the Government of India.

But the British took a more decided line when faced with the enormities of Hindu social practice. When Bentinck was forced to declare ‘Sati’ a crime throughout the whole of British India, the practice continued to lurk in the different Indian states. The British had to open a vigorous campaign against it. ‘Sati’ the feelings of all civilized communities, and the Indian chiefs were called upon to abolish them, under the obligations of subordinate Co-operation. By the date of Dalhousie’s arrival in India, most of the Muslim rulers like the Nizam and the King of Oudh had consented to their suppression, but the fight still went on in the other states—the states of Rajputana in particular.

The best handle for British intervention in the internal affairs of the states was provided by grave misrule, real or alleged. The degree of misrule in many instances might have been exaggerated by the British due to a ready desire to intervene with advantage to them, but it seems doubtlessly true that the establishment of the Subsidiary System was soon followed by growing mal-administration in most of the States. The causes were diagnosed early, and detailed discussion took place among the

\(^9\) As an example of the second trend, see Governor-General’s letter to Nusseeroodwla in 1892, vesting him with full powers of removing and selecting a ‘Diwan’: as an example of the first, see Court of Directors Despatch of 1838, saying, “that all that is required for giving us the power of effecting a reform in the administration is the paramount assurance of such an abstinence from interference in public affairs on the part of the Nizam himself as he already for the most part practices- an assurance which would cause the Minister to look for support exclusively to the Resident,” Also of Briggs: ‘The Nizam’, Vol.I, p. 93. Thus Hyderabad alone furnished examples of both trends, and within 10 years.
authorities concerned. But no satisfactory substitute for the Subsidiary System was found. The real remedy, revealed by the developments after the “Mutiny”, was indeed suggested, but the times were not ripe for its adoption. Other theories held the field and it required the shock of 1857, which completely discredited the annexationist school, to make the British rulers see light.

As mentioned earlier, there was no uniformity in British practice regarding interference. In some of the states, like Oudh, Travancore, Cochin, Nagpur, etc. the Company had expressly reserved the right of interference in case of misrule. In a few other states like Hyderabad and Baroda, interference had taken place, with the tacit consent of the ruler, as in the first, or on the special request of the chief, as in the second. But the Rajput princes enjoyed greater immunity, due principally to their

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10 For details of discussion, see Letters of B.S. Jones and Col. Walker in the Select Committee Report on East India Company 1853, Vol. VI. The cause were:- Removal of the fear of rebellion by oppressed subjects due to presence of British troops; the decay of the native aristocracy due to their hereditary posts in the armies being filled by British Officers, etc. etc. An important cause lost sight of in the discussions recorded in the Select Committee Report on East India Company Vol. VI and elsewhere) was the impact of foreign ideas about the Rule of Law, Separation of the Judicial and the Executive functions of Government etc. on the native institutions based on ideals of a ‘Benevolent Despotism.’ The impact led to the old system, already in its decadence, losing its vitality and spirit- the benevolence disappeared; despotism remained.

11 ‘The appointment of a Minister friendly to our interests in an experiment that may be fairly tried not only when we have a reason to suspect the fidelity of the prince, but also when he is known to be deficient in the qualification requisite for the station. Perhaps, however, in either of these cases, it might be better to establish a regency than to set up and support a Minister obnoxious to his nominal master. Letter of S.S. Jones: ‘Select Committee Report, 1853, Vol. VI, p. 258.

12 As an example of the views favored by the authorities, notice that James Mill himself said in his evidence before the Select Committee on February 16, 1832 “In my opinion, the best thing for the happiness of the people is that our Government should be nominally as well as really extended over those territories; that our own modes of Governing should be adopted, and our own people put in the charge of the Government. It would lead to the making of them all ‘Rajas’ of Tanjore, with places to live in, and liberal pensions, both for comfort and dignity assigned them.”
strong position in the affections of their subjects, and due to relative absence of gross misrule in Rajputana. Another notable example of non-interference, even in the face of gross misgovernment, was provided by Indore in 1835, where the British refused help when his subjects rose against Maharaja Hari Rao Holkar, and also there were violent disturbances.

The last ground of interference in the internal affairs was furnished when the Company’s Government was called upon to use its forces to maintain internal order in a state. For instance, the Treaty of 1801 with Oudh obliged the Government to dispatch its troops to help in the realization of revenue, or to suppress recalcitrant ‘Taluqdars’. Soon the British officers, on such service felt remorse at then enforcement of the unjust demands on the ‘Taluqdars’ and gradually the practice developed of allowing British officers to mediate between the ruler and his recalcitrant nobles and also to determine the punishment which the rebels might deserve. Even as early as 1823, Adams, officiating as Governor-General before the arrival of Lord Amherst, instructed Rickett, the Resident at Lucknow, to inform the King that owing to his misrule and the consequent disturbances, the British officers would ‘of necessity, exercise the right of judging between His Majesty’s officers and his people, in questions relating purely to the ordinary business of this country.’\textsuperscript{13} In 1848, such interference was common in the Hyderabad state. The better governed principalities, of course, seldom required the assistance of British troops or officers and thus escaped interference which otherwise would follow.

It will not be out of place if economic aspects of paramountcy during the period of the rule of East India Company are discusses briefly.

\textsuperscript{13} Select Committee Report, 1853, Vol. VI, p. 273.
here to understand the companies objectives of establishing its political power in India. In some respects, the economic consideration provided the key to the history of the British in India. Not only did the East India Company start as a trading concern, but even when its trade was abolished by the Charter Act of 1833, the economic motive continued supreme. For both India and the East Indies were treated by the British as ‘colonies de exploitation’ as contra-distinguished from in India, and they encouraged intermarriages with Indians,¹⁴ but not so the British. To them, Indian was only the ‘goose that laid the golden egg’. And even through the primary centers of interest and fields of operation were Bengal and the other British provinces, the Indian states could not remain unaffected by the economic considerations that ruled the day. But this aspect of paramountcy presented singular difficulties in its study. Before 1818, the Company achieved its economic ends in the states by means of quiet influence over the rulers, and few of the results were embodied in treaties. After 1818, the same ends were realized as forms of ‘Subordinate Co-operation’ provided for in the treaties of Lord Hastings. The frequent minority administrations in different states, moreover, afford unique opportunities for bringing the States into line with British economic policy, for as explained above, the resident in each case exercised a very deep influence over them.

