

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF SIR JOHN WILLIAM KAYE

(1814 - 1876)

by

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ABSTRACT

This study of the life and writings of Sir John William Kaye (1814-1876) has two main purposes. The first is to examine his writings with a view to showing the ideas by which he was moved. The second is to explore the underlying historical perspective and to assess the importance of his contributions. Moreover, in so doing, an attempt has been made to look at the contemporary and later reception of his works as well as at his technique.

Kaye had a long and productive career as a writer which centred around his lifelong interest in Indian affairs. He also served as an officer in the Company's army, worked as a journalist in India, and finally occupied a senior position in the East-India House and in the India Office. He formed strong views on Indian policy, and these may be traced in his various writings. He began his writing career as a novelist. One area in the field of Indian history that was of particular interest to him was contemporary developments: he believed that the study of current events could be useful in providing guidelines for future British policy. Another area in which Kaye made important contributions was Anglo-Indian biography. Although he was one among a number of Anglo-Indian writers whose major assumptions were political, his achievement, in both these areas, was more significant, suggesting greater skill in historical analysis and in the use of original sources. Thus, he left behind him a number of books which are still widely used.

Much of the material for this study is derived from Kaye's own published works, including his periodical contributions. Use has also been made of his confidential Letter Book and of relevant private papers.

INTRODUCTION

Sir John William Kaye was so well known as one of the foremost Anglo-Indian writers in his lifetime and as "one of the greatest authorities on Indian questions" ¹ in England and in India, that it is surprising that he has not received attention as a major figure in British historiography. One of the contemporary journals, the Athenaeum remarked:

There is no Knight of the Star of India so well known to Orientals by repute, of whom they have seen so little. It was the books of the man, his opinions, which have of late years chief power. So there was, but in a different manner, a fascination about the very name of Sir John felt from Afghanistan to the Gangetic Doab. ²

Kaye left a profound impression not only among his contemporaries, but also on posterity. Many years later, Robert Sencourt observed in his India in English Literature: "A writer so brilliant in style that he falls not far behind Burke and Macaulay is Sir John Kaye. He deserves to rank among the great historians of the last century."³ To re-read Kaye's historical and biographical works even now, when so much more research has been done on the history of the nineteenth century, is to be struck once again by his accuracy in detail and by the vast mass of original sources which lie behind his narrative.

Kaye's writings reflected a keen individual mind with a sensitive awareness of the major issues of his day. But his dominant ideas as well as his general

1. Bengalee, 29 July 1876.

2. Athenaeum, 29 July 1876.

3. Sencourt, Robert, India in English Literature (London, 1925), p.420.

frame of reference were typical of the majority of Anglo-Indians - those Englishmen who had lived in India in one capacity or another and whose experiences there had made them sceptical of doctrinaire approaches to the solution of Indian problems. In other words, they were pragmatists, with an inclination to judge things according to their results. For instance, they were not opposed to the gradual diffusion of English ideas, but they viewed all attempts at rapid westernisation as dangerous for the safety of British rule. Their belief was generally to deal with practical issues as they arose. Some of their governing ideas were: England had a mission to fulfil in India; to rule India properly it was necessary to know the Indian people, their languages, customs and laws. Many among them also believed that India must be kept away from English party politics. As a group, they were all eager to make Indian studies sufficiently interesting to attract popular attention.

Kaye's general attitude towards British rule in India was in line with that of his contemporaries. However, his career was in significant ways unique. Unlike most Anglo-Indian historians, he came to history through journalism. Journalism brought him near to current events. Here he saw more clearly than any one before that history could be used not merely to inform but to draw public opinion in a specific direction, and that the study of recent events could form an essential part of the history of British rule in India. The result of this was his lifelong interest in contemporary history.

Seen in its historiographical context, Kaye's work is of great importance for a proper understanding of the changing pattern of British historical writing on India. Unlike James Mill and Mountstuart Elphinstone, Kaye did not write general historical works covering all the periods of Indian history. His primary concern was with

the history of British rule in India. Moreover, in so doing, he also broke with the existing tradition of writing history based on a general description of peoples and places as exemplified by the works of James Todd, Grant Duff, J.D. Cunningham and others. The distinction of his writing was that it contained a new emphasis on the study of the events and the men of his own times. This emphasis, in part, reflected his assumption that they were important enough to be treated separately. But it was also because he had a great deal to say, and consequently, he wanted to use his work as a guide to British policy at that time.

Kaye made his reputation with a pioneering work on the Afghan war, and extended it with his studies of the Company's administration and the Sepoy war. The framework of his study in these works was provided by three principal questions of the day - territorial expansion, continuance of the Company as a body governing India, and the speed of Westernisation. Indeed, it is difficult to name another nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian writer whose writings were so preoccupied with day-to-day politics over so long a period. Moreover, he held an unchallenged place as a biographer of distinguished Anglo-Indians during his lifetime. In short, one has only to look at his contributions to realise how he put the study of British rule in India on an altogether new basis.

However, his achievement prompts us to enquire into the relationship between his assumptions and his research, between his preoccupations in the world of affairs and his scholarship as a historian. How dominant were these assumptions? How early in his career can they be perceived, and how deeply do they reach into his writings - not only as a historian and a biographer, but as a novelist and journalist? If political involvement and didactic aim had been integral

components of Kaye's literary and intellectual life, can we regard him now as a reliable historian? How and to what extent did he succeed in reconciling political purpose with scholarship? What reputation did he come to achieve in his lifetime? How consistent was he in pursuing his avowed ideas in his writings? How have his works stood the test of the searching criticisms of the present century, and what significance do they have today? These are some of the major questions that have been asked in the course of this study with a view to assessing the importance of Kaye's contributions as a historian and as a biographer.

CHAPTER 1

THE MAKING OF THE HISTORIAN

In the Dictionary of National Biography, the Sanskrit Scholar, Edward James Rapson began his essay on Kaye by describing him as a military historian.¹ But in the eyes of his contemporaries, Kaye was not merely a military historian, but the outstanding Anglo-Indian historian of his time. He was widely acclaimed for several kinds of achievement. His intellectual endeavours were considered remarkable and he was regarded as being ahead of most of his contemporaries in amassing knowledge regarding Indian affairs. This he did as a journalist, administrator, biographer and historian of India. What, then, were the influences which inspired his ideas and shaped his intellectual efforts?

Although himself a well-known biographer, Kaye appeared indifferent to the idea of commemorating his own life. There is no autobiography or biography of Kaye, and his premature death following a protracted illness may help to explain the destruction of most of his private correspondence. However, like most creative writers, he had a season of sowing and a season of harvesting. His childhood in England, and his later visit to India may be viewed as the seasons of sowing. The period following his return to England may be regarded as the period of fruition and harvesting. As there was a close connection between his early life and his works, an attempt will be made in this Chapter to focus attention on the formative years of Kaye's life, which were instrumental in determining the direction of his subsequent career as a historian.

1) Dictionary of National Biography, Vol.X, pp.1141-1142.

He was born in London on 3 June, 1814.¹ His childhood was thus spent in England during a period of confidence after the victory in the Napoleonic wars. We may assume that this played an important part in shaping his own views towards the problems of peace and war that subsequently engaged his attention as a writer on Indian affairs.

He began his life in a well-to-do middle-class background. He was the second son of Charles Kaye of Acton in Middlesex.² His grandfather, Joseph Kaye, had risen to high rank in the legal profession and had been appointed Solicitor to the Bank of England. Kaye's father followed the same career and retired as Solicitor to the same Bank.³ Kaye's middle-class heritage permeated his life and thought and conditioned his social and political outlook. His conception of society had no place for "Lords and Lordship".⁴ In his biographical writing, he always took a delight in showing "how youths from the middle-class families" of England "carved their way to fame and fortune".⁵

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1. Calcutta Monthly Journal, Third Series, Vol.IV, Nos.XL-XLL, May 1838, p.33. The reference to London as the place of his birth is drawn on the basis of the information that he was baptised at St. Pancras. See Hodson, V.C.P., List of the Officers of the Bengal Army, 1788-1834 (London, 1928), part ii, p.512.
 2. Dictionary of National Biography, op.cit.
 3. Calcutta Monthly Journal, May 1838, p.33.
 4. Kaye to Henry Reeve, 13 April, 1874, Kaye's Confidential Letter Book, L/P2/S/Miscellaneous/19.
 5. Kaye, J.W., The Lives of Indian Officers (London, 1867), Vol.I, Preface, p.xi.

Along with his middle-class background went the pietistic atmosphere of the time. As a child, Kaye saw a new tide in religious life under the influence of Evangelicalism which grew to the status of a dominant creed. Its ideals spread throughout the country. A faith in divine activity as the ground of all existence and a belief in Worship of God were some of those fundamental ideas which he cherished from his childhood. He remained firmly attached to these ideas all through his life.

Moreover, Kaye grew up in an era of reforming activity. The demand for parliamentary reform and the anti-slavery agitation were the main symptoms of this ferment. Recollecting his own experiences, Kaye later observed:

I have witnessed the cremation of social and political evils, the existence of which, in recent times, my children will scarcely credit. When I was a boy, the green slopes of Old Sarum were my habitual playground. There was a little inn on the white chalk road which sent two members to Parliament while Manchester and Birmingham sent none. 1

He went on to enumerate other evils in England, social, economic and moral, which he saw as fit areas for reforming politics. He continued by arguing that India also contained areas for the reforming policies of the company. In other words, he saw India in the same light as England, as an area for the same type of reformist policy. Another point to note here is that it was not only Evangelical but also Utilitarian ideas which he absorbed, at least to the extent that he thought that "the happiness of the people" was the proper aim of government.²

1. Kaye, J.W., The Administration of the East India Company (London, 1853), p.10.

2. Ibid., pp.1-14.

There was a growing awareness among the middle-classes of the usefulness of education at this time. The sons of tradesmen and professional people had begun to invade the public schools.¹ The education which Kaye's parents chose for him was of a high order. The excellence of Rugby and Eton was taken for granted.² On the other hand, Kaye was a studious boy and evinced an aptitude for extensive reading from his early childhood. Before joining Eton in 1823, Kaye had attended both Rugby and Repton Schools.³ In the testimonial given by one of the masters of Rugby School, he was praised as a boy "professing ability and originality of mind".⁴ Perhaps this favourable recommendation was at the root of his father's decision to train him for a political career. It was with this end in view that he was sent to Eton.

But his father then met with sudden financial reverses which necessitated a change in his son's career.⁵ Kaye could not continue his studies at Eton, and left the School before 1826.⁶ In February 1826, he was sent to a large private school at Salisbury where he was placed under the supervision of the Rev. Dr. George Redcliffe. Thanks to Kaye's sound schooling, his progress under him was excellent.⁷

1. Bamford, T.W., Rise of the Public Schools: A Study of boys' public boarding schools in England and Wales from 1837 to the present day (London, 1967), p.5.

2. Ibid., p.11.

3. Petition No.42, 2 November 1855, MSS. IOR. J/1/89.

4. Ibid.

5. Allen's Indian Mail, 1 August 1876.

6. Stapylton, H.E.C., The Eton School Lists from 1791 to 1850, with notes (London, 1864), p.133.

7. Military records, cadet papers, 1830. MSS. L/Mil/9/177.

The absence of uniformity and specialisation which characterized the English schools in those days naturally provided great scope for the individual idiosyncracies of talented boys like Kaye. He manifested a remarkable taste for writing and commenced the habit of composition at a very early stage.

Regarding his juvenile contributions, it was asserted in the Calcutta Monthly

Journal that :

when he was thirteen or fourteen years of age, he contributed, both in prose and verse, to a work which was got up at the School and printed periodically, called the Horae Sarisburienses. The youthful contributor seems to have limited himself to no particular subject or tone, but, to have written on whatever occurred to his youthful mind, ranging in fancy free, with the versatility of a clever boy and a volatility which belongs to the happy days of boyhood. ¹

Thus, it is clear that Kaye from the start was a boy of literary taste and devoted himself to writing.

As a teacher, the Rev. George Redcliffe was highly impressed by the qualities of his young student and testified to his abilities in the following words: "I consider him a young man of considerable classical attainments as well as general knowledge and of sound moral principles". ²

A turning point came in Kaye's life with the decision of his father to send him to India as a cadet in the Company's military service. His nomination to a cadetship was procured by his grandfather, Joseph Kaye, as a personal favour from William Astell, one of the Directors of the East India Company. ³ Those

1. Calcutta Monthly Journal, May 1838, p.33.

2. Military records, Cadet papers, 1830, MSS.L/Mil/9/177.

3. Ibid.

nominated to the Company's service came mainly from the middle-classes of British society. The largest group comprised the sons of the Company's servants, but there were many who came from the banking and mercantile community.¹ Thus, though that age had passed away when men went out to India without a penny and came back to buy boroughs at home, still the prospects and profitability of an Indian career were great. An offer of a cadetship was eagerly looked forward to as the highway to prosperity.

Kaye joined the military seminary at Addiscombe on 4 February 1831.² Some glimpses of his life and experiences during his stay here are available in one of his novels,³ and in an article entitled 'Addiscombe' which he contributed to the Calcutta Review. It seems that Kaye was not happy about the general tenor of the life and the process of training of a cadet at the seminary. He referred, in particular, to the failure of the existing disciplinary system and attributed it to a number of factors such as the disparity in the age of initiation, lack of proper relationship between the teacher and his pupils and, finally, the inhibited atmosphere. After being kept as a prisoner for the whole day, Kaye argued, a cadet tried to seek relaxation in drunkenness and other illicit amusements of his own. On the other hand, he said, there was always a lack of opportunity to join family or friends during the period of training.⁴ Needless to say, at the root of his criticisms were his own experiences. He

1. Tate, R.F.S., The Home Government of India, 1834-53 (Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1972), p.36.

2. Hodson, V.C.P., op.cit., p.512.

3. Kaye, J.W., Peregrine Pultuney; or Life in India (3 vols., London, 1844).

4. Kaye, J.W., 'Addiscombe', Calcutta Review, vol.ii, no.iii, 1844, pp.125-129.

wrote: "It must be added, too, that no great pains are taken at the seminary to encourage the growth of more honourable feeling. Precept is not wanting, but example is more powerful than precept".¹

Between seventy and seventy-five officers every year passed out from Addiscombe. The best qualified of these cadets having been trained in the scientific branches of the service, went into the engineers or the artillery, with the remainder going into the infantry. On the successful completion of his training, Kaye obtained his commission as Second-Lieutenant in the Bengal Artillery on 14 December 1832.²

Kaye landed in Calcutta on 16 September 1833 and joined the headquarters of his regiment at Dum-Dum.³ As a young officer, his first glimpses of military life here were encouraging. Recalling his experiences, he wrote several years later: "There were then, and many years afterwards, stationed there an unbroken succession of Christianmen, whose care it was to preserve from evil the inexperienced youngsters who joined the regiment".⁴ Thus, unlike Addiscombe, Dum-Dum provided a solemn but hospitable atmosphere. The association which Kaye formed with people of "much Christian piety" such as Major Powney⁵ was no doubt fundamental in determining his attitude to life in later years.

1. Ibid., p.133.

2. Vibart, H.M., Addiscombe - Its Heroes and Men of Note (London, 1894), p.460.

3. Ibid.

4. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, Vol.ii, p.296.

5. Ibid.

Kaye's career in the army was, however, short and uneventful. During the first year of his arrival, he suffered several severe attacks of fever, "the latter of which so alarmed his medical attendants that they pronounced his return home indispensable".¹ After a few months' stay in India, he went on sick-leave on 15 August 1834 and returned to England.² There is among his articles one entitled 'The Sick-room in India', which shows that, despite his agreeable experiences at Dum-Dum, he was soon convinced that the tropical climate of India was baneful to the health of Europeans. He argued that, although the number of diseases arising out of the sufferer's own imprudence were very small now, cases of the pernicious effects of exposure at unreasonable hours were still numerous. The victims of the climate, he said, were unfortunately those who were "the strongest, the heartiest, the most robust, in whom there is the most life".³ He then turned to explaining how there was a great difference between sickness at home and abroad. He noted with regret that the accomplishments of the sickroom in India were not similar to those "cheering environments which so brighten up the gloom of the sick chamber in England".⁴ He sensed that it was the want of friends and relations which made sickness a real misery in India. But at the same time, he held that such sentimental feelings were a natural sequel to the patient's state of mind in his confinement. Thus: "During sickness the comparative value of things is strangely inverted. Great things became little, and little things became great".⁵ Here, then, we

1. Calcutta Monthly Journal, May 1838, p.34.

2. Hodson, V.C.P., op.cit., p.512.

3. Kaye, J.W., 'The Sickroom in India', Calcutta Review, Vol.iii, no.V, 1845, p.79.

4. Ibid., p.91.

5. Ibid.

see that he tried to reconcile his negative view of the inner conflicts of the invalid with a positive view that those conflicts were superficial and momentary. As we shall see, he expressed similar ideas in a poem which he wrote at this time.

Kaye returned to Calcutta again on 27 November 1837.¹ In 1838, he commanded a detachment of artillery at Kyaukpyu in Arakan. But during the following year, he was once again obliged to go on sick-leave for six months.² On resuming his duties, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on 19 August 1840.³ In less than a decade of army service, Kaye had realised that "few men enter it with any high hopes or pleasurable emotions".⁴

His initial experiences and observations during his stay in Calcutta, nevertheless, helped him to form ideas with which to begin his literary career. Even amidst the noise and bustle of the barracks, thoughts of study were never driven from his mind. He maintained his habit of reading. He collected a number of books which amounted to a "small though very select library".⁵

He soon distinguished himself as a writer. He became a regular contributor to the Calcutta Literary Gazette which was then edited by David Lester Richardson. His first essay appeared in the issue of 25 January 1834 in the series of papers entitled 'The Essayist'. The subject of this essay was 'The Pen

1. Hodson, V.C.P., op.cit., p.512.

2. Vibart, H.M., op.cit., p.460.

3. Hodson, V.C.P., op.cit.

4. Kaye, J.W., A History of the Sepoy War in India (London, 1864), Vol.i, p.154.

5. Calcutta Monthly Journal, May 1838, p.34.

and the Pencil'. It begins with the question whether one should be a great poet or a great painter. The essayist looks at some of the great figures in the worlds of poetry and painting. At one stage, he finds that while a poet's work could live forever, the painter's could not, even though his fame might be handed down by tradition. But he considers it difficult at the end to decide which way to lean. After all, poetry and painting support each other.¹

In similar fashion, in his next essay, 'On the magnifying mediums', the essayist considers the relative advantages of "memory" and "hope". But this time, he does not leave the question undecided. Thus:

Now I am inclined to think differently upon this subject, and attach more importance to the past than to the future, inasmuch as I prefer certainty to doubt, upon all occasions, even though the certainty be involved in less pleasant considerations.²

Kaye also contributed a number of other essays ranging over diverse topics such as 'Excitement of publication - disappointment of genius', 'Effects of sight-seeing on children', 'On school boys'. Written in a graceful and pleasing style, these essays brought Kaye into contact with the literary world of Calcutta. The Calcutta Monthly Journal commented: "They abound in just and striking thoughts, and the illustrations, which are very copious, indicate extensive reading, and are, in general, in very good taste".³ Thus, it was in intellectual rather than in military pursuits that Kaye first revealed his abilities.

These early successes encouraged Kaye to further efforts. As Anglo-Indian

1. Calcutta Literary Gazette, New Series, Vol. i, no. i, January 1834, pp.55-57.
2. Calcutta Literary Gazette, vol. i, no. 9, March 1834, p.132.
3. Calcutta Monthly Journal, May 1838, p.44.

social life began to develop in the larger cities, English verse^{be} came a popular medium for the expression of wit and satire. He also made an attempt in this direction and published a small collection of poems entitled Poems and Fragments for private circulation. These poems are important as revealing both his affinity with the leading English poets of the day and the writings of his Anglo-Indian predecessors. In his remarks at the outset, Kaye praises Wordsworth for "beautiful inspirations".¹ In imitation of the leading poets, he composes his poems in various styles of versification - sonnet, ode, verse. 'On the death of Shelley' reveals his admiration for that poet and his deep regard for his poet's passionate love of mankind: "That spake at once a heart at peace with all mankind".² Kaye also deeply laments the death of S.T. Coleridge.³ Needless to say, other poems of the collection are equally distinguished by richness of poetical images and the poet's creative longing to resurrect lost worlds within the imagination. It is in his poem, 'Written on recovery from sickness' that Kaye once again depicts the nostalgia of a sensitive individual for the home and the yearnings of a sick for the freshness of his life: "I stood upon the shores of Hindustan - A solitary man".⁴ Thus, we may find the same note of melancholy expressed in Kaye's own remarks which pervaded Anglo-Indian literature from the very beginning. Indeed, the Anglo-Indians often lamented their separation from home, although the moral imperatives and material profits of the imperial mission generally made them gladly bear this

1. Kaye, J.W., Poems and Fragments (Place not mentioned, 1835), Introductory remarks.

2. Ibid., p.2.

3. Ibid., p.18.

4. Ibid., p.15.

isolation. Passing by the occasional melancholy of Sir William Jones, The Rev. Reginald Heber and D.L. Richardson, we find the same note continuing and expressed in Kaye's own melancholic yet sympathetic vision of India.

Having distinguished himself as an essayist and a poet, Kaye turned to the writing of novels which not only gave him an employment during his leisure, but also provided him with a vehicle for the discussion of Anglo-Indian social life and contemporary developments. He was convinced that, although old ways of life survived here and there, there was a great change in the life of the English community in the Presidency towns of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Indeed, as time went on, more English women came to these places to marry the young civil and military officers of the Company. The enormous social as well as political transformations of the preceding decades had created a new awareness of the need to reveal the life and society of the English in India. A series of novels from the pen of such accomplished writers as Thomas Moore, Robert Southey, W.B. Hockley, Walter Scott and Colonel Meadows Taylor, had won remarkable appreciation.

Like Taylor, Kaye was familiar with the fictions of Sir Walter Scott which blended romance and history in acceptable proportions. He had also read the works of other Anglo-Indian novelists and was keenly aware of the popularity which they enjoyed.¹ Thus, the successes achieved by these early ventures as well as the great popularity of the historical novel as a distinct medium under Scott's influence, formed the background against which Kaye began to write novels based on his first-hand experience of Anglo-Indian life and its settings.

1. Kaye, J.W., 'The English in India', Calcutta Review, Vol. i, no. ii, 1844, p.290.

Despite a certain similarity in approach and basic motivation, there was a noticeable difference in terms of emphasis between the novels of Taylor and those of Kaye. Taylor was interested in the impact of one culture upon another and consequently devoted himself to depicting the life of Indians; Kaye was concerned with the portrayal of the life of the Anglo-Indians in Indian settings. Hence, unlike Taylor's Tapoo Sultan and Tara, the heroes and heroines of Kaye's novels were drawn from English society in India. Looking at their Indian careers, it seems that this difference was largely due to the fact that unlike Taylor, Kaye never moved out of Calcutta and had no close association with Indians. Again, although Kaye was influenced by Scott, his own novels set in contemporary India brought to historical romance, a sense of familiarity based on personal experiences that was lacking in Scott's novels.

Although they included characters who had had Indian connections, Kaye's first two novels were not set in contemporary India. They were of a general character and centred mainly around the question of interaction between individuals and the problems of their existence. But as the depiction of individualities ran as a common feature through all his novels, we may profitably turn to them to gain an idea of his imaginative skill.

His first attempt, Jemingham; or the inconsistent man, published in 1836, immediately drew favourable attention and his contemporaries recognised him as "very successful" in the delineation of his characters.¹ In the style of Plato,

1. Calcutta Monthly Journal, May 1838, p.36.

the author begins the novel with "An Apology" where he indicates the choice of the title. He writes:

I have attempted to delineate, in the ensuing pages, the characters of two good men, both equally benevolent, though one had the world with him, the other the world against him, though one is the friend to establishments, a lawyer, and a member of Parliament, the other, an enemy to establishments.

The story opens with Claude Jerningham, who is portrayed as the friend to establishment. Jerningham was born in the city of Benares, where his father was posted as a civilian in the service of the East India Company. His father enjoys a good fortune and, like many other Englishmen in India at this time, sends his sons Frederick and Claude to England for schooling. Both Frederick and Claude begin their education under the supervision of their uncle.

The other main character is that of Everard Sinclair, whom Jerningham meets at school. There develops an enduring friendship between the two. Jerningham and Sinclair are both serious students, but they are poles apart in their attitude to life. Sinclair is inspired by an anger against the established order: "It is because I dare to think for myself, to differ from constitutional authorities, and, therefore, from the rest of the world, upon matters of polity and religion".² Jerningham's approach is more practical: "Why not have the prudence to be silent, when you know that there is danger in uttering those thoughts".³ Both grew up and became free to accept or reject what they think

1. Kaye, J.W., Jerningham; or, the inconsistent man (3 vols., London, 1836), vol.i, p.xi.

2. Ibid., p.96.

3. Ibid.

fit. Jerningham leaves for India while Sinclair remains in England and marries. Soon, he comes face to face with a multitude of worldly problems and finds himself unable to meet their challenges. On the other side, Jerningham leads a happy-go-lucky life and when the time comes, saves his friend from utter destitution and greatly helps him in recovering from sickness. In fact, Jerningham is consistent in showing kindness to everyone he meets in his life. Impressed by his kindness towards himself, his uncle decides to resign his seat in Parliament in his favour. It is only after his marriage that Jerningham reveals the inconsistency in his character. Rejected in love with Margaret, Jerningham had married Ellen Harvey on an impulse. On her side, his wife, Ellen, is always very affectionate and kind, but Jerningham is finding it difficult to reciprocate. Meanwhile, Ellen gives birth to a son. This leads to a change in Jerningham. But it is already late. Ellen is afflicted with tuberculosis. Jerningham is helpless. He realises that it would have been much better if he had remained consistent in his kindness towards Ellen. Thus, it is evident that the principal aim of the novel is to show that consistency is a virtue in human life.

The next novel, Doveton; or the man of many impulses, is less serious. The scene appears to be set for a happy ending. The novel begins with Gerard Doveton's childhood days and traces the story of his life until he is married to Ella Moore. Here Kaye engages in the selection of an incident which reflects his own experience. Gerard's father, like Kaye's father, meets with a sudden financial setback in his business and this brings a crisis in the family. One may quote a passage which is very revealing of young Gerard's mind: "Child as I then was, I knew well enough how to read the human countenance, like a book,

and to find a history in the tones of a voice".¹ Then, after a period of despondency, Gerard goes to a school where he meets, among others, a boy called Reginald Euston. Reginald Euston later succeeds his father as Sir Reginald Euston, and his friendly countenance provides a great comfort and support to Gerard. It is from him that Gerard receives an offer of a job in a foreign country. Meanwhile, Gerard gets an opportunity to become rich as an heir to Mr. Anstruther who dies naming him as his successor in his will. Gerard, however, decides not to avail himself of this opportunity, because he thinks that the property left by Mr. Anstruther should actually go to Ella and Michael who were the long-lost children of Mr. Anstruther. When the time comes, he tears the will into pieces and persuades Michael to fight for his claims. Michael follows his advice, and is successful in establishing his claims to the Anstruther estates. After serving as an attache to the ambassador at Petersburg for two years, Gerard returns to England and enters into marriage with Ella Moore, who has become Mary Anstruther. The character of Doveton is presented sympathetically. He suffers from poverty, but he is never mean and avaricious. In the end, he gets his reward and settles down happily in life. It is clear that as with his first novel, Kaye has a moral to convey here: virtuous men marry rich women.

Unlike its predecessors, The Story of Basil Bouveric is set in contemporary India. It is distinguished by the author's efforts to connect the general theme with a portrayal of the inner life of English society in Calcutta. The two worlds

1. Kaye, J.W., Doveton; or, the man of many impulses (3 vols., London, 1837), vol. i, p. 19.

of the novel are represented by Mr. and Mrs. Basil Bouveric on the one hand, and Harry Brereton on the other. The Bouverics are simple and helpful people who value their circle of friends. Harry Brereton is a bachelor and joins the Bouverics as a friend. As a bachelor, one of his main preoccupations is to attract the young ladies of the city. Whereas Basil is impressed by Brereton's jovial nature, Mrs. Bouveric from the very beginning does not entertain a good opinion of him. Meanwhile, one of Brereton's misdeeds comes to the surface. Ellen Lascelles, a widow, is the victim. Basil decides to expose his character as a warning to others: "I can forgive errors, into which men are betrayed by the impetuosity of their passions; but cool, calculating villainy, I cannot forgive".¹ The exposure proves costly for Brereton and he loses the chance of marriage with Miss Meryon who is the only child of a retired and rich civilian. Brereton becomes utterly frustrated. But before he dies in an accident, he commits yet another crime by having Ellen's baby murdered. His end is most miserable. Such is the general theme. It is set against the background of a growing moral consciousness in Anglo-Indian society, and it is developed with the greatest subtlety.

The picture that is presented in his next novel, Peregrin Pultuney; or, Life in India, is based largely on his impressions of the life of Anglo-Indian society in Calcutta. The novel takes the form of an autobiography in which the author traces the story of his life from the time of the decision of his parents to send him to India. When the story begins, they are discussing the prospects of an Indian career. Mrs. Pultuney at first, opposes her husband's wish to send

1. Kaye, J.W., The Story of Basil Bouveric, (2 vols., Calcutta, 1842), vol.ii, p.19.

Peregrine to India: "India! Only think, Mr. Pultuney, of the climate, the fevers, the liver complaints, the jungles, and the Black Hole of Calcutta".¹

But later she gives way to persuasion from her husband .

Young Pultuney does not seem to be concerned about the evils of an Indian life and starts his journey in high spirits. The course of the journey is distinguished by a duel which the young hero picks up with one of his co-passengers, Long Comet. Here, we see that the duel which Peregrine fights with Cornet reflects a characteristic feature of early Anglo-Indian life, and we may refer here to the famous instance of a duel between Warren Hastings and Philip Francis. Soon after his arrival in Calcutta, Peregrine finds himself surrounded by the desultory life of the great city. Because of an upright and lovable disposition, Peregrine comes to occupy a central place in the company of his friends and admirers.

The characters are vividly drawn and the women, in particular, are treated with grace and wit. The novel is rich in indoor-settings and there is much conversation on a wide variety of topics. After all, conversation forms an essential feature of life in the city:

Nothing is so insignificant as the staple of Calcutta conversation. What Mr. this said to Miss that, and what Miss that did to Mr. this; and then all the interminable gossip about marriages and no-marriages and will-be marriages and ought-to-be marriages - gentlemen's attention, ladies' flirtings, dress, reunions and the last burra-khana. 2

1. Kaye, J.W., Peregrine Pultuney; or, Life in India (3 vols., London, 1844), vol.i, p.4.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, p.131.

Despite a busy schedule including social calls and friendly chats, Peregrine begins to feel a loneliness in his heart which could be satisfied only by an enduring companionship. He soon finds one, who apart from her charms, commands a considerable fortune as the only child of a Lt. Colonel. The novel ends with a valedictory fortnight showing the hero leaving India amidst the kindly farewells and good wishes of all with whom he had come into contact. Insofar as Peregrine is able to marry a rich woman because of his upright and lovable disposition, the main implication of the story in this novel is the same as that of Doveton.

Despite a recurring Anglo-Indian background, Kaye's last novel, Long Engagements; a Tale of the Afghan Rebellion, may be regarded as of a different character. It is a historical romance set against a background of the First Afghan war. Because of his residence in India and because of the position which he occupied as editor of a local daily newspaper, Kaye was preeminently qualified to do justice to a theme such as this. In particular, the novel shows the depth of the author's interest in the theme which he subsequently developed in a historical work on The History of the War in Afghanistan.

The central problem of the novel is the depiction of the mental conflicts which characterize the sensitive men and women living in Calcutta at this time. The theme of the breaking up of a "long engagement" in the wake of the Afghan tragedy fits in well with the author's task and adds a social touch that is characteristic of his novels. The scene is partly set in Calcutta, partly in Afghanistan. The developments in Kabul after its occupation by the British forces provide the background and the author shows his consummate skill in linking the scenes at

Kabul and Calcutta by placing Arthur Carrington, the hero of the tale, the man who is engaged to Miss Adela Balfour, at Kabul.

While Carrington remains at Kabul, Miss Adela Balfour arrives in Calcutta at her brother's home. There is an ominous lull beyond the frontiers, and as in most Indian developments, it becomes a topic of frequent discussions in the friendly gatherings of the city: "We mistook altogether the national character of the Afghans, or rather we never troubled ourselves to study their character at all. We experimentalized upon them from the very beginning as though they had been Bengalees".¹ The problem before Mr. and Mrs. Balfour and their family friends is to keep the news of unhappy developments in Afghanistan away from Miss Balfour. While ignorant, Miss Balfour is idly flirting in Calcutta, the retreat from Kabul commences. The novel closes with a few chapters devoted to the disastrous retreat, the horrors of which are painted with great imagination.

Apart from revealing his imaginative skill in the construction of personalities, Kaye's novels set in contemporary India, were distinguished by his attempt to highlight the social and political developments of the time. Thus, as a novelist, he wanted to explain Anglo-Indian life against the background of his own experiences. He wanted to demonstrate that Anglo-Indian society of his day was different from that of the past in that it no longer tolerated vices of the type which Brereton had committed. He viewed improvement primarily from a moral point of view. There is no doubt that this was a distinctive viewpoint within Anglo-Indian society at this time. And, as we shall see, he consistently advanced this view in subsequent articles and historical works.

1. Kaye, J.W., Long Engagements; A tale of the Afghan rebellion (London, 1846), p.40.

Thus, so far as his major assumptions were concerned, there were connecting links between his novels and his historical works. This connection was still more apparent in his last novel which was developed around the theme of the Afghan War. At the same time, his versatility was noteworthy.

Kaye's early life in India coincided with one of the most eventful periods of Indian history. He had arrived at a time when the Charter Act of 1833 had just changed the character of the East India Company's administration by divesting it of its remaining commercial privilege of China trade monopoly. In short, the political situation at that time was characterised by the ascendancy of a liberal trend. The period of political conquest had ended and a period of peace ensued. It was during this period of peace that the British rulers applied themselves to policies of reform. One of Bentinck's memorable contributions which marked the closing year of his reign in India, was the decision incorporated in the resolution of 7 March 1835, that laid the foundation of the System of English education in India.

Another reform was the removal of restrictions on the freedom of the Press, which was effected under Bentinck's successor, Sir Charles Metcalfe. The immediate effect was to give a stimulus to Calcutta journalism, and Kaye was involved in this. He had been in close touch with the press of Calcutta ever since he came to India. Commenting on Metcalfe's decision, Kaye wrote several years later: "He took his stand boldly upon the broad principle, that to deny this right is to contend that the essence of good government is to cover the land with darkness".¹

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, Vol.i, p.612.

It was at this time that Kaye had resigned his commission in the army. After a brief period of uncertainty about his vocation, he went to edit the Bengal Harkaru, one of the leading newspapers of the day. It was at this time that he came directly into touch with those problems of contemporary history which became so significant for him as a historian. The developments which he observed and recorded as a journalist coloured his own historical outlook, and became an important driving force behind his first historical work - that on the Afghan War. The importance of this part of Kaye's life, as we shall see, also lay in that it made him aware of the need to highlight some of these developments as a warning for the future.

Hence, though occupying an important place as editor of the Bengal Harkaru, he was not fully satisfied with what he could write in its columns. He always felt the need for a journal which might serve as a more effective medium for the expression of his views and ideas. From his early days, he had seen how British periodicals such as the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly Review and the Westminster Review were serving as a useful medium for the dissemination of ideas and opinions.

He decided, therefore, to establish a periodical which could perform the same function in India as these British periodicals had been performing in Britain. Against the background of his connections in the Company's services and the literary world of the time, Kaye had been able to develop a large circle of friends and well-wishers which he maintained through companionship and correspondence. In fact, it was with their encouragement that his project for a first-rate quarterly review took a practical shape.

Although the earlier period of Kaye's stay in India was marked by peace and reform, the last years witnessed wars and annexation, during the time of Auckland and Ellenborough. Like many of his contemporaries, Kaye preferred peaceful policies, and the formative influences of the early phase had their effect on him as a writer in later years. Kaye was convinced that the extension of the empire would be an evil, because any further addition of territory would mean a greater strain on its resources and threaten its progress and stability. This was one of the leading ideas in the political sphere which he advanced from the beginning, and it was put forward in his early essays in the Calcutta Review.¹ Thus, Kaye as well as his associates, had some common assumptions about the need for a periodical. One of them was that the dissemination of information was good and necessary in itself. Another was that such a periodical could influence the policies of the government. Finally, it was thought that it would fill a gap.

Having taken the decision, Kaye now took the initiative in enlisting support and organising a band of contributors. One of the first persons from whom he received a promise of support was J.C. Marshman, the son of the famous Serampore missionary. Marshman was well-known at this time as a Professor at the Serampore college and the editor of the Friend of India. He not only extended his support to Kaye in his new venture, but also secured the assistance of another person who proved to be a source of great strength to the Calcutta Review in the course of time. Marshman was in touch with Sir Henry Lawrence, who was at this time holding the office of Resident at the Court of Nepal. Having plenty of leisure at his disposal, Henry Lawrence was pleased

1. Kaye, J.W., 'Civis on Indian Affairs', Calcutta Review, Vol.xiii, no.xxvi, 1850, p.407.

to have an opportunity to turn it to good account. He was looking forward to a magazine which could serve as a vehicle for the expression of his views. Kaye later recalled that as soon as Lawrence heard of his intention to start the Calcutta Review, he promised to send articles to every number. Kaye added further: "He did not see that a public officer, who, brimful of knowledge, desired not to confine the exposition of it wholly to official documents was less likely to prove a trustworthy servant of the State".¹ But Kaye made no attempt here to explain, in the first place, whether Lawrence's knowledge had been obtained in the course of official duties, and secondly, whether such a periodical was concerned merely to disseminate "knowledge" or in addition to advocate ideas of policy and influence government.

Another important figure who helped Kaye in this connection was the Rev. Alexander Duff, the famous Calcutta missionary. Duff was also convinced of the need for such a magazine. As he observed:

I had long felt very strongly the need of a powerful periodical to do justice to the weighty affairs of our Indian empire. I therefore had no hesitation in replying at once, expressing a sense of the extreme desirableness of such a periodical.²

Duff's only reservation was that the Calcutta Review should be conducted on "sound moral principles" and that it should not be "hostile to Christianity or Christian

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, vol.ii, p.410.

2. Smith, George, Life of Alexander Duff (London, 1879), vol.ii, pp.92-93.

subjects generally".¹ Among others, Captain H. Marsh of the Bengal artillery, and William Sinclair Mackay, a journalist, were those whom Kaye consulted in this regard. As the founder, Kaye had thus gathered around him an assembly of dedicated people who were eager to help him in the furtherance of his object.

Like the Edinburgh Review, the Calcutta Review prefixed to its first volume an 'Advertisement' explaining the aim of the journal. The 'Advertisement' was drafted by Kaye himself.² Kaye wanted the Review to be an instrument of enlightenment and reform: "The basis of this country is ignorance. Ignorance, not in the dark recesses of native life - there it is comparatively harmless, but in high places - among the ruling body".³ Thus, Kaye decided to apply the periodical to the purpose of a vast commission of enquiry and wanted to give evidence which might be used to influence government's policies.