The simplest form of financial benefit derived from the states was in the shape of annual tribute. Except for such examples as of Nagpur, only those states, in general, had to pay tribute which had been subordinate tributaries of the Marathas. In Rajputana, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Kishangarh paid no tribute at all. Jaipur and Udaipur paid a ‘stipulated (but progressive) portion of their gross revenues’, while the

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tributes of Marwar and Kotah remained what they had paid to the Marathas previously. The petty states of Kathiawar also paid tributes to the Company, which had entered into an agreement with the Gaekwar regarding them.

Transfers of territory to adjust accounts were not rare. These included not only the transfer of districts to the Company for payment of the subsidiary or contingent troops, but also as payment for debts. The precedent for the Barer case of 1853 was laid down by Malcolm himself when he took over Baroda districts worth 27,00,000 rupees annually to pay the debt advanced to the ‘Darbar’ by the ‘Sahoucars’ on the Company’s guarantee. Another instance was provided by the Nepal War, when the Company ceded to the Nawab of Oudh a portion of the newly conquered ‘Terai’ region in lieu of a crore of rupees advanced by him to the Company. It should be noted that later such transfers of territory to an Indian state were not approved of on the ground of the alleged oppression of the people in the states.

Taking up the consideration of the Supreme Government’s policy regarding coinage and currency, it was evident that it consistently tried to effect standardization and uniformity. The prevalent economic theories attached considerable importance to the depressing effects upon trade and commerce of a confusion produced by numerous sets of coins. And in India the types and denominations of coins were truly bewildering in their variety. Rajputana had at least fifteen different types of rupees in circulation, while the Punjab boasted of no less than thirty varieties of the Nanak-Shahi rupee. But the task of creating uniformity out of this

16 Ibid., p. 281.
18 F.P.P. April 7, 1848, Vo. 215.
chaos was not easy, for the princes jealously upheld their right of coinage as an essential attribute of sovereignty. Nonetheless, important steps had been taken by 1848 in the desired direction with the abolition of several mints of the petty states of Bundelkhand, and suppression of the mint of Janjira in 1834. In Hyderabad too, Siraj-ul-Mulk had been induced to close down the mints in the provincial cities and to issue coins only from a single mint at Hyderabad.

The provision of good roads was naturally considered indispensable for the growing trade following upon the export of raw cotton to, and import of the finished goods from England. Calcutta and Bombay were the Chief ports, and the ‘upper provinces’ one of the most important areas for both the import and the export trade. The broad bosom of the Ganga, served as the best road from the upper provinces to Calcutta. However, Bombay happened to be a thousand miles nearer to London. Therefore, efforts were made to secure the help of the states intervening between Bombay and the great trade marts of Agra and Mirzapur, for making roads and establishing ‘dawk’ arrangements. Agreement with the chiefs of Kathiwar in 1807, they guaranteed the safety of roads in their state, and that of 1813 with Rewa for the establishment of a ‘dawk’, through the state, revealed the success of these efforts. However, yet much remained to be done when Dalhousie took up the reins of administration in India.

After the decline of its trade in Indian calicoes, and apart from the export of raw cotton and indigo still in its infancy, the virtual monopoly of opium and of salt proved very paying to the Company. Even the first Governor-General, Warren Hastings, had tried to revive for the Company the old Mughal monopoly of the opium in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Later on, the Malwa opium, exported through Bombay, offered serious

competition to the Company in its China market, and the order of 1803 prohibiting the export of the Malwa opium from Bombay was the result. But the large-scale smuggling, resorted to as a consequence, proved difficult to check, and so agreements were made with the Gwalior and Indore ‘Darbars’ regarding the control of the opium crop and the sale of the total yield to the Company’s agents. A similar policy was followed in the case of the salt industry. In 1829, for example, the salt-works of Radhanpur state were made a joint property of the ‘Darbar’ and the Government. In 1837, it was even suggested that the works be surrendered to the Company for a money-payment. But effective monopoly of salt was obtained only after 1857, when the British had secured the lease of the great Sambar Lake in Rajputana. The cultivation of cotton also received the best attention of the Government, but the finest cotton soil within the states of Gwalior, Nagpur and Hyderabad and not much had been achieved when Dalhousie came to India.

The same spirit of distrust and exacting control was revealed in 1851, when the Governor-General ordered the removal of four out of the eight guns left so far on the walls of the fort to fire a salute to the Maharaja. But to injury was added insult when he ordered the public auction of these old guns of utilizing the proceeds for the repairs to the fort. No wonder that the Darbar expressed its readiness to pay any sum demanded for the repairs of the fort if they were spared the humiliation of the sale of the guns. Then Dalhousie was induced to agree. Yet another instance was provided in 1853. When a few hundred cavalry and eighty artillery men were found in excess of the numbers set down in the treaty, the Maharaja of Gwalior was promptly asked to bring down his forces to

21 F.P.P. April 19, 1851, Nos. 107-110.
22 F.P.P. March 14, 1851, Nos. 139-140.
the exact treaty specifications.  

For replacements of arms and ammunition, the states generally depended upon the British magazines. Between 1854 and 1855, twelve old guns of Gwalior were replaced by new ones from the British magazines, at the cost of the Maharaja, of course, and only after a commission of British officers had certified the old guns to have become unserviceable.