But one of its purposes was no doubt missionary; to act as an instrument of general enlightenment and to gain popularity for Christianity and missionary enterprises. The Calcutta Review's missionary overtones might be attributed both to the general climate of opinion dominant at this time and to the personal influences of missionaries, such as Marshman and Duff. In fact, Kay was himself deeply religious and valued moral influences as necessary to general enlightenment. However, this was not the only objective, and the general character of the Calcutta Review was not that of a purely missionary journal. The other main area of interest was supplied by the political questions of the day.

1. Ibid.

2. 'Genesis of the Calcutta Review', Calcutta Review, vol.cxvii, no.ccxxxiii, 1903, pp.111-112.

3. 'Advertisement', Calcutta Review, vol.i, no.i, 1844.

Kaye set out to fulfill a great need. His motives were both ideological and professional. As proprietor, manager and editor, he wanted the Calcutta Review to rank in merit with the British quarterlies of the day. As he wrote in a letter to Henry Lawrence:

The Review is getting on very well and has gained a very considerable reputation, so that I trust that we shall be able to keep it afloat for a long time. It must do good and I hope in course of time, raise the character of Calcutta. I shall do my best to push it into circulation in England and thence in Paris. Indeed, if we can keep up to the present mark in respect of contributions, I have no fear of complete success. 1

The first number was published in May 1844, containing six articles and miscellaneous notes. In keeping with the practice prevalent in contemporary Victorian periodicals, the articles in the Calcutta Review were anonymous. It was printed locally and passed through three editions. Each edition comprised 500 copies.² As an enterprising editor, Kaye kept his promise by producing four numbers within the first year of its existence.

The practice^{of} anonymity had obvious advantages, for it enabled authors in the Company's service to express their ideas about official policy without risking their careers. It was mainly because of this practice that the Review could manage to secure reviews and articles from civil and military officials, who would not have otherwise thought of contributing. Another remarkable feature was the inclusion of Indian contributors whose numbers increased with the pace of time. The Rev. Krishna Mohan Banerjea was the first among them.

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1. Kaye to Henry Lawrence, 2 September 1844, MSS. Eur. F. 85.27.
 2. It was printed in Calcutta by Messrs. Sanders & Co. 'Genesis of the Calcutta Review', Calcutta Review, vol. cxvii, no. ccxxxiii, 1903, p.111.

He was followed by others, such as Bipin Behari Sanyal, Lal Behari De, Kishore Chandra Mitra and Peary Chandra Mitra.

The Calcutta Review was highly applauded by its contemporaries. The Friend of India regarded it as a great and most successful experiment.¹ The Englishman hailed it as a periodical "similar to the most popular reviews published in England, and not inferior in paper and printing".² The Calcutta Christian Herald expressed high opinions of its merits and praised Kaye as "the liberal and spirited editor". Thus, soon after its appearance, the Calcutta Review attained celebrity of a high order. It continued to retain its place as the most important Indian periodical. In 1856, Allen's Indian Mail described it as "the most reliable authority on all Indian subjects and the fifty numbers which have been published continue to be referred to as the most valuable repository of authentic facts, and with some exceptions, of sound opinions".⁴

There is no doubt that the outstanding achievement of this phase of Kaye's career was the foundation of the Calcutta Review. One can see here that Kaye was, consciously or unconsciously, engaged in creating a basis of popular interest for his own study of contemporary developments. In any case, it is certain that it helped him to shape himself to be a critic and a historian.

Thus, the Calcutta Review was not merely Kaye's labour of love; it served to define his programme of work for the remainder of his life. He had a taste for

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1. Friend of India, 13 December 1855.
 2. Englishman and Military Chronicle, 17 May 1844.
 3. Calcutta Christian Herald, 26 November 1844.
 4. Allen's Indian Mail, 3 June 1856.

writing on contemporary developments. His energy was such that he was able to continue writing articles for the Review in addition to performing his duties as editor of the Bengal Harkaru. His fertility was, indeed, considerable and he generally furnished two or three articles to each number of the Review. The articles ranged over a number of topics and were usually sixty or seventy pages in length.

To study Kaye's work in its early maturity, it is necessary to look at some of his contributions to the Calcutta Review. His articles were highly informative and reflected the major points he made in the course of his subsequent writings. They fell into two distinct groups: the articles on contemporary socio-political problems and the reviews of books. It is important to note the way in which Kaye's articles revealed the ideas and assumptions which he had come to cherish.

Of the six articles which were published in the first number, Kaye himself contributed four. His first article was on 'The English in India' and was continued into the next number. The article began with a commentary on the absence of proper knowledge about India which characterized the English mind at that time. As Kaye observed:

Of India itself little more was known than that Calcutta and Madras were, somehow or other, two of its principal components; that the climate was very hot and unhealthy; and that the Great Mogul, the hero of the playing cards, was one of its most magnificent potentates. Whether Madras was in Calcutta, or Calcutta in Madras; or whether they were contiguous cities like London and Westminster; whether Tipoo Sultan was the great Mogul, or whether the great Mogul was one of the princes of Onde; all these were questions which only the very knowing were competent to satisfactorily solve. 1

To Kaye, this ignorance was largely due to the apathy shown by contemporary writers and he quoted the lines of a poet who wrote: "There's glory on thy mountains, proud Bengal!"¹ He then turned to explaining the circumstances under which ignorance was gradually replaced by an eagerness to know more about Indian life and its settings. He explained that several factors accounted for this change of outlook, such as the growth of communication, the increase of interest shown by the British press, the dramatic character of some of the political developments, like the Afghan War, the annexation of Sind and the Anglo-Sikh War.² At the same time, Kaye emphasised that there were changes in the manners and standards of Anglo-Indian society: "Old Indians are not in these days so much unlike the rest of the world. Neither do they turn up unexpectedly, with mines of wealth, to lavish upon unsuspecting relatives".³ He went on to say that Anglo-Indians of the present day lived in a better condition than that which characterized earlier periods: "comfort and respectability seem now to be aimed at, and attained. There is little licentiousness to shock, and less poverty to distress".⁴ He saw that these differences in the social condition of the English in India had paved the way for an improvement in their morality; "Ruffianism had gone out of fashion. People drank less, gambled less, swore less, and talked less obscenity".⁵

1. ibid., p.2.

2. ibid., pp.2-8.

3. ibid., p.11.

4. ibid., p.20.

5. ibid., vol.1, no.2, p.319.

The other subject that drew his attention was the progress of religious feeling among the English in India. Thus, the time was gone "when to be a Christian was, in their estimation, to be lustful, rapacious, cruel".¹ He had already given evidence of his interest in these questions and he continued to do so in the course of his subsequent writing.

His articles on the 'Ameers of Sindh' and on the 'Administration of Lord Ellenborough' reveal some of the ideas which he later developed in his major historical works. As a contemporary, Kaye identified himself with the tradition of peace and stability which had been established by Bentinck. With his deep religious feelings and Evangelical inclinations, he combined political liberalism. His reforming zeal was very much in time with the spirit of the time. Convinced of the positive achievements of peaceful politics, he showed a critical disposition towards the later dramatic developments which posed threats to the safety of British rule in India: "Never in the recollection of the oldest had such a series of appalling events filled the breasts of men with horror and dismay".² Close upon the heels of the unjust war in Afghanistan, he said, came the equally unjust annexation of Sindh. To Kaye, "the real cause of this chastisement of the Ameers consisted in the chastisement which the British had received from the Afghans".³ He saw no justification for this treatment because he thought that the Ameers had shown no unwillingness to listen to reasonable requests from the government. Hence, as he observed, "the only offence of the Ameers was their

1. Ibid., p.292.

2. Kaye, J.W., 'The Administration of Lord Ellenborough', Calcutta Review, vol.1, no.2, 1844, p.508.

3. Kaye, J.W., 'The Ameers of Sindh', Calcutta Review, vol.1, no.1, 1844, p.232.

weakness. Because they were weak it was resolved to punish them."¹

Kaye argued that, although the appointment of a Conservative Governor-General, Ellenborough, was looked forward to with a sense of relief and satisfaction by the Anglo-Indian community, irrespective of their political affiliations, his performance as Governor-General brought nothing but disappointment. Here, then, we see him emphasising characteristically that Whig and Tory considerations did not influence the views of the British community in India. He added further:

To support or to oppose the measures of a Governor-General, simply because he is a Whig or a Tory, is an excess of active prejudice wholly unknown in India. There are no political parties, and there is no party press to play out such a game as this. Public men are judged, not by what they belong to, but what belongs to them. 2

Ellenborough's administration, in his view, had no creditable features. The Governor-General had neither inclination nor time to devote himself to the nobler pursuits of progress and enlightenment. He concluded that Ellenborough had wasted his time "in the strenuous idleness of camps and pageants"³ and that his "hatred of war was confined to the wars made by other men".⁴

The majority of the articles which Kaye wrote for the Calcutta Review were in the shape of reviews of books. Some of his reviews of contemporary historical works are important insofar as they give an idea of his attitude to

1. Ibid., p.221.

2. Kaye, J.W., 'The Administration of Lord Ellenborough', p.510.

3. Ibid., p.562.

4. Kaye, J.W., 'The Ameers of Sindh', p.231.

to historical scholarship and to writing on Indian history. There is also no doubt that this practice of reviewing historical books had a large role to play in the shaping of the historian and helped him in determining his own approach. The detailed review of important works was in fashion at this time and formed a characteristic part of contemporary British periodicals.

Kaye's contemporary in India, T.B. Macaulay, had emerged as one of the most prominent reviewers of the day. And it seems that Macaulay was in Kaye's mind when he was writing his reviews. In his first review article on the biography of Sir John Shore by his son, Kaye referred to some remarks of Macaulay in the footnote. Not only this, the remarks which he made at the outset of this article were characteristic of Macaulay as regards literary style:

This is not a very amusing book - neither has it any claim to be regarded as a literary performance of distinguished merit. But it is the biography of a truly good man, and is thickly interspersed with letters from the pen of a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian".²

As a reviewer in an Anglo-Indian periodical, Kaye considered it his main duty to point out the inaccuracies of European writers on India. This is evident from the review article which he wrote on the seventh volume of Archibald Alison's History of Europe, which was devoted to the rise and progress of British power in India. Alison, Kaye argued, betrayed complete ignorance when he called the Afghans "fierce idolators" and declared that Nand Kumar's death left Warren Hastings without any rival.³ Just as the Afghans had nothing to do with idol-

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1. Kaye, J.W., 'Lord Teignmouth', Calcutta Review, Vol.1, no.1, 1844, p.42.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Kaye, J.W., 'Alison's Chapters of Indian History', Calcutta Review, Vol. iv, no. vii, 1845, pp. 129-134.

worship, he said, so, too, Warren Hastings was not without a rival so long as Philip Francis was in India and Clavering alive.¹ Similarly, Alison, he asserted, had committed an error when he remarked that "the natives are still ineligible to offices of trust both in the civil and military departments".²

Kaye pointed out that Indians were "not ineligible" to offices of trust under the existing charter of the Indian government, and that "natives of India are, every week, appointed to offices of trust".³ Moreover, Kaye not only denied Alison's contention that the mutiny at Vellore was due to an "absurd interference" with the religious feelings of the Sepoys, but also criticised the tendency among European writers to view every development in India as a religious question.⁴

No less important was Kaye's difference with Alison over his account of Wellesley's administration. Unlike Alison, Kaye emphasised that Wellesley was so much involved in wars and expansion that he had no time to carry out administrative reforms and improvements.⁵ "The picture", Kaye concluded, "which he has drawn is more beholden to the brightest tints of imagination than to the grave colors of plain historical truth".⁶ It is thus apparent that as a reviewer, Kaye was concerned not merely to point out inaccuracies, but also to put forward his own views. Indeed, this desire to express his own ideas on Indian developments

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.129.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., pp.135-136.

5. Ibid., pp.142-144.

6. Ibid., p.155.

was fundamental to his historical writing.

In passing from Alison to 'Mr. Thornton's last volume', one finds the same disposition in principle and tone. Thus, Thornton, Kaye argued, displayed a rare skill as a "discoverer of possible paltry motives" when he suggested that Bentinck abstained from interfering with the press because it supported his measures. This was clearly not the case, and Bentinck, he said, did so because he himself believed that free discussion in the press was necessary.¹ Similarly, Kaye saw no merit in Thornton's assertion that Metcalfe should not have liberated the press because he was a temporary occupant of the office of Governor-General.² Indeed, this led Kaye to enter into a lengthy discussion of the liberation of the press in which he tried to justify Metcalfe's decision. Kaye's view was that the advantages which followed from this measure could easily be seen in "the fact that the liberation of the press has in no wise increased its licentiousness".³ On the other hand, Kaye also argued against Thornton that there was no justification for the decision to replace Dost Muhammad as the ruler of Afghanistan. As in the former case, he tried to support his point with a number of arguments. This was exactly what he later tried to show more clearly in his work on the Afghan War.

No wonder, then, that Kaye closed his review article on Thornton with the following remarks: "Had he spent a few years in the country, he would have written a much better history of India. Perhaps it is only on this account that

1. Kaye, J.W., 'Mr. Thornton's Last Volume', Calcutta Review, vol.V, no.ix, 1846, pp.148-149.

2. Ibid., p.180.

3. 'Mill's British India', Edinburgh Review, vol.xxxi, December-March 1819, p.3.

we have to add that the history of India¹ "yet to be written".¹ A similar criticism had previously been made of Mill's history of India.² Mill, like Thornton, had never been there. Kaye's remarks show that this attitude was also common among Anglo-Indian reviewers.

Another review article which Kaye contributed to the Calcutta Review was on Cunningham's History of the Sikhs. The last chapter of Cunningham's book entitled 'The War with the English', which Kaye was ostensibly reviewing,³ had caused a great deal of controversy.⁴ The reason was that Cunningham had argued there that the Anglo-Sikh War began with the provocation given by the British Agent on the north-western frontier and was won in collaboration with the Sikh leaders. Although Kaye was opposed to the Afghan War and to the conquest of Sind, he was critical of Cunningham's general attitude. He did claim that he found it difficult to pass an altogether "condemnatory sentence" on the book, but he asserted that there was no justification for Cunningham's view of the Anglo-Sikh War. Thus, as Kaye observed:

He has been led astray by an over-weening anxiety to do justice to our enemies. But while he has done them more than justice; he has done the English less than justice. He is the apologist of the Khalsa; he has written the history of the Sikhs, for the most part as a Sikh historian would write it. 5

1. Ibid., p.180.

2. 'Mill's British India', Calcutta Review, Vol.xxxi, December-March 1819, p.3.

3. Kaye, J.W. 'Cunningham's History of the Sikhs', Calcutta Review, Vol.xi, No. xxii, 1849, p.527.

4. Cunningham, J.D., A History of the Sikhs, from the origin of the nation to the battles of Sutliij (London, 1853), Preface to the Second edition, pp. vii-x.

5. Kaye, J.W., 'Cunningham's History of the Sikhs', Calcutta Review, 1849, p.523.

Kaye argued that what Major Broadfoot did as the Governor-General's Agent on the north-western frontier was justified insofar as it was that Satlej and not the Jamuna that had long been regarded as the British frontier.¹ Similarly, it was not a fact, Kaye asserted, that the war was inevitable and that the British officers were acting in collaboration with the Sikh leaders. He contended that Lal Singh was actually trying to deceive the English officers and was playing a double game by communicating with them.² "Lord Hardinge", he went on, "did no more than was done, in 1845, that he might not irritate the Sikhs. We need not tell Captain Cunningham that if he had done less, the British would have been defeated".³ The objection Kaye raised against Cunningham's History of the Sikhs was thus important not so much from the point of view of his arguments, for he himself appeared to be looking at only one side of the development, as from the standpoint of his assumption that Cunningham had done "more than justice" to the Sikhs. He observed: "An historian, however, is rarely disposed to be prejudiced against his own countrymen; and we conceive that such prejudices, when they do exist, are less injurious than those which set in opposite direction".⁴ In his attitude to Cunningham's History, Kaye may have been influenced by Henry Lawrence, who was so closely associated with the Calcutta Review.

One of his later reviews on 'Recent works on Scinde' also revealed Kaye as a writer who could be particularly critical in judging works which presented views different from those which he himself entertained. Thus, William Napier's

1. Ibid., p.546.

2. Ibid., pp.549-550.

3. Ibid., pp.546-547.

4. Ibid., p.541.

Conquest of Scinde was "anything but a dull book". It was characterised by "energy and an impulsiveness" which kept readers alive over its content.¹ He urged that the work was one-sided: "The historian of the Peninsular war appears as the champion of his brother's reputation".² Kaye had earlier criticised the annexation of Sind in the Calcutta Review.

Thus, Kaye had published much on contemporary developments. It was his ability to combine his own assumptions with the evidence he gathered that made him an impressive writer. A general thread running through these articles was his awareness that contemporary developments offered wide scope for historical treatment. The value of his early essays lay in their skilful blending of contemporary observation with analysis. They were written with several purposes in view: to contribute materials on the history of the times; to help spread a knowledge of Indian history; and finally, to express his own ideas as well as to support the policies in which he believed.

As has been seen, the last few years of Kaye's life in India were marked by intense activity. Owing to the heavy burden of work resulting from his involvement in the establishment and conduct of the Calcutta Review, in addition to his duties as editor of the Bengal Harkaru, Kaye's health gave way. However, he completed the arrangements for the fifth number before finally leaving India. It has been pointed out that at one stage, Kaye wanted to remove the Calcutta Review to England, but his friends and colleagues overruled him.³ He continued to be the proprietor of the journal until 1856 when its management was

1. Kaye, J.W., 'Recent works on Scinde', Calcutta Review, vol.xvi, no.xxxii, 1851, p.383.

2. *Ibid.*, p.395.

3. 'The First twenty years of the Calcutta Review', Calcutta Review, vol.ix, 1874, p.232.

taken over by the editor of the Friend of India.¹ As the founder, Kaye evinced the same interest for many years and regularly sent articles and notices of the latest works. Looking back on the success of his venture, Kaye later recalled in one of his works: "It was a bold and seemingly a hopeless experiment, and I expected that it would last out a few numbers and then die, leaving me perhaps a poorer man than before. Its success astonished no one more than myself".²

Thus, after staying in India for more than a decade during which he had varied and extensive experiences, Kaye finally returned to England in 1845. There is no doubt that his Indian years acted as the bridge to his emergence as a historian. His genius had found a direction and he could easily see that there lay great scope for utilizing those experiences which he had gained.

As the editor of the Calcutta Review, Kaye had certainly made a good beginning, particularly as this was the period of the great Victorian journals. But this was not enough and he looked forward to more substantial achievement - something to bring him permanent fame and recognition. In 1839, he married Mary Catherine, daughter of Thomas Puckle, Chairman of Quarter Sessions for Surrey.³ During the first few years of his stay in England, he depended mainly on his pen for survival. In view of increasing responsibilities - for he had six children by this time⁴ - he had to find a way of meeting his obligations. Guided by this, as well as many other considerations, the gusto for literary work which

1. Friend of India, 25 December 1856.

2. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, Vol.ii, p.405.

3. Dictionary of National Biography, op.cit.,

4. Kaye to Henry Lawrence, 30 August 1854, MSS .Eur. F.8537A.

characterized his early life waned, and it was replaced by an unflagging devotion to the field of Indian history.

CHAPTER 2

THE MILITARY HISTORIAN

Kaye's name as a historian became familiar from the time when he published his History of the War in Afghanistan.¹ The immediate success of his work may be attributed partly to the fact that he had addressed himself to one of the central issues of his own time, and partly to the techniques with which he carried out his task. The Afghan War of 1839-1842 was unique among the wars which the East India Company had fought. It was accorded great publicity and the disaster which followed it brought a spate of criticisms which had not hitherto been equalled. As a result, a new interest was injected into the whole development. Those who were opposed to the expansion of British rule in India seized upon it as an example. Indeed, a main aim of Kaye's work was to show that expansionist policy was not beneficial to British rule in India. In so doing, his work threw light on one of the important questions besetting imperial policy, and thereby gained a particular significance at the time. As he himself observed: "I am conscious that I owe to the nature of my subject the largest part of the praise which has been so encouragingly bestowed on myself".² Since most of the accounts which were quickly produced at that time were concerned mainly to narrate events as witnessed by the authors, there remained great uncertainty on a series of questions from the beginning of the war to the end. In the

1. Kaye, J.W., History of the War in Afghanistan, from the unpublished letters and journals of political and military officers employed in Afghanistan (2 vols., London, 1851).

2. Ibid., Preface to the second edition (3 vols., London, 1857) p. IX.

circumstances, there was widespread realisation that the topic was worthy of detailed examination. Kaye shared this view. He set out to explain the genesis, the progress and the end of the war.

Alongside its relevance for the contemporary scene, his Afghan War was much in advance of its time as a work on contemporary Indian history. No wonder, then, that it was soon recognised as a remarkable achievement both in England and India. Sir Henry Lawrence, who shared Kaye's viewpoint, wrote to him:

Your Afghanistan book has been very well received in India nearly as well as in England. It must have cost you great labour and I quite believe what you say that it has been written in an impartial spirit and that it is quite as honest a book as is likely to be produced during the lives of the actors and written from their papers. 1

That it was written "in an impartial spirit", as Henry Lawrence claimed, could hardly be maintained. As in all his writings, Kaye made no attempt to conceal or transcend his own opinions. Rather, he wrote to demonstrate their validity by citing historical evidence. But this did not detract from his reputation as a historian at that time. Sir Charles Wood, referring to him as the historian of the Afghan war, praised him as "one of the ablest of modern historians".² There is no doubt that Kaye's interpretation of the First Afghan War exerted considerable influence on subsequent writings on the subject.

In recent years, as we shall see, J.A. Norris in his First Afghan War, has looked upon Kaye as a writer who based his work on insufficient evidence.

1. H.M. Lawrence to Kaye, 24 June 1852, MSS. Eur. F.85. 35A.

2. Hansard, Vol. cxxvii, 3 June 1853, col.1133.

But to take this view of Kaye is to miss the significance of his work, for its real strength, in fact, lay in its richness of original sources, especially the private papers of those who had witnessed the events. And, not surprisingly, H.T. Lambrick has criticised Norris' standpoint. In short, although the questions Kaye posed were typical of the time, he drew upon a wide range of original sources when he dealt with them. Thus, one of his reviewers hailed him as a pioneer among nineteenth century Anglo-Indian historians in evolving a new technique:

The present is the first instance in which any historian, writing on Indian affairs, has had full and unreserved access to the private correspondence of the actors, and has thus been placed completely behind the scene; and it is difficult to picture to one's self a greater contrast than exists between the present History of the War in Afghanistan, and the history of other Indian wars and transactions. 1

In fact, Kaye was not the first among the writers on Indian affairs to have used private papers. William Napier had utilized Charles Napier's private papers in his The Conquest of Scinde. But Kaye's Afghan War stood out in sharp contrast to other works in that he went far beyond his contemporaries in the collection and study of a wide variety of original sources, both private and official. He used several collections of private correspondence. He also used a good deal of the material from the official records in the Company's archives. What gave his work its distinctive look was not merely the vast mass of new material which he collected, but also the way he used it. His handling of his original sources showed that he had a preference for private papers. His practice of

1. Friend of India, 10 June 1852.

assigning relative weight to private papers was revealed in his own remarks at the very outset: "Circumstances having placed at my disposal a number of very interesting and important letters and papers, illustrative of the History of the War in Afghanistan, I undertook to write this work".¹ Implicit in his emphasis on private papers was his view that as eye-witness accounts of the events, they could help to explain the developments in a better way than official sources. He utilized private papers in different ways: to undermine the official explanation regarding the background of the War; to add picturesqueness to his narrative; to reinforce the ideas he wanted to put forward. But at the same time, the way he selected private papers of both those who were critical of the course pursued by the British-Indian Government in Afghanistan and those who had supported it, indicated that he was careful to examine the arguments of both sides before passing his own judgment as a historian. Thus, as he observed, "M'Neill recommended the consolidation of Afghanistan under Dost Mahomed. Burnes recommended the same course. Wade recommended the government to rely upon the disunion of the Barukzye Sirdars, and was opposed to consolidation of any kind".² His familiarity with a wide range of sources and his attempt to present the opposite view as well as his own added authenticity to his account. Having once successfully experimented with his technique here, he came to follow it, as we shall see, as a model in his later works.

Kaye quoted Henry St. George Tucker's remarks deploring the Afghan War as "a great political blunder and a national crime".³ Tucker's assumption,

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, Preface to the original edition (3rd ed., London, 1874), p.xi

2. Ibid., vol.i, p.377.

3. Kaye, J.W. (ed.), Memorials of Indian government; Being a Selection from the papers of Henry St. George Tucker (London, 1853), p.266.

Kaye argued, was that the British concern in Persia was not "an Asiatic question" and consequently, he saw no ground for the involvement of the Indian government in the politics of Afghanistan.¹ Auckland's predecessor as the officiating Governor-General, Charles Metcalfe was also shown by Kaye as being opposed to the project of establishing a commercial mission at Kabul on similar grounds.² Kaye quoted a letter from Metcalfe to Tucker: "You were one of the few who condemned our mad policy in Afghanistan, when the world admired and applauded; and although you could not prevent it, your opposition to it will ever rebound to your honour".³ Kaye also quoted a letter to Tucker from the the Duke of Wellington, expressing his disapproval of the idea of sending an expedition after the raising of the siege of Herat: "The consequences of crossing the Indus once to settle a government in Afghanistan will be a perennial march into the country".⁴

In his biographies, Kaye thus quoted private letters in which eminent persons entertained serious doubts about the whole scheme and opposed the policy of invasion. He himself held similar views. In his Afghan War, he also quoted from private papers of Tucker, Metcalfe, The Duke of Wellington, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Henry Willock and Edmonstone.⁵

When Kaye was pursuing his career in Calcutta, the debate over the Russian designs and the course of frontier policy figured prominently in the leading Anglo-Indian newspapers of the day. Ironically enough, one of the most

1. Kaye, J.W., The Life and Correspondence of Henry St. George Tucker, Late Accountant General of India and Chairman of the East India Company (London, 1854), pp. 479-498.

2. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers (London, 1867), vol.ii, p.25.

3. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, p.510.

4. Ibid., p.500.

5. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.i, pp.378-379.

consistent supporters of Auckland's policy in Calcutta was the conservative daily, The Englishman. Supporting the decision to restore Shah Shuja, The Englishman compared the case of Shah Shuja to that of Shah Alam who was restored by Wellesley because of his being the legitimate representative of a royal dynasty. It also claimed that Shah Shuja enjoyed great popularity among the Afghans.¹ A few months later, The Englishman observed that the expedition had been highly successful in "effecting its object without bloodshed".² Although it later praised Kaye's Afghan War, the Serampore weekly, The Friend of India was another leading supporter of the forward policy. It criticised the "hue and cry" raised by members of the British Parliament against the decision of Indian government to replace Dost Muhammad and called it as "contemptuous".³ It argued that there existed great dangers from the Russian designs. Later, it suggested that the dangers were neutralised in the wake of the occupation of Afghanistan by a British army.⁴

Unlike both The Englishman and The Friend of India, the liberal daily, The Bengal Harkaru from the beginning viewed these developments with disfavour, as an open case of invasion. It criticised the Government's policy to restore Shah Shuja. In its view, there was no ground for such a policy because "Dost Mahomed was anxious at one time to enter into the closest bonds of offensive and defensive alliance against the Persians".⁵ Apart from the question of legal

1. Englishman, 30 April 1839.

2. Ibid., 25 June 1839.

3. Friend of India, 29 May 1839.

4. Ibid., 21 November 1839.

5. Bengal Harkaru 25 October 1839.

and moral justification which it took up, it also emphasised that the measure was inexpedient. Commenting on Auckland's proclamation, The Harkaru observed: "Weeded of diplomatic subtleties, the proclamation asserts the political right of aggression and conquest whenever the stronger party may choose to think his interests commercial or otherwise in danger of compromise".¹ It suggested that the policy pursued by Auckland and his advisers was bound to end in utter embarrassment: "There never was a moment in which England had been placed on so critical a position".² It also warned: "Let not Auckland or his commanders deceive themselves".³

This was the time when Kaye was able to use first the Calcutta Review, and secondly, the Bengal Harkaru to express his views on Indian policy, and after he had resigned his commission, he was without inhibitions. Moreover, he occupied a position which not only made him familiar with the points at issue but also provided him with the opportunity, and indeed, the necessity of examining, sifting and comparing the various accounts from the seat of war and assessing their validity.

In the meantime, the developments in Afghanistan had suddenly taken a turn for the worse. As the war had dragged on longer than had been planned, despite the British occupation of the country, a good number, even of those who had earlier supported the whole scheme, now began to view it with dissatisfaction. By the spring of 1841, the cost of the continued occupation of Afghanistan was causing "much anxiety in Calcutta and London".⁴ At the end of the year, there

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., 8 May 1839.

3. Ibid.

4. Fraser-Tytler, W.K., Afghanistan. A study of Political Development in Central and Southern Asia (Oxford, 1953), p.115.

were open manifestations of widespread rebellion. In its monthly overland summary of news, The Bengal Harkaru wrote: "Our worst fears regarding the Afghan expedition have been realised. Disaster has trodden upon the heels of disaster rapidly within the last two months".¹ A number of events followed in quick succession which dramatised the events before the British public. The assassination of the British emissaries in Kabul, Alexander Burnes and William Macnaghten, followed by the virtual surrender and extinction of the British army on its withdrawal, the solitary arrival of Dr. Bryden, and the continued imprisonment of the officers and their wives, all shocked the British public and produced an unprecedented stir.

With few exceptions, Englishmen of all ranks and persuasions condemned the invasion as politically unwise.² There was a clamour for detailed information on the origin and progress of the war, both in England and India. Several narratives giving details of the disaster were published. The writers of these accounts painted sensational pictures of the overwhelming calamity and revealed their personal experiences of the sufferings at Kabul. Vincent Eyre recounted the story to which he was a witness and provided graphic details of the developments from the end of 1841 to the beginning of 1842: "The time from the 2nd November 1841, on which the sudden popular outbreak at Cabul took place, to the 13th January 1842, which witnessed the annihilation of the last remnant of our unhappy force at Gundamuk was one continued tragedy".³

1. Bengal Harkaru, 20 December 1841.

2. Athenaeum, 8 November 1851.

3. Eyre, H. Vincent, The Military Occupations at Cabul, which ended in the retreat and destruction of the British Army (London, 1841), Preface, p.viii.

Lady Florentia Sale gave her own experiences in her Journal, and provided an eye-witness account of the capture and treatment of officer's wives.¹ Kaye stated that in view of the excitement which prevailed in the public mind about these events, thousands of copies of the Narrative of Lieutenant Eyre and the Journal of Lady Sale were sold in a few weeks.²

These reminiscences of the sufferers were very popular and created a wider awareness of the Afghan episode. To satisfy growing public interest, some writers made attempts to trace the origin and conduct of the war in greater detail. One of the early English travellers in Central Asia,³ Charles Masson seized the opportunity and published his Narrative in 1842. Masson began with the story of his wanderings from Bhawalpur to Sind, Peshawar, Kabul and Kandhar. It was only in the third volume of his book that he attempted to discuss the genesis of the war. But he failed to do justice to this question because he concentrated his attention mainly on arguing that these unfortunate plans originated in the mind of Alexander Burnes. Masson was extremely critical of the envoy and went to the length of saying that Burnes was lax in his relations with Kabul women.⁴

Masson's outright criticism of Alexander Burnes naturally infuriated some of Burnes' defenders. George Buist, the Editor of the Bombay Times, set out to

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1. Macrory, Patric, (ed.), Military memoirs, Lady Sale, the First Afghan War (London, 1969).
 2. Kaye, J.W., 'The English in India, Calcutta Review, vol.i, no.i, 1844, p.7.
 3. Grey, C., European Adventurers of Northern India, 1785 to 1849 (London, 1929), p.176
 4. Masson, Charles, Narratives of various journeyings in Baloghistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab, including a residence in these countries from 1826 to 1838 (London, 1842), vol.iii, p.432.

demonstrate that the war was planned at home and executed by Auckland. In doing this, he ably refuted Masson's allegations against Burnes. In support of his arguments, Buist made use of Burnes' private and public correspondence and showed how Burnes' views were disregarded to suit the government's policy. He observed: "No man knew more of the Afghan character than the late Sir Alexander Burnes; he lived with them in peace and traversed their country before our discords began with them; he had negotiated with them and striven to avert collision".¹

Kaye had been regularly writing articles for the Calcutta Review which he had founded. Besides these articles, he published a novel which emphasised the tragedy of the Afghan episode.² What is noticeable is the consistent pattern in his ideas running through all these articles. One fundamental theme was that of tragedy: "There is nothing more fearful in history than that massacre in the Canbul passes - nothing we may add, more instructive".³ Kaye regarded the Kabul disaster as not only dreadful but "instructive". From the beginning, he viewed the Afghan war as providing a lesson for the future.

The range of Kaye's ideas as revealed in his articles might vary greatly with the particular case, but at the same time, they were all associated with the main theme of the Afghan war in one way or another. Also, the guiding idea behind these articles was to condemn the war and the policies that led to it. Thus, the

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1. Buist, George, Outline of the Operations of the British troops in Scinde and Afghanistan betwixt November 1838 and November 1841 (Bombay, N.D.), p.x.
 2. Cp. Dale H. Porter's comments on the historian's awareness of tragedy, 'History as Process', History and Theory, vol.xiv, no.iii (1975), p.312.
 3. Kaye, J.W., 'The Administration of Lord Ellenborough', Calcutta Review, vol.i. no.ii (1844), p.508.

successes achieved by the British army in Afghanistan, Kaye argued, were not due to Ellenborough but because of the competence shown by the Generals Nott and Pollock.¹

In his article entitled 'Eastern Captivity', where he reviewed the accounts of Lieutenant Eyre and Lady Sale, Kaye argued that, though the imprisonment of the British officers and their wives had aroused widespread apprehension and there were many who never expected to see them alive, the prisoners were not slaughtered as had been apprehended.² He took the view that the Afghans did not display "any very uncommon amount of harshness and inhumanity" in their dealings with the British prisoners.³ He tried to demonstrate this by drawing copious illustrations from the experiences of Lady Sale and Lieutenant Eyre. He went beyond this to suggest that the time had arrived for a reasonable consideration of all aspects associated with the Afghan war. He observed: "The equilibrium of the public mind, so badly shaken by the earthquake shock of an unparalleled disaster, is now restored, and even the conduct of our Afghan enemies may be discussed with some approach to moderation and justice".⁴

In his article on 'Dost Mahommed Khan', Kaye set himself to the task of revealing the early life and character of the Afghan ruler. His professed purpose was to satisfy doubts about Dost Muhammad's character and popularity as a ruler as compared with Shah Shuja. The article was devoted to a review of Mohan Lal's

1. Ibid., p.524.

2. Kaye, J.W., 'Eastern Captivity', Calcutta Review, vol.v, no.x, 1846, pp.428-430.

3. Ibid., p.482.

4. Ibid., p.433.

Life of Amir Dost Mahommed Khan. Though critical of its English and style, Kaye regarded the book as "valuable" and argued that the author was well placed to ascertain the truth regarding many facets of Dost's personality which were of considerable historical significance.¹ He emphasised that Dost Muhammad had all the signs of a promising young man. Dost Muhammad followed the career of his warlike predecessors and became a warrior of repute while he was yet in his teens.² He saw no ground for any misunderstanding about Dost Muhammad's character: "He was just and unjust, merciful and cruel; cautious and rash, frank and treacherous".³ Kaye's final assumption was that "he is to be pitied rather than condemned".⁴ In his History of the War in Afghanistan, Kaye expressed the same view of Dost Muhammad's character and achievements, and also quoted some passages from this article.⁵

Similarly, Kaye proceeded to express his fundamental disagreement with the policy of invasion in one of his subsequent articles. He argued that if India were really threatened with an invasion by a Russo-Persian army, the idea of sending an army might not have been an insane object. But "the question is, whether the British army was not marched into Afghanistan at a time when there was no danger - at a time, when the Russo-Persian alliance had ceased to bear perilous fruit".⁶

1. Kaye, J.W., 'Dost Mahommed Khan', Calcutta Review, vol.ii, no.xii, 1847, p.4.

2. Ibid., pp.6-12.

3. Ibid., p.63.

4. Ibid.

5. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, (3rd ed., London, 1874), vol.i, pp.111-112.

6. Kaye, J.W., 'Civis on Indian Affairs', Calcutta Review, vol.xiii, no.xxvi, 1850, p.411.

Secondly, Kaye pointed out that the object of securing a friendly power in Afghanistan was not fulfilled.¹ In short, he condemned the war on political grounds.

It was against this background that Kaye began to write the history of the Afghan War. He devoted the six years between 1845, when he left India, and 1851, when the work appeared, to painstaking enquiries and fruitful research. The original edition in two volumes was published in 1851. Six years later, in October 1857, the second and revised edition of the History of the War in Afghanistan appeared in three volumes. This change in framework was designed to provide "the epic completeness of a beginning, a middle and an end".² Excepting some minor material corrections and alterations in view of some additional information derived from biographical researches which Kaye carried out during this period, the actual text did not undergo any remarkable change. But the first edition contained many lengthy quotations in the footnotes in support of the views expressed in the text, and Kaye in the second edition either abridged them or incorporated this material into the text. He claimed in his preface to the second edition: "Few works of contemporary history containing so large a body of facts have been so little questioned or controverted".³ He felt that copious proofs were no longer required. During his lifetime, the work went into a third edition in March 1874.

There is no doubt that in the preparation of the work, Kaye had made a

1. Ibid.

2. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, (London, 1857), Second edition, Preface, p. ix.

3. Ibid., p. viii.

vigorous search for all available contemporary materials and that his exertions were amply rewarded. He himself wrote that friends and strangers were equally ready to help him and that all his applications for assistance were readily responded to by the parties whom he contacted.¹ Having made this point, Kaye proceeded to explain that he had not advanced any view without a "good and sufficient authority".² This was all the more necessary because the Afghan War had been one of the most controversial subjects of the time. As Kaye remarked: "I have been walking, as it were, with a torch in my hand over a floor strewn thickly with gunpowder. There is the chance of explosion at every step".³ He dedicated the work to the "Officers of the Bengal artillery" with whom he had passed some of the early years of his life. As he himself expressed it, the three volumes of the work denoted the three phases of the Afghan War - the beginning was devoted to tracing the background and the causes, the middle touched on the problems of British rule after the occupation of the country, and finally, the end depicted the efforts at retrieval.

It seems that Kaye's attitude towards historical writing was considerably influenced by the "critical era of historiography" which had begun with Ranke.⁴ Although Kaye referred to Ranke explicitly only once,⁵ it is evident that like him,

1. Ibid., Preface to the original edition, p.viii.

2. Ibid., p.vi.

3. Ibid.

4. Gooch, G.P., History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1952), p.75.

5. Kaye, J.W., Administration (London, 1853). Kaye quoted some lines from Ranke's Civil Wars and Monarchy in France on the title page.

Kaye believed that "the nearest witness to the event was the best, and that the letters of the actors were of more value than the anecdotes of the chronicler".¹ It is not surprising, therefore, that Kaye found the private papers a great help in the task he had undertaken.

He drew on three main groups of sources. In the first place, there were the contemporary published works - geographies, travels, histories proper and periodicals. Secondly, he had access to the official records preserved in the Company's archives; he collected a great deal of useful information from them. The third and the most important group comprised private papers, including demi-official correspondence of some of the leading actors of the event. For instance, in the introductory portion of the work itself, Kaye utilized both the official records relating to the administrations of Wellesley, Barlow and Minto, as well as the unpublished correspondence of John Malcolm and W.H. Macnaghten. In his description of Afghan politics, Kaye cited numerous references from the 'Autobiography' of Shah Shuja which, as he said, was not available to preceding writers.² On the other hand, events from the time of Auckland were illustrated with a number of original letters from Alexander Burnes, W.H. Macnaghten and other officials, such as Claude Wade and McNeill, the British envoy at Persia. The private correspondence of Alexander Burnes was largely quoted with reference to the attitude of Dost Muhammad towards the English at this time, and the failure of his mission. In the chapter on the *Siege* of Herat, he described the operations

1. Gooch, G.P., op.cit., p.75.

2. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol. i, p.34.

from within the walls of the city with the help of Eldred Pottinger's manuscript journal. The developments in Afghanistan were illustrated with the help of W.H. Macnaghten's official and private correspondence. In addition, Kaye was also in possession of the journals of Jasper Nicolls, Captain Johnson and Rawlinson, as well as the unpublished letters and reports from Outram, Pottinger, McGregor, Havelock and others which provided interesting materials for the narrative of events from the time of insurrection at Kabul in November 1841.

Thus, it is evident that Kaye utilized private papers of a number of important actors involved in the episode. In this he had no predecessor. On the other hand, to an extent rare if not unique among Anglo-Indian historians of his day, he made use of his footnotes to give extracts from the original sources. For instance, a good portion of the information drawn from the manuscript records as well as the original correspondence of men like Alexander Burnes and W.H. Macnaghten was given in the footnotes. One main advantage of this practice lay in that it enabled him to provide additional detail without impeding the flow of his narrative.

Kaye started with a survey of the history of Afghanistan from the days of Zaman Shah and early British diplomacy in Central Asia before coming to deal with the War itself. It is apparent that in his account of Afghan history, he was concerned mainly with the personal qualities of the Afghan rulers. This was because he wanted to show that among all those who ruled Afghanistan at that time, Dost Muhammad was the ablest as well as the most popular.

To begin with, Kaye emphasised that Zaman Shah was an ambitious man, but he had no security at home to ensure him any success in his projects of invading

India.¹ Thus, he implied that the alarm caused by Zaman Shah's threat was not a real one, although he did not specifically say so. Wellesley, unlike Shore, saw the threat as a serious one.² Without analyzing in detail the motives which prompted Wellesley to highlight this danger, he briefly alluded to the gravity of the political situation within India at this time. Thus, several invitations had gone to the Afghan ruler from different parts of the country and "enemies of the British empire in India had turned their eyes with malicious expectancy upon Cabul".³ But, then, he also argued that the lack of knowledge about the political and economic condition of Afghanistan tended to magnify the danger in the eyes of the British authorities in India.⁴

Whatever might have been the causes of the widespread alarm, Kaye believed that Zaman Shah's threat was "at least plain and intelligible".⁵ Besides, it was hitherto a question of defending India against the designs of a single enemy. The problem of India's defence from the north-west aroused greater concern when, as Kaye remarked, "intelligence, only too credible, of active efforts of French diplomacy in Persia" reached the government in Calcutta.⁶ Kaye saw no difference between the aims and assessments of the governments in London and in Calcutta.

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol. I, pp.1-2.

2. Ibid., p.3.

3. Ibid., p.2.

4. Ibid., pp.14-18.

5. Ibid., p.3.

6. Ibid., p.4.

Both dreaded the French designs and desired to make Persia a friend. Wellesley took the initiative and despatched Malcolm on a mission to the Persian Court. Malcolm was to secure Persian friendship against the ambitious designs of both France and Afghanistan, for as Kaye remarked, "An offensive alliance between France, Persia and Caubul, might have rendered the dangers, which only seemed to threaten us from the north-west, at once real and imminent",¹ But before Malcolm reached the Court in Teheran, the Afghan menace had ended. Kaye argued that "time and circumstances did more for us than diplomacy".² Zaman Shah was a captive of his brother, Mahmud, and blinded by his orders. Kaye, therefore, attached no significance to the mission's political results. In his opinion, the positive results of the mission lay in the stores of information it collected regarding the area and its people. He wrote: "Before the mission of Captain Malcolm to the west, but little was known in India, and nothing in Great Britain about the Douranee empire, the nature and extent of its resources, the quality of its soldiers and the character of its rulers".³ What he particularly wished to emphasise was that the information which Malcolm gave was "not of a very alarming description".⁴

On the question of Afghan character, Kaye maintained that the "physical character of the country had stamped itself on the moral conformation of its inhabitants".⁵ Like Mountstuart Elphinstone,⁶ he saw the dark and bright features of

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.6.

3. Ibid., p.10.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p.11.

6. Elphinstone, Mountstuart, An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul (London, 1839), vol.i, pp.197-198; also pp.326-327.

the Afghan character as related to the physical character of the country. In his opinion, alongside his boldness and kindness, the Afghan was also cruel and revengeful.¹ But this contradiction, he stressed, "no one could discern".²

Kaye emphasised that, although Shah Shuja became the King in 1803, his position was never well-established: "there was something in the temper of the monarch adverse to the formation of new and retention of old friendships".³ He believed that if Shah Shuja had attempted to conciliate the Barakzai Sardars who, at this time, controlled the destinies of the princes, he would have perhaps succeeded in consolidating his position. But Shuja always lost the opportunity. His intention, as he himself expressed it, was to offer an idea regarding "the extraordinary vicissitudes of the early career of the man whom thirty years afterwards the British raised from the dust of exile and resealed on the throne of his father".⁴

Unlike Shah Shuja, Dost Muhammad's achievements were the greatest possible under the circumstances. As has been seen, Kaye had expressed a favourable opinion of Dost Muhammad's early life and career in one of his articles in the Calcutta Review.⁵ He was convinced that Dost Muhammad was extraordinarily gifted among the contenders to the throne of Kabul. Indeed, the importance which he gave to the role of individuals in history comes out prominently

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol. I, p.12.

2. Ibid., p.35.

3. Ibid., p.32.

4. Ibid., p.34.

5. See supra, p.60.

In his attitude towards Dost Muhammad:

Nature seems to have designed him for a hero of the true Afghan stamp and character. Of a graceful person, a prepossessing countenance, a bold frank manner, he was outwardly endowed with all those gifts which most inspire confidence and attract affection. ¹

Dost Muhammad's early days were no doubt stained with many crimes, but they were, he asserted, rather the result of circumstances than of any badness of heart. At the same time, he found that Dost Muhammad had remedied and repaired those deficiencies of his personality by the constant cultivation of kindly and humane virtues. He argued that Dost Muhammad's success as a ruler was remarkable and his firm hold over the country was accepted even by his opponents. ² Thus, Kaye was clear in his own mind regarding Dost Muhammad's popularity as the ruler of Afghanistan.

Coming to the diplomatic developments in Central Asia, Kaye argued that the chronic instability and constant warfare which characterized Afghan politics remained for a time a source of "acknowledged security" to British power in India. ³ It was only after the French had succeeded in establishing their influence at Teheran that the British government in London and Calcutta realized the necessity of "doing something". ⁴ Kaye saw that, although the invasion of India by a French and Persian army was one of the objects of the treaty, which was sent for approval of

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.1, p.108.

2. Ibid., pp.121-123.

3. Ibid., p.36.

4. Ibid., p.50.

Napoleon, the danger was not a real one. On the other hand, he stressed that the Persian King had sought French alliance against Russia, and that, too, only when he realized that "the British-Indian government was either too busy or too indifferent to aid him".¹ Similarly, the consummation of the treaty of Tilsit in 1807, he argued, provided no ground for apprehending a French and Russian invasion of India. He contended that the alliance between Russia and France was, in fact, a source of security rather than that of imminent danger to British power in India. This was because by entering into an alliance with Russia, France, in his view, had frustrated Persian hopes of the restitution of Georgia which lay under Russian control. Thus, as he observed:

But in 1807 it was not so clearly seen that Persia was more easily to be conciliated by the enemies, than by the friends, of the Russian Autocrat - that the Confederacy of Alexander and Napoleon was fatal to the Persian monarch's cherished hopes of the restitution of Georgia, and the general retrogression of the Russian army; and that, therefore, there was little prospect of the permanency of French influence at the Court of Teheran.²

It is clear, then, that he wanted to show that there was a mistake on the part of the British authorities in properly assessing the situation and in estimating the nature of Persian alliance with France. He concluded:

It is easy to be wise after the event. We know now that India has never been in any real danger from French intrigue or French aggressiveness; but Lord Wellesley and Lord Minto saw with different eyes, and grappled³ the shadowy danger as though it were a substantial fact.

1. Ibid., p. 45.

2. Ibid., p. 53.

3. Ibid., p. 52.

Thus, Kaye emphasised that, although the diplomatic missions which were sent under Minto's government were marked by lavishness of expenditure on the one hand, and a cordial reception on the other, they did not prove to be of any use as they were directed against exigencies which had ceased to exist.¹ To Kaye, the only substantial achievement of these embassies was that "they gave birth to two standard works on the countries to which they were despatched".² On the other hand, as far as Sir Harford Jones' mission to Persia was concerned, Kaye argued that Jones succeeded because he went to Persia at a time when the political climate had changed in favour of England and General Gardanne had withdrawn from the Persian capital. He took the view that Malcolm might have been equally successful had he remained a little longer at the Persian Court.³ In particular, he emphasised that the "chapter of accidents" was the most remarkable feature in oriental diplomacy, and it was this which brought success to Jones.⁴ Thus, he assigned no particular credit to Harford Jones for bringing Persia under the direct influence of the Foreign Office in London. It may be noted here that Kaye held similar views while referring to these developments in his Life of Malcolm.⁵

But the government in London, Kaye argued, failed in its intention to make Persia a barrier against the invasion of India by an European army.⁶ He emphasised

1. Ibid., pp. 86-96.

2. Ibid., p.96.

3. Ibid., p.63.

4. Ibid., pp.73-74.

5. Kaye, J.W., The Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm, From unpublished letters and journals (London, 1856), vol.ii, pp.51-52.

6. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.1, p.146.

that the experiment of drilling the Persian army was nothing better than an expensive failure and the military strength of Persia was not augmented. And this became apparent when the war broke out between Persia and Russia in 1826. He was clear in his own mind that the provocation in this war had come from the Russian side. Though England, he argued, was bound under the terms of the Treaty of Teheran to actively support Persia against Russia, she did not come to help Persia at this time.¹ He continued, "The game was one in which the more honourable player was sure to be foully beaten".² Thus, while the British influence at the Persian Court declined to the lowest extent, the Russian influence became paramount. Here, then, it is clear that in his account of early diplomacy in Central Asia, Kaye wanted not merely to bring out the background of conflict between England and other European powers, but also to highlight the failures of British policy in maintaining friendship with Persia. He also wanted to show that since Russian influence had already been established at Teheran, the only course left open for England was to consolidate her influence at Kabul.

Kaye explained that it was plain that the developments in Central Asia were such that the British-Indian government could not afford to neglect them. But before formulating any course of policy, he added, it was necessary to view it from different standpoints. Kaye argued that, although Auckland was a sincere and laborious administrator, he showed no eagerness to understand the Central-Asian question in the light of the recent developments. Thus, although he received a cordial letter of congratulation from Dost Muhammad, he did not pay any particular

1. Ibid., pp.151-152.

2. Ibid., p.152.

attention to it.¹ From the beginning, he was possessed by "vague and indefinite ideas" and was constantly haunted "by a feeling of insecurity".² He, therefore, thought it necessary to despatch an agent to Kabul to keep a watch over developments.

It may be noted here that in order to show that the War was a foregone conclusion following the failure of negotiations with Dost Muhammad Khan, several despatches of Alexander Burnes to the government in Calcutta had been either omitted or altered in the Blue Books that were laid before Parliament. On 31 May 1842, John Hobhouse, who was the chief architect of the Afghan policy as the President of the Board of Control under the previous government, argued that such "omissions" were "almost always made in despatches of this nature when laid before Parliament".³ He further added: "As for any alterations in these despatches, they were only such as were positively called for by a dire regard to the public interests".⁴ Whatever the explanations, by suppressing information in this way the Blue Books had shaken the confidence in the reliability of official sources, and, indeed, this was one reason why Kaye made such use of private papers.

Kaye saw the mission of Alexander Burnes as political as well as commercial, emphasising that "Burnes had ulterior designs, and that he, in reality, went to Caubul either as a spy or a political diplomatist".⁵ At the same time, with

1. Ibid., p.170.

2. Ibid., pp.171-172.

3. Hansard, vol.LXIII, 31 May 1842, col.1021.

4. Ibid., col.1022.

5. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.i, p.182.

the help of Burnes' original correspondence which was available to him in full in the Company's archives, he tried to show, in the first place, that Burnes' view had been disregarded by the government in Calcutta, and, secondly, that the attitude of Dost Muhammad Khan towards a friendly alliance with the British-Indian government had been misrepresented in the Blue Books.

He emphasised that the fact was that the mission was received with "great pomp and splendour" and only four days after its arrival, the envoy was invited to a private meeting with Dost Muhammad in the Balla Hissar.¹ On the basis of Burnes' original correspondence, he denied the explanation given in the Blue Book that it was not possible to reach a satisfactory settlement with Dost Muhammad. He argued that Dost Muhammad was well disposed towards the British government, and that he showed a compromising disposition even on the Peshawar question.² He also explained that the arrival of the Russian agent, Vitkovitch, did not immediately create any difference in the situation because he received no attention from Dost Muhammad.³ At the same time, he expressed his criticisms of the way in which the information had been suppressed.⁴ Thus, it is evident that here he used private papers to undermine the official version in parliamentary papers.

Kaye argued that, although Dost Muhammad's conduct was friendly, he was disappointed to find Burnes unprovided with definite instructions from his own government. Thus, all through the negotiation, Burnes asked for everything but promised

1. Ibid., pp.182-183.

2. Ibid., pp.199-200.

3. Ibid., pp.197-198.

4. Ibid., pp.203-204.

no thing, because he had no authority to do so.¹ And when, Kaye argued, he tried to exceed the instructions, he was censured in strong words by the Governor-General.²

He argued that under such circumstances, Burnes' mission could by no means have succeeded: "If utter failure had been the great end sought to be accomplished, the whole business could not have been more cunningly devised".³

Next, he focussed his attention on the seige of Herat by the Persian army. As the published letters of Colonel Stoddart and McNeill did not contain details of the defensive operations of the people of Herat,⁴ he considered it worthwhile to describe the operations from within the walls of the city with the help of Eldred Pottinger's journal. Thus, we see that this was another way in which Kaye used unpublished and private papers. He began with a general description of Herat. The city occupied a very strategic position. Situated at that point of the mountain range which alone presented facilities for the transport of heavy artillery, it could serve as an admirable basis of military operations against India. The ruler of Herat, Kamran, in his view, exercised only a nominal sway, and the real power was in the hands of his powerful minister, Yar Mohammad.⁵ The Persian army reached Herat in November 1837, and began preparations to besiege the city. But at this juncture, Kaye argued, the 'spirit of adventure' brought Eldred Pottinger

1. Ibid., p.207.

2. Ibid., p.190.

3. Ibid., p.308.

4. Ibid., p.294.

5. Ibid., pp.212-218.

to the gates of Kabul.¹ In his view, but for Pottinger's accurate advice and indomitable courage, Herat would have fallen into the hands of the Persian King. He praised Pottinger's chivalrous conduct and regarded him as a hero.²

At this stage, Kaye once again pointed out that if Auckland had secured the friendship of Dost Muhammad at this time, the immediate problem, which had arisen in the wake of Russian intrigues and Persian ~~siege~~ of Herat, would have been solved. But Auckland still looked upon an alliance with Ranjit Singh as the pivot of the whole frontier policy and turned down the recommendations of McNeill, the British envoy at the Court of Persia, Captain Claude Wade, the British agent on the north-western frontier and Alexander Burnes who favoured a conciliatory policy with the existing government and pleaded for helping Dost Muhammad in getting possession of Kandhar and Herat.³

He maintained that four factors influenced Auckland's policy. In the first place, the Governor-General took the semblance of the Russo-Afghan alliance for a serious threat to British power in India. Secondly, the Governor-General was surrounded by advisers like William Macnaghten, Henry Torrens and John Colvin, who believed in drastic measures for combating the danger and made the best use of this opportunity by making matters worse. Thirdly, Auckland was separated from the Supreme Council at Calcutta.⁴ Finally, Kaye argued that the home government which had been greatly upset by the Russian designs

1. Ibid., p.224.

2. Ibid., p.276.

3. Ibid., pp.300-308.

4. Ibid., p.312.

constantly urged upon the Indian government the necessity of taking vigorous measures:

The Ministers of the Crown, fortified by the knowledge that the expenses of the War would fall upon the treasury of the East India Company, and that they would not be called by the British public to account for any expedition ... were exhorting Lord Auckland to adopt effectual measures for the counteraction of Russian intrigues and Persian hostility in the countries of Afghanistan. 1

Kaye stressed that despite these persuasions, if Auckland had not quitted Calcutta, or if he had had older and more experienced advisers, he would have followed a line of policy more in accordance with his own views and opinions, and less harmful to the interests of the British Indian empire.² Again, Kaye argued that as long as there was a probability that Herat would fall, the scheme of invasion would have been at least "an intelligible and straightforward movement". But after the raising of the siege, even that pretext of self-defence had disappeared.³ To quote his words: "the failure of Mahomed Shah cut from under the feet of Lord Auckland all ground of justification, and rendered the expedition across the Indus at once a folly and a crime".⁴ Kaye also emphasised that under the terms of the Tripartite Treaty, which was signed in June 1838, between the British-Indian government, Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja, the government were under no obligation to provide any military help for the purpose of Shuja's restoration. Thus, he declared that "it was wholly an after thought",⁵

1. Ibid., p.360.

2. Ibid., pp.315-316.

3. Ibid., pp.375-376.

4. Ibid., p.385.

5. Ibid.

and the expedition was commenced in defiance of every consideration of political and military expediency.

Moreover, Kaye endeavoured to show that this course of policy was criticised by some of the leading Anglo-Indian figures of the day. He observed: "The oldest, the most experienced, and the most sagacious Indian politicians were of the opinion that the expedition though it might be attended at the outset with some delusive success, would close in disaster and disgrace".¹ Among those who criticised the policy and warned against its failure, were the Duke of Wellington, Wellesley, Metcalfe, Edmonstone, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Henry Willock and Tucker.² As has been noted, Kaye used his biographies on Tucker and Metcalfe to express his criticisms of the Afghan War.³ Here, Kaye also argued that the Court of Directors of the East India Company and the Supreme Council at Calcutta were opposed to the scheme of invasion.⁴

Evidently, one of Kaye's main objectives was to show that the War was not a foregone conclusion, and that responsibility rested with Lord Auckland who decided to reinstate Shah Shuja despite Dost Muhammad's willingness to seek friendship with the English. Kaye agreed on the question of Russian intrigues behind the Persian move to ~~siege~~ Herat, but he differed on the question whether there was any justification left for going to war after the Herat ~~siege~~ had been raised. He regarded, therefore, Hobhouse's statement in the House of Commons

1. Ibid., p.378.

2. Ibid.

3. See pp. 52- 53 of this Chapter.

4. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, pp.380-381.

declaring himself the author of the project of invasion as nothing but an attempt to cover up the mistakes of the Governor-General. He argued: "The truth is, that Lord Auckland had determined on the course of policy to be pursued, not before the India Board despatches were written, but before they were received".¹

Kaye argued that instead of selecting a straight route, it was decided that the army of the Indus should march through a devious route from Ferozepur via Sind to Kandhar. He explained that the decision was politically motivated. In the first place, Ranjit Singh, he argued, did not like the idea that the invading army should traverse the Punjab.² Secondly, it was thought necessary, he contended, as a show of strength, the idea being to make the unwilling Amirs of Sind agreeable to pay the ransom money for Shikarpur to Shah Shuja.³ He viewed this as an unreasonable case of the revival of an abandoned claim by an "exile of thirty years' standing".⁴ Consequently, he saw no justification behind the violation of the assurances given earlier by the British government to the Amirs that the Indus would not be used for military purposes.⁵ This was all very similar to the views he had earlier expressed on this issue.⁶ The only difference here was that he quoted Colonel Pottinger's comment on the injustice of the

1. Ibid., p.377.

2. Ibid., p.396.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.397.

5. Ibid., p.398.

6. See p.40 of the previous chapter.

whole proceeding.¹

Kaye took the view that Shah Shuja's repeated failures in his attempts to regain the Kabul throne had degraded him in the eyes of the public. And when Shuja was restored with the assistance of a foreign power, he could hardly hope to win back the affection of the Afghan people. Kaye emphasised that the popularity of Shuja was nowhere to be seen.²

Kaye argued that the troubles began soon after Shuja was installed on the throne. The first disappointment came over the question of the withdrawal of British forces. As Shuja's position was still very shaky, the earlier decision of complete withdrawal had to be postponed.³ He insisted that, though the situation from the beginning was grave and full of evil forebodings, Macnaghten failed to see the dangers and clung to the belief that the country was settling down under the new ruler.⁴ Not only this, in order to strengthen Shuja's position, Macnaghten initiated a course of dubious policy. But this, he asserted, was of no avail: "Neither the bayonet nor the money bag could keep the turbulent tribes in a continued state of repose".⁵ As an optimist, Macnaghten remained blind to what was clear to many of his subordinates. Kaye urged that Macnaghten was everything but a statesman.⁶ He maintained that prompt and vigorous

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.i, p.397.

2. Ibid., pp.478-479.

3. Ibid., vol.ii, pp.17-18.

4. Ibid., p.62.

5. Ibid., p.50.

6. Ibid., p.63. Also, p.308.

military action would have crushed the early insurrectionary movements without much difficulty.¹ But the indifference, vacillation and delay shown by the persons in authority helped the crisis to assume an alarming proportion. In particular, he referred to the incompetence shown by the military commanders, General Elphinstone and Brigadier Shelton in tackling the situation. They were, in his view, at variance not only with each other, but also with the civilian authorities.² It may be noted here that in a letter to Mountstuart Elphinstone, Kaye claimed that his criticisms of General Elphinstone did not arise from any partialities:

I must, however, assure you that what it has pained you to read, it has greatly pained me to write - I knew General Elphinstone personally and seldom liked a man better. It was my fortune accidentally to make his acquaintance, on the day after his arrival when I was a subaltern in the artillery; and although I could not help seeing how sad a mistake had been made in sending him out to command a division of the Indian army, I greatly admired his genial manner and his fine soldierly bearing, which showed itself in spite of his physical infirmities. He was very kind to me and I cannot say, therefore, how much it has pained me to write what I have done - though I believe every word to be true. 3

Meanwhile, Kaye stated, things were going from bad to worse at Kabul. Rumours of all types were in the air. Still, the authorities paid no attention to these and dismissed them as baseless. On 2 November 1841, a riot broke out in the city in which Alexander Burnes and Lieutenant Broadfoot lost their lives.⁴ While the preparations for the retreat were going on, Macnaghten was also

1. *Ibid.*, p.180.

2. *Ibid.*, pp.204-208.

3. Kaye to Mountstuart Elphinstone, 8 August 1851, MSS. Eur. F.88 Box 5A.

4. Kaye, J.W., *Afghan War*, vol.ii, p.170.

assassinated under tragic circumstances. This was, Kaye stressed, a time of unparalleled difficulty - despondency brought defeat and defeat increased despondency in the British cantonments and the conduct of the troops.¹

Kaye argued that the news of the overwhelming disaster had so much perplexed Auckland that he could not rise to the occasion.² His successor, Ellenborough, Kaye contended, also failed to formulate a consistent policy to retrieve the situation and showed a great deal of vacillation. Kaye took the view that Ellenborough's vacillation was tantamount to a frank confession of weakness and proved detrimental to the interests of the British Empire in India. The Governor-General, he argued, showed great indecision by reversing his orders of 15 March in which he had attached considerable importance to the question of vindicating British prestige and instructing Pollock and Nott to withdraw.³ Besides criticising the pusillanimous conduct of the Governor-General, he asserted that Ellenborough's instructions to the military commanders were so phrased as to gather to himself a large part of the credit and to throw the odium of failure on to the military commanders. Accordingly, the task of re-establishing the lost military reputation of Great Britain, in his view, was accomplished not by the Governor-General but by Pollock and Nott.⁴ At the same time, he saw complete lack of wisdom in the Governor-General's proclamation over the gates of the temple of Somnath: "The folly of the thing was past all denial. It was a

1. Ibid., pp.317-320.

2. Ibid., vol.iii, pp.191-194.

3. Ibid., p.288.

4. Ibid., p.289.

folly, too, of the most senseless kind, for it was calculated to please none and offend many".¹ In this, Kaye mainly reinforced and elaborated the views he had expressed in one of his early articles in the Calcutta Review.²

As has been seen, like many of his contemporaries, Kaye was convinced from the very beginning that the Afghan War was a disaster that brought no positive results. He observed: "After an enormous waste of blood and treasure, we left every town and village of Afghanistan bristling with our enemies".³ He had a remarkable opportunity of viewing the events as they were taking place and had expressed a great deal of himself in his articles, which were written at this time. Indeed, his articles show that he was at work before finally settling down to his History of the War in Afghanistan. What he wrote on the causes and the consequences of the War in his History showed that there was no modification in his attitude. Nor did it change subsequently, as can be seen in some of his subsequent articles and in his later biographies and letters. Soon after the publication of his work, Kaye wrote a review article entitled 'Miss Martineau on the War in Afghanistan' for the Calcutta Review, in which he was equally critical of the whole transaction and drew particular attention to its economic results. He argued that the war involved a heavy financial burden, and the Company's exchequer for long years afterwards groaned under its weight.⁴ Similarly, in another review article in the Edinburgh Review, Kaye insisted on the unsoundness

1. Ibid., p.381.

2. See *supra*, pp.58-59.

3. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.iii, p.399.

4. Kaye, J.W., 'Miss Martineau on the War in Afghanistan', Calcutta Review, vol. xvi, December 1851, p.343.

of the policy which led to the war: "It is not contended that in 1838, we should have done nothing. The opponents of the policy that we adopted, only declare that we combated the danger in the wrong way, when we marched into Afghanistan and placed Shah Soojah on the throne".¹ As in his History, he suggested that what was needed at that time was a treaty of friendship with Dost Muhammad Khan.²

At the same time, as has been noted,³ it was characteristic of Kaye that he used his biographies to express his criticisms of the Afghan War, by quoting the views of those who shared his own assumptions. In 1874 when Henry Reeve requested him to write an article on Ellenborough, Kaye reminded him about his stay in India during Ellenborough's time, and then referred to some of those points which he had emphasised in volume three of his History: "I think that Lord Ellenborough behaved shamefully towards the Afghan Generals Nott and Pollock, and that if he had acted on his own first resolve to evacuate Afghanistan, he would have brought disaster and disgrace to our country".⁴ Kaye was still consistent in his views.

Kaye claimed in his preface that his purpose was scholarly - to write a complete political history of the war which had not been written before.⁵ There

1. Kaye, J.W., 'India, Persia and Afghanistan', Edinburgh Review, vol.105, January 1857, p.284.
2. Ibid.
3. See supra, pp.52-53.
4. Kaye to Henry Reeve, 13 April 1874. Kaye's Confidential Letter Book.
5. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, Preface to the original edition, pp.xiii-xiv.

is, however, no doubt that he had other motives too. As a journalist, he had seen the importance of the event in the eyes of the public. Moreover, from the popularity of contemporary accounts, he must have realised that there would be a great demand for a book based on unpublished sources. Another motive, then, was to gain fame and earn money, especially at a time when he had no other source of income but his pen. He also wanted to influence Indian policy. A critical attitude towards further British expansion in India and abroad was almost a creed with Kaye at this time, although he on occasion, admitted that such a course might be sometimes justifiable on grounds of expediency and morality.¹ In general, he believed that the Company had a specific mission in India and that this could be accomplished only during a period of peace and tranquillity. He was convinced, therefore, that the wars and annexations involved wasteful expenditures and undermined people's faith in the rulers.² He also wanted to show that it was not merely in the Indian question that the genesis of the War was to be found.

Thus, Kaye's major assumptions as a historian were a mixture of his personal biases as a contemporary observer, and the ideas and notions which he shared with his age. While his pointed criticisms of the policy and the principal actors carried echoes of his personal predilections, as well as the views of those who had opposed the War, his belief regarding the War as unjust was characteristic

1. Kaye, J.W., 'Cunningham's History of the Sikhs', Calcutta Review, vol.xi, January - June 1848, pp.523-598.

2. Kaye, J.W., 'The Ameers of Sindh', Calcutta Review, vol.i, May 1844, pp.217-245.

of many of his contemporaries. Again, a devoutly religious man as he was, he never lost an opportunity of showing the relevance of religious faith to the problems of secular life. This is evident from the passage in which he asserted that the hand of God was visible all through the episode and that such an unjust transaction was destined to end in disaster.¹

In spite of these assumptions which he shared with his age, there is no doubt that as a historian, Kaye endeavoured to present a reliable account of the War. As has been seen, Kaye had read one of Ranke's works.² As a product of the age of Ranke, he knew that he could present only those facts that were attested by documentary evidence. He realised, therefore, that his first task was the collection of all the relevant original sources. And he was successful in marshalling a large variety of new materials on the subject. Though he consulted a wide range of sources, for the purposes of his major arguments, he relied mainly on the private papers of the leading participants. Indeed, the exchange of letters between them was so prolific that it touched almost every aspect of the episode. At the same time, he showed considerable skill in using private papers in different ways. On the other hand, Kaye's concept of reliability did not preclude personal judgments or opinions, sweeping statements or vigorously stated conclusions. Indeed, in his tendency to pass moral judgments, too, he proved himself to be a true representative of his age.

From the standpoint of style, Kaye's History was designed after the classical tradition of the time. He made this clear when he referred to the idea of "giving

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.iii, p.402.

2. See p. 62 of this chapter.

the epic completeness of a beginning, a middle, and an end" to his work.¹ His merit also lay in writing an interesting narrative which could easily attract a good number of readers. His literary tastes had made him familiar with the works of Scott and Macaulay. Under their influences, he was convinced that the popularity of the work would also depend on the picturesqueness of the narrative.

His volumes are replete with individual portraiture and rich imagery.

There is, for example, his comment on Burnes as a negotiator:

Burnes, with his instructions in his hand, miserably fettered and restrained, enunciated the opinions of his government, from which he inwardly dissented, and strove, in obedience to the orders he had received, to make the worse appear the better reason. 2

Then there is a passage describing Shuja's entry into Kabul:

The exile of thirty years - the baffled and rejected representative of the legitimacy of the Douranee Empire, was now at the palace gates. The jingling of the money-bags, and the gleaming of the bayonets of the British, had restored him to the throne which, without these glittering aids, he had in vain striven to recover. 3

One of the defects which Kaye, however, could have avoided without any damage to the utility of the work is repetitions. For instance, Dost Muhammad's willingness for a friendly alliance with the British is one of those issues which is stressed on several occasions in the work. But this was again a defect which he shared with his generation.

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.1, Preface to the second edition, p.viii.

2. Ibid., vol.1, p.199.

3. Ibid., p.477.

Kaye's contemporaries were quick in discerning the merits of the book. This is evident from the favourable attention which his volumes received from the reviewers both in England and India. Though critical of 'lengthy treatment and vivacious style', the reviewer in The Spectator regarded the work as a reliable one.¹ He thought that the author "has been allowed the use of a vast mass of unpublished documents, some apparently official, others evidently private".² He agreed that on the main subject "a fuller and more inward light is thrown by Mr. Kaye's original matter".³ The reviewer in The British Quarterly Review had no adverse comments to make and found it as a "very interesting work".⁴ He praised Kaye for "ably and impartially performing the task of producing a detailed history of that disastrous war in Afghanistan".⁵

Similarly, Kaye's arguments were upheld by the reviewer in The Quarterly Review. The reviewer asserted: "His laborious researches seem to have been prompted and guided by a love of truth, powerful enough to divest his mind of all personal partialities".⁶ In his view, Kaye had not merely related what happened, but how and why it happened.

In an extended notice, the reviewer of the Athenaeum extolled the copiousness and authenticity of the sources and recognised Kaye as a writer "who at once

1. Spectator, 22 November 1851.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. British Quarterly Review, vol.xv, February - May 1852, p.220.

5. Ibid., p.222.

6. Quarterly Review, vol.xci, June - September 1852, p.35.

embellishes and exhausts the subject".¹ He declared that this was the first time that the events relating to the Afghan disaster had been treated with clarity. He went to the length of saying: "That in all probability the book now before us will be the last separate work of consequence which will be written on the Afghan War".² The reviewer in the Calcutta Review also emphasised the importance of Kaye's work in view of the original sources which had been used, although his general assessment was couched in more moderate terms, perhaps, because of Kaye's early association with the Review: "the present author will deserve some thanks for having contributed some valuable materials towards the history which he lived half a century too soon to write".³

For many years, Kaye's volumes remained the only standard work on this topic. One of the Anglo-Indian historians of the day, J.C. Marshman regarded it as "the most interesting of all works which have hitherto appeared on British Indian history".⁴ Later, H.M. Durand published his book entitled The First Afghan War and its Causes. Although Durand differed from Kaye on the question of Burnes' conduct at Kabul, he made no reference to Kaye's arguments in this connection. He relied on Masson and quoted his views criticising Burnes for showing want of caution.⁵

1. Athenaeum, 8 November 1851.

2. Ibid.

3. Calcutta Review, vol.xv, January - June 1851, p.424.

4. Marshman, J.C., Memoirs of Major General Henry Havelock (London, 1870), p.57.

5. Durand, H.M., The First Afghan War and its Causes (London, 1879), pp.41-42.

He argued that had the mission been entrusted to a "wiser and better man", the results would have been very different.¹ As the private secretary of Ellenborough, Durand could have imparted some freshness to the history from the time of Ellenborough's arrival until the evacuation of Kabul. But here, he merely quoted Ellenborough's instructions to the military commanders so that the readers could form their own judgments.² Archibald Forbes, who wrote on the first and second Afghan wars, also covered no new ground. He repeated Kaye's arguments that the only redeeming features of the Afghan war were the services rendered by Pollock and Nott.³

Both these accounts were of a fragmentary character and consequently, they failed to make any advance on Kaye's work. It is not surprising, therefore, that Kaye's History continued to retain its importance as a classic account of the first Afghan War and exerted great influence on later historians. In his India in the Victorian Age, Romesh Dutt hailed the historian of the Afghan War as "one of the most impartial of Anglo-Indian historians".⁴ Similarly, Percy Sykes had no fault to find, and commended Kaye's History as the most valuable work.⁵ Favourable opinions have been expressed by a number of other writers while dealing with this topic in the standard text-books of the day.⁶

1. Ibid., p.46.

2. Ibid., p.437.

3. Forbes, Archibald, The Afghan Wars, 1839-42 and 1878-80 (London, 1876), p.157.

4. Dutt, Romesh, India in the Victorian Age. An Economic History of the People (London, 1904), p.9.

5. Sykes, Percy, A History of Afghanistan (London, 1940), vol.i, p.402.

6. See, for example, Dodwell, H.H. (ed.), The Cambridge History of India, pp.483-520. Also Majumdar, R.C., Roy Choudhary, H.C. Datta, K.K., An Advanced History of India (London, 1960), vol.iii, pp.753-759.

As a matter of fact, Kaye's emphasis upon Russophobia has been confirmed by recent scholars, such as M.E. Yapp and G.D. Bearce. Yapp points out that the defeat of Persia at the hands of Russia leading to the Treaty of Turkomanchai in 1828 induced the British authorities to look forward to an alternative barrier against the Russian advance: "In that year, it was recognised that Persia could not resist Russia alone".¹ Bearce shows that from the beginning of his career at the Board of Control, Ellenborough remained perpetually haunted by the fears of Russian designs over Asia. He further observes:

The great threat over Europe and Asia, as Ellenborough, Palmerston, and Hobhouse understood it, was the spectre of Russian power, and Ellenborough saw his task as that of preparing Britain and India for the inescapable conflict with Russia in Asia and Europe.²

Recently, J.A. Norris in his book The First Afghan War severely criticises Kaye for his judgments which, in his opinion, were based on "incomplete and circumstantial evidence".³ He believes that later historians have merely copied Kaye's comments.⁴ No one can deny that Norris' book contains a mass of new evidence. Yet, at the same time, it is difficult to find any reasonable ground for his outright dismissal of contemporary accounts of Kaye and his successors as partisan interpretations. Norris criticises Kaye for looking at the Afghan War as an isolated issue, as well as for putting the blame on to Auckland and his advisers. He argues that this is because Kaye failed to view the episode in the

1. Yapp, M.E., British Policy in Central Asia, 1830-43 (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1959), p.41.

2. Bearce, George D., British Attitudes towards India, 1784-1858 (Oxford University Press, 1961), p.184.

3. Norris, J.A., The First Afghan War, 1838-1842 (Cambridge University Press, 1967), p.xiii.

4. Ibid, p.xiv.

context of the objectives of British policy at that time. On the other hand, he emphasises that it was the British government that had planned the war which broke out in 1839. In his view, Auckland's decision to send troops to Afghanistan had been endorsed jointly by the Foreign Office and the Board of Control prior to 1839.¹ Norris states further that a Secret Committee despatch from Hobhouse, dated 24 October 1838, had sanctioned the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of Kabul, but Hobhouse left it to Auckland's discretion to try conciliation with Dost Muhammad.² As has been seen, it was this question of the failure of negotiations at Kabul that occupied a central place in Kaye's exposure of the circumstances that led to the War.