**Foreign Mercenaries:** During Lord Dalhousie’s administration the problem of foreign mercenaries was confined to the Nizam’s territories. The other states were almost entirely free of the dreadful incubus, so that no other purgative elucidation of his policy on the subject. It is worth mentioning that the Arab mercenaries came to Hyderabad as early as 1795, and gradually built up their strength. After the defeat of the Sikh mercenaries in 1831 and of the Rohillas in 1836, the Arabs became the most powerful mercenaries in the state. Although their number did not exceed five thousand, with another twelve thousand half-breeds as active supporters, by 1850 they had obtained ‘Taluqa’ yielding thirty-five lacs of rupees per year, and not only held numerous strong forts all over the state, but enjoyed the military occupation of the capital itself. Haughty and volatile, recklessly brave and united by a bond of tribal cohesion stronger than the ties of fidelity and even self-interest, they had become formidable rivals of the Paramount Power itself in the counsels of the Nizam. In 1851, he left the punishment of the Arabs of Beechconda in the hands of their own leaders at Hyderabad, even though they had grossly insulted British sepoys. And when at last the Nizam was forced by the Resident to punish the offenders according to British advice there were

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23 F.P.P. April 22, 1853, No. 45.
24 F.P.P. May 18, 1855, No. 13, 14.
grounds to believe that he had to buy the acquiescence of the tribes by
giving a new title of honour and a good ‘jageer’ to Arab leader or chief!26

The problem was complicated not only by the docility and
weakness of the populace, but by the mercenaries almost always using the
name of an officer or nobleman as a shield for their depredations. The
Raja of Bhadrachalam was not very original when he pleaded that he
could not discharge the mercenaries according to the Nizam’s orders
because they threatened to kill him if he did so.27 But history gained
credence when it was discovered that on another occasion when they had
helped in the capture of a fort, the mercenaries preferred serving for four
months more to an immediate dispersal with a gratuity of four month’s
pay.28

It is difficult to say that their attitude was hostile towards the
Nizam himself. It is true that they had looted the surrounding villages
when their employer, the ‘jageerdar’ of Raheemow(?), failed to
discharge their pay; that they rebelliously held the forts of Dharoor and
Nandoora against the Nizam and fought the Contingent troops sent to
eject them; and also that they had captured a hundred children from
Wanparti-out of which two died in their hands-simply because the Raja
owed them money.29 There was also the instance of a violent assault
made on ‘Dewan’ Siraj-ul-Mulk and his numerous retinues by a small
party of Arabs near Hyderabad itself, in which the ‘Dewan’ was wounded
and narrowly escaped death. But each one of these cases represented only
the violent reactions of a turbulent and cruel people against what they
considered injustice. Use of violent was to them the only court of appeal

26 F.P.P. April 25, 1851, No. 168-175; F.P.P. May 9, 1851, No. 68-73.
27 F.P.P. August 11, 1849, No. 48-66.
28 F.P.P. December 30, 1848, No. 596-597.
29 See F.P.P. April, 7, 1848, No, 30-58; F.P.P. July 22, 1848, No. 61; May 13,
1848, No. 37-46; F.P.P. March 14, 1851, No. 213; March 21, 1851, No. 146-
160; F.P.P. May 9, 1851, No. 68-73.
against their debtors. But to admit it was by no means to deny the untold miseries inflicted by them on the people of the state, or the desirability of their suppression.

Their attitude towards the British appeared to have been far simpler. The insults and threats of violence offered to the 17th Madras Native Infantry at Beechconda, to the 25th Madras Native Infantry at Yadgeer, and to Brigadier Mayne’s party at Deonee and at Umbar, proved conclusively that there was no love lost between the British and the mercenaries.30 The two, in fact, represented mutually destructive principles and could not flourish together.31 This was realized by the Governor-General also after the Aurangabad incident, when the British troops engaged in fighting rebels were fired upon from behind by Arabs, manning the walls of the city, and ostensibly in the employ of the Nizam himself.32 But even bitter hatred could not drive away from their minds a wholesome dread of the Governments’ power, and the turbulent Arabs seldom disturbed the peace of the Company’s districts beyond the border.33 The solution of the problem presented by these foreign mercenaries could be attempted along two lines, Viz., by checking their further influx into the country, and by their total expulsion from the country by force.

The first solution was advocated both by the British Government, which urged the Nizam not to let them enter his state, and also by the Nizam himself, who bitterly complained that the British provinces surrounded his state on all sides, and so the British alone could check the

30 For details, see F.P.P. February 28, 1851, No. 88-89; April 25, 1851, No. 168-175; May 9, 1851, No. 68-73; July 18, 1851, No. 186-187; September 18, 1851, No. 138.

31 Economic exploitation of the British was indeed incompatible with the feudal exploitation by the Arabs, etc. Marx doubtlessly stated middle class had to result in the decay of feudal barons.

32 F.P.P. April 15, 1854, No. 32; June 2, 1854, No. 97 etc.

33 F.P.P. April 7, 1849, No. 29 and No. 74; May 12, 1849, No. 68.
mercenaries from entering his state.\textsuperscript{34} The Indian government indeed appeared to have been under the impression that effective steps had already been taken by it to prevent their ingress. But investigation revealed the inadequacy of the steps taken, for the Magistrate of Betul could find no order in his office instructing him to prevent Arabs or Rohillas from entering the \textit{Nizam’s} state. And the Magistrate of Ahmadnagar forcibly reintroduced into the state a parry of Rohillas who had come from it, because he apprehended a breach of peace by them.\textsuperscript{35} It was undoubtedly the result of these disclosures and General Fraser’s\textsuperscript{36} repeated requests that the Government of Bombay had to issue its special proclamation dated September 7, 1852, introducing a system of passports to “prevent to peace of the native states being endangered by the immigration of foreign adventurers seeking military service within those territories.”

But checking their further influx could at best ameliorate the trouble. For there remained the numerous body already entrenched in the state, which could only be weaned away from its predatory habits through a long and painful process of assimilation. That was why General Fraser strongly advocated the forcible expulsion of the entire tribe as the only solution of the problem. But the Governor-General as strongly resisted the proposal, and was upheld in his decision by the Court of Directors, with their traditional distrust of drastic policies. Their dispatch dated February 21, 1849, emphasized “the great embarrassment consequent on this attempt and the slender prospect of its being in any considerable degree, successful” and instructed that “your attention should rather be directed to the preventing the ingress of such persons.” General Fraser

\textsuperscript{34} F.P.P. June 14, 1850, No. 262-263.
\textsuperscript{35} See. F.P.P. May 7, 1852, Ni. 157-159; F.P.P. September 15, 1849, No. 117-121.
\textsuperscript{36} (General Fraser was then the British Resident at Hyderabad).
argued that experience had shown the impossibility of preventing their ingress while there were others of their tribe to shelter them. The Governor-General was by no means convinced of this in 1849, and the Resident was requested to give no help to the Nizam in effecting a total expulsion of the tribe, though “as an absolute sovereign’ he was fully entitled to expel them by his own troops.” General Fraser could scarcely appreciate the rights of the Nizam “as an absolute sovereign’ and appeared simply bewildered when the Governor-General pointed out soon after that the recognition of the Nizam’s perfect right did not mean that the Supreme Government did not have ‘the strongest objection to the exercise of that’. At the same time, the Resident was asked not to inform the Nizam that the Government acknowledged such as right. But if he insisted on expelling them, they were not only to be disarmed but also given enough subsistence for a month before being expelled. This attitude of the Government was based on two important factors: firstly, the belief that the mercenaries could be easily assimilated; and secondly, the undesirability of repatriating them to their old home, Peshawar, which had become a British province by then. The first belief was soon shattered by the growing turbulence of the Rohilalas and the Arabs. The latter, in particular, were revealed as a deadly foe with whom a collision was inevitable. The Governor-General, in his Minute dated the 26th October, 1853, on the Auragabad incident, frankly admitted it and deliberately decided to postpone the reckoning yet awhile, till the Company got rid of other distractions. General Fraser’s policy was

37 F.P.P. June 30, 1849, No. 86.
38 For details of the controversy, see: - F.P.P. June 9, 1849, No. 38-58; June 30, 1849, No. 86; September 15, 1849, No. 117-121; April 10, 1853, No. 122.
39 F.P.P. December 2, 1853, No. 330-333; Political Letters from the Court, No. 12 of 1854.
accepted in principle at least, but only after his acute differences with the masterful Governor-General had forced him to resign.

Another characteristic variation between the views of the two was revealed when Fraser suggested that the Rohillas of Dharoor should be banished by the Government for having fought against the contingent troops under British officers. Dalhousie held that they had not defied the British Government, for the Contingent troops were the Nizam’s own troops, and the Rohillas had rebelled only against “the powers of a foreign and independent state.”\(^40\) The Resident explained that he had imagined the Rohillas to have offended the Government when they disobeyed the Resident’s orders and fired upon troops under his command. The soldier could perhaps be excused for failing to appreciate the legal niceties of the politician’s stand, and for being unable to recognize his old friend the Nizam as ‘an absolute sovereign’! But his setting up of the Nizam as a ‘foreign and independent’ prince certainly had its advantages, for it enabled the Governor-General to hold him responsible for the indignity offered to the British sepoys by the Beechconda Arabs. A delay in their punishment led the Governor-General to give an ultimatum that unless the culprits were punished publicly and severally within seven days, the Government would take it that the Nizam had ‘adopted’ their actions.\(^41\) In general the mercenaries coerced by the troops under the Resident’s orders, or who had been guilty of offences against the Supreme Government, were punished according to the Resident’s advice.\(^42\) The most flagrant offence of the Arabs concerned

\(^{40}\) F.P.P. July 21, 1849, No. 54; March 212, 1851, No. 146-160; May 2, 1851 No. 167.

\(^{41}\) F.P.P. April 25, 1851, No. 178.

\(^{42}\) F.P.P. February 28, 1851, No. 88-89; July 18, 1851, No. 187; September 19, 1851, No. 138, etc.
in the Aurangabad incident was punished by banishment to Arabia, while the few absconders were declared outlaws.\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{Intervention for Removal of Social Evils:} In securing the abolition of obsolete social customs, as perhaps in some other spheres too, the Government’s policy was to extract maximum concessions possible under the circumstances from the rulers. The end in views was, of course, the total abolition of ‘\textit{Sati}, ‘\textit{Samadhi},’ etc., but the lines of policy followed vis-à-vis the different states were adapted to the actual circumstances of the case and the degree of opposition anticipated. Having full regard to the limitations imposed by the treaties, the Government of India was keen to eliminate to social evils from the states also but the intensity of its action depended upon the degree of the states’ resistance to the pressure. The treaties with both Mewar and Panna, for example were silent on the point; yet Mewar escaped the treatment extended to Panna, not only because of its bigger size but the strong sentiments of its people on the subject. The difference between the policies followed in Baroda and in Nepal also led to the same conclusion.\textsuperscript{44}

Few of the treaties with the Indian states included many provisions relating to the eradication of social ills. But by 1848, the Government, by diplomatic pressure, had secured the abolition of ‘\textit{sati}’ etc. in a large number of states.\textsuperscript{45} However, some of the most prominent of them still held out, such as Mewar, Marwar, Bikaner, Alwar and Kotah, apart from Baroda and Nepal, of course.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{43} F.P.P. June 2, 1854, No. 97.
\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{45} Oudh, Jaipur, Gwalior, Kashmir, Indore, Huderabad, Rewa Rundi, Jhalawar, Dungarpur, Partapgarh, Banswara, Dholpur, Bharatpur, Sirohi, Jaisalmer, Karachi, Tonk, Bhopal, and most of the petty states of Bundelkhand and Central India, had abolished ‘\textit{sati}’ by 1848; Cf. March 10, 1848, No. 28; March 17, 1843, No. 105; ‘\textit{Political Letters from court}’ 1848, No. 12.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Ibid.}
The Resident’s task was comparatively simple if a case of ‘sati’ was reported from a state where it had been prohibited. He not only offered a strong protest, but demanded a fitting punishment to the persons involved. Stray examples of this are available from Jaipur, Gwalior and Oudh.\(^{47}\) But in Hyderabad no less than five cases of ‘sati’ were reported during 1850-51. The district officers concerned frequently pleaded ignorance of the prohibitory orders as their excuse, so the Resident got a new proclamation issued by the ‘Darbar’ and made it known even in the villages by beat of drums. Not only were the relations of the ‘sati’ to be punished but the officers concerned also were to be recalled and punished according to the Resident’s advice.\(^{48}\) The result of these stringent measures was revealed when the ‘naib’ of ‘Wurwal Rajoora’ district used force to prevent a ‘sati’ even at the risk of a collision with the enraged populace.\(^{49}\)