Though a detailed enquiry into such criticisms is beyond the scope of the present study, it may, however, be mentioned that Kaye greatly improved upon previous writers. It is true that Kaye, like Masson and others, blamed Auckland. But what about Kaye's implied criticism of Masson when he defended Alexander Burnes whom Masson had so severely criticised? This seems to be conveniently overlooked. At the same time, there is evidence to show that Kaye was not ignorant about the views of the home government, as well as their instructions contained in the despatches from the Secret Committee. This is apparent from Kaye's remarks on the authorship of the War.³ Indeed, Kaye's view that the war in Afghanistan ultimately remained an Indian question was determined by the fact that though the whole idea of the scheme was conceived in England, the final decision was

1. Ibid., p.208.

2. Ibid., pp.214-215.

3. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.ī, p.377.

taken in India. In particular, he emphasised that the War was fought with Indian forces and the Company was to bear the burden of its expenses.¹ Kaye argued that what Auckland did was in no way different from what the home government of the day wanted him to do. It was for this reason that Kaye referred to the exhortations which were constantly coming from "the ministers of the Crown".² Thus, Auckland became the tragic hero of Kaye's book only when he saw to it that the negotiations at Kabul were unsuccessful. It was here that - in sharp contrast to Norris³ - Kaye urged that the Governor-General showed an uncompromising attitude and paid no attention to Burnes' arguments.⁴ Moreover, Kaye argued that in spite of the recommendations from the home government, Auckland, as the Supreme authority in India and the man on the spot, could have easily forestalled the ultimate plan of invasion, especially in view of the raising of the ~~siege~~ of Herat.⁵ It may be noted here that in his review of The First Afghan War, H.T. Lambrick rightly points out that Norris fails to carefully examine the question whether the threat was such as urgently required counter measures.⁶ Norris, he argues, formulates his own answers to some of these questions in view of his assumption that every step taken at that time resulted from "the master

1. Ibid., vol.iii, p.399.

2. Ibid., vol.i, p.360.

3. Norris, J.A., op.cit., pp.133-134.

4. Kaye, J.W., op.cit., vol.i, pp.199-203.

5. Ibid., p.384.

6. Lambrick, H.T., Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Part 3 & 4, 1968, p.188.

plan" which was devised to meet the Russian threat.¹ Lambrick concludes that Norris' line of argument is based on "a method which amounts to discounting all the 'old' evidence and accepting all the 'new'",²

Thus, Kaye's study of the Afghan War should be recognised as a pioneering interpretation of the events of 1839 - 1842. Kaye not only had his own memories of the time, but also utilized all the available contemporary sources, including the private papers of participants. He saw the War as primarily a political event, although he also referred at times to its moral and economic consequences. Indeed, the enduring value of Kaye's explanation lay in his disclosure of the circumstances leading to the War. And it was to that exposition that he owed his reputation as the pioneer among Anglo-Indian historians. He never diverted his attention from the heart of the matter - that, although the War was well-planned, it took place at a time when one of the main grounds behind that planning had ceased to exist. With all this, Kaye wanted his study to serve as a lesson for the future safety of British rule in India.

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.190.

CHAPTER III

THE DEFENDER OF THE COMPANY

Kaye belonged in the tradition of Anglo-Indian writers who admired the East India Company, and who wanted to explain its achievements to their contemporaries. He occupied an important place in this group because he brought to his task his vast knowledge of the Company's history. He demonstrated this in his Administration of the East India Company,¹ which appeared during the discussion respecting the renewal of the Company's charter in 1853. The point at issue was this: the Company lost all its commercial privileges in 1833, and its continuance seemed anomalous. But Kaye, like many others at this time, saw no need for a change in the existing arrangement. He argued that the Company had become an administrative body operating on moral and reforming principles. He denied that its government had failed to bring moral and material improvement in India. He asserted that on the other hand the Company's achievements in recent years provided a reasonable ground for optimism regarding its future performance. Thus, as a prominent defender of the Company, Kaye realised that a history of administration, social and economic reforms under its rule would enable him to justify its continuance as a body governing India.

Although his aim was to defend the Company at a time when its continued existence was in question, Kaye provided an enduring historical record of the Company's administration. In this respect, the work may be said to exemplify

1. Kaye, J.W., The Administration of the East India Company; A History of Indian Progress (London, 1853).

his attempt to combine propaganda with scholarship. Moreover, in so doing Kaye opened a new branch of Indian history by concentrating on the Company's administrative institutions and social reforms,

At the same time, Kaye was a critic as well as an admirer of the Company. This was characteristic of many other Anglo-Indian writers of the day who wanted to influence policy. Kaye's defence of the Company, therefore, derived from the double set of assumptions which guided his approach as a historian: one set provided the basis for a critique of the expansionist policy of the time; the other set supplied the basis of a case for the continuance and strengthening of the Company's government.

In general, however, he was as convinced as any other defender of the Company's rule that British obligations to India could be fulfilled only under the non-partisan East India Company and its experienced men. This is evident not only from his remarks in the introductory portion of the present work,¹ but also from his observation in the articles which he wrote at this time.² It is noteworthy that he was consistent in his views, and employed the same line of argument while opposing the abolition of the Company's government in one of his subsequent articles in 1858. He argued there that it was wrong to put the blame squarely on to the Company for what had happened in India. After all, the Company was not a prophet. He contended that the remarkable feature of the India House was that it worked as harmoniously with a Whig as with a Tory government. He further added: "What I deprecate is

1. Ibid., pp.10-15.

2. See infra, pp.104-106.

public discussion, which does not seek to elicit the truth, and has no tendency to benefit the people. Ignorance and party-spirit are what I fear. Give full play to these in Parliament, and I know not what may be the result".¹

It seems logical, then, that Kaye should have defended the Company against the accusations which were made during the debate over the renewal of its last charter. Unlike J.S. Mill and others who argued as witnesses before the Parliamentary Select Committees,² Kaye accomplished the task of defending the existing system by contributing articles and by tracing in his book the history of administration developments under the Company. One of the most common means of supporting a political argument in the 19th century was to appeal to historical evidence. Kaye had already done this in his History of the War in Afghanistan. At the same time, in so doing he always inserted his own views on Indian affairs by showing the advantages of policies which he supported.

The book was immediately hailed by contemporaries as a major contribution to the history of the Company's administration.³ During the succeeding decades, Kaye's work continued to occupy a pivotal place as a pioneering study of the history of the Company's administration, for no other attempt was made in this direction until the twentieth century.⁴

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1. Kaye, J.W., 'A familiar epistle from Mr. John Company to Mr. John Bull', Blackwood's Magazine, vol.LXXXIII, February 1858, pp.245-253.
 2. Mill's evidence, Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 29 June 1852.
 3. For a contemporary review, see Athenaeum, 11 June 1853.
 4. The next attempt to trace the history of the Company's administration was made in the fifth and sixth volumes of the Cambridge History of India.

The mode of administration in India was a topic of frequent debate down to 1858. Some believed that India could best be governed under the Company; others argued for the substitution of the home government in place of that of the Company. Needless to say, as British power progressed, several "pressure groups" or "interests" in centres as far apart as Calcutta, Westminster and Leadenhall Street, all interacted and influenced policy.¹ These pressure groups operated under different names and entertained different aspirations. During the early phase, the Evangelicals and the Utilitarians played an important role in guiding the destiny of the Company. These two movements "shared optimistic hopes for the rapid transformation of Indian society" and sought to achieve this by different routes.²

In the course of time, the free traders were prominent among the critics of the Company's government. Their outcry became louder and they came to be increasingly convinced that it was only by the substitution of direct parliamentary control that their own interests could be served. As the spokesman of the free-trade interests, "The Manchester School" played an important role in opposing a renewal of the Company's charter in Parliament. John Bright declared that he would oppose a renewal of the Company's charter, "chiefly because of the past neglect of material improvements".³ Bright was of the view that this neglect

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1. Philips, C.H., The East India Company, 1784-1834 (Manchester University Press, 1961), Preface to second edition, p.viii.
 2. Hutchins, F.G., The Illusion of Permanence, British Imperialism in India (Princeton University Press, 1967), p.10.
 3. Quoted Moore, R.J., 'Imperialism and Free trade policy in India, 1853-54', Economic History Review, 2nd Series, vol.xvii, 1964-65, p.136.

was at the root of the failure to grow more cotton.¹ No wonder, then, that the crux of the controversy in 1853 was whether the Company should be retained as it was or abolished. While its supporters pointed to the dangers of increasing parliamentary influence, its critics argued that it should be finally liquidated. They emphasised that the record of the Company's performance as the governing power was far below satisfaction, although their main criticisms were of its neglect of communications and public works.

In the arguments concerning the renewal of the Company's charter, contemporary newspapers and journals came to play an important role and vied with each other in applauding and abusing the Company. The leading newspaper of the day, The Times, played a significant part as a critic of the existing system. The Times criticised the Company's disregard of internal improvement through public works. It particularly blamed the Directors for this, on the ground that they were elected by a constituency which had no interest in the welfare of India. Although the revenue was large, it was absorbed in the enormous salaries of civil servants and in the extravagance of unnecessary wars.² Also, the duplicate machinery involved duplicate transactions and consequently was cumbrous and wasteful.³ The Times concluded that "A government, in fact, must be judged by its fruits, and by those fruits it is absolutely impossible to defend the Government of India".⁴ The British Quarterly Review also criticised the "anomalies" of the

1. Ibid.

2. The Times, 3 June 1853.

3. The Times, 6 June 1853.

4. The Times, 3 June 1853.

the existing system, and in particular, the Court's power to nominate to the Indian services.¹ But, unlike The Times, it had also a suggestion to put forward:

It appears to us that the President of the Board of Control should become our Indian minister, and that, the Court of Directors having been entirely abolished, he should be supplied with a council composed of all the most eminent Indian officials residing in England.²

Despite these attacks, the Company survived. This was possible not only because the proprietors and the directors of the Company were determined not to relinquish their possessions without a final struggle for existence, but also because there was still a powerful stream of public opinion which favoured the retention of the Company as being independent of English party politics. It has been pointed out that even Charles Wood strongly denied "that he had any wish to condemn the Company to an early extinction".³ Under such circumstances, side by side with those who were clamouring for its liquidation, there were those who defended the Company on grounds of expediency and performance. The Quarterly Review argued against changing the existing arrangement: "We believe that the home administration should not be subjected altogether to the vicissitudes of parliamentary parties".⁴ Believing that the "Directors, as a body, are free from the influence of political party", it emphasised that "there is need of increasing rather than diminishing the

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1. 'India and Its Government', British Quarterly Review, vol.xvii, February - May 1853, p.524.
 2. Ibid, p.496.
 3. Moore, R. J., Sir Charles Wood's Indian Policy, 1853-66 (Manchester University Press, 1966), p.25.
 4. 'Indian Administration', Quarterly Review, vol.XCII, December - March 1852 - 1853, p.65.

weight and efficiency of the Court of Directors".¹ At the same time, it repudiated the charge that the Company was indifferent to Indian welfare by referring to policies of social reform and improvement.²

Just as the opponents of the Company augmented their campaign of criticism, its defenders reiterated their support and began to stress the danger of making unwarranted experiments in the principles and practices of the Indian government. This was strongly argued in Allen's Indian Mail, which was a steady supporter of the Company: "India is too precious as a treasure to be trifled with; our tenure of it is too delicate to admit of needless experiment".³ Apart from this, Allen's Indian Mail dismissed the allegations levelled against the Company's neglect of public works in India, and referred, in particular, to the Great Ganges Canal and Roorkee College of Civil Engineering. It also argued that, although much had been done, more was meditated for the future.⁴ As we shall see, Kaye also emphasised these instances in his Administration of the East India Company.

As in England, the charter question occasioned widespread interest and became a topic of discussion in India, and natives as well as non-official Anglo-Indians played a prominent role.⁵ The Calcutta Review favoured the retention of the existing

1. Ibid., p.72.

2. Ibid., pp.74-75.

3. Allen's Indian Mail, 31 May 1853; article 'How is India to be governed'.

4. Ibid.

5. Chatterjee, P.K., 'Non-official opinion in India and the renewal of charter in 1853', Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1968, pp.250-259.

system.¹ The Friend of India, too, wanted the continuance of the double government, but unlike the Calcutta Review, it suggested that the Constitution of the Court of Directors should be remodelled: this moderate dose of reform would provide an alternative by which the desire of the government for instant legislation, and that of the opposition for further enquiry might be harmoniously reconciled.²

In the wake of a vigorous and acrimonious debate, several Anglo-Indian writers seized the opportunity to educate public opinion. Kaye was one of them. He contributed anonymous articles - before he published his book on the Company's administration - to contemporary journals both in England and India. Did he differ from other writers at this time?

As a civil servant under the Company, George Campbell enjoyed the advantage of personal experience. He had adverted to the need for an examination of the working of the Company's administration in his Modern India, which appeared in 1852.³ It was, however, in A Scheme for the Government of India that he came to make some specific suggestions when discussing "the form and mode in which India may be best and most conveniently governed".⁴ Campbell, unlike Kaye, Dickinson, Marshman and Prinsep, did not look at the history of the Company's administration. He thought that the principal defects of the Indian administration were "cumbrousness" and "slowness".⁵ However, he saw no reason why these

1. 'The East India Company and Its Charter', Calcutta Review, vol.XV, June 1851, p.325.

2. Friend of India, 12 May 1853.

3. Campbell, George, Modern India (London, 1852), Preface, p.2.

4. Campbell, George, A Scheme for the Government of India (London, 1853), p.1.

5. Ibid., p.3.

defects could not be remedied without transferring Indian administration to the Colonial Office. He wanted a moderate dose of reform aimed mainly at removing the apparent weaknesses of the system. In the home administration, he envisaged a "Senate of the Indies" which could unite the Board and the Court under one roof.¹ On the other hand, he claimed several advantages from a substitution of the name of the Crown for that of the Company: "In most cases, a name is of little consequence, but sometimes it really carries weight; and I think that the time has certainly arrived when the style and title under which we govern India becomes important, and involves considerable principles of policy".² He argued that it would impress the Indians who were obedient to forms and titles, and would enable the Governor-General to treat the native princes as subjects of Her Majesty instead of as the equals of the Company.³

The most radical reform proposals came from John Dickinson, who at this time published a book entitled India: its government under a bureaucracy.⁴ Although Dickinson looked at the Company's history, he, unlike Kaye, Marshman and Prinsep, saw no sign of improvement under its administration. Thus, he differed from these writers in that he used the Company's history to point out its failures. In so doing he selected three topics which were devoted to Ryotwar system, judicial system and public works, respectively. One main defect of the Ryotwar system as well as the judicial system, in his view, was that they had "subverted" the indigenous institu-

1. Ibid., p.44.

2. Ibid., p.61.

3. Ibid., p.62.

4. Dickinson, John, India: its government under a bureaucracy (London, 1853).

tutions.¹ He devoted more attention to public works than his earlier topics. He wanted to show here that the Company's government had destroyed the commerce of India by imposing transit duties and not making roads.² He argued that the real powers had been thrown into the hands of "an irresponsible bureaucracy".³ Moreover, he repudiated the claim that Indian administration, despite its imperfections, was better than colonial administration.⁴ Thus for him, the real remedy lay in the direct assumption of the Indian government by Parliament.⁵

In his Letter to John Bright, J.C. Marshman, the moving spirit behind The Friend of India, urged that in order to form a correct opinion on the subject of Indian government, it was necessary to look at the history of the Company's rule. He observed: "there is nothing more manifest or gratifying in the history of British India than the fact that almost every successive administration has been an improvement on that which preceded it".⁶ The topics which drew Marshman's attention were similar to those of Kaye and Prinsep. But Marshman differed from them when he suggested that a certain proportion of the Directors should be nominated by the government.⁷

1. Ibid., pp.40-74.

2. Ibid., p.97.

3. Ibid., p.20.

4. Ibid., p.147.

5. Ibid., p.148.

6. Marshman, J.C., Letter to John Bright, Esq., M.P., Relative to the Recent Debates in Parliament on the Indian Question (London, 1853), p.12.

7. Ibid., p.51.

As we shall see, both Kaye and Prinsep defended the Court as an experienced body and argued that it should be strengthened as against the Board.

Henry Prinsep wrote a pamphlet in which he compared the condition of India in 1853 with that in 1833.¹ This resembled Kaye's argument in looking to the Company's recent history. Prinsep dealt with topics similar to Kaye's. He noticed improvements in the financial and moral spheres under the existing administration.² He viewed the Court as an experienced body and saw no ground for any change in its composition. He concluded that there was nothing but "sheer mischief" in the motives of those who were delaying the course of legislation on India.³

Unlike Prinsep, Kaye, in his articles, touched upon the main accusations against the Company in a forceful manner. Above all, his ultimate aim, as we shall see, was the same as that which led him to write his book on the Company's administration. Kaye argued that what was necessary was to look at the Company's history before deciding what should be done in the future in regard to Indian administration. He emphasised that the Company was not to be held as good or bad in itself, but good and bad in so far as it had performed its tasks and met its obligations. He believed that the present system of government was that which was most likely to promote the welfare of the people.⁴ Hence, he saw no reason for any change either in name or in practice in the existing system; and he pointed out that it compared well with other colonial administrations: "India, though the most

1. Prinsep, H.T., The India Question in 1853 (London, 1853), p.12.

2. Ibid., pp.6-13.

3. Ibid., p.111.

4. Kaye, J.W., 'The Government of the East India Company', Calcutta Review, vol. xviii, July - December 1852, pp.440-441.

extensive and the most important, is infinitely the best governed among the colonies".¹

On the other hand, Kaye regarded it as unreasonable to advert to a state of things which had wholly passed away. He argued that the Company was not hostile to private trade. He suggested, therefore, that the critics of the Company were guided by wrong apprehensions.² Similarly, refuting the allegation against the abuse of patronage by the Court of Directors, he emphasised that the question must be viewed from a comparative angle. He believed that the present arrangement was the best that could be devised because, in his view, the transfer of patronage would only create greater scope for nepotism and corruption.³ On the whole, the Court as a body had been fair in the distribution of its patronage.⁴ This was the reason why, he asserted, "there is sufficient faith among all classes of men, in the character of the Court of Directors".⁵

Unlike other defenders of the Company, Kaye took the view that the Court should be strengthened as against the Board. In this, he was consistent with the views he had expressed in his History of the War in Afghanistan. He observed: "Let it be known that the Queen's Ministers make wars in India, and compel the Company - or rather the people of India - to pay for them".⁶ One way in which the Court could be strengthened was to make the power of the Directors in the Secret

1. Kaye, J.W., 'The Patronage System of the East India Company', Calcutta Review, vol.xviii, July - December 1852, p.1.

2. Ibid., pp.30-36.

3. Ibid., p.3.

4. Ibid., p.6.

5. Ibid., p.2.

6. Kaye, J.W., 'The Government of the East India Company', Calcutta Review, 1852, p.454.

Committee a "real operative power".¹ Under the existing arrangement, the Secret Committee had nothing to do but sign the despatches: "Their names are used and their purses are used. But beyond this, they have no material existence".²

Direct parliamentary control, in his view, was no solution because that would subject the Indian government to increasing political interference guided by partisan considerations. The real safety of India, therefore, lay in freedom from parliamentary control and interference.³

It may be noted here that a striking similarity with Kaye's view was provided by the observations of his contemporary J.S. Mill, who defended the Company's government as a witness before the Select Committee of the House of Lords. Like Kaye, Mill pleaded that the improvements which had been attained under the existing system could not have been reached under any other system. To explain this, he thus observed:

It is next to impossible to form in one country an organ of government for another which shall have a strong interest in good government; but if that cannot be done, the next best thing is, to form a body with the least possible interest in bad government; and I conceive that the present governing bodies in this country for the affairs of India have as little sinister interest of any kind as any government in the world.⁴

1. Ibid., p.455.

2. Ibid., p.454.

3. Kaye, J.W., 'The Government of the East India Company', North British Review, vol. xviii, February 1853, p.548.

4. Mill, J.S., Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, together with the Minutes of evidence and an appendix and index, 21 June 1852, p.303.

To Mill, the security for a good government was an enlightened public opinion. But enlightenment could come only through proper interest and acquaintance with the people and the country. In this respect, he argued, the public opinion of England was no security for a good government in India, because the people were neither acquainted nor interested in developing any acquaintance with the distant natives of India.¹ Hence, Mill saw no safety in the transfer of the existing Indian government to direct Parliamentary control.

Again, when asked about the disadvantages he apprehended from direct Crown government in India, Mill replied:

I should think it would be the most complete despotism that could possibly exist in a country like this; because there would be no provision for any discussion or deliberation, except that which might take place between the Secretary of State and his subordinates in office, whose advice and opinion he would not be bound to listen to; and who, even if he were, would not be responsible for the advice or opinion that they might give.²

Apart from this, consistently with Kaye's view, Mill saw no evil in the patronage system of the Court of Directors, in so far as those who were sent out to India were "unconnected with politics, or with the two houses of Parliament".³

But amidst these similarities, there were also some points of difference between the arguments of Mill and Kaye. For example, unlike Kaye, J.S. Mill supported the existing double government not only in principle, but also in practice.

1. Ibid., p.301.

2. Ibid., 22 June 1852, pp.313-314.

3. Ibid., 21 June 1852, p.303.

At no stage in his arguments did Mill - unlike Kaye - refer to the need for an equitable distribution of powers between the Board and the Court. On the contrary, Mill thought that the existing government provided "a great additional security" by giving the power of initiation to the Court and of veto to the Board.¹ In addition to this, there was also a difference in emphasis. While Mill defended the Company on grounds of expediency, Kaye pleaded for its continuance by referring to its historical development. Unlike Mill, for instance, Kaye tried to show that the Company had improved its administration, was improving, and given the opportunity, would continue to improve it. The difference between the approaches of Mill and Kaye may be traced to their respective ideological affiliations and background. Though connected with Indian affairs as a servant of the East India Company, J.S. Mill was at the same time well-known for his Utilitarian ideas. As an Utilitarian, he belonged to a school which had arraigned the Company's administrative machinery by emphasising the absence of Utilitarian elements in its organisation. Thus, Mill realised that it would be difficult for him to reconcile his liberalism with his defence of the Company if he went back over the past history of the Company's administration. This was perhaps the reason why his arguments never carried any reflection on the performance of the Company in the past. Thus, it appears that J.S. Mill maintained a characteristically official attitude on the question of the Company's defence. All that appeared important to him was the suitability of the skilled administrative structure of the Company's government and the safety it ensured from Parliamentary interference. On the

1. Ibid., 22 June 1852, p.315.

other hand, as a follower of the orthodox group of the Company's defenders, Kaye's arguments betrayed an anxiety similar to that revealed earlier by Charles Grant. Hence, apart from the efficiency of the existing machinery, Kaye saw signs of progressive improvement in the history of the Company.

Kaye's other major work to be published at this time was Memorials of Indian government, Being a Selection from the Papers of Henry St. George Tucker, Later Director of the East India Company. In his editorial remarks, Kaye explained that the publication of such a work was planned by Tucker himself, and that he had indicated this in a letter to a friend in which he hoped that it could "promote in any degree the interests and credit of the Court" by showing that the Court was not unmindful of "public duties".¹ Kaye did not doubt the value of Tucker's papers in fulfilling this intention. Rather, he saw that they could be used to highlight the efficiency of the Court as a body governing India, and to influence public opinion in favour of the continuance of the Company's administration, especially at a time when the renewal of its charter was to be reconsidered by Parliament. Thus, as he observed: "I have been guided in my selection by nothing so much as the wish to illustrate the present important discussions on the future Government of India".²

Not only this, since Tucker had expressed his opinions on almost every topic which was under discussion before the Parliamentary Select Committee, Kaye hoped that the book would be of great use to defenders of the Company. The papers had

1. Quoted, Kaye, J.W. (ed.), Memorials of Indian Government, Being a Selection from the Papers of Henry St. George Tucker (London, 1853), Preface.

2. Ibid., p.V.

thus been selected with a specific purpose in view, and in the arrangement of the papers, Kaye tried to "follow the classification of subjects adopted by the Parliamentary Committees now sitting".¹ The volume started with an introduction to the machinery of Indian government and ended with a conclusion devoted to "a just tribute to the general government of the East India Company".² The intervening chapters dealt with issues such as administration agencies and authorities, military establishments, revenues and resources, judiciary, finance, political relations. The views quoted were similar to Kaye's, and this was exemplified from the beginning. For instance, Kaye quoted Tucker's views emphasising that "It would be useful to take an historical retrospect of our administration in India".³ Similarly, Kaye quoted Tucker's views opposing annexation of territory: "The propagation of such a doctrine could not fail to shake the attachment and confidence of every native prince and chieftain throughout India, and may at some future period lead to consequences greatly to be deprecated".⁴ Again, consistently with his view that the Court of Directors was not influenced by English party politics, Kaye portrayed Tucker as an illustrious example of a non-party Director and Chairman of the Court of Directors who, though a Tory himself, openly criticised the conquest of Sind and recalled the Conservative Governor-General, Ellenborough. Thus, as Kaye observed:

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.503.

3. Quoted, Ibid., p.2.

4. Quoted, Ibid., p.253.

Upon the subject of the conquest of Scinde and the deposition of the Ameers, Mr. Tucker felt as strongly, and expressed himself as emphatically, as on that of the invasion of Afghanistan. He had all his life belonged to the Conservative Party; but when it is said of him that in all matters of Indian policy he was neither Whig nor Tory, that he regarded neither parties nor persons, but shaped his conduct in accordance with fixed principles, only that is said which applies, with equal cogency, to the whole body of the Court of Directors.¹

In short, though a compilation of Tucker's papers which were "partly of an official, partly of an unofficial character",² the book provided Kaye with an opportunity to reinforce his own views by quoting the views and opinions which were similar to his own, as well as to defend the Company.

Viewed against this background, it is not difficult to trace the origins of Kaye's Administration of the East India Company, which appeared in a single volume. As has been seen, Kaye had definite views regarding the usefulness and legitimacy of the Company's government in India. As a historian, he decided to defend the Company's rule by showing how its development fitted into a universal pattern of historical progress. It may be noted here that the idea of progress as the guiding law of human history was a familiar idea in Europe at this time. Exponents of this idea saw progress as a continuous movement. They saw progress in reason, in knowledge, in religion and in morals, leading to a better and happier state.³

It was this idea of progress implying continuous movement in some desirable

1. Ibid., p.313.

2. Ibid., Preface, p.iii.

3. Bury, J.B., The Idea of Progress (London, 1921),

direction that lay at the root of Kaye's own view of the history of the Company's administration. Kaye claimed that the Company's administration, in recent years, was constantly engaged in improving the condition of the people whom it governed. On the other hand, his own claims regarding the general character of the book were modest. He regarded it neither as "a perfect history of the internal administration of India" nor as a complete picture of "Indian Institutions".¹ He made it clear that the book was "a series of historical illustrations of Indian government".² He explained that his object was mainly to select some important topics and study them by throwing such light as could be derived from the details of the past. Thus, as usual, he was concerned to promote his views - on this occasion to defend the Company and so influence policy in 1853: "I offer this volume to the public as a contribution to the general stock of information relating to India and her affairs - information which, in the present juncture, it is very desirable to possess".³

The general plan of the work was determined by this purpose and the contents run swiftly down a well-marked course. The book was divided into five sections. The first section contained four chapters, two devoted to laudatory comments on the nature and tendency of the Company's administration and favourable comparisons with the salient features of Mughal administration, followed by two chapters on administrative progress. The second section contained three chapters on the

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, Preface, p.v.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

revenue administrations of the different presidencies and the north-western provinces, and a chapter on public works. In the third section, Kaye examined the judicial system and the rise and growth of the Company's civil service. In addition to these, there were chapters on Thagi and Dacoity. The fourth section included chapters on British policy towards the non-regulation provinces, the civilization of savage tribes, human sacrifice, sati and infanticide. The last section contained two chapters giving an account of the history of native education and the progress of Christianity in India.

Since the work was written with a specific purpose in view, Kaye prefaced his historical enquiry by some general reflections on the character and circumstances attending the growth of the Company's administration. These observations followed from his basic assumptions regarding the Company's rule. Convinced that the happiness of the governed should be the ultimate concern of every government, Kaye proceeded to enquire how far the Company's government sought that end. Not surprisingly, he found no evidence of any recognition of the claims of the governed in the early phase of the Company's administration. But the situation, he argued, considerably changed from the time of men like Cornwallis, Barlow and William Jones when, at last, it was clearly recognised that "the prosperity of the governing and the governed are mutually dependent upon each other".¹ In order to substantiate his argument, he quoted the corrections which William Jones made in the minute drawn up by Barlow on The Bengal Regulations of 1793. William Jones, he stressed, had appended this note: "I have presumed to alter the first words. Surely the principal object of every government is the happiness

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, p.2.

of the governed".¹

But Kaye, at the same time, accepted that it was always difficult to find an exact yardstick for measuring the success of a government. This was because "all government", was "more or less, an experiment".² No government, he argued, should be judged on the basis of either abstract generalisation or "after any imagined model of perfection".³

For a proper assessment of the performance of Indian government, Kaye asserted, it was necessary to keep in view, first of all, the peculiar circumstances under which the government had developed, and secondly, whether the government made efforts in the direction of progressive improvement in the condition of the people or not.⁴ He also argued that if there was much that had not been accomplished in India, there was also much to be done in England. He compared, therefore, the achievements and failures of the government in India. He found numerous instances of neglect and misgovernment under the Crown's government.⁵ He gave some examples. Like J.S. Mill,⁶ Kaye found in Ireland an apt illustration of administration inefficiency and neglect. Having shown this, he emphasised that if it was not an easy task to govern Ireland which was just a few hours journey

1. Ibid., pp.1-2.

2. Ibid., p.4.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., pp.9-10.

5. Ibid., p.11.

6. J.S. Mill was one of the prominent spokesmen on the Irish question at this time. See Steele, E.D., 'J.S. Mill and the Irish question', Historical Journal, XIII, Series 2, 1970, pp.216-236.

from London, it was equally not an easy task to govern such a vast and populous country as India.¹

In his introductory remarks, Kaye also made specific allusion to his aims. Since it appeared to him that the main reason for "indiscriminate criticisms" against the Company was the absence of a proper awareness about its doings among the British public, his intention was to supply this want of information by revealing what the Company had attempted to do for India.² Not only this, he believed that in order to arouse and stimulate Indian administrators to do more and more, it was more necessary to record and commend their good deeds than to express "vague general censure".³ Thus, Kaye's interest in the study of the Company's administrative history was more than academic. As much as any man of his generation, he had his views to put forward on Indian policy and on the factors guiding the proper behaviour of individuals in an imperial situation.

In the following chapter on 'India under the Moguls', Kaye's primary object was to show how British administrative principles and practices marked any improvement upon those of the Mughals. He asked, therefore, whether the people of India would have been more happy or less happy if the Mughal government had continued in the country. In other words, he applied Utilitarian criteria.

Kaye argued on Utilitarian grounds that there was no connection between "the royal progresses" as manifested in buildings and monuments and the happiness

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, p.13.

2. Ibid., p.14.

3. Ibid., p.15.

of the people. The construction of "sumptuous palaces and panoramic camps" only revealed that the revenues collected from the people were utilized in unproductive channels.¹ He could discover no sign of any fixed principle in their government: "the beneficence of the Mogul emperors was personal and accidental".² Not only was justice administered on the basis of discrimination, but the roads and highways were unsafe for public traffic.³

Here, Kaye's argument seems paradoxical. On general grounds, he argued that points of resemblance between conquerors and conquered render their yoke more irritating and oppressive. The analogy which he drew for the purpose of illustrating his conclusion was that of the master and the servant: "The greater the difference between the master and the servant, the less intolerable is the state of servitude".⁴ In other words, differences between rulers and ruled were more acceptable than similarities. No doubt he had in mind the position of the British as rulers in India, but this argument removed at least some of the force from his criticism of the luxury of the Mughal rulers.

Like Charles Grant,⁵ Kaye thought that the East India Company was the embodiment of the will of God. To use his own words: "The great structure of our Indian empire has been reared as no human intellect would have designed, and no

1. Ibid., p.39.

2. Ibid., p.40.

3. Ibid., p.45.

4. Ibid., p.53.

5. Embree, A.T., Charles Grant and British Rule in India (London, 1962), pp.144-145.

human hands would have fashioned it".¹ He saw evidence of a providential design behind the pattern of the growth of the Company from the very outset of its career in India. The success of the English Company over its European rivals was a foregone conclusion, and its early weaknesses gradually turned out to be the elements of its permanent success. The Portuguese were "desperate and unscrupulous adventurers" and their excesses cautioned the English. Similarly, the obstructions created by the Dutch Company gave the English those clues which were needed for future success.² Under such circumstances, the impediments in the way of the Company's advance were cleared by the interference of an almighty Providence, and the Company, which was always eager to "limit the number of its factories", came to possess an empire in India.³

Kaye argued that, even though his enquiry was "unsatisfactory and inconclusive", it would be helpful in dispelling the admiration for oriental despotism among the people "from the days of Burke to the days of Ellenborough".⁴ To Kaye, the Turko-Afghan government represented a system of arbitrary rule showing no affinity with the standards of a constitutional government. The Turko-Afghan rulers, in his view, were merely conquerors and spoliators. Firuz Shah was the only exception who could be regarded as "an enlightened prince".⁵ Not only

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, p.64. British rule as a divine dispensation was an idea held by a number of intellectuals. Lowith, Karl, Meaning in History (University of Chicago Press, 1970).

2. Ibid., pp.58-61.

3. Ibid., p.63.

4. Ibid., p.17.

5. Ibid., p.20.

this, unlike the peaceful nature of British expansion, these conquests were achieved at "an enormous cost of human life".¹

Coming to the first two Mughal rulers, Babar and Humayun, Kaye pointed out that the former had neither time nor opportunity, and the latter neither inclination nor ability, to develop a system of civil government. It was only Sher Shah who at this time devoted himself to "the better ordering of the civil administration, and the construction of great public works".² Even Akbar, who built the Mughal empire, failed to make arrangements for perfecting "its internal economy".³ Similarly, Shah Jahan's magnificence, in his view, did not necessarily reveal his benevolence.⁴

But at the same time, Kaye could see nothing approximating to a scheme of general administration in the early records of the East India Company. Even when the gradations of writers, factors, merchants and senior merchants were established in all the presidencies, the Company's internal administration was still carried on according to "the laws of power and impulses of passion, than to principles of justice and reason".⁵ Likewise, the grant of the Diwani in 1765 which vested the powers of revenue collection in the hands of the Company, gave birth to a system of dual control which proved to be exceedingly vicious and corrupt:

1. Ibid., p.22.

2. Ibid., p.25.

3. Ibid., p.29.

4. Ibid., p.32.

5. Ibid., p.64.

"The Company's servants in Bengal did very much what they liked, and grew rich on unhallowed gains without compunction or remorse".¹ He thus saw that there was no responsibility, and the Company's men were engaged in the promotion of their own interests. On the other hand, however critical Kaye might be of parliamentary interference in later years, he admitted^{That} North's Regulating Act had beneficial effects upon the Company's administrative character: "The administration of the East India Company had now become a great recognised fact".² From this time, he declared, the Company's administration witnessed a period of "progressive improvement".³

Kaye saw remarkable progress in the internal administration of the Company under Cornwallis: "He gathered up the scattered fragments of government which he found, and reduced them to one comprehensive system".⁴ At the same time, Cornwallis could do so much because he governed India with "enlarged powers" which had been conferred by the Amending Act of 1786. Kaye explained here that by empowering the Governor-General to override the decision of his Council and to act without its concurrence in extraordinary cases, this Act had removed one of the glaring anomalies of the previous system.⁵ He took the view that, although the independence of the subordinate presidencies was gradually lessened, the overall result of parliamentary enactments was satisfactory up to 1813.⁶ But the Charter

1. Ibid., pp.80-81.

2. Ibid., p.87.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.88.

5. Ibid., pp.95-96.

6. Ibid., p.98.

Act of 1833 deprived the subordinate presidencies of even the last vestige of independence, for that limited power of legislation which they enjoyed earlier, was withdrawn. He argued that this excessive centralization of powers in Calcutta had, in most cases, "dispirited and enervated" the local governments in the Presidencies and dampened their zeal for "much internal improvement".¹

As has been seen, Kaye thought the Court of Directors had been unreasonably subordinated to the Board of Control. Here he wished to examine this development against its historical setting. If the past was to act as a guide for the future, he argued, it was clear that even after the beginning of parliamentary control, there was an attempt rather to improve than to weaken the Court. In his view, the machinery of "conjoint authority" which was established under the Act of 1784 had clearly demarcated the respective powers of the Court and the Board. The Court had been given the power of initiation in all matters except those relating to peace and war. The Board was required to act merely as a "controlling power" in normal times.² In 1833, some other dignitaries were added as ex-officio members, and the controlling power of the Board was also made absolute.³ It is thus evident that, as on former occasions, Kaye was consistent in criticising the unequal distribution of powers between the Court and the Board, as not in accordance with the provisions of the Act of 1784.

Kaye then referred to the question of Indian revenues. Since people were fearful of frequent fiscal changes, the Company did the best thing by retaining the

1. Ibid., pp.99-108.

2. Ibid., pp.124-128.

3. Ibid., p.131.

traditional tax structure with some modifications.¹ He broadly classified the sources of revenue under two categories. The first category included the land tax, salt tax and customs levies which yielded the largest revenue. In the next category, came taxes such as those on opium and liquor sales, post office and stamp duties, and all other minor sources of revenue.² His primary object in conducting this enquiry seems to have been to explain to the opponents of the Company that the deficit it faced was neither chronic nor the results of the unproductiveness of its resources. On the other hand, it was the outcome of expenditure on wrong and productive channels such as war.³ In order to prove this, he endeavoured to show a gradual financial improvement with the help of statistics culled from Company's finance letters. On the basis of the data available to him, which were also quoted in the body of the book, he pointed out that whereas the net receipts averaged between twenty-four and a half millions to twenty-six millions, the total charges on the revenue amounted to twenty-five millions, leaving a shortage of only half-a-million. Even this meagre deficit, he asserted, was covered in the subsequent returns of the Company.⁴

A topic such as this naturally provided Kaye with the opportunity for an excursion into the history of the recent Wars. It was a guiding idea with him that Wars and annexations caused an enormous waste of public money. By this criterion

1. Ibid., pp.140-141.

2. Ibid., pp.142-143.

3. Ibid., pp.155-156.

4. Ibid., pp.147-153.

he criticised the expansionist policy of the Company. His study of the financial consequences of the Afghan War had made him further convinced that Wars were too costly.¹ His conclusion was: "But for these exhausting Wars we should have had a continued surplus".² Thus, there was a paradox here too. Surely, the Company had gained power in India by wars and annexations.

In his remarks on the revenue settlements enforced under the Company, Kaye concentrated his attention mainly on clarifying some of the controversial points relating to the genesis and the results of the different revenue systems. He denied James Mill's view that the idea of permanent settlement originated with Cornwallis and that it was "the aristocratic plan of an aristocratic statesman".³ He maintained, on the other hand, that the plan was founded on the local experiences of the Company's servants who regarded it as best suited to the interests of the country. He argued that the idea of the perpetual settlement first came into the mind of Thomas Law, who was a member of the Council of Revenue. Later, it was strongly supported by others such as Brooke, the Collector of Shahabad, and Sir John Shore. Kaye stressed that this view was also shared by the home authorities.⁴

He believed that the Permanent settlement was a great success in Bengal, and he asserted that this was because of the interest shown in the improvement of productivity by the Zamindars.⁵ Such a view would not commend itself to-day.⁶

1. Kaye, J.W., History of the War in Afghanistan, vol.iii, pp.398-400.

2. Kaye, J.W., Administration, p.156.

3. Ibid., p.181.

4. Ibid., pp.177-181.

5. Ibid., pp.193-201.

6. Gopal, S., The Permanent Settlement in Bengal and its Results (London, 1949), pp.39-40.

He also asserted that as a result, the condition of the peasantry in Bengal was much better than in the other provinces of India.¹ On the other hand, Kaye criticised the Ryotwar system of Madras. He argued that it was originally planned not by Munro but by "a little band of soldiers, who brought to this work more zeal than knowledge".² He mentioned the names of Captain Read, Macleod and Graham. He admitted that it was Munro who developed the system by virtue of "his experience and thorough acquaintance with the language and manners of the people".³ Of the general results of this system, Kaye had no favourable opinion because he thought that the land was over-assessed and consequently, the system failed to arouse the raiyat's interest in the improvement of his land and its fertility.⁴

Kaye also dealt with the Company's revenue policy in the north-western provinces where the system of revenue collection was devised initially after the Bengal model. But it was soon realised, he argued, that the declaration of a perpetual settlement had been "premature and dangerous".⁵ Even the short settlements, which were afterwards introduced, he explained, could not immediately provide a remedy. He insisted that, on the other hand, they not only created confusion but also provided opportunities for inflicting injustice on the old-landed proprietors. In his view, it was not until a group of prominent

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.200-201.

2. Ibid., p.208.

3. Ibid., p.215.

4. Ibid., pp.220-231.

5. Ibid., pp.236-238.

officials of the Company seriously addressed themselves to the task of redressing the grievances of the people that the widespread anomalies really ended.¹ Although Kaye never lagged behind in highlighting the achievements of the Company's servants, it is noteworthy that he did not hesitate to criticise the Ryotwari system of Madras. But, on the whole, Kaye regarded the Company's revenue system in Bengal as a great achievement.

He devoted a separate chapter to improvements in irrigation and public works. A system of canals, he argued, was the only effective remedy against the periodical famines that ravaged the upper part of the country. The other implication of canal building, in his view, was that it led to the progress of inland navigation.² The construction of the West Jamuna or Delhi Canal was the first step in the process. He also drew attention to the Eastern Jamuna Canal and the Ganges Canal which was then in progress.³

He praised the construction of several trunk roads as providing a "great channel of communication", and drew attention to the increasing amount of traffic on these roads.⁴ He also referred to the introduction of the railways and the telegraph.⁵ All the same, he combined criticism with praise in tracing the history of these developments. Thus, on the one hand, while he contended that there could be no doubt regarding the progressive tendency of the Company's

1. Ibid., pp.243-356.

2. Ibid., pp.275-276.

3. Ibid., pp.281-287.

4. Ibid., pp.306-307.

5. Ibid., p.314.

government in promoting "general works of public utility"; on the other hand, he also pointed out that "while some five millions of money have been spent on great national works, thirty millions of money have been spent on war".¹

The administration of justice under the Company was his next topic. The Mayor's courts² in his view, could not advance the interests of substantive justice, for they composed of "men of the slenderest legal attainments".³ The years between the grant of the Diwani and the assumption of direct control under Warren Hastings were utilized for acquiring "some knowledge and experience" of the native laws and the courts. He emphasised that it was because of this experience that Warren Hastings had no difficulty in the establishment of a system of civil and criminal courts. On the other hand, Kaye was critical of the Supreme Court at Calcutta. The Act of 1773 had not specified the jurisdiction between the Company's government and the Supreme Court. The result was that the Supreme Court unduly interfered with the jurisdiction of the Company's courts. Moreover, the new judges of the Supreme Court, he asserted, made no attempt to understand the native laws because they thought that they had come out to administer the English law.⁴ Kaye explained that this produced great confusion which lasted until Parliament defined the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court by an Act in 1781.⁵ Again, he admitted that Parliament's intervention had been beneficial in the long run.

1. Ibid., pp.316-317.

2. Ibid., p.322.

3. Ibid., pp.326-327.

4. Ibid., pp.329-330.

5. Ibid., p.331.

Kaye took the view that, although the Company's judicial machinery had improved as a result of the reforms introduced by Warren Hastings, it had not been shaped into "any general and uniform system".¹ This was done during the time of Cornwallis. The basis of these reforms, in his view, was derived from the instructions of the Court of Directors in which it had conveyed its desire to lay this judicial framework in conformity with "the subsisting manners and usages of the people, rather than to any abstract theories drawn from other countries, or applicable to a different state of things".² He pointed out that Cornwallis' next step was the establishment of Courts of Circuit for Bengal and Bihar.³ He then went on to show that Cornwallis conceived the idea of completely separating judicial administration from the administration of revenue because he realised that "the Civil Courts, presided over as they then were by the revenue officers, had been converted into instruments of oppression, and that the inhabitants of the provinces were groaning under the wrongs which had been inflicted upon them by officers in whom the fiscal and judicial authorities has been so unwisely combined, and who consummated in one capacity the injuries which they originated in the other".⁴

Kaye explained that Cornwallis wanted to provide the native inhabitants with the means of redress against "injuries which they may sustain in their persons and properties in opposition to the existing regulations".⁵ As has been seen,

1. Ibid., p.332.

2. Ibid., p.333.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.336.

5. Ibid., p.338.

Kaye had earlier supported the Permanent settlement in Bengal, and here he approved of the protection given to the Zamindars against arbitrary official interference. No less important than these reforms, he asserted, was Cornwallis' attempt to codify the laws "for the guidance alike of those who were to administer and those who were to appeal to them".¹

On the other hand, Kaye admitted at the same time that, though these measures accomplished "a great work" and gave uniformity to the legal system, they could not succeed in their aim of ensuring easy access to the Courts and quick disposal of cases. The result was that "business accumulated fearfully", and the number of undecided cases went on increasing.² Kaye argued that these evils had developed not only because of the prescribed formalities of the new arrangements, but also from the tendency of the people to rush into the law courts. Kaye emphasised that despite these anomalies, there was a general improvement in law and order, and that there prevailed "a greater sense of the security both of life and property under our administration, than under that of the Mogul".³

It is true, however, that while dealing with the subsequent history of the growth of the judicial system, he covered the ground with the help of some general comments. For instance, he remarked that all these years, from Cornwallis to Bentinck, the same arrangements continued except those changes which "the mutations of time and circumstances naturally engrafted upon it".⁴ He supported

1. Ibid., p.339.

2. Ibid., p.340.

3. Ibid., p.345.

4. Ibid., p.345.

Bentinck's decision to abolish the Provincial Courts on the ground that they had become inefficient. But he found no justification for Bentinck's scheme which reversed the process of separation of powers and converted the Revenue Commissioners into judges of circuit. He observed: "They were to look after the Company's coin, and they were to sit in judgment upon gang-robberies - a blending of Somerset House and the Old Bailey".¹ Thus, he was consistent in his praise of the idea underlying the separation of judicial functions from the administration of revenue. This was consistent with his criticism of Munro's ryotwar system.

It may be noted that, in recent years, B.B. Misra has drawn attention to the weaknesses of Kaye's treatment of the Company's judicial system. He argues that Kaye's account is too short, and does not present a coherent view of the development of judicial institutions.² Moreover, it shows, he adds, a want of "historical balance" and "critical approach".³ It will be clear already that Kaye did not aim to study the Company's administration in detail. He himself described his work "as a series of historical illustrations of Indian government".⁴ He also made specific allusion to his aim of defending the Company at this time. But the fact that he himself explained this clearly removes at least some of the force from the criticisms regarding the inadequacies of his treatment. On the other hand, what was characteristic of him as a writer was his combination of praise and blame. As

1. Ibid., p.347.

2. Misra, B.B., The Central Administration of the East India Company, 1773-1834 (Manchester University Press, 1959), p.2.

3. Ibid.

4. Kaye, J.W., Administration, Preface, p.V.

has been seen, he did not ignore the defects of the Cornwallis system.

It was typical of Kaye, with his aim of defending the Company, that, in explaining the Company's judicial administration, he gave due emphasis to the successes of the Company's policy in correcting defects in India. He viewed the Company's efforts for the suppression of Thagi and Dacoity in this light. His description revealed a remarkable thoroughness in research. He wanted to concentrate attention on the efforts that were made to suppress Thagi and Dacoity, but he also touched on their origins and methods. To begin with, Kaye emphasised that the growth of the Company had been accompanied by an increase in knowledge regarding "the habits and customs of the Indian people".¹ This knowledge, he argued, revealed that many abominable practices in India had the sanction of "some puerile or obscene legend".² Thagi, in his view, was an example in this regard, and a divine sanction was claimed by those who were engaged in this profession. The root of their proliferation, he stressed, lay in the apathy of the people.³ At the same time, the question of its suppression excited "little general interest" before the time of Bentinck who established a regular department for this purpose.⁴ The task was assigned to Sleeman and his associates, who in a short time learnt the "whole craft of Thuggee".⁵ Kaye regarded this as a great achievement. But as the Thugs also thrived upon "the legal niceties and the judicial reserve of the

1. Ibid., p.354.

2. Ibid., p.357.

3. Ibid., pp.357-360.

4. Ibid., p.370.

5. Ibid., p.371.

English tribunals", he argued that their complete extinction largely depended on the removal of the impediments to the "prompt administration of justice".¹ Although he had praised the Cornwallis system of justice, he now also praised its modification in 1836. In his narrative, he also praised the heroic qualities of the officers responsible for detecting and capturing Thugs.

Though not as terrible as Thagī, Kaye explained that Dacoity was, nevertheless, much more widespread, and "scarcely less fatal in its effect upon the general peace and happiness of the people".² Unlike Thagī, it had long been known to the authorities. But the increase in the number of these crimes could not be easily checked because of the secret protection given to these criminals by some of the Zamīndars, and the corrupt members of the public, especially "the Thanadars", and also because of the faulty legal procedure which afforded them opportunities for acquittal with the help of false evidence.³ Again, he accepted the need to relax the judicial formalities associated with the Cornwallis system, and again, he praised the heroic qualities of the Company's officers.

Kaye tried to show that there had been a significant improvement in the "character" of the Company's servants from the time of Cornwallis. He regarded this improvement as linked with the changes in their service conditions. The Company's servants, he argued, henceforward began to receive "fixed salaries in proportion to the dignity of the offices which they held".⁴ He explained that

1. Ibid., p.375.

2. Ibid., p.380.

3. Ibid., pp.388-395.

4. Ibid., p.418.

this not only removed their temptations for financial gains through trade, but also brought to them a greater sense of their responsibilities: "With the morality of the men, their intelligence rose also; they began to take a pride in their profession and an interest in the people".¹ On the question of the exclusion of natives from the higher ranks of the Company's services, he took the view that the provisions under the 87th clause of the Charter Act of 1833 had merely removed "the legal disability" by recognising the equal claims of all to employment.² Its practical operation, he argued, was not possible as other barriers remained in the way. Nevertheless, he stressed that this provision had given great encouragement to the progress of native education. He tried to show that in course of time, a large number of natives had been employed in different branches, especially in the judicial services of the Company. He asserted somewhat vaguely that the appointment of natives to other higher offices was "simply a question of time".³ He concluded what was coming to seem like an impassioned defence of the existing system with an admission that there were indeed many defects - a lack of judicial training and of "ordinary acumen". But he pointed rhetorically to the number of able men there were in the Company's service, and asked whether such men would have been appointed if the Company's patronage were in the hands of politicians. This was indeed been one of the arguments often used against the abolition of the Company.

Hitherto, Kaye had confined himself to reviewing the progress of the Company's

1. Ibid., pp.418-419.

2. Ibid., pp.421-422.

3. Ibid., p.427.

administration in the Regulation provinces; now he turned to those areas which had only recently been brought under the Company's control. Since it was difficult to deal with all the Non-Regulation provinces for the purpose of the present enquiry, he concentrated his attention only on the administrations of Sind, Arakan, and the Punjab. He argued that administration in these provinces was based on a "mixed system", incorporating the good elements of the native institutions.¹ He stressed that the results of this fusion had been advantageous to the governed, as well as the government. He explained this by an analogy:

What a people suddenly finding themselves under the sovereignty of a new set of rulers most requires, is a government very little in advance of that from which they have been transferred. All abrupt and violent changes are as injurious to the constitution of a nation as they are to the constitution of a man.²

But at the same time, Kaye tried to explain that the extent of success varied from province to province, according to the circumstances under which they were administered. For instance, the first task before the administration in Sind under Sir Charles Napier was to deal with "the restlessness of the predatory hill tribes".³ The consequences of this want of peace, he argued, was an "essentially military" government in the province. He observed:

When we consider that the civil government was conducted 'in the midst of an extensive military command', and that the collection of revenue was entrusted to young military officers, whose qualifications for such

1. Ibid., p.433.

2. Ibid., p.435.

3. Ibid., p.437.

duties consisted in 'a total want of experience', the only wonder is, that the experiment should have been half as successful as it was. 1

Thus, it was that the circumstances in Sindh were not so conducive to the development of civil administration as in Arakan where there had been "all governing and no fighting".² This peaceful situation, he went on to say, helped Captain Bogle to convert the proverbially unhealthy province of Arakan into a "fashionable sanitarium".³ Nevertheless, the greatest among these experiments, in his view, was that which was carried out in the Punjab. In the first place, unlike Sindh and Arakan, the Punjab and its people were known to the British officers who were there to assist the Council of Regency. Since then, they had been exercising an effective control over the administration, and were able to maintain general tranquillity in the province. He pointed out that the other important reason for the remarkable success of administration under the Lahore Board lay in "a judicious inter-mixture of civil and military elements".⁴ Whereas Henry Lawrence combined local knowledge and military experience, John Lawrence and Mansell possessed experiences of civil and financial matters, respectively. Moreover, the success of the Lahore Board, in his view, also depended on the way in which it functioned. He explained that what ensured harmony in the working of the Board was "a division of labour".⁵ He observed:

1. Ibid., p.442.

2. Ibid., p.443.

3. Ibid., p.445.

4. Ibid., p.450.

5. Ibid., p.453.

The result was that all matters of importance were well and carefully considered by the entire Board, whilst each individual member brought his own particular experience to bear upon the illustration of administrative details. ¹

Kaye referred to the improvement in the condition of the "savage tribes" as another important illustration of the gradual progress of civilizing measures under the Company's administration. The places he selected for this purpose belonged to the western part of the country. Mairwaora, in his view, was one of the important seats where the Company's officials carried on the task of elevating the social condition of the people with great success. He explained that the people living there had no permanent means of livelihood. They were professional robbers having no regard for "human life and liberty".² Hence, the problem before Captain Hall and Major Dixon, he insisted, was not an easy one. In the course of time, their sincere exertions yielded satisfactory results, and these lawless people were turned into "a class of peaceful agriculturists".³

Kaye pointed out that the situation in Khandesh was different from Mairwaora. He argued that the Bhils of Khandesh had suffered badly at the hands of the native governments: "It was no uncommon thing, under native rule, for them to be massacred by hundreds".⁴ Thus, here the comparison was not with Mughals but with Maratha governments. Again, Kaye made it to the advantage of the British. He took the view that it was the result of native misrule that the Bhils were suspicious of the

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.465.

3. Ibid., p.469.

4. Ibid., p.474.

Intentions of the new government. He maintained that after some years of continuous ill-success, the effective remedy was evolved by Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was at this time, the Governor of Bombay. "It was his desire", Kaye stressed, "to turn them from their lawless pursuits by finding other employment, alike pleasant and more profitable".¹ Side by side with these "remedial measures", he drew attention to the operations against the practice of human sacrifice which prevailed among the Khonds of Orissa.²

Kaye saw the efforts for the suppression of Sati as another example of the "humanising tendency" of the Company's policy. He pointed out that Sati had a "traditional origin" and that it was countenanced by the priests. On the other hand, he argued that this practice was not followed in all parts of the country: "It never has been universal throughout India - never in any locality has it been general".⁴ But it is at this point that one of the purposes which guided his enquiry also becomes explicit. "The Court of Directors had been for some time brooding over this painful subject - 'the Killing' - as they described it".⁵ He made no reference to the efforts made in this direction by men like Ram Mohan Roy and his associates.

Kaye viewed the suppression of infanticide in a similar light. Johnathon Duncan and Major Walker, in his view, were among those who made the first

1. Ibid., p.478.

2. Ibid., pp.495-500.

3. Ibid., pp.522-523.

4. Ibid., p.529.

5. Ibid., p.532.

sincere attempts in the direction of its suppression. He held that during the succeeding years, the process was gradually, though successfully, carried on by a number of other servants of the Company.¹ At the same time, as on earlier occasions, he underlined the superiority of the Company's administration over the Mughal administration: "Even in such works we are far surpassing the Moguls".² He concluded that these works were of permanent significance in the history of British rule in India.³

After these social reforms, Kaye presented the progress of native education as further evidence of the valuable work done by the Company. Like his contemporaries, T.B. Macaulay, C.E. Trevelyn and Alexander Duff, Kaye was deeply convinced of the paramount importance of English education for changing the manners and the outlook of Indian people. . In particular, ever since the days of the Calcutta Review, Kaye had enjoyed a personal friendship with Alexander Duff, and like him, indulged in the vision of English education leading eventually to the growth of Christianity in India.⁴ He saw education as "a great remedial agent".⁵ He thought that the efforts made recently in the direction of English education constituted the dawn of a great reformation. On the other hand, it may be noted that, although Kaye urged that the Court of Directors had come to realise the importance of English education before 1830, he was clear that Bentinck's

1. Ibid., pp.545-558.

2. Ibid., p.585.

3. Ibid., pp.585-586.

4. For Kaye's friendship with Dr. Duff, see Kaye, J.W., Administration of the East India Company, p.586.

5. Ibid., p.589.

decision relating to educational policy was made in India:

Lord William Bentinck was at this time at the head of the government of India. His own unaided judgment had led him to similar conclusions, and he was well prepared to lay the axe to the trunk of the great tree of oriental learning. 1

There is no doubt that at the root of this remark was his own observations as a contemporary in India. He saw that the instances of educational institutions imparting English education were continually increasing. He also drew attention to the establishment of a College of Civil Engineering at Roorkee.²

Like Charles Grant, Kaye thought that the progress of British rule should be accompanied by the spread of the gospel through the country. He concluded his book with a survey of the progress of Christianity. He observed:

In the whole history of Indian progress there is nothing that cheers the heart more than the progress of morality and religion among our own people. It was said of old that we must begin there - that we must first convert ourselves, and then think of converting the people of India. 3

In short, Kaye's purpose in this book was the defence of the existing system of the Company's government. The topics he selected as illustrating the Company's work were such as showed it in a favourable light. His originality lay in that he showed how it was possible to defend the Company by looking at its history. There were also some recurrent themes which, apart from revealing a consistency in his

1. Ibid., p.595. For a clear exposition of this view, see Ballhatchet, K.A., 'The Home government and Bentinck's educational policy', Cambridge Historical Journal, vol .X. No.2, 1951, p.228.

2. Ibid., pp.618-619.

3. Ibid., pp.653-654.

views, gave certain unity to the whole book. These were, that the Company was divinely ordained and unique in history; that the Court of Directors was an experienced and useful body; that by swallowing up the resources of the Company, the exhausting wars, which were not the results of its own policies, had impeded the task of Indian progress; that initiatives for reform generally emanated from the Company's officials; that despite stresses and strains the history of the Company's administration reflected signs of progressive improvement. Like many of his contemporaries, Kaye was convinced that progress was the guiding law of historical development and consequently, he used progressive improvement as the criterion of his enquiry. He saw numerous signs of progress both in the institutional framework of the Company's administration, and in the reforming policies adopted in social and economic matters. In the main, progress, in his view, constituted improvements in the spheres of morality and religion according to Utilitarian and Christian assumptions.

However, it is arguable that despite the tone of an advocate which Kaye adopted, this work laid the foundation of our knowledge of the administrative history of the Company's period. Similarly, though concerned more with revealing the divine dispensation and the achievements of the Company's officials than the systematic development of its policies, the book provided much factual information with no historical inconsistencies. Like Carlyle and Macaulay, Kaye was convinced that to study the past for its own sake was mere antiquarianism. He saw, therefore, a practical purpose in history and used it so as to illuminate the present by the past. Above all, he had access to the manuscripts and records of the Company in Leadenhall Street, and he was also helped by individuals with

private information on Indian topics.

Although there was a general consensus that he had performed his task well, most of the reviewers in the contemporary journals recognised Kaye's propagandist aim. Thus, the reviewer in The Friend of India observed: "There may be a little colouring observable here or there, but taken altogether, it is a true narrative".¹ Similarly, Allen's Indian Mail emphasised that the work merited particular attention for the author's views in support of the Company.² But, Kaye seemed to some contemporaries to have been more impartial in his Afghan War. The reviewer in The Athenaeum began by comparing the present work to his earlier one. He argued that unlike the former occasion when the author was only a historian "pronouncing judgments which were expected to stand for all time", in this particular case the author's task was different, for he had a thesis to plead.³ He further added: "Mr. Kaye has written nothing which he will ever have any occasion to repent or retract; but on this occasion he is an advocate and not a historian".⁴ Perhaps this tells us more of the reviewer than of Kaye, who had didactic aims in both works.

On the other hand, the Calcutta Review presented a highly favourable picture of the book. Kaye was praised for demonstrating that there had been a general improvement in the Company's administration: several passages were quoted on such matters as the Company's financial, revenue and judicial administrations,

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1. Friend of India, 30 June 1853.
 2. Allen's Indian Mail, 17 May 1853.
 3. Athenaeum, 11 June 1853.
 4. Ibid.

as well as the measures which were taken to suppress Thagī and Docoīty. But Kaye's main purpose was ignored: "He has religiously eschewed all theory, and confined himself to plain historical truth".¹

At the same time, a book such as this, which was written professedly to justify the Company's government, could not escape criticisms. To the reviewer in The Spectator, the book was "distinguished by too obvious a rhetoric".² But the reviewer was not merely referring to style: a major portion of his review was devoted to criticising the working of the Court of Directors, which Kaye had consistently praised. The reviewer, unlike Kaye, emphasised that the transfer of the patronage to government would be an advantage.³

Mountstuart Elphinstone commented that the book might have a "good effect in correcting the false standards by which it is now the practice to measure the administration of India". He thought, in particular, that the chapters relating to the revenue administration, the non-regulation provinces and docoīty were important both from the point of view of "intelligent and judicial examination", and because of the information they conveyed.⁴

Kaye's book was a tract for the times as well as a serious study of the subject. As such it owed its success to the fact that it expressed a current idea with peculiar

1. Calcutta Review, vol.xiv, January - June 1853, p.477.

2. Spectator, 21 May 1853.

3. Ibid.

4. Mountstuart Elphinstone papers, Undated memorandum, MSS. Eur. F.88, Box 15E.

clarity, force and conviction. But it was as a serious study of the subject that it influenced the course of the debates in Parliament. What is important is that it provided material for defenders as well as critics of the Company. Since it was written by the well-known historian of the Afghan War, it was quoted as reliable evidence by Sir Charles Wood who was defending the existing system in Parliament. Wood, like Kaye, argued that when considering the renewal of the Company's charter, it was necessary to review the progress of Indian administration during the last twenty years. Wood concluded this part of his speech which focussed on the measures of social reform and improvement of the condition of the people with a quotation from Kaye's Administration of the East India Company to the effect that more had been done since 1833 than during the previous two centuries and a half of the British connection with India.¹ On the other hand, John Bright, who opposed the existing dual government, also quoted a passage from Kaye's Administration of the East India Company, where the author had argued that Tucker deplored the mystery and mockery of the system which obscured responsibility and deluded public opinion.² The great popularity which Kaye's work enjoyed at this time, may also be evident from the fact that it went into a second edition only five months after its publication in September 1853.

In recent times, Kaye's work has still been recognised first as a pioneering study in the field of Anglo-Indian administration,³ and secondly, as one of the

1. Hansard, 3rd Series, 3 June 1853, pp.1133-1134.

2. Ibid., p.1174.

3. See, for example, Misra, B.B., The Central Administration of the East India Company, 1773-1834 (Manchester University Press, 1959), Introduction, p.2. Also Phillips, C.H. In his Foreword; Cohn, Bernard S., The Development and Impact of British Administration in India (New Delhi, 1961), p.6.

"earliest attempts at emphasising social and economic forces".¹ Indeed, one has only to look at its contents to realise that Kaye was adding an altogether new dimension to the study of Indian history. The general frame of reference which had hitherto guided the historians of British India was concerned mainly with the expansion of political power under the Company and those allied aspects which directly or indirectly fell in its arena. Here was a study which, for the first time, attempted to see a connection between the growth of political power and the development of administrative institutions preparing the way for social reforms under the Company. Indeed, the work retains a certain usefulness even today both as administrative history and as a study of social policies.

1. Bhatnagar, O.P. (ed.), The Administration of the East India Company (New Delhi, 1966), Introductory Remarks to the volume, p.iv.

CHAPTER IV

THE BIOGRAPHER

Kaye excelled Malcolm and Gleig as a biographer of distinguished Anglo-Indians. As we shall see, this was partly because he enjoyed better access to original sources than previous biographers. His subjects, except for Cornwallis, on whom he wrote in his Lives of Indian Officers, were nearer to him as contemporaries than Malcolm's or Gleig's. He had his own personal recollections of them and, where these were wanting, he collected useful information by correspondence with other contemporaries of his subjects. But it was also because he made a better use of his original sources than did Malcolm or Gleig. One of his most important advances in technique was in his incorporation of material from the original sources directly into his text. In some cases, for instance, he incorporated excerpts; in others he used only some words and tried to supply additional information in his footnotes. In short, he, unlike his predecessors, avoided quoting full letters in his text: in other words, he had a better mastery of his material. This enabled him to maintain a flow in his narrative. He had already given evidence of his interest in original sources as well as in using them in various ways in his previous historical works. Thus, much of the permanent value of his biographies lay in their richness of original sources and in their readability.

He held an unchallenged place as an Anglo-Indian biographer during his lifetime and all his works were highly acclaimed by the reviewers of the day.¹

1. This is evident from the extensive reviews of his biographical works in the leading English and Anglo-Indian journals of the day. They have been discussed later in this chapter.

The observation, made four years after his death, by the reviewer of Goldsmid's James Outram in Blackwood's Magazine is worth quoting here as a typical example of contemporary estimates of Kaye as a biographer:

We share Sir Francis Goldsmid's regret that Sir John Kaye did not live to fulfil his purpose of writing a life of Outram. Since Kaye's death, Anglo-Indian biography seems to have fallen upon evil days.]

Despite a fundamental coherence in some of his major assumptions, Kaye's intellectual endeavours had, hitherto, been marked by a duality. His view of the history of the East India Company had hovered between criticism and praise. As the historian of the Afghan War, he criticised all those who caused the disaster, but he was never wanting in praise either for the excellence of the Company as a providentially-ordained organisation, or for its men. This ambivalence derived from his motivations: on the one hand, he wanted to provide warnings for those concerned in public affairs by critically interpreting the ebb and flow of contemporary developments; on the other hand, he wanted to popularise knowledge regarding Indian affairs and to emphasise the historical continuity of the Company as an institution, again with an eye to public affairs in that he was concerned to influence the electorate.

Deeply conscious of the Company's historical character under a providential design,² Kaye was at the same time, convinced that the Company's progress was linked with the enduring achievements of the great individuals who served its

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1. 'Bayard of the East', Blackwood's Magazine, vol. 128, September 1880, p. 328. Goldsmid, F. J., James Outram: A Biography (London, 1881), vol. I, Preface, p. ix.
 2. Kaye, J. W., The Administration of the East India Company, p. 64.

destiny.¹ Thus, Kaye's faith in a divine dispensation and his emphasis on the character and achievements of those who played important roles in the realisation of the divine will behind the Company were complementary to each other. To Kaye, these individuals were instruments in furthering the designs of providence. This accorded with Victorian ideas about human and divine activity. Human energy and material success were only tangible shapes and forms of divine power and spiritual triumph. In another sense, Kaye's emphasis on men as makers of history was characteristically romantic in conception, and so accorded with other tendencies in his own time.

Characteristically Victorian also was the concept of self-made man: Kaye was at pains to show how his heroes struggled successfully against early disadvantages. He knew that biography could be a highly useful form for emphasising this, as well as highlighting the views which he entertained on Indian affairs. This was the reason why side by side with his other historical works where he focussed his attention on events and institutions, he also selected biography as a major field of study.

His first attempt was a biography of Henry St. George Tucker, which appeared in 1854. This was followed by a similarly pioneering and solid biography of Charles Metcalfe. In 1856, Kaye published the first and still the only work on John Malcolm. But this was not the end. He was also the first man to conceive of the idea of a collective biography of distinguished Anglo-Indian personages. In 1865, he had contributed a series of articles to Good Words on the careers of

1. This was one of Kaye's major assumptions in his book on the Company's administration.

some of the important servants of the East India Company which, as he stated, "after fifteen additional months of conscientious research"¹ resulted in the publication of the volumes entitled Lives of Indian Officers in 1867.

Though typifying the nineteenth-century interest in the lives of heroes, his biographies, at the same time, revealed a mind not essentially different from that which characterised his historical works. He approached his biographies as a historian. As a result, his biographical works are important today not merely as successful portraiture, but also because they contain plentiful historical material concerning the ideas of his subjects and also the major events in their lives.

Kaye's interest in biography was characteristic of the time. He lived during the "golden age of English biographical writings".² Like all golden ages, it had a history. The man who heralded the age was Samuel Johnson. According to Richard D. Altick, Johnson performed three major roles "as the first important theoretician and an able practitioner of the art, and then as the subject of the greatest biography".³ If Johnson's Lives of the English Poets was a classic example of commemorative biography, his own biography by James Boswell introduced a new dimension into the art of biographical writing and showed how the individuality of a subject could best be portrayed through a lively pictorial method. Harold Nicolson thought that Boswell evolved a "formula" which provided guidelines for

1. Kaye, J.W., Lives of Indian Officers (London, 1867), Preface, p.vi.
2. Cockshut, A.O.J., Truth to Life: The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century, (London, 1974), p.11.
3. Altick, Richard D., Lives and Letters: A History of Literary Biography in England and America (New York, 1966), p.46.

biographers during succeeding periods. In his words: "Previous biographers had composed a studio portrait, or at best a succession of lantern slides, Boswell's method was that of a cinematograph".¹ Nicolson's comment that Boswell was the photographer who had set a new pattern pointed to a vital realisation in biography - the usefulness of an empirical method, based upon flashes of actual conversations.

But Boswell's was a unique case. He knew Johnson intimately and spent a great deal of time in his company. Moreover, his devotion over the years to the task of studying the living Johnson was unparalleled.² In the circumstances, failure to reproduce the Boswell formula was only to be expected.

Although many of the assumptions which formed the common basis of the art of biography had been evolved during the eighteenth century, they were limited to the tastes of the generation in which they had been formed. In the nineteenth century, several new and diverse forces came into play. Boswell continued to be admired because he had striven to portray the individuality of his subject. But gradually with the new wave of romanticism, there was more curiosity about the mainsprings of individual character. Romanticism unfolded a perspective of life through which men rather than institutions came to assume the supreme importance as the makers of human history. It was thought that the eighteenth century had been preoccupied with abstract rationalism and unchanging principles.

1. Nicolson, Harold, The Development of English Biography (London, 1933), p.87.

2. Boswell, James, The Life of Samuel Johnson (London, 1973), vol.1, p.5.

It was assumed as imperative, therefore, to replace them by a new set of values not entirely guided by the voice of reason. As Basil Willey observes:

There was at this time a new spirit afloat, a sense that there were spiritual needs and unseen realities which had been unrecognised in the religious, ethical and political teachings of the immediate past. The new demand was for an interpretation of the whole range of human experience which should be richer, more deeply satisfying than old, dry superficial rationalism.¹

Romanticism, with its exaltation of the individual, contributed to the general interest in biography. Several new questions began to be asked. There was much critical interest in the problems of biography. As James L. Clifford observes: "Even for the most ardent admirers of Boswell it was obvious that one could not in the nineteenth century merely imitate his technique".² Such a bent of mind naturally afforded opportunities for a biographical bias even in the general historical writing of the period. To quote H. E. Barnes, "In spite of their glorification of the nation, the historical writings of the Romanticists frequently became little more than a collection of biographies".³ It is no wonder, therefore, that biography was very much suited to the tastes of the time when Kaye lived.

Among the dominant forces which helped the intensification of biographical studies at this time, religious enthusiasm also played a very important role. This

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1. Willey, Basil, 'Essay on S.T. Coleridge', Nineteenth Century Studies (Victoria, 1964), p.10.
 2. Clifford, James L. (ed.), Biography as an Art, Selected Criticism (London, 1962), Introduction, p.xiv.
 3. Barnes, H.E., A History of Historical Writing (New York, 1962), p.179.

enthusiasm was kindled by the "strong, systematic, outspoken and determined" ¹ movement of Evangelicalism. J.W. Reed argues that the presentation of life as an example was a characteristically Evangelical formula which guided the biographers of the day:

The influence of the movement upon literature had certainly been felt by the last quarter of the eighteenth century, it was having its effect upon biography in the first years of the nineteenth century in a form which amounted to an Evangelical canon law of aesthetics. ²

Thus, Evangelicalism provided a new standard which highlighted the necessity of a worthy memorial of the deceased, so that posterity might know his life as an example worth emulation. At one extreme, Samuel Smiles portrayed his heroes as guides and incentives to others, although his interest was in what they did rather than in what they were. ³

In the course of time, this inspirational purpose assumed great value in the eyes of anxiety-ridden Victorians. Apart from satisfying the commemorative instinct, biography provided the comforting assurance that the individual was capable of performing remarkable exploits. Under such an impulse, it became one of the main aims of biographers to hand down to the future the memoirs of those who, as Sidney Lee observes: "by character and exploits had distinguished themselves from

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1. The Rev. C.C. Smyth, 'The Evangelical Movement in Perspective', Cambridge Historical Journal, Vol.vii, No.3, 1943, p.169.
 2. Reed, J.W., English Biography in the Early Nineteenth Century (Yale University Press, 1966), p.28.
 3. Cockshut, A.O.J., op.cit., pp.105-124.

the mass of mankind".¹

The basis had thus been laid for the institution of hero-worship. Walter Edward Houghton observes: "Though it has always existed and is still alive today - too much so under Western eyes - hero worship is a nineteenth-century phenomenon".² Houghton argues that what made hero-worship particularly important at this time was "the cult of enthusiasm" which pervaded the intellectual sphere in the wake of romantic revival in this century.³ The heroes, therefore, came to be regarded as examples of persons capable of solving the problems of society.

Hero-worship was not confined to biographers. It also influenced historical writing. In England, the biographical emphasis in history was most influentially proclaimed and practised by Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle believed that "history was the essence of innumerable biographies" and, therefore, concluded that the history of the world was but the biographies of great men.⁴ Apart from this, guided by a belief in the superior racial qualities of the Anglo-Saxons, Carlyle also furthered the evolution of the idea of the chosen race which had a mission to fulfil in the world.⁵ In his view, the great man was a genius with infinite

1. Lee, Sidney, Principles of Biography (N.D.), p.7.

2. Houghton, Walter E., The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870 (Yale University Press, 1957), p.305.

3. Ibid., p.306.

4. These remarks were central to Carlyle's thought and abound in all writings on his life and works. Symons, Julian, Thomas Carlyle (London, 1952).

5. Knorr, Klaus, E., British Colonial Theories, 1570 - 1850 (London, 1963), p.464.

possibilities of remarkable action. As such, it was in great men's ideas and actions that lessons of wisdom could be read. Thus, by supplementing hero-worship with the idea of the chosen few, Carlyle greatly solidified the hero-principle which had been developed by his predecessors. He had supplied a new theme which fitted in well with the spirit of the times.

What could have been more attractive than the heroic actions of those who had distinguished themselves as empire builders in distant lands? Obviously enough, hero-worship was highly capable of being applied within the framework of Anglo-Indian history. An increasing number of people began to believe that side by side with the will of God as reflected in the growth of the Company's political power, there were those shining examples of individuals who had fought for supremacy, won and governed the Indian empire for England. Earlier, as a historian of the Company's administration, Kaye had himself emphasised that it was high time that proper recognition should be extended to the valuable services rendered by the Company's officials in India.¹

This was the intellectual background for the study of Anglo-Indian biography. The inclination towards highlighting the achievements of the empire builders was reinforced by the new urge for romanticism and hero-worship. It was further supplemented by the idea of India as the arena for ambition - where careers were open to talented men whatever their origin. All these combined to arouse a desire to stress and glorify the actions and achievements of the "Indian heroes".²

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.14-15.

2. Kaye used this epithet. Kaye, J.W., Lives of Indian Officers, Preface, p.V.

Gleig had originally planned to write his biography on Munro in two volumes. But the enthusiastic manner in which the first two volumes were received overcame his initial diffidence, and he added a supplementary volume to this work.¹ As a biographer, Gleig thought he should portray an exemplary character - a man rising to greatness from humble beginnings - and Munro gave him the opportunity. His Munro was the embodiment of all the heroic virtues: "Endowed by nature with talents of the highest order, possessed of judgment, singularly clear and sound, calmly and resolutely brave, Sir Thomas Munro seemed formed for a life of active enterprise".²

In his Life of Munro, Gleig's task was merely to portray a character full of extraordinary talents, but his next work on Warren Hastings also gave him scope for the display of his skill as a defender. It was this work of Gleig's which occasioned the review article by Macaulay in the Edinburgh Review.³ Malcolm's Life of Clive was likewise distinguished by hero-worship. His Clive was the man who had won the empire of India for England. In Macaulay's judgment, although Malcolm had not written an "undiscerning panegyric" he had given evidence of partiality as a biographer, and saw nothing "but wisdom and justice with actions of his idol".⁴

1. Gleig, G.R., The Life of Major General Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras (London, 1830), Preface to the third volume, pp.iii-iv.

2. Ibid., vol.ii, p.219.

3. Macaulay, T.B., 'Warren Hastings', Edinburgh Review, vol.74, October 1841, pp.160-255.

4. Macaulay, T.B., 'The Life of Lord Clive', Edinburgh Review, vol.70, January 1840, p.296.

Gleig's Life of Munro was a pioneering attempt in Anglo-Indian biography and, as has been seen, it enjoyed immediate success. Gleig utilized both Munro's private correspondence and his official papers, including memoranda and minutes. Some of these official papers were given in the appendix to the second volume of his work.¹ But it should be noted that he had no first-hand access to these sources. The circumstances of Gleig's association with this work can best be explained in his own words from the preface. "There is another gentleman connected with this undertaking, to whom by far the greater share of its merits, if it have any, is due; I mean J.G. Ravenshaw, Esq. one of the Directors of the East India Company".² Gleig further added that "the principal labour of collecting the correspondence, a good deal of the arrangement, and, to a certain extent, at least the drawing up of the plan, devolved upon him."³ Unlike his Life of Munro, Gleig depended mainly on private correspondence in his Life of Warren Hastings. The reason he gave for this was that he attached more importance to letters:

The despatches which went home at this period are accessible to all men. But the following private letters, addressed by Mr. Hastings as well to the King's minister as to his personal friends, are too valuable to be passed over".⁴

But, as in his former work, Gleig was wanting here in personal recollections of the man: "of those who were his contemporaries not one now survives".⁵

1. Gleig, G.R., Life of Munro, Appendix to the Second volume.

2. Gleig, G.R., Life of Munro, vol.I, preface, p.x.

3. Ibid.

4. Gleig, G.R., Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, First Governor-General of Bengal (London, 1841), vol.I, p.468.