The treatment meted out to the new ruler of Jhalawar on his mother practicing ‘sati’ showed that neither rank nor position could be allowed to shelter the evil. As ‘Sati’ had already been prohibited in the state, the Governor-General decided to punish the ruler by stopping the customary correspondence. It was only after His Highness had expressed regret and more than a year had elapsed, that Dalhousie consented to reopen correspondence.\(^{50}\)

During the eight years under study, at least two of the states still holding out were induced to forbid ‘sati’ formally. The Proclamation of

\(^{47}\) For Jaipur see F.P.P., January 14, ’848, No. 63; for Gwalior October 18, 1850, No. 76-79; For Oudh March 31, 1848, No. 37.

\(^{48}\) For details see F.P.P. April 10, 1850, No. 150; F.P.P. April 19, 1850, No. 373; F.P.P. June 14, 1850, No. 261; F.P.P. June 28, 1850, No. 103; F.P.P. September 6, 1850, No. 157; F.O.C. October 25, No. 126-127; F.P.P. December 6, 1850, No. 119-121; F.P.P. August 8, 1851, No. 90.

\(^{49}\) F.P.P. August 29, 1851, No. 109.

\(^{50}\) F.P.P. July 29, 1848, No. 78; F.P.P. May 26, 1849, No. 24-26.
March 3, 1848, abolishing ‘Sati and Samadhi’ in Kotah State was doubtless the result of persistent though unostentatious pressure of the Paramount Power. The ban on the practice was accompanied by a threat of severe punishment not only to the family involved but also to the nobles or officers whose negligence permitted the offence.51

But in Panna, more severe measures were required before a similar prohibition was secured. The younger Rani there committed ‘sati’ on the death of her husband Raja Harbans Rai on August 23, 1849. The Government seized this opportunity to demand a total prohibition of the rite in the state, and refused to grant the ‘Khillut’ of recognition to the new Raja Nripat Singh although of his ‘right to succeed; there seemed to be of no doubt.52 And recognition was granted only when the Raja had prohibited the practice in the entire state. Panna was thus brought in line with the majority of the neighboring states where ‘sati’ had already been prohibited.53

Appreciable efforts towards the abolition of inhuman rites were recorded in Nagpur and Marwar also. In 1851, the Maharaja Bhonsla was induced to forbid the ‘Meriah’ sacrifices prevalent in the impenetrable eastern and southern regions of the state.54 But the case of Marwar deserved maximum importance due no less to the advance secured than to its position as the bulwark of proud conservatism in Rajputana.

Self-immolation by ‘Charuns’ or the bards had been forbidden in Marwar with full popular support shortly before Dalhousie’s assumption of office.55 But so far the Maharaja had stoutly refused to prohibit ‘sati’ against the sentiments of his proud Rathore nobles and peasantry, through

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51 F.P.P. April 14, 1848, No. 54.
52 F.P.P. September 27, 1849, No. 159.
53 F.P.P. November 17, 1849, No. 152.
54 F.P.P. May 30, 1851, No. 121.
55 F.P.P. February 11, 1848, No. 75.
avowing his personal disbelief in the sanctity of the rite. In April, 1849, he was persuaded to impose a fine on the families practicing ‘sati’. This failed to act as a deterrent, for the fine was small, being Rs 7/- for ordinary households and Rs 10/- per thousand rupees of ‘Rekh’ for the Jageerdars. But the British pressure was renewed with added vigour in 1852, when a ‘sati’ took place before the Maharaja’s palace itself. The Maharaja and many of his ‘Thakurs’ expressed their dislike for the rite on that occasion, but nothing concrete was done. At this, the Resident, Hon’ble Sir Richmond Shakespeare, decided to abstain from attending the ‘Dussehra Darbar’ as a mark of protest. This attitude of the Resident appeared to have created quite ‘a stir and the Maharaja issued another proclamation levying heavy fines on the practice, at the rate of Rs. 200/- per thousand rupees of ‘Rekh’ for the ‘Thakurs’.

The Economic Aspects of Paramountcy: In some respects, the economic factor provided the key to the British policy towards the Indian states, for, as mentioned earlier; the East Indian Company was established not to colonies the shores of the Indian Ocean, but to exploit their economic wealth for the benefit of Great Britain. Through the passage of centuries, and while a British empire was in India, this motive continued to direct the energies of the Company’s statesmen. By the time of Dalhousie, outright annexation of the states had come to be regarded as the best means of furthering the economic exploitation of the country. But many of the states could not be yet annexed, and in them the Paramount Power continued to serve its ends by quit interference and political pressure. In would be convenient to study the economic aspects of Paramountcy under the following heads:

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56 F.P.P. May 19, 1849, No. 45-46.
57 F.P.P. November 19, 1852, No. 222.
58 F.P.P. December 17, 1852, No. 308.
Tributes; debts owed to the British Government; coinage and currency; communications; transit and custom duties; and cotton and opium. Only the economic or financial aspects of the above subjects shall be dealt with here, e.g. the revenue aspect of tribute, etc. Tributes from the native states to the Government of India were certainly of great significance as the best acknowledgement of British supremacy, but their importance as a source of revenue to the Company was also obvious. Being a recurring financial asset, tributes were to the Government of India an economic benefit in its most palpable form. The tributes as a source of revenue could not be called insignificant, for the states of Rajputana alone subscribed about fifteen lacs rupees annually to the Company’s coffers under this head.