5. Ibid., p.11.

Gleig's next attempt was a biography of Clive. Unlike his previous biographies, here he had no access to his subject's original papers. Indeed, he had compiled the book from whatever material was at hand: "the sources from which I have sought to collect materials for my work are so numerous and diversified that I abstain from all attempt to particularize them".¹ Gleig also explained that he found Malcolm's biography of Clive to be of great help at every stage in the progress of his work.²

Unlike Gleig, Malcolm in his Life of Clive had access to Clive's correspondence which was placed at his disposal by Clive's descendant, Lord Powis. But it related mainly to the middle part of Clive's life, i.e. Indian career. Hence, a major part of Malcolm's narrative was based on secondary sources. For instance, apart from his own published books, Malcolm made use of the works of Orme, Mill, Wilkes,. He also utilized Parliamentary papers. The work would perhaps have been better had Malcolm lived to finish it. But he was engaged in the last chapters when he died. The result of this on the work was explained in the Advertisement: "The materials which were here available were, of necessity, less abundant, less original, and less authentic than those from which the earliest part of the Memoirs had been composed".³

Both Malcolm and Gleig stressed that the best way to explain the life of a subject was to let the subject speak for himself. It is evident that they tried to

1. Gleig, G.R., The Life of Robert, First Lord Clive (London, 1848), preface, p.iv.

2. Ibid.

3. Malcolm, John, Life of Robert, Lord Clive (London, 1836), vol.1, Advertisement, p.ix.

take full advantage of this wherever possible. For instance, while quoting one of Clive's letters, Malcolm wrote: "His letter to Admiral Watson of the 7th of July fully explains his conduct on this occasion".¹ In general, they preferred to quote letters in full instead of using excerpts from them. The letters they quoted in their texts sometimes clearly impeded the flow of the narrative, because of their length. Gleig, for example, in his Life of Munro quoted a letter which was of twenty-three pages in length.² His Life of Warren Hastings showed no improvement in this respect. As he himself observed at one place in this work: "It is a long letter, but I do not think that it ought to be withheld".³ Gleig also avoided using footnotes, and consequently, even that information which should have gone into the footnotes was given in the text. The following passage from the text of Gleig's Life of Munro may illustrate this point: "I regret extremely that my limits will not permit the insertion of any letters addressed at this period by Mr. Munro to different members of his family".⁴ One difference between Gleig's Life of Munro and his Life of Warren Hastings lay in that in his latter work, he appeared generally in the first person. On the other hand, Malcolm normally made use of footnotes to supply additional information. He also avoided appearing in the first person. Neither Malcolm nor Gleig was as much concerned with the different ways of using his sources as he was with the presentation of what sources he had.

1. Ibid., p.277.

2. Gleig, G.R., Life of Munro, vol.I, pp.30-52.

3. Gleig, G.R., Warren Hastings, vol.I. p.65.

4. Gleig, G.R., Life of Munro, vol.I, p.18.

Kaye resembled his predecessors as well as differing from them. Like Malcolm and Gleig, he wanted to influence policy. In fact, it had been a guiding view with him to influence the reading public in the direction of the policies he approved and away from the policies of which he disapproved. This was shown here by the topics he selected for close attention. In his Life of Tucker, he devoted a chapter to Tucker's opposition to the course of Afghan policy which he had himself earlier criticised.¹ In a similar fashion, as an Anglo-Indian journalist he regarded Metcalfe's decision to liberate the Indian press as a remarkable one, and consequently, dealt with this issue in great detail in his Life of Metcalfe.²

Like his predecessors, again, he saw a positive value in the contemporary idea of hero-worship. As a result, he also revealed a well-defined attitude to the art of characterization. The foundation of this attitude lay in his conviction that there was a great usefulness in such writings, because they might provide models and examples for the future. Consequently, one of his tasks was to highlight the achievements of his subject's career ostensibly with the view that by doing so and describing this life, the work might succeed in creating a greater awareness of Indian issues and also encourage others to make heroic exertions. The subject's value as a model depended upon his aloofness from common human weaknesses. The result was that his biographies, like those of his predecessors, followed a pattern

1. Kaye, J.W., The Life and Correspondence of Henry St. George Tucker (London, 1854), pp.489-528.

2. Kaye, J.W., The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe (London, 1854), vol.ii, pp.134-156.

fulfilling the requirements of exemplary biography which was a common practice at this time.

Though Kaye shared some basic assumptions with his predecessors, he brought to his biographies certain advantages which were not available to them. It was his good fortune that, except for Cornwallis, all his subjects were his contemporaries. One important advantage that he derived from this was that he could collect their private papers as well as recollections about them without much difficulty. Hence, too, compared to his predecessors his knowledge of his sources was derived at first-hand.

The material he used was collected largely from the original sources. He rarely made use of a published book. For instance, he used only one published book, History of the Bermudas, in his Life of Tucker.¹ His original sources in this work included Tucker's autobiographical notes, letters, minutes, memoranda and the official records of the East India Company. In addition, he had his own personal recollections of his subject, which he related from time to time. For example:

He often discoursed, in after-days, upon the eccentricities of the Moonshee with whom he studied at Gyah - a man who believed himself to be a sort of Admirable Crichton in a turban and cummerbund, and who was just as ready to prove his practical powers by reciting a drama of his own composition, as his agility by jumping out of the window. 2

His Life of Metcalfe was likewise distinguished by his use of original sources of different types including Metcalfe's journals, letter books, letters, minutes,

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, p.15.

2. Ibid., p.41.

memoranda, confidential despatches and other official records drawn from the Company's archives. In fact, as he himself expressed it, he had a "superabundance" of materials.¹ In addition, he had successfully contacted many of Metcalfe's contemporaries for help in terms of letters which might remain in their possession, and other information of an anecdotal character.² The result was most satisfying to him as it completed the materials of his biography by supplying the want of letters of Metcalfe to different individuals. As in the case of his Life of Metcalfe, he had access to a vast collection of original sources of both private and official nature in his Life of Malcolm.³ He was also successful, as we shall see, in obtaining much useful information from Malcolm's contemporaries. Thus, he covered a wider range of original sources than his predecessors.

The other advantage which Kaye enjoyed, as a new entrant to the field of Anglo-Indian biography, was that he could know the weak points of his predecessors. It was the most natural thing, under such circumstances, that he should have tried to overcome those weaknesses as far as possible. He realised that, although evidence was necessary to impart an objective appearance to the work, it should be presented in a way which could appeal to readers. His concern for enhancing the readability of his work was manifest in his technique which varied from those of his predecessors.

One of Kaye's main aims throughout was to let the subject speak for himself

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe, vol. i, Preface, p. vii.

2. Ibid., p. viii.

3. Kaye, J.W., The Life and Correspondence of Major General Sir John Malcolm (London, 1856), vol. i, Preface, pp. v-vi.

whenever possible. This was a common practice at this time. But he avoided quoting long letters in his text. Thus, as he observed: "The letter is of considerable interest and importance in connexion with the whole Persian question, but it is too lengthy for insertion here".¹ Unlike his predecessors, one way in which he sometimes quoted lengthy letters without directly impairing the continuity of the narrative was that he devoted a separate chapter for this purpose. For instance, one of the chapters in his Life of Tucker was utilized only for quoting selections from Tucker's private correspondence.²

But, on the whole, excerpts from the original sources were used either in the text or in the footnotes. This use of extracts was one of the distinctive features of Kaye's technique, and it added to the reader's sense of authenticity without impeding the flow of the narrative. Moreover, unlike his predecessors, he often made use of a footnote to supply additional information. His footnotes were used for different purposes - first, to give large extracts from the original sources, secondly, to relate personal recollections, thirdly, to commend on important events concerning the lives of his subjects, fourthly to give information about the sources he used. In addition, he sometimes used his footnotes to draw attention to a point which he considered as important from his own point of view, and tried to prove it, in his characteristic way, by some extracts from his original sources. We may quote one of his footnotes from his Life of Tucker as an example here:

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, p.493.

2. Ibid., pp.470-488.

It is well known that Malcolm's views were greatly opposed to those of Cornwallis and Barlow; but it is an error to suppose that at this time his opinions found utterance in bitter or disrespectful words, or that he gave practical expression to them by hesitating to carry out their plans of financial reform. Of Lord Cornwallis he wrote, in language of emphatic admiration, as of 'a great and good man, who has continued to the last to devote himself to his country'. 'Few, if any', he continued, 'have lived with such honor; no one ever died with more glory'. Of Sir George Barlow he wrote, a month afterwards. 'I am at a loss to express my gratitude for the very flattering manner in which he has expressed his approbation of my conduct. I shall thank him by my future exertions.'¹

As we shall see, Kaye touched on this point again in his Life of Malcolm. Apart from this, one finds that there was a difference between Kaye and his predecessor in the way they introduced their own ideas. For instance, Kaye did not appear as much in the first person as Gleig did. In short, he, unlike his predecessors, covered the ground methodically. The gains in readableness and appearance by this were considerable. In this way, his biographies marked an advance, even though their outer framework resembled those of Malcolm's or Gleig's. But his own views were seldom in doubt. In the footnote just quoted, for example, he conveyed his approval of obedience to orders, of the avoidance of bitterness and insubordination, and of the capacity to admire those with whom one did not always agree. Such admirable qualities, his reader might conclude, were also conducive to success in life.

As he wrote a series of biographies, the men he included represented a great variety of the Company's servants - administrators, soldiers, soldier-admini-

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, p.205.

strators and even a missionary. But the plan on which he based his major biographies was adhered to in his succeeding biographical work.

Of the three major biographical works which Kaye wrote, the first was of Henry St. George Tucker. As the Chairman of the East India Company, Tucker had occupied a high post in his time. He also shared some of those views which Kaye had emphasised as a historian. Besides, he was remembered by his contemporaries with great affection as one of the distinguished Anglo-Indian administrators of the day. Just a year before the publication of his biography, Kaye had edited a volume containing a selection of Tucker's private and official papers.¹ This had been published professedly to illustrate Tucker's opinions in support of the Company at a time when the Company was passing through the Charter controversy of 1853. It seems probable that the reception which this work enjoyed encouraged Kaye to proceed with Tucker's biography. Also, Tucker was a subject with an abundance of materials already collected.

Kaye claimed that his book would both contribute historical information about "things worth knowing" and provide an example of the man as he was.² Remarkably enough, having clarified the aim of the work, Kaye attempted to explain his own approach as a biographer, because he feared that the work, at certain places, might be considered as too favourably disposed to one side at the expense of the other. He emphasised that he had no intention to praise or criticise any party as he had never identified himself with the partisan issues of English politics. He suggested that if anything of this sort appeared in the book, it

1. Kaye, J.W. (ed.), Memorials of Indian Government, Being a selection from the papers of Henry St. George Tucker, late Director of the East India Company (London, 1853).

2. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, Preface, p.iii.

should be regarded as sound historical explanation rather than partial observation.¹

He stated the contemporary assumption that the task of a biographer was to display his subject as an example for others. He argued that Tucker provided an example of a poor man rising without advantages: "He had no recognised position of any kind; he was not, a writer; he was not a cadet; he was not a clerk in a merchant's office; he was simply an adventurer".² Tucker began his life in Calcutta in a very small way and for some time lived at a place where he had to maintain himself "against a colony of rats".³ But he soon came into contact with Thomas Law, the Collector of Gaya in Bihar. Kaye assigned Law a very important place in shaping Tucker's early career.⁴

Though external help came at an opportune time, it was merit which ultimately triumphed, despite initial discouragement and handicaps. Thus, Kaye emphasised Tucker's disposition to learn Indian languages and his eagerness to develop an understanding of public finance.⁵ Tucker had thus not wasted his time in his adverse circumstances, but acquired skills which benefited him in his later life.

At this stage, Kaye tried to emphasise particularly that young Tucker was

1. Ibid., Preface, p. iv.

2. Ibid., p. 37.

3. Ibid., p. 35.

4. Ibid., pp. 37-42.

5. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

one of those who supported Law in his idea of a Permanent settlement.¹ In his Administration of the East India Company, Kaye had approved of the Permanent settlement and showed its beneficial results.² Kaye had also argued there that it was Law who had first of all conceived the idea of a Permanent settlement.³

Having bravely faced difficulties for some time, Tucker managed to secure an appointment as an assistant to the Commercial Resident of one of the Company's factories at Harrāul.⁴ Already Kaye had emphasised Tucker's determination in struggling against his initial problems and had also shown his hero supporting a policy of which his biographer approved. Nor did he object to Tucker's shrewd pursuit of his own interests.

Despite "ample income" from his twin offices of assistant to the Accountant of the Board of Trade and Private Secretary to Sir William Jones, Tucker was not satisfied with his lot as "an uncovenanted servant".⁵ So much was clear and simple. But without emphasising the business mentality which Tucker seemed to possess, Kaye thought that he joined the house of John Palmer & Co. just to add something to his fortune. However, as the house met with a sudden collapse, Tucker's object was not fulfilled and he continued to look forward to promotion in his official career.⁶ Kaye did not doubt the value of personal ambition.

1. Ibid., pp.50-53.

2. Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.200-201.

3. Ibid., p.177.

4. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, pp.43-46.

5. Ibid., pp.61-71.

6. Ibid., p.72.

It was during Wellesley's period as Governor-General that Tucker rose to the pinnacle of his official career in India, and was appointed Accountant-General to the Government.¹ Kaye asserted that it was a good time for soldiers and financiers. Soldiers were wanted for fighting battles, and financiers were wanted for supplying money. Wellesley, in Kaye's view, had a rare ability to judge men's ability. Therefore, Tucker could easily attract his attention through the papers he had submitted on the state of public finance at this time.² So Wellesley appointed him to high office.

But how did Kaye, the historian who criticised the Afghan War, view the massive expenditure on wars and campaigns which characterized Wellesley's policies? One answer might be that the question was of limited relevance in a work of a biographical nature. However, Kaye was not wanting in a characteristic criticism:

Our Indian Empire has more than once tottered on the brink of ruin - not because swords or bayonets have wanted temper, but because the money-bags have been emptied by exhausting wars, and it has been far more difficult to replenish them than to sweep great armies from the field.³

As a skilful financier, Tucker proved to be the man of the hour. In view of the decline of public faith in government securities, the immediate problem was to restore public credit on a secure basis. Kaye stressed that it was Tucker who suggested the idea of establishing a Government Bank for this purpose.⁴

1. Ibid., p.103.

2. Ibid., pp.82-86.

3. Ibid., p.85.

4. Ibid., p.88; Also, pp.106-107.

Kaye had already emphasised that, although the French menace was not a reality, it had, nevertheless, caused widespread apprehension in Wellesley's time.¹ Here he explained that one of Wellesley's main concerns was to arrange for the defence of Calcutta against a naval attack by the French troops. Wellesley, he added, issued an appeal to this effect, and his appeal was immediately responded to by all classes of the Company's servants. Thus, although not a soldier, Tucker was given the opportunity to show his soldierly qualities in the preparations for the defence of Calcutta.²

However, if Tucker was engaged in providing remedies for the financial condition of the Company and arranging for the defence of Calcutta, he was also equally concerned to better his own financial position. But, as a biographer, Kaye was not inclined to discuss this aspect of his personality. Hence, without expatiating on the circumstances in detail, Kaye defended Tucker's decision to change his career from that of an official to that of a partner in a business firm on the ground that he had joined the firm only to enable Palmer to proceed to England for medical treatment.³

Similarly, the question of Wellesley's displeasure with Tucker for joining a business house and leaving the Company's service was dismissed by Kaye in a few lines. He referred to Tucker's reply to the Governor-General that he could not recede from "the promise which he had made to Palmer, whose health, perhaps his

1. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol. I, pp.45-53.

2. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, pp.91-92.

3. Ibid., p.123.

very life, was at stake".¹ As a biographer, Kaye was prepared to show more than ordinary loyalty to his subject. In this connection, attention may also be drawn to Kaye's silence regarding Tucker's trial before the Supreme Court of Calcutta on a charge of assault with intent to commit a rape.² Whatever his views on this issue,³ a fact such as this which formed the subject of a pamphlet would not have passed unnoticed by him. But it was his practice as a biographer to ignore the unsavoury sides of his subject. After all, he was a believer in exemplary biography.

Kaye tried to steer a middle course between Wellesley and Cornwallis, who succeeded him in 1805. He commented cautiously:

I do not myself perceive that the followers of the former nobleman were moved by a 'general frenzy for conquest and victory' or that those of the latter were weakly and pertinaciously regardless of the honour of their country. But I do see that in the autumn of 1805 the affairs of our British Indian empire were in such a state, that the course of policy to be pursued by its rulers had almost ceased to be the matter of its choice. 4

1. Ibid., p.132.

2. For a description of this trial, see The Trial of H. St. George Tucker, Esq. for an Assault with Intent to Commit a Rape. The indictment related to an attempt to rape a Mrs. Dorothea Simpson on 13 June 1806. The trial ended in a sentence of six months' imprisonment and a fine of four thousand rupees.

3. Tucker had rejoined the Company's service in February 1806. In June 1807, he was nominated as a member to the Commission which was set up to enquire into the condition of the north-western provinces. Thus, it seems that he was given leave to serve his sentence. The charge was regarded as incredible by many members of the Company's service, as well as by John Palmer, a business man, who gave their evidence on behalf of Tucker. Kaye himself left the Company's service in 1841.

4. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, p.162.

Kaye saw financial necessity as the main reason for the change of policy. Under such circumstances, it was natural for Cornwallis to request "the able financier" to come and take charge of the public finance.¹ Cornwallis died soon afterwards, and Tucker joined the office of the Accountant General when George Barlow had become Governor-General. Apart from seeing no justification for the criticisms of the financial measures which were taken by Barlow at this time, Kaye asserted that Tucker proved to be a source of great strength in the process of re-establishing the financial condition.²

The coming of Minto as Governor-General coincided with a new phase in Tucker's life, when he began to feel homesick. The news of the death of his father and brothers came as "afflictions" which rendered him all the more anxious to return to England.³ His stay in England was marked by his marriage with Jane Boswell about whose "womanly beauty and gentleness" he had already heard in India.⁴ Tucker's wife, according to his biographer, was like-minded and after a few months of happy journeyings, they set out on their voyage to India. Tucker joined the Service as Secretary in the Colonial and Financial Department, but Mrs. Tucker's failing health soon made him bid a final adieu to India.⁵ Thus, it is not difficult to see that Kaye has had to wrestle with some difficulties in presenting Tucker as a hero. Not merely the rape, also his resignation from the Service to

1. Ibid., p.165.

2. Ibid., pp.168-199.

3. Ibid., pp.231-233.

4. Ibid., p.254.

5. Ibid., pp.272-275.

join Palmer's. Then his leave when he felt homesick - although the Company had presumably shown generosity both in readmitting him after he had been with a commercial group, and also in overlooking his imprisonment. Finally, this resignation when his wife was ill.

After enjoying leisure for five years, Tucker stood for election to the Court of Directors, and won by a narrow margin in 1826.¹ Kaye asserted that, although a young Director, Tucker was well conversant with affairs of commerce as with affairs of state. One of the first subjects to which Tucker directed his attention was the question of land revenue settlement of the north-western provinces. Kaye argued that, although Tucker was in the minority at the India House, he opposed the settlement and the resumption of rent-free tenures on the grounds of justice and expediency.² Already Kaye had shown Tucker as a supporter of the Permanent settlement. He emphasised here that Tucker had not departed from his abiding faith in the wisdom of the land revenue policy of Cornwallis in Bengal and consequently, wanted that the same system should be introduced in the north-western provinces. It is noteworthy that Kaye was consistent in this view and subsequently, criticised the revenue policy of the north-western provinces in his Sepoy War on similar grounds.³

Tucker, in Kaye's view, played an important role as a Director in resisting the growing influence of the Board of Control and always raised his voice whenever

1. Ibid., pp.325-355.

2. Ibid., pp.358-364.

3. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, vol.i, pp.156-160.

the Board exceeded its legitimate authority by intervening in general administrative matters.¹ As has been seen, Kaye had consistently favoured the question of strengthening the court as against the Board of Control.

Kaye emphasised that as the Chairman of the Court of Directors, Tucker took the view that the vacancy created by Bentinck's resignation should be permanently filled by an Anglo-Indian of sound experience. As Mountstuart Elphinstone had declined the offer, Tucker wanted Metcalfe confirmed as Governor-General.² This was one of those issues on which Kaye held a firm view from the very beginning. It was almost a conviction with Kaye that the home government was always guided by partisan considerations in matters relating to India. He argued, therefore, that Tucker could not ultimately succeed because party considerations influenced appointments to this high office.³ It is noteworthy that Kaye saw a distinct connection between the refusal of Metcalfe's claims and the War in Afghanistan. He observed:

I cannot take upon myself to say that if Lord Heytesbury's appointment had not been reversed, this chapter would not have commenced; but I have a very strong conviction, based upon the recorded sentiments of Sir Charles Metcalfe, that if the Indian civilian instead of the English Peer had been appointed to the Governor-Generalship, we should have heard nothing of the wars in Afghanistan and Scinde.⁴

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Tucker, pp.385-408.

2. Ibid., pp.440-442 .

3. Ibid., pp.444-465.

4. Ibid., p.489.

No less important in the eyes of the historian of the Afghan War, however, was Tucker's stand on the question of sending an army beyond the frontiers to Afghanistan. Tucker, Kaye emphasised, was of the view that the Persian alliance was an European question with which the Indian government should not have interfered. Tucker, therefore, did not approve of the idea of sending a commercial mission to Afghanistan, for he knew that such missions were prone to develop into political missions.¹ To Kaye, the most important point regarding Tucker's protest at this time, was that it had no connection with party considerations. Thus, if Tucker criticised Auckland, who was a Whig nominee, he also indignantly raised his voice against the actions of the Conservative Ellenborough on the question of the annexation of Sind.² Kaye had already expressed his criticisms of the Afghan War and the annexation of Sind. Here, then, he tried to reinforce them by highlighting Tucker's identical views on these questions.

Although Kaye claimed that he saw Tucker not as a hero but as "pre-eminently a man among men", he nevertheless presented an ideological portrait. Tucker was also shown as acting in accordance with the principles and policies in which Kaye himself believed. But Kaye claimed that he saw his main task as being to assign to Tucker "his due place in history".³ He had worked out a way of interpreting history with the help of biographies of the leading men of the time, so as to emphasise his own point of view by highlighting those aspects

1. Ibid., pp.490-491.

2. Ibid., p.518.

3. Ibid., p.608.

in which his hero expressed those ideas which he shared himself.

Kaye's Life of Henry St. George Tucker was enthusiastically reviewed in its time. "It is interesting to know", wrote the reviewer in The Athenaeum, "how an individual who when young lived in poverty and debt, in a small hovel, became the possessor of a fortune which no one impugned".¹ Regarding Kaye's performance as a biographer, the reviewer observed: "He has allowed his life to speak for his character and has not acted as the flatterer, but as the friend".² He also found the work readable and interesting as presenting detailed information regarding Indian developments covering an important period. This last point which the reviewer emphasised was, indeed, a striking feature of Kaye's biographical works.

If the Life of Henry St. George Tucker was an appropriate record of a career which supported many of his convictions, the Life of Charles Metcalfe offered to Kaye another opportunity for studying a hero whose views resembled his own. Metcalfe's career, in Kaye's view, was a shining example of a Company's servant winning his way to a "grand climax".³ When Metcalfe died in 1846, Macaulay had been assigned the task of wording the epitaph which was raised on his tomb.⁴ It was now Kaye's turn to complete the epitaph.⁵

1. Athenaeum, 15 February 1854.

2. Ibid .

3. Kaye to Henry Lawrence, 30 August 1854, MSS. Eur. F.85.37A.

4. Edinburgh Review, vol.102, no.207, July - October, 1855, p.178.

5. The epitaph is quoted in full. See Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe (revised edition, 1858), vol.ii, p.446.

Paying compliments to Kaye on "a happy choice of a subject", Mountstuart Elphinstone emphasised that there were few men who had been "tried on scenes so remote from each other, both in space and character".¹ Kaye rightly stated that Metcalfe needed no introduction as a subject of biography.² Metcalfe might not figure conspicuously in the line of the Governors-General of India, but he was, by far, one of the greatest administrators of the East India Company, not only in his time but during the whole period of the Company's rule in India. His Indian career occupied an eventful period of Indian history. In addition, Metcalfe had the distinction of presiding over other dependencies of England, such as Jamaica and Canada. In a letter to Henry Lawrence, Kaye gave an idea of how he had approached his task as a biographer:

You ask me about the life of Sir Charles Metcalfe - I have just completed it; It is now finally launched before the world. It has been a laborious & not a very easy work in respect of what involves more than mere labour. 3

Why did Kaye choose to write on Metcalfe? Presumably, the length, variety and distinction of Metcalfe's career were attractive to him as a biographer. Apart from this, he had been one of Metcalfe's contemporaries in Calcutta. In any case, it is certain that Metcalfe's liberation of the press had left a lasting impression on the mind of his contemporary. This is borne out by Kaye's enthusiastic support of Metcalfe's decision: "The freedom of the Indian press dates from

1. Mountstuart Elphinstone to Kaye, 26 April 1854, MSS. Eur. F.88, Box 5B.

2. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe, vol. I, Preface to the original edition, p.xi.

3. Kaye to H.M. Lawrence, 30 August 1854, MSS. EUR. F. 85. 37 A.

the 15th of September, 1835. It was a great day, which the people of Calcutta were eager to celebrate".¹ Again, like Tucker, Metcalfe was opposed to the Afghan policy, and Kaye had already shown this in his Life of Tucker. Thus, like Tucker, Kaye had another example of some one with whose ideas he agreed.

One of Kaye's basic needs as a biographer was documentary evidence. And he had great success in overcoming this problem. He observed: I had ample materials, indeed, for three volumes - but the publisher said two & perhaps the public would not have tolerated more".² These remarks are supported by the description which Kaye gave of his sources in the preface. He had a vast mass of papers written by Metcalfe, partly of an official, partly of an unofficial character. They supplied materials from Metcalfe's early life to the time when he died.

Like many biographers of the day, Kaye considered it necessary to accord a detailed treatment to the early life of his subject. His reason was that "the history of promise is not less valuable than the history of performance".³ He explained that although Metcalfe might have been fortunate in the circumstances of his birth, he gave evidence of self-reliance and did not depend on his heritage and family connections for his future greatness.⁴ Moreover, Metcalfe, in the eyes of his biographer, was a "very studious" boy from the very beginning. In this respect,

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1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe, vol.II, p.156.
 2. Kaye to H.M. Lawrence, 30 August 1854.
 3. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe, Preface, p.XV.
 4. Ibid., vol.I, pp.1-7.

Metcalfe differed not only from many other boys of his school, but also from his brother, John Metcalfe, who was some years senior to him. With the help of the 'Journal' which Metcalfe had begun to keep from his school-days at Eton, Kaye provided a vivid picture of the early life of his emerging hero.¹

Sometimes Kaye emphasised trivial details as if they were important. Thus, Metcalfe reached India "on the first day of the present century". He was among "the first few" who joined the Fort William College which Wellesley had established for budding administrators.² But at the same time, Kaye did not fail to see that despite the company of a large circle of acquaintances, including closer contacts even with the Governor-General, Metcalfe missed many things and felt homesick:

Doubtless, therefore, Charles Metcalfe, at this time, found himself lonely and dispirited - languid and exhausted - with all sorts of sickly fancies preying upon his mind. He was dissatisfied with the present; he was hopeless of the future, and, worse than all, he was regretful of the past.³

His remarks regarding Metcalfe's feelings of loneliness, indeed, reflected a new realisation in his approach to the study of the life of his subject. As a biographer, he was developing an insight into the mind and shifting emotions of his subject. Among the important factors which subsequently changed Metcalfe's mind, Kaye thought that the first one was his own ambition and, secondly, the firmness shown by his mother in asking him to stay on.⁴ As in his Life of Tucker, Kaye showed

1. Ibid., pp.9-12.

2. Ibid., pp.27-31.

3. Ibid., p.35.

4. Ibid., pp.37-41.

his hero overcoming his early difficulties and nursing great ambitions.

Metcalfe's apprenticeship in the Indian administration began with his appointment as an assistant to the Resident at Sindhia's court. After an uneventful stay, he returned to Calcutta and joined as an assistant in the office of the Chief Secretary to the government. Soon, however, he was transferred to the Governor-General's personal office.¹ It was "that grand vice-regal school", observed Kaye, "where the clever boys of the Civil Service ripened rapidly into statesmen".² One of the common ways of attracting the attention of higher officials in those days was to write a brilliant memorandum, and Metcalfe, according to Kaye, greatly pleased Wellesley by the memorandum which he submitted on the question of stationing a subsidiary force in Sindhia territory.³ Thus, Metcalfe, like Tucker, was a protege of Wellesley.

Though a civilian, Metcalfe, in the eyes of his biographer, also possessed the spirit of a soldier. As a political assistant in General Lake's Camp, he got an opportunity for the display of his chivalrous qualities. He joined the storming party to the fortress of Dig and claimed praise as the first to enter the breach.⁴ Kaye had earlier tried to find soldierly qualities in Tucker.

Although Kaye did not generally approve of a policy of war and expansion, and emphasised that peaceful policy was the need of the hour at the end of Wellesley's reign, he argued at the same time that "it was certain that no states-

1. Ibid., pp.40-72.

2. Ibid., p.76.

3. Ibid., p.82.

4. Ibid., pp.87-97.

manship, that no diplomacy, could avert the inevitable collision".¹ He added further:

Neither the players of the 'great game' in Lord Lake's camp, nor the merchant-statesmen in Leadenhall Street, whilst they set up theories of their own, both wise after their kind, took account of those practical impediments to war or peace with which the Governor-General had to contend. They did not reflect to think that peace at one time might be as difficult as war at another. They did not reflect - to use an expression the emphasis of which atones for its want of elegance - that it might happen that, in making war or peace, Lord Wellesley 'could not help himself'. He was forced into circumstances not be controlled or resisted. 2

Nor did Kaye minimize the extent to which Metcalfe accepted and admired Wellesley's policies:

Incidents of this nature were surely calculated to bind such warm-hearted, earnest youths as Charles Metcalfe by the strongest feelings of personal attachment and fidelity to Lord Wellesley ... He was at once their master and their friend; and there was not one of them who did not identify himself with his policy, and was not eager to contribute to its success.³

But Kaye also emphasised that Metcalfe subsequently compromised with the "waking realities of a far more sombre complexion",⁴ and supported the cause of peace and economy. Thus, Kaye reconciled his own views with that of his hero's, and portrayed him as acting in accordance with the principles and policies in which he himself believed.

1. Ibid., p.79.

2. Ibid., p.122.

3. Ibid., p.81.

4. Ibid., p.127.

Again, although firmly emphasising his view that the immediate cause of Metcalfe's mission to the Punjab - apprehension of European invasion - was merely conjectural, Kaye saw ambition as a justification and consequently, approved of the decision to court an alliance with the Sikh as an expedient and practical one.¹ He argued that the manner in which Metcalfe had conducted the negotiation had placed him at once in the front rank of the public servants of the Company's government. After a brief stay in Calcutta, Metcalfe was appointed as the Resident at Sindhia's court.² He had not even completed his first year when the Delhi Residency was offered to him. Kaye asserted that this was "an office coveted by men of twice his age and four times the length of his service".³ As the Resident of Delhi, Metcalfe addressed himself to his duties with a brave resolution. The system of land revenue and the administration of justice were the two main areas which attracted his attention.⁴ "The Resident", wrote Kaye, "was a great man" and "he had what was called a 'family' - all the officers attached to the Residency, with their wives and children, were members of it".⁵

From what Kaye wrote about the melancholic feelings which at times clouded Metcalfe's mind, it appears that he wished to directly reflect on the solitariness of Metcalfe's life by indirectly evading an important issue. There is no doubt that loneliness persisted in Metcalfe's life because even his marriage with

1. Ibid., pp.188-190.

2. Ibid., pp.226-229.

3. Ibid., p.240.

4. Ibid., pp.267-269.

5. Ibid., p.241.

a Sikh lady had lasted only for a short period,¹ But, then, why did Kaye prefer to maintain silence regarding this marriage and its attending circumstances.² And, here, it seems that as a Victorian biographer, Kaye was guided by the notions of sacred and profane marriages. Thus, it was only Christian marriage, which was sanctioned under the English socio-religious system, that could form the basis of the family as a sacred institution. He preserved a discreet silence to avoid damaging the reputation of his hero among the people of his time.

The period between 1813 and 1818 of Metcalfe's career, in his biographer's view, was devoted to the "general political duties".³ It was a period of renewed political activity and excitement. Kaye argued that there were several important questions which demanded attention in view of the consolidation of the empire. He emphasised that Metcalfe paid his attention to the major questions of the day and consequently, contributed to the task of consolidating the empire.⁴

Kaye explained that Metcalfe decided to leave Delhi in view of "the flattering offer" of holding the conjoint offices of the Private Secretaryship and Political Secretaryship.⁵ Moreover, the position was such as to provide Metcalfe with wide opportunity for closer connections with the Governor-General, Lord

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1. Thompson, Edward, The Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe (London, N.D.), p.101.
 2. The Suppression of this information was one of the main criticisms of Thompson. Thompson, Edward, op.cit., Preface, p.X.
 3. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe, vol.I, p.271.
 4. Ibid., pp.311-339.
 5. Ibid., p.335.

Hastings.¹ But he added at the same time that "the circumstances of the Indian government of 1819-20 were not of a nature to place any large amount of power in the hands of a Political Secretary, even if he had been inclined to exercise it".² Thus, unlike Delhi where Metcalfe was a King and enjoyed kingly independence for action, here in Calcutta he could not be more than a powerful Secretary of an important department. However, it was while Metcalfe was trying to adjust himself to the new situation, that he received Malcolm's letter suggesting that he should not have left the Kingship of Delhi.³ Kaye regarded this letter as important insofar as it might have helped Metcalfe to make up his mind to leave Calcutta. As a biographer, Kaye always appreciated his subject's exertions to personal ambition.

As the Resident at Hyderabad, Metcalfe, in the eyes of his biographer, gave himself heart and soul to saving the Nizam from the plunder perpetrated by the mercantile house of William Palmer & Co. The commercial firm had not only made the Nizam its debtor but charged an unusually high rate of interest. One of the most obvious anomalies was that the house received money from the government at 12 per cent, and lent the money to the Nizam and other creditors at 25 per cent.⁴ Kaye seized the opportunity to demonstrate Metcalfe's beneficent role, and explained that it was through "back-stairs influence" that the house had come to acquire such huge wealth and immense indirect political authority.⁵ As Metcalfe's

1. Ibid., pp.341-346.

2. Ibid., p.342.

3. Ibid., p.349.

4. Ibid., p.395.

5. Ibid., p.399.

measures against the house had led to a furore, Kaye suggested that Metcalfe had no personal prejudice against the firm and that it was only "a just conception of the extent of the evil" that guided him in taking these steps.¹ As a biographer, Kaye found evidence of "characteristic meanliness" in the way Metcalfe had tackled the whole controversy, including a reproach from the Governor-General.² Kaye argued that Metcalfe had performed his duty as a public servant at the sacrifice of long-standing private friendships, ease and comfort.

Finally, he gained "the highest prize in the regular line of the Service" in 1827, and was appointed to a seat in the Supreme Council of the Government.³ Kaye emphasised that this was a position which could have been either a most onerous one, or a most indolent one. But, from the beginning, Metcalfe was disposed to do his best. Metcalfe was not merely "a laborious man of business", but showed a determination to make use of his knowledge and experience. Kaye insisted that Metcalfe thought for himself and was no "servile follower of the Governor-General".⁴ Amherst had been succeeded by Bentinck. There was a "brief coldness" in the beginning between Bentinck and Metcalfe, but soon they began to appreciate each other and formed a lasting friendship.⁵

Kaye argued that, although Metcalfe had entertained a contempt for the idea of financial reform, he was now "one of the holders of the public purse"

1. *Ibid.*, p.402.

2. *Ibid.*, pp.400-405.

3. *Ibid.*, vol.ii, p.51.

4. *Ibid.*, p.53.

5. *Ibid.*, pp.60-65.

himself and acted as "an economist among the economists".¹ Apart from this, Metcalfe, Kaye asserted, had always viewed the question of Interference in the affairs of Central Asia with apprehension. This was because he believed that "the more we endeavoured to counteract supposed dangers, the more certain we were to convert the remote into the proximate, the conjectural into the real".² Kaye reiterated his view that had Metcalfe continued as the Governor-General, the Afghan War would not have taken place.³ Needless to say, Metcalfe's view that an alliance with Dost Muhammad should have been the aim of British policy was similar to Kaye's own standpoint.

Kaye later emphasised that Metcalfe was also "anxiously alive" to the instability of the Indian empire.⁴ Metcalfe's scepticism regarding the stability of the Indian empire had not been mentioned in the original edition of the work which appeared in 1854. Significantly, Kaye added it to the revised edition which appeared in 1858, after the mutiny. The safety of British rule in India was, no doubt, a leading idea with Kaye. And he had touched upon this question in his essays, as well as in his Afghan War. By highlighting Metcalfe's views here, Kaye tried, therefore, as he always did, to support his own.

Metcalfe reached the climax of his Indian career in 1834 when, as Kaye put it, he became "what more than thirty years before he declared that he would become - Governor-General of India".⁵ It was, however, purely a provisional

1. Ibid., p.7.3

2. Ibid., p.85.

3. Ibid., p.86.

4. Ibid., p.73.

5. Ibid., p.115.

appointment, for though a majority of the Directors were eager to confirm him, the government of the day did not approve it. As on the former occasion, this was an important event in Kaye's eyes as indicating the manner in which Indian affairs were subjected to considerations of home politics. Hence, here again, he devoted some pages to illustrating the stand which the Company had taken on this question. Kaye argued that when the issue first arose, Lord Melbourne, a Whig, was at the head of the government. His Cabinet was not disposed to ratify the choice. But the Company was equally indisposed to accept the Whig nominees. As such, nothing could be immediately done. But before the contest could be terminated, the Whigs resigned. Sir Robert Peel came to power. He selected a Conservative and appointed Lord Heytesbury to the post. Meanwhile, the Whigs returned to power. One of their first acts was to cancel the earlier appointment and nominate Lord Auckland, a Whig, instead. Kaye thought that the question of Metcalfe's confirmation as Governor-General was not favourably considered by the ministries of the day because he was neither a Whig nor a Tory.¹ On the one hand, British politics had come to play a vital role in the determination of Indian policy ever since the renewal of the Company's charter in 1833. On the other hand, the Governor-Generalship of India had become a valuable appointment with which to reward political supporters.

As provisional Governor-General, Metcalfe was chiefly distinguished by his measure for the liberation of the Indian press. Kaye argued that under Bentinck, the press had been allowed a considerable amount of freedom and public issues had begun to be openly discussed. But there were still certain laws of a

1. *Ibid.*, pp.117-119.