Considering the straitened finances of the Company during Lord Dalhousie’s administration,59 it was only natural that the Government countenanced no proposals for the reduction of the tribute paid by a state, even when the British Resident himself recommended it. Col. Sutherland could hardly have been surprised when his proposal of giving up the entirely annual tributes paid by the Rajput states was firmly turned down by the Government of India in the beginning of 1848.60 The petition of the Rao of Kutch, for a reduction in his tribute of two lacs of rupees, met the same fate; despite the assistance of Col. Roberts, who verified the Rao’s statement about his falling revenues.61 The similar representations from Nagpur,62 Sirohi,63 and Sitamau states,64 elicited the same refusal

59  In the eight years of Dalhousie’s administration 8, 354, 000 were added to the public debt; in the last three years there was a deficit of 2,044, 000 in 1853-54 and of 1,850,000 and 1854-55.
60  F.P.P. April 14, 1848, No. 56.
61  F.P.P. February 24, 1849, No. 6-9.
63  F.P.P. November 30, 1855, No. 120-22.
64  F.P.P. July 7, 1849, No. 66-8.
from Dalhousie, and there appeared to be no example of his having agreed to reduce the tribute from a state for any reason whatever.

On the other hand, the tribute of Kashmir was repeatedly varied to suit the convenience of the paramount Power. In 1853, Maharaja Gulab Singh was induced to commute into money his early tribute of twelve Kashmir shawls.65 But when the Hon’ble Court of Directors decided in 1853 again to demand shawls as tribute, Dalhousie not only pressed Maharaja Gulab Singh to revert to the old practice, but also informed him that “as his tribute is now to be paid each year at the feet of the Queen of England,” the Governor-General was confident that the Maharaja would send the very finest shawls as tribute.66 It needed hardly be added that Maharaja Gulab Singh again agreed.

**Debts:** The debts owed by the native states to the British Government originated in a number of ways. For example, the fifteen thousand rupees payable annually by the Jodhpur state for the upkeep of the Merwara battalion by the Agreement of 1824 accumulated into a debt of one *lac* of rupees by 1848.67 The unpaid tributes of Jhalwar state similarly grew into a debt of two *lacs* of rupees by 1848.68 The debt of Bharatpur on the other hand, originated in a promise of the Regent Minister of the state after the expulsion of Durjan Sal to bear the express of the British Agency which was then opened at Bharatpur.69 But whatever its origin, when a debt had once attracted the notice of the Supreme Government, it naturally insisted on prompt repayment. Considerable pressure was put upon the

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66  ‘Pol Letters from the Court’, No. 3, of 1855, dated January 31, 1853; F.P.P. October 5, 1855, No. 181ff.
67  F.P.P. April 22, 1848, No. 123ff.
68  F.P.P. February 18, 1848, No. 65.
69  F.P.P. August 26, 1848, No. 112.
subordinate ruler to clear his debts frequently brought forth congratulatory “khureetas’ from the Governor-General.70

It should be noted that the British attitude was governed not merely by the selfish desire of getting back all the money it could claim from the states, but also by solicitude for the good of the native states. The Paramount Power judged it desirable to have all its subordinate states perfectly solvent and unburdened by any debt. Accordingly, the Resident always exhorted the Raja to whom he was accredited, to pay off all arrears to his troops and the native merchants or ‘Sahourcars’ also. This was illustrated not only in the case of Jhalwar, whose ‘Sahoucar’ creditors had been guaranteed by the Government;71 but in Nagpur also, where the Government had no commitments to the Raja’s creditors.72 In Gwalior at least, the Government solicitude for the financial stability of the state led Dalhousie to refuse to bestow a complimentary ‘Khureeta’ on the Regent till it was satisfactorily explained as to how and wherefrom the debt had been cleared.73

The non-payment of old debts brought the Government’s severe displeasure at the head of the ruler in debt. In the case of Karauli, at least, this displeasure took the shape of non-recognition of the accession of Nursing Pal-even though it was undisputed-till the first installment of the state’s debt was paid. Formal recognition was granted in December 1849, only after the elder Queen-Mother had paid Rs. 15, 000/- as the first installment of the debt.74 In the cases of Jhalawar and Bhartpur, the Supreme Government had decided to take over their districts yielding sufficient revenue to pay off the debts in a few years, and only punctual

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70 e.g. F.P.P. June 7, 1850, No. 225ff.
71 F.P.P. February 18, 1848, No. 65; F.P.P. March 3, 1849, no. 15-17.
72 F.P.P. March 24, 1848, No. 155; F.P.P. May 6, 1848, No. 89ff.
73 F.P.P. May 31, 1850, No. 201-4.
74 F.P>P. December 22, 1849, No. 139-43.
liquidation of the debt saved them from this punishment.\textsuperscript{75} The failure of the \textit{Nizam} to rise to the occasion in a similar situation led to the loss of Berar in 1853. \par

**Coinage and Currency:** British policy regarding matters of coinage and currency aimed at producing order and uniformity in the whole of the country, in place of the chaos and multiplicity that had existed even up to the middle of the nineteenth century. That there should be fifteen types of one rupee coins in Rajputana alone,\textsuperscript{76} and no less than thirty varieties of the ‘\textit{Nanukshahi}’ rupee of the Punjab,\textsuperscript{77} was naturally considered ridiculous by the Supreme Government. It was considered objectionable not only from the view-point of sanity and commonsense, but also because it was supposed to hinder trade and commerce. The high British officers could not but imagine that a merchant who was forced to pay tools in ‘Chittoree’ rupees in Mewar, and in ‘\textit{Saleemshahi}’ rupees of different value a few miles further down his road to Bombay, would be greatly annoyed and very lath to repeat his venture. The advantages of standardization were taken for granted, and consequently the Government of Indian strove to substitute its own coins for all the various coins of the different states in the whole of India.\textsuperscript{78}

The enquiry addressed by the Court of Directors to the important political officers in India was perhaps with a view to the entire abolition of the states’ currencies, but their unfavorable replies prevented the measure. They held that the traders were thoroughly familiar with local conditions in every part of their trade-routes, and found little difficulty in

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\textsuperscript{75} For Jhalawar case, see: F.P.P. February 18, 1848, No. F.P.P. February 10, 1849, No. 32, etc. For Bharatpur case, see: F.P.P. February 11, 1848, No. 116; F.P.P. August 26, 1848, No. 112 etc.

\textsuperscript{76} F.P.P. April 7, 1848, No. 215ff.

\textsuperscript{77} Bosworth Smith: ‘\textit{Life of Lord Lawrence}’, p. 307.

\textsuperscript{78} For details of the bewildering variety of coins in the different states, see Appendix-IV.
producing the exact currency required at a particular mart. Further, these traders and ‘Sahoucars’ indulged in ‘Stock-exchange’ dealing, as the value of the different coins waxed and waned periodically.\textsuperscript{79} The trade, therefore, did not suffer. And when the considerable reluctance shown by every prince to suppressing the currency of his state was taken into account, the political officers were convinced of the undesirability of the abolition of states’ currencies. For the Indian rulers looked upon the right of coinage as an essential emblem of sovereignty and heartily disliked its surrender. Moreover, as pointed out by Col. Sleeman, the Company’s mints were not producing enough coins even for the existing needs of the country, and the states of Bundelkund were suffering from a paucity of coins after the closure of the Government’s mint at Saugor.\textsuperscript{80}

It is interesting to observe that, in response to the Hon’ble Courts questionnaire, Gen. Fraser suggested the minting of ‘bland’ coins in the Government mints, and of the same weigh and value as the Company’s rupees. These ‘blank coins’ could then be stamped with the inscriptions of the \textit{Nizam’s} usual coins, and taken on par with the Company’s coins. This suggestion would have insured a uniform currency in the whole of the country and at the same time preserved and perpetuated the separate identities of the native states. But the Government of India refused to entertain the suggestion unless the \textit{Nizam} himself prayed for it, and the matter ended there.\textsuperscript{81}

Apart from the discussion detailed above, which bore no fruit in action, the Government of India remained vigilant to prevent the

\textsuperscript{79} For example ordinarily, 125 ‘Chittoree’ Rs. Equaled 100 ‘Kuldar’ but at the end of the ‘\textit{Rabi}’ crop, the ‘Chittoree’ rupee was in great demand to buy up the Malwa opium, and so then 119 ‘Chittoree’ Rs. 100 ‘Kuldar’ and at other seasons, when no demand at all, 130 ‘Chittoree’ Rs, 100 ‘Kuldar’; F.P.P. April 7, 1848, No.14ff.
\textsuperscript{80} F.P.P. June 24, 1848, No. 14ff.
\textsuperscript{81} F.P.P. April 7, 1848, No. 226-30.
reopening of mints in the states where they had been closed by British pressure in the past. The copper mints at Jhansi, Chattarpur and Karauli were again closed down by the Government in 1851 as they had been restarted without permission.\textsuperscript{82} In Hyderabad too, the Resident made strong representations to secure the closure of all mints except at the capital, and it only increased the enormity of the offence when it was discovered by ‘assays’ at Calcutta that the new coins from ‘Gudwall’ and ‘Sorgoor’ contained more than the usual amount of alloy.\textsuperscript{83} In the period under study, the roads and the postal ‘dawk’ were the chief means of communication. The railway and the telegraph were not seriously competing with the roads for the conveyance of travelers or of mails, especially through the broken plateaus of the peninsula. Canals as arteries of trade or as highways were still unheard of in India.\textsuperscript{84} Consequently, that the roads and the ‘dawk-buggy’ monopolized all attention in the greater part of the country.

The Indian rulers were frequently induced by the British political agents to sanction road-building schemes through their states. In such projects, it was customary for the Paramount Power to lend a helping hand, either by providing the trained engineer from its own services, or by offering a monetary contribution. The roads were almost always planned with a view to feed the great trade route between Agra and Bombay, and so were at least as useful to the company as to the states. This was the consideration that prompted the Government to bear of the expenses of road-making despite its straitened finances. The principle

\textsuperscript{82} F.P.P. June 20, 1851, No. 115-17.
\textsuperscript{83} F.P.P. November 3, 1849, No. 106ff; F.P.P. March 1, 1850, No. 46-8; F.P.P. May 22, 1851, No. 91ff.
\textsuperscript{84} Only from Calcutta to Allahabad or Agra steamer was used for transport then, while the railways had just started. In Rajputana and the Central India, where most of the native states lay, the road was the only means of communication.
was amply illustrated in the case of the roads through the Nizam’s\textsuperscript{85} territories, Holkar’s state\textsuperscript{86} and Bhopal.\textsuperscript{87} If a ‘foreign’ traveler was robbed on one of these highways, the state concerned was expected to pay ample compensation to the victim. But definite conditions were laid down for it during the administration of Dalhousie, and no compensation was awarded unless those conditions had been fulfilled by the traveler. Among them, the observance of proper precautions by the traveler was the most universally recognized, though the elaborate rules laid down in Baroda in 1855 were far more comprehensive.\textsuperscript{88} It was according to this generally accepted principle that Major Browne, the Superintendent of the Hyderabad Survey, was refused compensation after he was robbed in his tent, because he should have obtained a guard of the subsidiary Force for his camp.\textsuperscript{89} Since he had neglected this precaution,\textsuperscript{90} he could get no compensation for his loss. On the other hand, a certain Mrs. Thomas obtained Rs. 2735/- as compensation from the Rana of Dholpur, when she was robbed in that state despite having taken all the usual precautions. Sirohi too had to pay compensation to travelers in 1849 according to the same rule.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{85} The Nizam had set apart a lac of rupees per year for a road along the Berar valley towards Bombay; F.P.P. January 28, 1848, No.; F.P.P. August 25, 1849, No. 90.

\textsuperscript{86} Holkar bore half the cost of the road from Indore to the Nurbada river, the other half being borne by the Government; F.P.P. August 11, 1849, No. 78-84.

\textsuperscript{87} Bhopal gave Rs. 30,000/- yearly for roads radiating from Bhopal to Saugor, Hoshungabad, Indore and Mhow. The Engineer was provided by the Government; F.P.P. March 24, 1848, No. 252.