"severe character" which could be called into operation against the press of the day.¹ Although for a short period, Metcalfe had now that opportunity as the Governor-General for which "he had long yearned",² Kaye stressed that the question had been fully debated and there was a general consensus in favour of the repeal of the earlier press regulations. He concluded that this was a "wise and enlightened measure" which not only removed the grievances of the Calcutta press, but also provided a rare opportunity for a free discussion on public issues and "the diffusion of knowledge among the people".³

Kaye wanted to show that against the background of the alternation of Whig and Tory governments in England, Metcalfe found himself in a state of uncertainty and doubt. Although his uncertainty soon ended when he heard about Auckland's nomination to the Governor-Generalship, his doubt persisted and he looked forward to the manner in which the Agra Bill, then before Parliament, was going to be shaped. Kaye sensed that Metcalfe was still prepared to serve the State as a Governor of a Presidency. But the news that the Agra Presidency was to be reduced to a Lieutenant-Governorship ended his doubt. He was now faced with the question of deciding whether he could accept such an appointment as the Lieutenant-Governorship of Agra. Kaye claimed that it was "entirely in obedience to his sense of public duty" that Metcalfe decided to put aside all his scruples and accept the charge of the North-Western provinces.⁴ But Kaye also saw that Metcalfe was

1. Ibid., pp.134-143.

2. Ibid., p.146.

3. Ibid., pp.146-148.

4. Ibid., p.178.

at the same time, never happy in his new position.¹ Meanwhile, there arose a question regarding the authority to be exercised by the Governor-General within the territories over which Metcalfe exercised control as the Lieutenant-Governor, Metcalfe decided to resign and proceed to England.²

On his return to England, Metcalfe was eager to go into Parliament.³ But he was soon offered the Government of Jamaica. Kaye asserted that Metcalfe's main achievement as the Governor of Jamaica lay in his restoring harmony to the Colony, which had been disturbed on account of a "continued state of irritation" between the proprietors of the lands and the labourers who cultivated them: "the object of one party was to sell their labour at the highest possible price, and of the other, to buy it at the lowest".⁴ Metcalfe, in his view, had proceeded with his task in a spirit of kindness and conciliation, and this enabled him to gain "the confidence of the aristocracy without sacrificing that of any other class".⁵ The question of conciliating "the aristocracy" was a guiding view with Kaye, and he supported this course of policy as a writer on Indian affairs. Thus, Metcalfe, he concluded, enjoyed great popularity and commanded the affection of all classes of society as the Governor of Jamaica.⁶

Metcalfe returned to England in July 1842. He had already been

1. Ibid., p.186.

2. Ibid., pp.186-191.

3. Ibid., pp.224-226.

4. Ibid., p.243.

5. Ibid., p.261.

6. Ibid., pp.280-288.

afflicted with malignant cancer. Kaye stated that he, nevertheless, showed a rare courage in submitting himself to the most painful remedies from which he received some temporary relief.¹ In January 1843, Metcalfe received another offer to assume the charge of the Government of Canada. Kaye argued that Metcalfe accepted this office only because he was always guided by considerations other than those of self. He was doing his best when his sufferings from cancer made him decide to lay down the office. He died in England in September 1846.²

Thus, in the eyes of his biographer, Charles Metcalfe was a remarkable specimen of an Imperial hero: "From the beginning to the end of his career, he was as free from malignity as he was free from guile. He could neither hate an enemy nor deceive him".³ In short, he placed Metcalfe on an extremely high pedestal as a person combining an extraordinary amalgam of the good qualities of mankind. Like Tucker, Kaye admired Metcalfe as a hero whose career exemplified many of those ideas and beliefs which Kaye identified with his own. Inconvenient discrepancies were ignored.

Kaye's Life of Metcalfe attracted favourable notice. It was reviewed both in England and India. The main characteristic which struck most of the reviewers was that the volumes succeeded in bringing to light an example of a devoted and high-minded public servant, which would greatly inspire others in the field. They also thought that the author possessed a sound background as a historian of India, and that he had demonstrated his historical knowledge in dealing with the project before

1. Ibid., pp.305-310.

2. Ibid., pp.315-445.

3. Ibid., p.447.

him. Apart from accepting that Metcalfe had been treated with diligence and skilfulness, the reviewer in the Edinburgh Review asserted that Kaye's most gratifying achievement lay in the justification he provided for Metcalfe's measure for the liberation of the press. The reviewer thus observed:

After Mr. Kaye's publication of this testimony, spontaneously given by the highest authority on the subject, we trust that it will never again be said that the measure was uncalled for, and that we shall hear no more the unconstitutional dogma that Sir Charles Metcalfe ought not to have meddled with the matter at all, because he was only a 'locum tenens' as Governor General.¹

The reviewer in Fraser's Magazine accepted Kaye's claim in his preface that letters and journals helped in providing a full and realistic account of any life story. In his view, the literary execution of the work was "far beyond the average run of present biographical productions", and the style in particular was "easy, fluent and throughout readable".² He also drew attention to the great admiration which Kaye displayed for his subject.

In a comparatively short notice, Allen's Indian Mail began with a description of Metcalfe's place as one of the most distinguished civil servants of his time. The reviewer thought that Metcalfe set out as a Tory but ended as an "ultra-liberal".³ This resembled Kaye's account of Metcalfe. So it might be regarded as a veiled criticism of Kaye's method of stressing what fitted his own ideas and ignoring what did not. The reviewer concluded by expressing a wish "that the volumes may be

1. Edinburgh Review, Vol.102, no.207, July - October 1855, p.165.
2. Fraser's Magazine, Vol.L, July - December 1854, p.702.
3. Allen's Indian Mail, 19 September 1854, p.534.

universally read as they deserve to be".¹

It is evident from the contemporary reviews that the work was regarded at the time as a substantial contribution. However, in recent times, Kaye's Life of Metcalfe was severely criticised by Edward Thompson, who wrote the second biography on this subject. Thompson was, of course, seeking a justification for his own work. In his preface, he made two apparently contradictory points. On the one hand, he stated that Kaye was "Metcalfe's official biographer" and that he possessed a vast amount of materials which "he handled arbitrarily".² On the other hand, he tried to emphasise that Kaye deliberately suppressed facts because "he disliked Metcalfe".³ The question which arises here is whether Kaye really had an unfavourable bias against Metcalfe? If so, what was its background? One may well say that viewing Kaye against his background as an Anglo-Indian journalist at a time when Metcalfe liberated the Indian press, the question of his having an unfavourable bias seems quite improbable. Again, had there been any such bias in his work, it would not have escaped the attention of the contemporary reviewers. Apart from this, if Kaye had really disliked Metcalfe, he would have been eager as a Victorian moralist to bring out the fact of his Indian marriage and his three sons.⁴ Finally, on the basis of a close perusal of his biography and other references to Metcalfe in his letters, it seems that Kaye had, in fact, a favourable bias towards

1. Ibid.

2. Thompson, Edward, op.cit., Preface, p.x.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.101.

Metcalfe, and this was characteristic of him as a biographer. Kaye wrote Metcalfe's biography not because he disliked him, but because he liked and admired him.

On the other hand, if we compare Kaye's Life of Metcalfe with that of Thompson's, we shall find that there were no differences in the outline of their portrayal of Metcalfe. Both of them saw Metcalfe as an ambitious boy from the beginning. Both portrayed him as a protege of Wellesley. Thompson observed: "He was a Howe Boy; and the Lord, like himself an enthusiastic Etonian, loved him. All this, joined to his ability and application, sent him at once ahead in a flying start".¹ Similarly, both regarded Metcalfe as an administrator of the first rank and emphasised his beneficent role as the Resident in Delhi and Hyderabad. Above all, both viewed Wellesley's policies in the same light. Thus, as Thompson observed:

Destiny pointed to paramountcy, which Wellesley knit every energy to achieve, scorning the Company's solely mercantile outlook and making the subordinate presidencies - which had been so openly contemptuous of even the 'Sultanlike' Warren Hastings - mere instruments of his will.²

Hence, a perusal of their works suggests that the only significant differences were those of details. Thus, unlike Kaye, Thompson added three chapters to a portrayal of Metcalfe's career as the Resident of Delhi, and provided a more detailed picture of "cleansing the Augean stables" at Hyderabad.

Indeed, Thompson's book does not clearly indicate that Kaye disliked Metcalfe, although on more than one occasion it is implied in the comments that

1. Ibid., p.26.

2. Ibid., p.43.

were made: "Kaye can hardly conceal surprise, tinged with contempt, that there should ever have been a boy so unathletic, and recurs to this flaw repeatedly".¹

But, in fact, Kaye showed no such "contempt", and he viewed Metcalfe's lack of interest in sports in this light:

But it was fortunate, in this instance, that the bent of the boy's inclination was rather towards intellectual than muscular exercise - that he spent his leisure hours with Aristo and Chatterton, with Gibbon and Voltaire, rather than with the boat's crews and the Eton Elevens. If he had been captain of the boats ... he could not have grown into a manlier character.²

At the same time, it is true that Kaye must have known about Metcalfe's marriage, although he made no reference to it. Perhaps the explanation for this silence may be found in Victorian notions of family and morality. Hence, if Kaye desisted from writing about Metcalfe's family, it was because of his uncritical treatment of his heroes.

Leaving apart the question of prejudices and assumptions, if one looks at the merits of Kaye's work, one can easily find that it was a remarkable production as a source. He had access to a vast amount of original source material in the form of diaries, journals, letters, and minutes, and he showed great skill in reproducing his material. With such a wealth of original material, Kaye's Life of Metcalfe has permanent value for a study of Metcalfe's life and work.

Kaye's next major biographical work, his Life of Malcolm, was designed as a parallel record of a similar career. Both Metcalfe and Malcolm, in the eyes of their biographer, had risen to eminence about the same period and even shared the

1. Ibid., p.11.

2. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe, vol.I, p.17.

experience of living together in Lord Lake's camp towards the close of Wellesley's reign.¹ Both were gifted with qualities which entitled them to rank as statesmen.² Malcolm might not have reached the "grand climax" of Metcalfe's life, but he, too, enjoyed an equally important place as an Anglo-Indian administrator in the estimation of his biographer. "I believe", wrote Kaye in the preface, "it would be no exaggeration to say that the History of India can be but imperfectly understood without an understanding also of the character of Sir John Malcolm."³

Unlike his previous biographies, Kaye clearly stated here that he had no personal knowledge of Malcolm, who died when Kaye himself was on his way to India as a cadet.⁴ Thus, the initial impressions which acted as the source of his inspiration were based mainly on second-hand information. This is evident from a letter which he wrote to Henry Lawrence at this time:

I am now busy on Malcolm which will occupy me nearly all this year . . . My first favourable opinions of him were derived from a little sketch of him which you wrote in one of the first numbers of the Calcutta Review. My present opinion of him is that he was a Man and on a large scale. The more I see of him in his correspondence, the better I think of him.⁵

From what Kaye remarks in the preface, it is apparent that as with his

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1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, vol.i, p.535. The sketch of Metcalfe in this volume starts with the meeting between Metcalfe and Malcolm, who were serving in the division under Lake.
 2. Ibid., p.539.
 3. Kaye, J.W., Life of Malcolm, Vol.i, Preface, p.vii.
 4. Ibid., pp. vii-viii.
 5. Kaye to H.M. Lawrence, 8 February 1855, MSS. EUr. F.85.38.

earlier works, he had no shortage of personal correspondence and the official papers of his subject. As a matter of fact, the materials were "voluminous" and as a biographer, Kaye's problem was that of selection.¹ He had no personal recollections of his subject, and the only lacuna which he felt initially was the want of this personal knowledge. All the same, he looked forward to gathering such materials from those who knew Malcolm personally.

Mountstuart Elphinstone was one of the most prominent contemporaries of Malcolm who lived in England at this time. He had many lively memories and anecdotes of Malcolm, and he encouraged and helped Kaye in his work. He wrote in reply to Kaye's queries:

I believe I have a good number of letters of Sir John Malcolm, perhaps some papers that you will not have met with elsewhere. I shall immediately begin a search for them. It may take sometime to discover them & to see what are fit for communication, especially from the state of my eyes to which I have adverted, but I will let you know the result.²

Elphinstone further added that he would be very glad to meet him personally whenever he would like to do so. The letter concluded:

I shall be glad to give you any information I can about Sir John Malcolm. But it will be comparatively scanty as to the events of his life, for although I had the good fortune to know him very well, I never was employed under him or at the same station with him & although our meetings were numerous at different periods, they never lasted for many days at a time.³

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Malcolm, Preface, p.vi.

2. Mountstuart Elphinstone to Kaye, 17 December 1854, MSS. Eur. F.88 Box 5.B.

3. Ibid.

Kaye remained in close touch with Elphinstone and availed himself of every opportunity of checking and verifying the information relating to different dates and events of Malcolm's life. Thus, he was able to supplement the evidence of written sources, even though he had never met Malcolm.

Thus, while writing about the negotiations which led to the signing of the Treaty of Sarjī-Anjangaon in 1803, Kaye solicited Elphinstone's opinion regarding the role Malcolm played in this negotiation, as well as clarification whether Elphinstone joined General Wellesley after Malcolm's departure from Ahmadnagar or before.¹ To this, Elphinstone replied that he had joined Wellesley's camp only after the surrender of Ahmadnagar and left it before the treaty was finally concluded. But Malcolm had arrived a week earlier and was participating in the talks with Sindia's prime-minister. He observed: "I do not remember any anecdote about the proceedings, but I well remember the effect of Malcolm's arrival in enlivening Head Quarter line".²

Similarly, when dealing with Malcolm's visit to Poona in 1817, Kaye asked Elphinstone if he had any "memoranda or reminiscences" of that visit.³ In his reply, Elphinstone sent extracts from the journal which he used to keep at this time. The extracts contained his personal impressions of the man and his qualities without any reflection on the nature and purpose of the visit: "Malcolm is gone. Never was anybody so frank & good humoured. Considering his time of life, his ardour, his activity of body & mind, his inexhaustible spirits & his

1. Kaye to Mountstuart Elphinstone, 21 August 1855, MSS, Eur. F.88 Box 5.C.

2. Mounstuart Elphinstone to Kaye, 28 August 1855, MSS, Eur. F.88 Box 5.C.

3. Kaye to Mountstuart Elphinstone, 19 January 1856, MSS, Eur. F.88. Box 5.C.

imperturbable temper are truly admirable".¹ Such personal impressions were, no doubt, valued by Kaye as a biographer.

Two points may be made here. First, the value which Kaye attached to personal recollections was characteristic of him as a biographer. Secondly, the care with which he collected them may be regarded as an instance of the care that he bestowed on his works. On the other hand, although in one of his letters to Elphinstone, Kaye emphasised that he wanted to illustrate Malcolm's "social, domestic, literary habits and his diplomatic and military career",² in fact, as in the previous biographies, his emphasis here also lay mainly on the official career of his subject. Like his previous subjects, Malcolm had an equally distinguished record of public service. Hence, the presentation followed the model of Kaye's earlier works.

Malcolm, in the eyes of his biographer, was reserved for something great in his future life. Thus, as a child, Malcolm might not have been as studious as Metcalfe, but from the very beginning, he possessed a "certain quickness of parts".³ "Jock", as Malcolm was popularly addressed by his school teachers, left his house at a very young age for London with one of his maternal uncles, and acquitted himself spiritedly at his interview at the East-India House. Again, Kaye wrote approvingly of youthful ambition and energy.⁴

1. Mountstuart Elphinstone to Kaye, 3 February 1856, MSS. Eur. F.88, Box 5.C.

2. Kaye to Elphinstone, 12 January 1856, MSS. Eur. F.88. Box 5.C.

3. Kaye, J.W., Life of Malcolm, vol. I, p.5.

4. Ibid., pp.6-8.

Malcolm reached India in 1783 when Haider Ali had died and Tipu Sultan was planning to renew the war against the English. His first few years at Vellore and Masulipatan were spent as any "free-spirited" boy would have spent them, and he was immersed in debt. But, in the eyes of his biographer, he soon realised the errors of his ways. Kaye considered these early years of Malcolm's military life as particularly important from the point of view of the "habits and the feelings of a soldier" which clung to him throughout the rest of his career.¹

Malcolm's career began during the wars against Tipu Sultan. Henceforward, his success was rapid. A sound knowledge of Indian languages was one of the important ingredients of the future success of Kaye's subjects, and he explained that Malcolm paid serious attention to learning them.² During a visit to England, which Malcolm undertook at this time, the attention of senior officials of the East India Company was turned towards him in view of the 'elaborate paper' which he submitted on the grievances of military officers.³ Again, the hero brought himself to the notice of his superiors by writing memoranda.

Again, Kaye portrayed a hero with ambition at an early stage in his career. Thus, although Malcolm remained with the Madras army, he was not satisfied and looked forward to an opening in the diplomatic line of the Company's service. Malcolm attracted Wellesley's attention soon after his arrival in India, and was appointed as an assistant to the Resident at Hyderabad.⁴

1. Ibid., pp.9-29.

2. Ibid., pp.32-41.

3. Ibid., pp.60-61.

4. Ibid., p.65.

Who else could have been better than Malcolm for selection as an envoy to Persia? Kaye thought that there was none, especially in view of the success Malcolm had recently achieved against the French in Southern India. Besides, Malcolm enjoyed the confidence of the Governor-General and shared his conviction that the mission to Persia could be utilized "in checkmating French ambition in Central Asia".¹ As the historian of the Afghan War, Kaye had viewed the question of French threats to India's security in detail. He had emphasised that there was no real ground for alarm about French designs against India. He had argued that even the apprehension regarding an Afghan invasion at this time was highly inflated due to an absence of proper knowledge about the country.² Kaye, therefore, was concerned to emphasise both implicitly and explicitly, as in the Afghan War, that there was no real threat to India's security. It was only in connection with the treatment of the incidents of the Persian mission and the expenses involved therein that one finds Kaye taking a more moderate attitude than he displayed earlier. Thus, he had previously held that the mission, though not a fruitless one, was highly expensive.³ Here, he implied that the expenditure had become imperative in accordance with the requirements of diplomatic etiquette at the Persian Court: "Malcolm resolved to do in Fars as is done in Fars".⁴

As the mission had been successful in achieving its ostensible objects, Malcolm, on his return, was welcomed with praise and "unqualified approbation" for his

1. Ibid., p.91.

2. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.1, pp.1-165.

3. Ibid., p.7.

4. Kaye, J.W., Life of Malcolm, vol.1, p.113.

proceedings by the Governor-General.¹ Malcolm was working with Wellesley as his Private Secretary when an important issue cropped up which demanded the immediate attention of the government. The trouble this time had arisen in view of the death of the Persian envoy at Bombay. Against the background of his experience of dealing with the Persian Court, Malcolm was chosen to go to Bombay. Kaye's Malcolm understood the Persians and they understood him and, therefore, he easily succeeded in appeasing both the relatives of the deceased and the Shah of Persia.²

Kaye emphasised that General Wellesley was eager to have his old friend, Malcolm, as a political agent for negotiations with the Maratha States.³ The Governor-General also wanted Malcolm to join General Wellesley. As political agent, Malcolm was assigned a principal role in carrying out the negotiations with Sindhia. In the course of negotiations, the question of control over Gwalior posed a serious difficulty as Sindhia made a claim that Gwalior should be restored to him.⁴

Kaye explained that Malcolm's view was that Sindhia's demand for the restoration of Gwalior was justified. Malcolm was also convinced that "even as a mere stroke of policy" it was expedient that Gwalior should be given up to Sindhia.⁵

1. Ibid., p.157.

2. Ibid., pp.177-189.

3. Ibid., pp.212-222.

4. Ibid., pp.262-266.

5. Ibid., pp.266-267.

Although General Wellesley did not approve of Sindhia's claims, he seconded Malcolm's view on the ground of practical considerations.¹ But Lord Wellesley did not halt between two opinions and consequently, rejected Malcolm's recommendations.² Not only this, he took a serious view of Malcolm's disobedience: "Mr. Malcolm's duty is to obey my orders and to enforce my instructions. I will look after the public interests".³

As Malcolm's biographer, Kaye regarded the "Gwalior Controversy" as very important both as touching on his independence of judgment and as showing his determination to suffer even Lord Wellesley's displeasure on an issue which he viewed as unfair to Sindhia. It may be noted here that this was one of those episodes of Malcolm's career on which Kaye had also solicited Mountstuart Elphinstone's personal opinion as a contemporary.⁴ Elphinstone was of the view that Malcolm was right on the question of Sindhia's claims to Gwalior. He regarded it as a remarkable example of Malcolm's determination to stand firm on an issue which he thought to be just. In his words:

It was an exertion of public virtue such as few men of the sternest character could have attained. He knew very well that Lord Wellesley was at all times impatient of opposition and jealous of respect & that at the time he was intoxicated with success so that he must have foreseen all the consequences of his resistance. 5

1. Ibid., pp.268-270.

2. Ibid., p.271.

3. Ibid., p.276.

4. Kaye to Elphinstone, 21 August 1855, MSS. Eur. F.88. Box 5.C.

5. Elphinstone to Kaye, 28 August 1855, MSS. Eur. F.88 Box 5.C.

Kaye wanted to show that the approval and sympathy of the future Duke of Wellington came as a consolation to Malcolm in this perplexed situation. He quoted one of Arthur Wellesley's letters to Malcolm in which he had said: "I saw the notes to which you allude, and think them quite shocking. You did not deserve such treatment, positively, and I am not astonished at its having distressed you".¹ Soon afterwards, Lord Wellesley tried to appease him, and Malcolm replied that his kindness had banished from his memory every painful feeling.

Cornwallis succeeded Wellesley in 1805. Kaye explained that, although Malcolm did not show his defiance, it was difficult for him to believe that the policy of peace and consolidation as laid down by Cornwallis would ultimately be beneficial to the interests of the empire. Like Metcalfe, Malcolm thought that the new regime was determined to demolish the structure which Wellesley had erected through a policy of conquest and expansion and that Cornwallis' peaceful policy would not last very long.² But Kaye was not inclined here to discuss the financial questions of the day in detail as he had done in his previous biographies. The reason was that Kaye had always held a strong view on this question, emphasising that financial stability and an end to the policy of conquest and expansion were the fundamental needs of the hour after the period which closed with Wellesley's exhausting wars. And since an emphasis on this issue would have led him to criticise even his hero whose portrait he was painting, Kaye preferred to sidetrack this question. Nevertheless, he mentioned in passing that Lord Lake, who had played an important part as commander-in-chief in shaping

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Malcolm, vol. I, p.279.

2. Ibid., pp.329-334.

Wellesley's schemes of conquest, was also convinced that the economy of the Company was in a bad condition, and that Malcolm, who was acting as his assistant at this time, came to share his opinions.¹

Before joining the office of the Resident at Mysore, Malcolm stayed for some time in Calcutta, where he had an interview with the Acting Governor-General, Sir George Barlow. To Kaye, this was an important occasion, for he wanted to show that despite the differences which characterised their political views, Malcolm and Barlow did not fail to appreciate each other's knowledge of public affairs and zeal for public service: he could show heroes co-operating heroically together in spite of disagreements. Also, as Malcolm's biographer, he was careful to point out that though Barlow might not agree with Malcolm's views, he, too, realised the qualities of Malcolm's character and mind.²

After describing the circumstances under which Malcolm undertook his second trip to Persia, Kaye attempted to explain why the mission was a failure. In fact, earlier Kaye had pronounced a similar view regarding the outcome of the mission in his Afghan War.³ But here, his explanation was mainly directed to show that under the circumstances which then existed in Teheran, Malcolm's mission could not have resulted in anything but failure. He emphasised that it was the failure of British diplomacy that had actually provided scope for the ascendancy of the French in the Persian Court. Once the Persians were convinced that it was only by the

1. Ibid., p.344.

2. Ibid., pp.366-367.

3. Kaye, J.W., Afghan War, vol.1, pp.56-57.

intercession of France that Russia could be kept at a distance, it was difficult for any man to pull them apart. Thus, although Malcolm had erred in "assuming a dictatorial tone", the ultimate cause of failure of his mission lay in the unsoundness of British policy.¹

Shortly after his return from the mission to Calcutta, Malcolm was asked by the Governor-General to go to South India where a mutiny had occurred in the Madras army.² The insurrection was due to widespread dissatisfaction against Colonel Munro's recommendations for the abolition of the tent-contracts under which commanding officers of regiments used to supply camp equipment. Kaye argued that the dissatisfaction was rather increased than allayed by the new commander of the Madras army, General Macdowall, for he was not well-disposed towards the government of George Barlow.³ Soon, there were seditious meetings and violent protests. Kaye took the view that the grievances were not such as to occasion inflammatory appeals for insurrection in the army. But, as a soldier, Malcolm's sympathy was with the officers of the army.⁴ Kaye was thus faced here with the problem of reconciling this difference of views between himself and his subject. As on former occasions, he was not prepared as a biographer to emphasise his own views in a way which could have implied sharp criticism of his hero. Instead, he praised the sincerity which he found in Malcolm's attempts to deal with the grievances of the mutineers in a practical way. But Malcolm was still engaged in the

1. Kaye, J.W., Life of Malcolm, vol. I, pp.417-419.

2. Ibid., pp. 455-461.

3. Ibid., pp.457-460.

4. Ibid., p.468.

task of reconciliation when George Barlow decided to adopt a tough line of action by calling upon the army officers to sign a declaration of loyalty.¹ Here, then, was another moment of disappointment for Malcolm. But on this, as on other occasions, Kaye wanted to show that this disappointment was temporary, and that Malcolm had pursued a course which he declaredly thought to be just.²

Malcolm soon received an "invitation" from Lord Minto to undertake another mission to Persia.³ Once again, Kaye's views were similar to those which he had expressed in his Afghan War. After all, he was not merely a biographer. Thus, he observed: "The political results of the mission, it has been acknowledged, were not great. But its literary and scientific fruits it is not easy to undervalue".⁴

Malcolm's return from Persia was followed by "an interval of rest" which lasted up to 1816.⁵ His immediate task was to provide an account of the expenditure he had incurred during his visit. As the expenses of the mission had been a subject of controversy, Kaye considered it necessary to defend his subject. As has been seen, this was not the first time that Kaye had manifestly taken a view which showed to advantage the character and achievements of his heroes. He emphasised that "a mission such as this cannot very easily be conducted upon economical principles".⁶ Having adjusted the financial accounts, Malcolm turned

1. Ibid., p.487.

2. Ibid., p.497.

3. Ibid., p.510.

4. Ibid., vol.ii, p.51.

5. Ibid., p.54.

6. Ibid., p.55.

to providing a historical account of Persia on the basis of the materials he had collected during his visits.

Kaye looked with professional condescension upon Malcolm's activities as an author: "His writings abound in information, which, when it was first laid before the Public, was novel and striking ... But he was not an artist. His works are rather elaborate reports than finished compositions".¹ This resembled Kaye's view of Malcolm's historical writings. In this respect, his view of history was an analogue of the approaches which characterised such authors as Macaulay and Carlyle. A historian was not merely a collector of facts, but an interpreter and an artist at the same time. He emphasised, therefore, that there was a difference between fact-finding reports and general books of history which interpreted developments. Malcolm's greatness, in Kaye's view, lay not in his writings but in his actions as a soldier and a diplomat. Kaye regarded his literary pursuits as never more than a sort of digression in his life.

Kaye avoided the question of the justice of the Maratha war by emphasising Malcolm's role as a soldier. Thus, during the War which ensued between the English and the Maratha States, Malcolm, in Kaye's view, made full use of the soldierly qualities which he had gained at the outset of his career. As Kaye observed: "A great opportunity was now before him - an opportunity of enrolling his name among the soldiers ... and his heart pulsed eagerly with the thought of realising the dreams of his early manhood".² He asserted that the War was

1. Ibid., p.63.

2. Ibid., p.206.

decided largely by Malcolm's gallantry as commander in the battlefield.¹

In another diplomatic role, Malcolm had to bring the Peshwa to terms, and was again criticised for extravagance, but Kaye defended Malcolm on the ground that a large pension was justifiable in view of the object it attained.²

Hitherto, Kaye had no problem as a biographer in presenting that portrait of a hero which he desired but, henceforward, he had the task of reconciling the early image of the man with that which appeared from the time when Malcolm received the shocking news that the home authorities had ignored his claims for the Governorship of Bombay. Although he had suffered temporary spells of depression, so far Kaye's Malcolm was an ambitious man whose ambitions had always been fulfilled. But the year which followed after his achievements in the Maratha War found him in a state of frustration. Kaye was convinced that Malcolm was not looking forward to something which he did not deserve. But he emphasised, at the same time, that Malcolm had one consolation here that the post had gone to a man whom he "loved and respected".³ Guided by this, as well as a hope that a Lieutenant-Governorship for Central India was going to be created, Malcolm continued to administer Central India. Here, then, as a biographer, Kaye tried to reconcile the succeeding years of Malcolm's life with the rest of his career by his assumption that, although thwarted in his ambition, Malcolm's eagerness for an active life was unimpaired. Thus, although Malcolm had not won the favour

1. Ibid., pp. 192-222.

2. Ibid., pp. 244-245.

3. Ibid., p. 300.

of the home authorities, he was portrayed as earnestly doing his job in Central India. Kaye explained, in his characteristic way, that Malcolm's intimate knowledge of the people among whom he worked, had always been an important element in his success, and this was at the root of his great fame in Malwa: "In Malwah he was as a patriarchal ruler among them - the father and the friend of rude but grateful communities who blessed the name of Malcolm as that of a tutelar saint".¹

Malcolm's hopes of the Governorship of Madras were ended when the appointment of Sir Thomas Munro was announced. Although he was offered the rank of a Major-General, Malcolm could not console himself on this occasion. Kaye explained that Malcolm had not anticipated that Munro would compete with him for this post, especially in view of his physical infirmities.² Malcolm was still hopeful about the Lieutenant-Governorship of Central India. But the scheme was not approved.³ Malcolm, therefore, decided to return to England.

Malcolm wanted to return to India as Governor of a Presidency. He, therefore, always looked forward to a suitable opportunity when he could satisfy his ambition. Early in 1824, he made an attempt to obtain the Governorship of Madras in the wake of the announcement of Munro's resignation. But once again, he failed. In 1827, Malcolm had another opportunity when Mountstuart Elphinstone retired from his office as Governor of Bombay. This time he was successful.

1. Ibid., p.317.

2. Ibid., p.314.

3. Ibid., pp.324-327.

Kaye also suggested that Malcolm knew when he accepted the offer that he might have the chance of acting as Governor-General for some time after Amherst.¹

In Bombay he was soon involved in a personal quarrel with Sir John Grant, a Judge of the Supreme Court.² Kaye explained that Malcolm regarded the Supreme Court's decision to extend its jurisdiction over the whole Presidency as "novel and startling".³ Although Malcolm knew that any resistance would create a public scandal, he considered it his duty to prevent the Supreme Court from going beyond its limits.⁴ The dispute came to public knowledge in connection with the case of Maru Raghunath, and became the most notable event of his tenure as Governor. Here, above all, although Kaye denied that Malcolm had any desire to give publicity to Ellenborough's letter supporting his stand, he sensed that Malcolm had shown a want of "official reticence".⁵ "But, after all, it was but an episode",⁶ and Kaye wanted to show that this did not occupy Malcolm's mind to the exclusion of other subjects connected with his administration. Malcolm had already decided that he would follow Elphinstone's system and introduce no changes under his administration. Public economy and public works were the two main areas of Malcolm's attention. Kaye argued that he tried to achieve results

1. Ibid., pp.458-479.

2. Ibid., pp.497-507.

3. Ibid., p.509.

4. Ibid., pp.509-510.

5. Ibid., p.535.

6. Ibid., p.540.

In both spheres by discriminating between productive and unproductive channels of expenditure.¹ As has been seen, Kaye had consistently supported the idea of economy, and the necessity of promoting public works. Thus, Malcolm was also shown as acting in accordance with principles and policies in which Kaye himself believed.

On his return to England, Malcolm entered Parliament as a Tory member. Kaye explained that, although Malcolm was not active in the politics of England, he had from his youth entertained a dislike for the "principles of the French Revolution".² Another factor which brought Malcolm closer to the Conservative party was his life-long friendship with the Duke of Wellington. But Malcolm, in his biographer's eyes, had joined Parliament at the wrong time, and he failed to distinguish that the people wanted "only reasonable reform" and not revolution.³ Malcolm's Conservatism clashed with Kaye's political views, and the faithful biographer could only explain the difficulty by referring to Malcolm's ignorance of English politics: "His first efforts as a public speaker were, unfortunately, made in defence of close boroughs in general, and borough of Launceston in particular".⁴ In similar fashion, Kaye endorsed Malcolm's suggestion for giving India the benefit of representation in Parliament, but he did not favourably view Malcolm's pamphletting on the subject of Parliamentary reform.⁵

1. Ibid., pp.544-545.

2. Ibid., p.559.

3. Ibid., p.560.

4. Ibid., p.561.

5. Ibid., pp. 564-568.

In fact, Kaye never doubted Malcolm's sincerity and his determination to apply himself with unabated energy and activity to his duties: "He was so habituated to hard work, that what would have been labour to other men was relaxation to him".¹ But at the same time, he saw that Malcolm was sometimes prone to view everything "with the hues of his own mind".² In other words, there were times when his views differed from Kaye's. Personal idiosyncrasy was the only explanation acceptable to Kaye, in addition, of course, to ignorance. Kaye then went on to give an account of Malcolm's last speech which he had delivered at this time while moving the resolutions supporting a favourable consideration of the Company's claims for continuance as a strong and intermediate body.³ Already Kaye had himself argued in favour of the continuance of the Company, and consequently, here he solemnly endorsed Malcolm's judgment on this question. Malcolm, in the eyes of his biographer, died a contented man on 30 May 1833.⁴

Thus, Malcolm might have been an ambitious man, but so were all Kaye's heroes. As has been seen, Kaye attempted to reconcile the last years of Malcolm's life with his early career by the assumption that throughout Malcolm remained eager for exertion in public life. In one sense, however, Kaye presented a difference in his pattern here. Unlike in his previous biographies, he brought himself to concede his hero's faults - in a want of caution and in expressing views different from those of his biographer. He observed:

1. Ibid., p.579.

2. Ibid., p.570.

3. Ibid., pp.600-607.

4. Ibid., p.611.

But as a frequent speaker and writer on the general question of Parliamentary Reform, and as the representative of the doomed borough of Launceston, battling for the preservation of its franchise, I cannot but think that he was out of place; and that when he consented, on his return to England, to become the nominee of the Duke of Northumberland, he committed the greatest mistake of his life.¹

But, on the whole, Kaye revealed the same coherence and consistency in Malcolm's characterisation as a hero which so distinguished his earlier biographies. And this is evident from the manner in which Kaye summed up the main points regarding Malcolm's character and achievements at the end of his biography. Thus, as a biographer, Kaye saw Malcolm's career as a whole, as one glorious development, as the story of a great public servant possessing extraordinary qualities of head and mind.

Like his previous biographies, Kaye's Life of Malcolm was considered to be an important contribution to Anglo-Indian biography by contemporary reviewers. The reviewers extolled the work as based on careful research and plentiful original materials. The reviewer of the Edinburgh Review accepted that the book deserved popularity as it portrayed the career of one of the most distinguished Anglo-Indians of the day. He also thought that Kaye's work threw "some additional light on the history of British policy in India".² But he did not concur in the conclusion of the biographer that nature had made Malcolm for a hero, for he believed that some essential ingredient was wanting in the composition. The Edinburgh reviewer argued that Malcolm's character was "expansive rather than profound" and that he

1. Ibid., p.562.

2. Edinburgh Review, Vol.105, No.214, April 1857, p.391.

was "eager to impetuosity".¹ The reviewer, in particular, drew attention to Malcolm's parliamentary career, and asserted that Malcolm had acted as a "bigoted Tory" and a champion of "the rotten boroughs".² He concluded that the work had been written "in anything but a critical spirit, and it bears throughout marks of an extreme predilection for the subject".³

In the Calcutta Review, the reviewer began by expressing his lament over the death of Sir Henry Lawrence who had been planning to write a review of the work.⁴ In his view, Henry Lawrence, as Malcolm's contemporary, would have done better justice to the task he had now undertaken. However, he believed that Kaye had full success in reproducing Malcolm's life. Kaye's success, in his view, was partly due to the selection of the subjects: "Mr. Kaye has been very felicitious in the choice of subjects for the exercise of his admirable talents as a biographer".⁵

Elphinstone had occasion to review the progress of Kaye's work at different stages from the beginning to the end. He anticipated the praise which was subsequently bestowed by contemporary reviewers. This may be evident from his remarks in his letter to Kaye:

1. Ibid., p.394.

2. Ibid., p.395.

3. Ibid., p.394.

4. Calcutta Review, Vol. XXIX, September 1857, p.121.

5. Ibid., p.122.

I said I should make no remarks except on inaccuracies in dates etc., but I have so few of that nature to offer that I am tempted to go a little beyond the limits I had prescribed. The part of Malcolm's life previous to his return to Madras in 1796 was in a great measure new to me. In that and other places in the subsequent narrative, you have been very happy in giving a lively idea of the peculiarities of his character, especially the mixture of sagacity and occasional application which he showed in the earliest part of his life.¹

He further added: "It is impossible to read your account of him previous to his entering on his official career without perceiving that your future hero is no ordinary man".²

There is no doubt that Kaye's biographies of Tucker, Metcalfe and Malcolm marked a significant contribution to Anglo-Indian biography. The main strength of his works lay in the richness of materials. As has been seen, he had published a selection of Tucker's papers before he wrote his biography.³ In the case of Metcalfe, the biography was supplemented by a volume containing his private papers, minutes, and despatches. The papers selected in this volume were designed to provide "a just idea of the character of the writer's public life and the tenor of his opinions" on the major questions of the day.⁴ The papers were divided into three groups. The first concerned Metcalfe's early official career in India. Included in this group were Metcalfe's letters and papers on topics such

1. Elphinstone to Kaye, 11 June 1855, MSS. Eur. F.88. Box 5.C.

2. Ibid.

3. See supra, pp. 109-111.

4. Kaye, J.W. (ed.), Selections from the Papers of Lord Charles Metcalfe (London, 1855), Preface, p.iii.

as the policy of Sir George Barlow, the mission to Ranjit Singh, the administration of Delhi, the administration of Hyderabad, and a number of other issues of general importance, like the native army, the coinage of India, insecurity of English position in India. Among these documents, there were letters in which Metcalfe advocated ideas contrary to Kaye's: for example, he included a letter in which Metcalfe criticised Barlow for overturning Wellesley's policies; he also included Metcalfe's despatch which explained that the main object behind the mission to Ranjit Singh was to secure the protection of the Panjab against the apprehended French invasion. In short, in this volume, Kaye had no hesitation in presenting arguments with which he disagreed, although of course, they were expressed at an early stage in Metcalfe's career. The second group was devoted to Metcalfe's official minutes which he wrote as a member of the Supreme Council. His minutes dealt with topics like the machinery of Indian government, defence of Indian empire, constitution of the Indian army, commercial agency at Kabul, Russia and Persia, and a number of other questions concerning the revenue and judicial administration under the Company. The third group comprised colonial despatches relating to his Jamaica and Canada administrations. The subject matter of the papers was largely official. They showed that the making of policy attracted Metcalfe's attention from the very beginning. The value of his minutes, in particular, lay in that they expounded important issues relating to the whole range of Indian government. Thus, Kaye claimed that "there is much in those papers to be read with profit at the present time; and in others are contained lessons as pertinent to the present conjuncture of public affairs as though they had been written yesterday."¹ That Kaye did not publish a selection of Malcolm's papers does

1. *Ibid.*, p.vi.

not mean that materials were lacking. In fact, like Tucker and Metcalfe, Malcolm was a good scribe and maintained a habit of recording his views and opinions from the beginning. But Kaye had used his materials so extensively in this work that he had hardly anything significant to publish subsequently. In short, Kaye's materials consisted of autobiographical notes, journals, letters, minutes and despatches, and finally, the huge mass of information of an anecdotal character. It is noteworthy that as a biographer, Kaye attached great importance to the usefulness of anecdotes and personal recollections from contemporaries. As he observed in a letter to Elphinstone: "Such personal recollections, when the truths they suggest are eminently characteristic of the man, are, indeed, more valuable to the biography than whole shelves of letters and documents".¹

The other striking feature of his biographies, as has been seen, was that they provided a detailed picture of the period covering the lives of his subjects. Indeed, Kaye was well-equipped for this in view of his own background as a historian. The careers of his three subjects, therefore, appeared as a connecting thread in the set of important events spanning the period from Wellesley to Bentinck. But, though Tucker, Metcalfe and Malcolm were Wellesley's proteges and shared some of the remarkable achievements of their careers during this period, they differed, in the eyes of their biographer, in the nature of their contribution and the fame they enjoyed as officials. The first, Tucker, was an example of a good Anglo-Indian administrator, as well as a sound financier. The second, Metcalfe, apart from being a sound administrator, was exceptional in intellect as a statesman.