\textsuperscript{88} By these rules, the traveler was expected to inform the police of the theft before the other travelers had left the ‘Daharamshala’ and to engage a definite number of guards for each carriage at the rates mentioned in the rules. See Appendix-V; F.P.P. July 20, 1855, No. 27.

\textsuperscript{89} F.P.P. April 3, 1850, No. 499ff.

\textsuperscript{90} F.P.P. July 29, 1848, No. 89ff. It should be noticed that in Rajputana, the Court of ‘Vakeels’ at Ajmere decided such cases.

\textsuperscript{91} F.P.P. September 8, 1849, No. 2-9.
The Sirohi case, among others, served to evolve a formula of cases in which the dacoits looted in one state and took refuge in another. In such cases, the problem was to determine which of the two states concerned was to be held liable for the compensation. By 1849, however, a satisfactory agreement was reached between the various political officers unconcerned, and the Supreme Government also approved of it for future guidance. It was established that the compensation was to be paid, in the first instance, by the state in which the robbery took place, and the amount could be realized from the state where the robbers had taken refuge, after due enquiry later on. In the case of postal robberies too, the eight years of Dalhousie’s administration saw the establishment of a systematic practice. In 1849, the representations of Col. Robinson and other political officers on behalf of the Indian states led the Government of India to concede that, owing to the absence of agreement on the subject, the states were not bound to pay any compensation for the robbers of mails and parcels from the postal ‘dawk - buggees’. At the same time, the Governor-General instructed the political officers not to broadcast the state’s rights as admitted above, for it was sure to increase the difficulties of the Government postal department.

But next year, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North West Province threw his considerable influence into the controversy, and in June 1850, secured from the Government of India an authoritative declaration that the states, being ‘foreign territories’, must be held responsible for all

92 Ibid.

93 There appears to have been no formal agreements about the liability of states to pay compensation for mail robberies. The custom was to do nothing till mail-robberies became frequent, when the representation of the Resident led the ‘Durbar’ to take all measures for vigorously suppressing the dacoits. In less severe cases, the Resident only levied a fine on the ‘Durbar’, which was paid without remonstrance; F.P.P. June 9, 1849, NO. 21-23.

94 Ibid.
damages to the British postal ‘dawks’ passing through them. The renewed protests of the political officers were ignored, and the duty of the subordinate states in the matter was firmly established. It should be noted that his liability imposed on the states was not accepted by the Government of India itself, when the post was looted in the British territories. The Government as ‘public carriers’ had declared that valuable letter and parcels could be sent through the post only at the owner’s risk, and no compensation was due in case of their loss and theft. But an entirely different principle was imposed on the subordinate states, on the plea that they, as ‘foreign states’ must be held ‘prima-facie’ liable to pay compensation for all robberies of the post. The stand taken by the

The Political officers argued on behalf of the states, that:- (1) States had entered into no agreement to pay such compensation; (2) The Company itself paid no compensation if the ‘dawk’ was looted in British territory, as the sending of valuables by ‘dawk’ was prohibited by rules; (3) Most often the, ‘dawk-runners themselves looted the ‘dawk’ and declared that robbers had attacked them; and (4) If states liability was fully enforced, the numerous enemies of the ruler or the ‘Taluqdar’ would destroy the mail to get the ruler punished by the British. Such instances had already taken place. Also the Governor of N.W.P. argued that: (1) It was as ‘public careers’ that Government took no responsibility of the mails or parcels getting lost; (2) States recognized liability to pay compensation to private individuals if looted with their bounds so why not a public property, the mail; (3) It is possible that the runners themselves looted sometimes but ‘these are the necessary difficulties attending the circumstances of the case.’ Let others suggest HW to overcome the difficulty; (4) If investigation revealed that state not at fault, it would not have to pay; *Ibid*, F.P.P. October 18, 1850, No. 153-65.

96 F.P.P. October 18, 1850, No. 168ff.

97 ‘The claim advanced against the Oodeypore state rested on an entirely different and international ground, in which reciprocity between the British and Foreign Government has been from the first declared, in express terms, not to be necessary. We give no compensation for properly plundered within our town territories, but we exact from Foreign States, compensation for all property plundered or stolen from the subjects of other states, within their territories. It is unnecessary to discuss the fairness of this rule.” Vide. (Governor of N.W.P. to British Agent at Ajmer) F.P.P. October 18, 1850, No. 158.

The real key to the situation might be found in the following extract from Thompson to Dalhousie, “It is incumbent on the Paramount Power in India to maintain the public peace and above all to ensure the safe transit of the public mails. In states which are left to administer their own affairs, it holds them to
Government at the instance of the Lieut-Governor of the North-West Provinces could hardly be justified by any fair view of international law or political morality.

In 1853, the liability of the states was given its final form, when Hamilton, the Resident at Indore, was informed by the Supreme Government that ‘sufficient precautions’, which theoretically could absolve the state from its liability to pay compensation, could, in practice, be nothing less than what could effectively secure the mails from robberies. In other words, the very incident of a mail robbery implied that ‘sufficient precautions’ had liable to pay compensation. It would be proper to mention briefly the old privilege enjoyed by the major states of sending the personal letters of the rulers through British territory in sealed bags, and by their own runners. Although the privilege was still permitted under Dalhousie, the Government naturally expected the Indian rulers to offer no competition to the Government postal service by sending letters of the public also in their sealed bags. In 1850, Scindia’s private ‘dawk’ was opened by the British postmaster near Agra, and he was proved justified in his suspicion that the ‘Darbar Munshee’ of Gwalior used to send letter of the public also by the Maharaja’s private ‘dawk’. Henceforth, it was agreed that the postmaster would be entitled to open and inspect any ‘dawk’ packet of the Maharaja after securing the permission of the Resident of Gwalior. In the matter of communication, the policy of the Government, thus, appeared to have been encouraged road-building everywhere, and to demand protection of travelers and the mails using these roads.

the responsibility which therein independent action involves.” F.P.P. October 18, 1850, No. 153.

98 F.P.P. July 22, 1853, No. 71ff.
99 F.P.P. June 14, 1850, No. 236ff.
100 F.P.P. October 18, 1850, No. 200ff.