1. Kaye to Elphinstone, 11 September 1855, MSS. Eur. F. 88 Box 5.C.

Finally, Malcolm combined several virtues, although his chief merit lay in his being both a soldier and a diplomat. The development of the time fitted in well with the ir distinguishing traits. Needless to say, it was largely with the help of this difference which Kaye saw in the main traits of the personalities of his subjects that he succeeded in avoiding monotony in his portrayal. Yet, at the same time, he also offered a sameness of note which was characteristic of his mind as a biographer. And, sooner or later, all his subjects were shown as sharing the views which Kaye had himself supported. Despite his characteristic admiration for his subject, Kaye showed that he was developing his technique of presentation as a biographer. Thus, unlike his praise in his Life of Tucker, Kaye tried to look at Metcalfe's shifting emotions and feelings of loneliness in his Life of Metcalfe. He went further than this in his Life of Malcolm when he, above all, accepted some faults of his subject. Although Kaye had developed his technique of portrayal, his basic assumption that his subjects were heroes had not changed. After all, his biographies had emerged from a tradition of hero-worship.

Although different in size and character from his previous biographies, Kaye's Lives of Indian Officers were a unique example of collective Anglo-Indian biography. In point of time, the present work was separated from earlier ones by more than a decade, but the general assumptions which characterised them varied little. Kaye endeavoured to show that in spite of criticism of the Company's administration, it provided a galaxy of heroic men for which it was difficult to find a parallel. The subjects were distinguished officials of the Company, and there was a similar motivation to commemorate the achievements of those who, as Kaye stated, "looked to India as a Home, and to Indian service as a career".¹ Thus,

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, vol. I, Preface, p.xiv.

the model of the present work was designed after that which he had already evolved.

However, the similarity was limited mainly to the basic approach which guided the work. Unlike his earlier works, Kaye was concerned here not only with a group of men but also with a period which was longer - from the days of Cornwallis to the outbreak of 1857. The vastness of the canvas and the multiplicity of the subjects were the two notable differences which Kaye resolved by adopting the pattern of a collective biography. But at the same time, though he was successful in describing his subject as a hero, he appeared inclined here to consider his subject collectively rather than individually - as a man among a group of men. Hence, a less intimate picture as well as an uncritical treatment of the subjects in the present work.

As stated in the preface, the men Kaye selected were representative figures of the different services, as well as the three Presidencies under the Company. Moreover, Kaye emphasised that the examples he had chosen were also drawn from the three major nationalities of the United Kingdom - Englishmen, Scotsmen and Irishmen.¹ Thus, the only nationality which could not be represented in this selection was Welsh.

The sketches were arranged in a chronological order and a major justification of the work, in Kaye's view, was that it aimed at presenting "a Biographical history of India from the days of Cornwallis to the days of Canning".² This remark was typical of Kaye insofar as it revealed the basic approach which underlay all

1. Ibid., p. ix.

2. Ibid., p. x.

his biographical works - to provide a history of the period through the help of biographies. He further added in this connection: "I have not attempted, indeed, to write History, it has grown up spontaneously out of the lives of the great men who make History".¹ Kaye assigned individuals an important role in the shaping of history. Thus, though he might not have completely subordinated the biographical to the historical, it was evident that in his conception biography gained much from the sidelights which history could throw on it.

Kaye admired the old East India Company,² and he thought that his project would have an influence on opinion.³ He also hoped that the work might be able to arouse an interest in Indian Service as a career open to talent: "I wish that the youth of England should see in these volumes what men, merely by the force of their own personal characters, can do for their country in India, and what they can do for themselves".⁴

Thus, the work was undertaken with several purposes in view - to provide suitable memorials; to illustrate the major events of the lives of his subjects; to do it in such a way as to attract and excite the curiosity of the younger generation towards the Indian Services; to arouse a general interest in Indian history and the "Indian heroes", and finally, to contribute some new materials regarding their careers. These were the aims which Kaye expressed, but it is true that without

1. Ibid., p.xi.

2. Kaye to Lord Salisbury, 17 April 1874, Kaye's Confidential Letter Book.

3. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, Preface, pp.xiii-xiv.

4. Ibid., p.xiii.

admitting it, he also wanted to put forward his own ideas.

As a popular writer, Kaye was convinced that these purposes would be appreciated by his readers and reviewers. There is no doubt that on the basis of the reception of the series of articles which he contributed to Good Words on these subjects, he was in a position to anticipate the response for the work among the public. Hence, there was only one task - to amend and enlarge the sketches with a view to giving them the shape of complete portraits. This Kaye could successfully accomplish against the background of his historical and biographical researches - historical researches supplied the materials and the practice of biographical writing provided him with the technique of portraiture.

It may not be perhaps practicable to attempt a detailed review of the lives of a dozen subjects whom Kaye selected in these volumes. Though merely a sketch in character, the life of the subject, in all cases, was replete with numerous and varied details regarding the major events of his career. This was characteristic of Kaye as a biographer, and here he was particularly keen to achieve it in view of the coherent picture of historical developments which he professed to give. The first volume was devoted to the lives of the earlier heroes, such as Lord Cornwallis, Sir John Malcolm, Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Rev. H. Martyn and Sir Charles Metcalfe. As regards Malcolm and Metcalfe, Kaye had already written their lives in great detail and consequently, there was nothing new in their portrayal in the present work. Kaye himself stated that their sketches were incorporated just to complete the "muster-roll" which he wished to present.¹

1. Ibid., p.vii.

Cornwallis formed the foreground to the group which Kaye had chosen for the purpose. Why did Kaye begin with Cornwallis rather than with Warren Hastings or Clive? This was because he thought that there existed a fundamental difference between the achievements of Cornwallis and his predecessors. Clive and Warren Hastings had fought for supremacy and won the empire of India, but it was Cornwallis who consolidated it and gave it a markedly different appearance. This idea was explicit. Above all, Kaye began with Cornwallis because he saw that Clive and Warren Hastings could not be depicted without including some criticism of the ways in which British power was established. He regarded Cornwallis as the representative of that group of morally upright heroes whose lives he was going to describe.

Kaye also suggested that even readers of Ross's Correspondence of Cornwallis might find something new in his "slender memoir".¹ In this, he was justified. Ross's main aim was to publish a selection of Cornwallis' private and official papers. In his preface, he expressed the hope that these documents would illustrate the character of Lord Cornwallis and throw light upon the history of the times.² Consequently, he passed over the circumstances of his subject's life with some notes at the beginning of each chapter, in which he briefly explained those issues to which Cornwallis' correspondence in that chapter was devoted. Although his volumes were remarkable as containing materials for Cornwallis' biography, Ross himself throughout remained in the background as a biographer. Kaye's method

1. Ibid., p.vii.

2. Ross, Charles, Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis (London, 1859) Vol. I, Preface, p.iii.

was different. He was already convinced of the greatness of Cornwallis, and throughout attempted to show how his subject's life provided moral lessons for his readers. Thus, he saw Cornwallis as a representative of a new age in the history of British rule in India. As a pioneer reformer, Kaye argued, Cornwallis not only sounded the death-knell of the corruption which pervaded the Company's civil service, but also reorganised its administrative system.¹ At the same time, Kaye provided a vivid picture of the developments of the time: for example,

It was soon known that hard drinking and high play were distasteful to Lord Cornwallis, and would be discountenanced by him. And from that time a steady improvement supervened upon the social morality of the Presidency. People began to keep earlier hours; there was less of roystering and of gambling than before his arrival, and, as a natural result, less duelling and suicide, both of which were fearfully rampant at the time of Lord Cornwallis' arrival in Calcutta.²

Moreover, Kaye observed, while commenting on the second Cornwallis administration:

But, brilliant as were these prospects, the time soon came when the territorial acquisitions of Lord Wellesley alarmed Lord Cornwallis. It seemed to him that our empire was growing too large, and that we should find it difficult to administer its affairs with advantage to so immense a population.³

As a biographer, Kaye viewed Cornwallis' life as an example for others. For Kaye, Cornwallis' chief merit lay in his being a "reliable man" who was trusted

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, 'Lord Cornwallis', Vol. I, pp.160-161.

2. Ibid., pp.61-62.

3. Ibid., p.176.

to do his duty.¹

Cornwallis was followed by Malcolm. Although there existed a difference of opinion on certain issues between Cornwallis and Malcolm, Kaye saw them as similar in their abiding belief in the maintenance of the good faith of the British government, and in their devotion to public service. Kaye had already portrayed Malcolm as a distinguished servant of the Company and highlighted his sense of public duty.

If Malcolm was the greatest example of the "civilian soldier" in the Company's service, Elphinstone, in Kaye's view, was the most shining figure among the soldier-civilians of the Company.² However, this comparison was concerned mainly with their respective official careers. For, on the whole, Kaye had expressed this view before he wrote his sketch of Elphinstone in a letter to Henry Lawrence:

I am glad that you admire Elphinstone. I spent two days with him, quite alone - last week - and left his house with an increased opinion of the extraordinary modesty & simplicity of his character. He is much unlike Malcolm, of whom however he has a high opinion. I wish that I had time to write on so attractive a subject.³

As a biographer, Kaye saw two distinct phases in Elphinstone's life. The early phase commencing with his childhood, continued up to his resignation from the Governorship of Bombay. The second phase portrayed the last thirty years

1. Ibid., p.186.

2. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, 'The Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone', vol 1, p.335.

3. Kaye to Henry Lawrence, 8 February 1855, MSS. Eur. F. 85.38.

of Elphinstone's life which he led as a scholar and recluse in England. The connecting links between the two phases were his studiousness, genuine love for intellectual pursuits and a deep interest in Indian affairs. Kaye regarded the achievements of the early part of Elphinstone's life as the result of an even blending between the qualities of a scholar and an administrator. He thought that Elphinstone's intellectual inclinations continued to grow, to the detriment of his earlier enthusiasm and zeal for the public service. Here, then, Elphinstone, unlike Malcolm, was portrayed as having no ambition for office and power.

Although living in a "self-imposed exclusion", Elphinstone in Kaye's view, gave a rare evidence of mental agility, especially with reference to the attention he paid to the major issues of Indian policy at this time. Thus, as he observed: "Elphinstone came to be regarded as the Nestor of Indian statesmanship, and very gracefully the character sat upon him".¹ Kaye argued that Elphinstone's greatness lay in the candidness and modesty with which he never failed to express his sound opinion on questions which he considered as important in the national interest. Hence, his criticism of British policy towards Afghanistan and Sind at this time.² Kaye regretted his refusal to accept the Governor-Generalship of India, because he thought that despite "the very highest reputation as an Indian statesman, he never made for himself a place in History commensurate with the capacity ... which he possessed".³

One most remarkable feature of the sketch was its richness in reminiscences of the man which was reflected particularly during the account of the last years of his life. Thus, Kaye wrote:

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, 'The Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone', p.433.

2. Ibid., pp.436-437.

3. Ibid., p.457.

There are many living who now look back to those days at Hookwood as amongst the pleasantest reminiscences of their lives; who can follow the venerable statesman from his library to his drawing-room, from his drawing-room to his breakfast-room, and remember how from morn to noon, from noon almost to midnight, he would converse with his guest ...¹

As has been seen, Kaye believed in personal recollections as an important adjunct to a finished portrait. Here, his task was made easier as he himself had so many of them. Needless to say, it was a notable attempt and the value of the sketch was well-acknowledged by T.E. Colebrooke, who subsequently wrote a detailed biography of Elphinstone. As Colebrooke observes:

I am not to be understood as undervaluing Sir W. Kaye's memoir of Elphinstone in his Lives of Indian Officers. Having access to the papers of several of Mr. Elphinstone's contemporaries, he was enabled to give several interesting letters, and complete a very spirited and excellent sketch of Mr. Elphinstone's career; but it can only be regarded as a sketch. ²

But, Colebrooke failed to emphasise Kaye's personal recollections of the man as one of the remarkable features of the biography.

Unlike his other subjects who were either civilians or soldiers, or both, Henry Martyn was an Evangelical clergyman of the Church of England. As the first Anglican missionary to India, Henry Martyn had already attracted the attention of biographers. The first biography of Martyn had been published in 1819 by John Sargent.³ In 1837, S. Wilberforce had made another attempt at portraying Martyn's life through his volumes entitled Journals and Letters of the Rev. Henry Martyn.⁴

1. Ibid., p.446.

2. Colebrooke, T.E., Life of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, (London, 1884) vol. I, Preface, p.7.

3. Smith, George, Henry Martyn: Saint and Scholar. First Modern Missionary to the Mohammedans (London, 1892), Preface, pp.iii-iv.

4. Ibid.

All the same, Kaye claimed some novelty on the basis of the correspondence of Charles Grant which had been handed over to him by Grant's son, Lord Glenelg.¹ Apart from this, Martyn had served as an official under the Company. Hence, Kaye's Martyn was not merely a saint and a scholar, but a unique example of a missionary official of the Company who lived and died for a glorious cause. As Martyn, in the eyes of his biographer, was comparable to Francis Xavier in his exertions for the cause of Christianity,² the portrait which followed revealed a persistent attempt to establish that comparison. Though of a weak physical constitution, Henry Martyn possessed all the attributes of a heroic character.³ Kaye regarded him as a true embodiment of "the many-sidedness of English heroism".⁴ Thus, as a biographer, Kaye saw that Martyn could be favourably compared in courage, devotion, sense of duty and sacrifice to any other distinguished figure who had served under the Company.

Alexander Burnes was one of those martyrs of the First Afghan War, who had attracted Kaye's attention in a major way when he wrote the history of the War. Since then, Kaye had cherished the view that he died for a cause which he had consistently opposed. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Burnes should have been considered a worthy choice for selection in this series of memoirs.

Like other officials of the Company in those days, Burnes had paid serious

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, vol. I, Preface, p.viii.

2. Ibid., vol. II, 'The Rev. Henry Martyn', pp. 459-460.

3. Ibid., pp. 460-462.

4. Ibid., p. 461.

attention to improving his knowledge of "Hindustaneë". But Kaye saw no evidence of any inclination towards foreign travels in Burnes' early life.¹ Thus, the famous "journeyings" which made him famous were politically inspired.² Though not inclined to attach much importance to his early visits to the countries beyond the Indus, Kaye emphasised that they evoked general interest because of the "Russophobia" which was "gaining ground in England".³ Coming to Burnes's mission to Kabul in 1836, Kaye, in his characteristic way, opined that from the beginning it was designed to be a failure. How could Burnes conciliate the Afghan chief when he had nothing substantial to offer except some verbal assurances. As a victim of a line of policy which he regarded as manifestly wrong, Kaye viewed Burnes' death as an irreparable loss: "If his life had been spared, he would have attained to much higher distinction".⁴ While portraying Burnes as an ill-used and unappreciated man who died for a policy with which he had nothing to do, Kaye reiterated those views which he had expressed as the historian of the Afghan War.

The next subject, Arthur Conolly, in Kaye's view, combined in his person the qualities of both Henry Martyn and Alexander Burnes.⁵ Although Kaye suggested that Conolly possessed the holy zeal and enthusiasm of a missionary, as well as the fortitude and perseverance of an explorer, he was concerned to portray him mainly

1. Ibid., pp.6-9.

2. Ibid., pp.24-25.

3. Ibid., p.42.

4. Ibid., p.92.

5. Ibid., 'Captain Arthur Conolly', p.93.

as an example of the costs of the "great game" in Central Asia. Conolly had made his name as a wanderer in Central Asia.¹ His disappointment in love was portrayed by Kaye as a turning point in his career: "Henceforward, humanity became his bride and airy hopes his children".² Conolly's name might not be associated with any particular achievement, but Kaye stressed even the minor incidents in such a way as to attract the sympathy of his readers. In this respect, this memoir may be regarded as an instance of Kaye's practice as a biographer to add detail to his portraits with a view to making them attractive.

Kaye argued that, although disappointed in his aspirations for a happy life, Conolly looked forward to a field of "energetic action". The question of shaping Central Asian policy, which had become very important in view of "Russophobia" at this time, soon attracted Conolly's attention.³ After all, he had been one of the explorers in Central Asia. After travelling by the way of Vienna, Constantinople, Armenia, the Persian Gulf and India, he joined the English camp at Kabul in 1840, where he was supposed to receive final orders regarding his placement in Central Asia.⁴ Busy as Macnaghten was to extend the "great game" all over the area, he ordered Conolly to undertake a mission to Bokhara. Kaye wanted to show here that the mission which he was to undertake was a perilous one, for two British officers, Captain Abbot and Colonel Stoddart had already been thrown into

1. Ibid., pp.98-102.

2. Ibid., p.115.

3. Ibid., pp.115-116.

4. Ibid., pp.120-129.

"hopeless captivity".¹ But Conolly, Kaye sensed, was persuaded to think that a great game was before him, and consequently, he started his journey in high spirits.²

Kaye explained that the "great game" had, meanwhile, exploded and the news of the outbreak at Kabul soon reached Bokhara. Conolly was imprisoned, and subsequently, died a martyr's death.³ Thus, it was in the circumstances of his death rather than the particulars of his life, that one may find the reason for Kaye's selection of him as a subject.

As adventurous as Conolly, Eldred Pottinger looked forward to a life of excitement from the very beginning of his career.⁴ He undertook a journey to Kabul in a characteristic way by disguising himself as a horse-dealer. However, his real adventures, in Kaye's view, commenced from the time when he reached Herat.⁵ His arrival in Herat coincided with the news of the Persian invasion. To Kaye, Pottinger's defence was one of the most interesting chapters of the First Afghan War. As the architect of the defence against the Persian ~~siege~~, he had proved equal to the needs of the hour. The Persian ~~siege~~ of Herat was soon raised.⁶ So Pottinger was shown here as having successfully combated that danger against

1. Ibid., pp.136-140.

2. Ibid., pp.141-145.

3. Ibid., pp.158-159.

4. Ibid., 'Major Eldred Pottinger', pp.209-211.

5. Ibid., p.212.

6. Ibid., pp.227-258.

which the Afghan invasion was initially planned. But at the same time, Kaye explained, as in his Afghan War, that although the siege had been raised, the British government still intended to go ahead with the measures which had been announced "with a view to the substitution of a friendly for hostile power in Afghanistan".¹ As a biographer, Kaye viewed with deep regret the untimely death of his hero, and blamed the government's policies that led to the loss of his life:

It has been said that his life was embittered and his health impaired by the neglect - if it were only neglect - with which he had been treated on his return to India by Lord Ellenborough, whose prejudices against the Afghan Politicals were strong and deep.²

If Pottinger had distinguished himself in defending Herat from behind the walls of the city, Major D'Arcy Todd, in Kaye's estimation, was one who had made exertions to the same effect from outside the walls of the city, first, as a mediator between the Persian and Herat government, and then as the head of a mission to Herat.³ Kaye argued that, though his efforts were not as successful as that of the former, his performance was nevertheless extremely courageous and creditable, especially at a time when "there were symptoms of a state of feverish unrest in Western Afghanistan".⁴ Kaye went on to say that Todd's decision to withdraw the mission from Herat was a wise one, for it saved the lives of the officers of the mission. But, he added, Todd's withdrawal was condemned "in the most

1. Ibid., p.257.

2. Ibid., p.292.

3. Ibid., 'Major D'Arcy Todd', pp. 337-345.

4. Ibid., p.354.

unqualified and unmeasured terms by Lord Auckland, and the result was that Todd was "dismissed from political appointment".¹ Kaye saw no justification for this. He emphasised that Todd "officially perished" because he could not please Auckland.² Todd subsided into the quietude of regimental life, but a sense of the injustice that had been done to him always rankled in his heart. Thus, as he observed, "Todd was himself desolate, and life had become only a burden to him, and there was not on that ensanguined battle-ground one for whom Death had fewer terrors".³ Todd died during the First Sikh War. Thus, like Burnes, Conolly, and Pottinger, Kaye saw that Todd's life was cut short by the policies that led to the Afghan War.

Like Burnes, Conolly, Pottinger and Todd, who were examples of heroes drawn from the scenes and the circumstances of his Afghan War, Kaye's last three subjects were among the most admired of all his heroes of the Sepoy War. Since Kaye had studied these events as a historian, he had his own views to reiterate as well as a better opportunity as a biographer of approaching his subjects as heroes in history. Needless to say, Wars have always provided a suitable background for the emergence of heroes. And they helped Kaye in his task here.

Among the heroes of the Sepoy War, H.M. Lawrence stood on a different footing from J.G. Neill and John Nicholson in view of his long and distinguished career, and in view also of his personal intimacy with Kaye who held him in high esteem.⁴

1. Ibid., pp.363-364.

2. Ibid., p.368.

3. Ibid., p.383.

4. Kaye's association with Henry Lawrence started from the days of the foundation of the Calcutta Review.

Henry Lawrence, in Kaye's view, was a worthy son of a worthy father. He possessed a studious disposition and availed himself of every opportunity to improve his knowledge of his profession. Thus, he acquired a good grounding in the native languages and the work of revenue-surveying.¹ Having portrayed the early struggles of the man, Kaye turned to the next phase which began with his days as the Resident in Nepal. Kaye sensed that Lawrence had that leisure now with which he could pursue his literary objects. He promised full-fledged support to the Calcutta Review which was then founded, and became one of its regular contributors.² As the editor of the periodical, Kaye observed: "There was, indeed, a charming candour and modesty about him as a writer; an utter absence of vanity, opinionativeness, and sensitive egotism about small things".³

Kaye was not merely a narrator of the important events in the lives of his subjects, but also a defender of their reputation whenever such opportunities arose. Thus, the battle of Sobraon during the First Anglo-Sikh War was justly fought and the charge of purchasing the allegiance of the Sikh chiefs was untrue.⁴ Here, then, one can see that Kaye reiterated the views which he had expressed in one of his articles to the Calcutta Review.⁵ Again, it was Henry Lawrence, in Kaye's view, who persuaded the Governor-General that a policy of peaceful collaboration would be far better than the continuance of war for the purpose of complete subju-

1. Kaye, J.W., 'Sir Henry Lawrence', Indian Officers, Vol. II, pp.387-393.

2. Ibid., pp.395-405.

3. Ibid., p.407.

4. Ibid., p.411.

5. Kaye, J.W., 'Cunningham's History of the Sikhs', Calcutta Review, 1849, pp.523-547.

gation.¹ As a biographer, Kaye saw Lawrence's career as Resident, and later as the President of the Council of Regency at Lahore as most important from the point of view of his administrative abilities and benevolent intentions. As on the former occasion, in his Administration of the East India Company, Kaye praised the Panjab administration under H.M. Lawrence.

Lawrence's career as the Agent in Raputana provided Kaye with an opportunity to emphasise the views which Lawrence held regarding the absorption of the native states. To give it a fitting illustration, Kaye quoted one of his letters: "We have no right to rob a man because he spends his money badly, or even because he ill-treats his peasantry. We may protect and help the latter without putting the rents into our own pocket".² Kaye agreed with Lawrence's view of generous treatment for native aristocracies, and it was evident when he explained soon afterwards that Jackson's administration in Oudh was not successful because it failed to conciliate the privileged classes who "ought to have been dealt with justly and generously in their misfortunes".³ Moreover, Kaye argued that it was with this end in view that Canning offered the Oudh Commissionership to Henry Lawrence.⁴ Another important issue which attracted Lawrence's attention was the condition of the Sepoy army. Kaye maintained that this was one of the principal questions which occupied Lawrence's mind as the Chief Commissioner

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, 'Sir Henry Lawrence', p.412.

2. Ibid., p.437.

3. Ibid., p.447.

4. Ibid.

of Oudh.¹ Kaye also insisted that Lawrence was one of those who had prognostications about the storm which appeared in 1857. Thus, Kaye argued that, although Lawrence had begun his life as a soldier and died a soldier's death, his greatness did not lie merely in the circumstances of his life as a soldier and in his death, but in the qualities of heart and mind which were manifest throughout his career. Kaye thought that he had lived and died as "second to none in the great descriptive roll" of the Indian empire.²

In view of his career and achievements, there was hardly any ground for comparison between the lives of H.M. Lawrence and J.G. Neill - except that Neill also died a soldier's death. But, in the eyes of his biographer, Neill was an example of a hero in his own right. Thus, it follows that whatever subject Kaye had in hand, that for the time was the most important.

An officer of the Madras army, Neill had an uneventful life until the outbreak of the mutiny which offered him an opportunity for distinction. As Kaye himself observed: "In the course of a few months, General Neill made a great reputation".³ All the same, as a biographer, Kaye had to prepare a background for his sudden greatness. And this he tried to do by providing details of his regimental life. Thus, Neill had devoted himself to his regimental duties "not only as one who was resolute to do what was demanded from him, but as one also who took the deepest interest in his work".⁴ His ability was soon recognised and he

1. Ibid., p.451.

2. Ibid., p.490.

3. Ibid., 'General Neill', p.584.

4. Ibid., p.500.

was appointed as "Assistant-Adjutant-General of the Ceded Districts".¹ Neill, in his biographer's view, took a great interest in the improvement of "the health, the happiness, and the moral character of the soldier".²

With respect to Neill's proceedings at Kanpur, Kaye took the view that, although Neill had executed a "terrible sentence", he was fully assured in his own mind that only by such an act could he check the atrocities which were being committed by the mutineers. Hence, his observation: "But if such acts as these be offences, they are offences which History is seldom ^{un}willing to condone".³

Unlike Neill, John Nicholson, the last subject, had an eventful career similar to Henry Lawrence's in certain respects. As a biographer, Kaye saw signs of future promise in his subject from the very beginning: "He was a precocious boy almost from his cradle; thoughtful, studious, of an inquiring nature".⁴ However, it was during the period of developments in Afghanistan that his "heroic qualities" were distinctly manifest for the first time.⁵ It was here that Nicholson made the acquaintance of Henry Lawrence, and Kaye explained that "the elder man, then in high place, stretched out his hand to the younger, and John Nicholson's fortune was made".⁶ Thus, Nicholson was chosen by Lord Hardinge to instruct the troops of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir, and served later as an Assistant to the

1. Ibid., p.502.

2. Ibid., p.501.

3. Ibid., p.538.

4. Ibid., 'General John Nicholson', p.588.

5. Ibid., p.595.

6. Ibid., p.603.

Resident at Lahore. Kaye emphasised that it was Nicholson who proposed the idea of the formation of a movable column during the outbreak of 1857.¹ Nicholson, he added, distinguished himself as one of the commanders of the Movable Column in the Panjab, and was later selected to command the main storming party in Delhi. It was in this operation that he was killed. "Few men", in Kaye's estimation, "have ever left behind them a reputation so perfect and complete".²

As volumes containing sketches of men who were all popular figures of the day, they were regarded as a landmark in Anglo-Indian literature by the contemporary reviewers. The reviewers used several adjectives to express their appreciation of the merits of the author and his production. In the words of the reviewer of the Contemporary Review, the book was "a worthy one", and it was also regarded as "almost unique".³ The reviewer argued that the volumes would greatly interest those who were ignorant of Indian history as well as those who were interested in it. In the case of the former, he thought that they would help to excite their curiosity; and with respect to the latter, they contained much in their pages.⁴

Robert Griffin, the reviewer of the Fortnightly Review emphasised that Kaye had, by and large, disengaged himself from controversial issues. He regarded Kaye as highly successful in introducing a discussion of policies which might be of great interest to the general reader. As a favourable reviewer, Griffin expressed the

1. Ibid., pp.643-644.

2. Ibid., p.685.

3. Contemporary Review, Vol.6, September - December 1867, p.532.

4. Ibid.

hope that the author would attain his object of interesting a new generation of Englishmen in an Indian career.¹

It was natural that a work such as this, which was written professedly to emphasise the achievements of "Indian heroes" should elicit comparisons with the hero-principle of Carlyle which was a dominant idea of the time. The reviewer of the Westminster Review attempted to assess Kaye's contribution by drawing an analogy with Carlyle:

Mr. Kaye's new work was much needed. Mr. Kaye's tact in his selection has overcome what is the great danger of such a work - Carlylism. Reading the lives of the conquerors over the conquered is too apt to propagate the doctrine of mere force. Many, too, of our Indian heroes were essentially narrow-minded. In the present instance, however, Mr. Kaye has guarded it from such a result. Although we often think him far too laudatory, yet he₂ never fails to censure when censure is really needed.

But it is clear that the reviewer ignored Kaye's treatment of Neill here.

What was important, notwithstanding the general comments of praise that were passed by the contemporary reviewers, was that Kaye enjoyed great popularity as a writer of Anglo-Indian biographies. In retrospect, there is no doubt that the significance of Kaye's biographical contributions lay in a unique admixture of biography and history. And, though Kaye himself emphasised this only in the preface to the volumes on the Lives of Indian Officers, it was his guiding approach with respect to the earlier biographies which he had written. It seems that the root of Kaye's conception of Indian history within a biographical framework lay

1. Fortnightly Review, New Series, Vol.2, July - December 1867, pp.376-377.

2. Westminster Review, Vol.88, New Series 32, July - October 1867, p.586.

both in the ideas and practices of his times, as well as in his own opinion that though the general history of British rule in India had been sufficiently covered, the importance of the role of individuals in shaping that history had hitherto been largely ignored. This was a characteristic approach in view of the intellectual climate of the age. But Kaye's originality consisted in the manner in which he praised the East India Company and the officials at the same time, and a clear picture of this dual emphasis was manifest in one of his early works on the history of the Company's administration. Herein he viewed the Company's progress as an institution, but at the same time, emphasised that the course of its progress was studded with the contributions of individuals. Thus, the individual, in his view, was always given his due recognition, but side by side with it, this was also recognised that the greatness of the individual was partly due to his being a part of an institution. Thus, it was that Kaye's hero expressed his disagreement boldly and politely, and if his superiors did not accept his view then he obeyed. In other words, Kaye saw that in this way the relationship between the individual and the government remained unimpaired. And so, the men he had chosen to represent as examples of a remarkable generation of Anglo-Indian officials, were also those who had helped the process of the growth of the Company.

At the same time, as has been seen, Kaye throughout approached his biographies as a historian. As a historian, he was convinced that biography could be an effective tool to aid in reinforcing the ideas he had expressed in his historical studies. And, indeed, he was at his best while portraying his subjects as supporting the principles and policies in which he himself believed.

Another major point regarding the construction of his biographical works was the richness of materials of an original nature. This coupled with his own personal recollections fulfilled his requirements for a successful portraiture. It is also noteworthy that except those of Cornwallis and Henry Martyn, all other subjects whom he presented, had not been treated by previous biographers.

Although Kaye had merged the historical with the biographical, he was throughout aware that he was first a biographer. This was clearly noticeable in his art of characterisation. The model which he used for this purpose was typical of the time, and consequently, conformed to the set patterns of the biographical writing of the age. Thus, as the works show, there was a consistent attempt to show the men as extraordinary human beings. Similarly, there was observable a deep belief on the part of the biographer that the way of life which his subjects exemplified was the best and worthy of emulation. As a contemporary of most of his subjects, Kaye knew the admiration which society entertained for their careers and achievements. Hence, how could he be unmindful of that estimation in his portrayal? Thus, as a biographer, his purpose was to produce idealized portraits of the persons who possessed heroic qualities. Furthermore, though it is true that as a contemporary writing about contemporaries, Kaye was limited by certain reticences, at the same time, he enjoyed countervailing advantages as a contemporary recording the lives of contemporaries.

Thus, like most men who choose compatible friends, all those men whom Kaye admired shared many of his assumptions. The complementary character of the relationship between the two was further strengthened by the fact that both the men as well as the man who portrayed them represented the two sides of the

same tradition. And so, if on the one hand, Kaye's men were shining examples of the grand tradition of the East India Company's service; on the other hand, Kaye himself belonged to the grand tradition of those intellectuals who had been struck by the achievements of these distinguished Anglo-Indians, and who eagerly wanted to explain them to their contemporaries. Both as a historian and a biographer, Kaye was preeminent in this group. His biographies, therefore, fulfilled both the contemporary criteria as laid down for the treatment of such works as well as a great historical need by providing plentiful materials of an original character on the period covering the lives of the subjects. After all, as Goldsmid rightly observed, Kaye was one of those writers who had "shown how even the dry bones of Indian annals can become things animate and of vital interest".¹ Thus, it hardly needs to be emphasised that a perusal of his biographical works may prove to be extremely rewarding from the point of view of the vivid picture they provide of the men and their times.

1. Goldsmid, F. J., James Outram: A Biography (London, 1881), vol. II, p. 414.

CHAPTER V

THE HISTORIAN OF THE SEPOY WAR

Kaye was fifty when he published A History of the Sepoy War in India.¹ Meanwhile, a change had taken place in his career. In 1855, he became the founder-editor of the Overland Mail, which started as a fortnightly newspaper devoted mainly to Anglo-Indian affairs.² Next year, he joined the Company's Home Civil Service on the recommendation of Rupell Ellice, one of the Directors of the East India Company.³ There is no doubt that his own literary successes over the years greatly helped him in obtaining this appointment. Indeed, in their resolution of 25 March 1856 by which he was appointed, the Court of Directors referred to him as the "well-known" author of "general works connected with the history and government of India".⁴ He was paid a salary of £900 a year,⁵ which, with his other earnings, must have given him a sense of financial security, for his income had hitherto been neither large nor certain. He succeeded J.S. Mill as Political Assistant in the Examiner's Department at the East India House on his promotion to the post of Examiner.⁶ A few months later, Sir Henry Lawrence, with whom Kaye was in

1. Kaye, J.W., A History of the Sepoy War in India, (London, 1864), vol. I.

2. Overland Mail, vol. I, no. 1, 10 July 1855. For Kaye's editorship, see Overland Mail 28 July 1876.

3. Petition No. 42, 2 November 1855, IOR/J/189.

4. Establishment Notes, L/A/G/30/12.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

constant touch, congratulated him on his securing "a good birth in the India House", but he also said that "the one you are in must be one of the pleasantest unless indeed you fear as I do that government is going too fast".¹ So far as Kaye's own views were concerned, they were in no way different from those of Henry Lawrence. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that he brought to his official work the same set of assumptions which characterised his previous historical and biographical works. At the same time, like his contemporaries, the events which took place in India at this time had greatly incensed him. Shortly afterwards, in September 1858, J.S. Mill voluntarily retired as the Examiner of Indian correspondence.² On the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown, Kaye was appointed as the Secretary of the Political and Secret Department at the India Office.³ Alongside his official duties, he also carried on for sometime the task of editing the Overland Mail and the Homeward Mail, which was established in 1857.⁴ The Homeward Mail, like the Overland Mail, catered mainly for the Anglo-Indian affairs but, unlike the former, it was a weekly newspaper. It is thus evident that Kaye's own position at this time was such as to give him abundant opportunities of observing the developments in India from close quarters. He had a rare opportunity of conversing not only with the books and pamphlets but also with the men, and not

1. H.M. Lawrence to Kaye, 16 July 1856, MSS. Eur. F. 85.39.

2. Homeward Mail, 4 January 1859.

3. See Moir, Martin Ian, A Study of the History and Organisation of the Political & Secret Departments of the East India Company, the Board of Control and the India Office, 1784-1919, London University Thesis, Diploma in Archive Administration, 1966, pp.138-139.

4. Homeward Mail, vol.1, no.1, 1 January 1857. For Kaye's editorship, see Homeward Mail, 1 August 1876.

only news-correspondents but also with the men of action. That a man of Kaye's experience and background should write on the Sepoy War was only to be expected.

It was, indeed, characteristic of Kaye that he tried to use history to teach lessons and to impart his own views of what Indian policy should be and of how people should behave. This close connection between his motivation and his intellectual endeavours was revealed on the one hand in his selection of appropriate subjects - events, or heroes, or themes. On the other hand, it was also reflected in his preference for quoting documents which expressed the ideas in which he himself believed. It is thus apparent that Kaye aimed at interpreting events and the consequences of events in such a way as to reinforce the validity of the ideas he wanted to support.

As the Sepoy War ended one stage of the history of British rule in India, it provided Kaye with a suitable opportunity to perform his self-appointed role. The picture he drew was comprehensive and reflected that vision which was typical of him. In other words, the task which Kaye set himself was the insertion of his own ideas: to provide warnings for those concerned in public affairs by critically interpreting the ebb and flow of contemporary developments. Thus, he not only collected a vast mass of evidence together in a historical account, but also integrated his own assumptions with them. No wonder, then, that Kaye's views on the Sepoy War in India were essentially a part of his whole attitude towards British rule in India. It was the last work of his career, to which he devoted the remaining two decades of his life and on which he lavished more time and energy than any of his earlier works.

The first volume was published in 1864. After an interval of six years, came

the second volume. The third volume appeared in 1876, the last year of his life. Only two years before, Kaye had retired from the India Office. It is noteworthy that the man who had experienced no difficulty in the past in turning out several volumes of historical and biographical works in less than a decade, should have taken such a long time to finish the present work. Perhaps it would have been completed a little earlier, but for the extra burden of official business and failing health which Kaye had come to share during these years. Not long after joining the staff of the East India House, Kaye wrote to Mountstuart Elphinstone:

... My time has been lately almost entirely occupied from morning to night in receiving visitors and answering letters respecting the present melancholy state of things in India, so that many things I have much wished to do, I have been wholly unable to accomplish. 1

Part of the reason for the time he took was probably the arduousness of the task he had undertaken. After all, as he himself observed: "There is no such thing as easy writing of History".²

On the one hand, there was a wide variety of published and unpublished materials which he had to collect and verify for the purpose of finding satisfactory evidence in support of his views. On the other hand, he had also to provide the answers to those questions which had been raised regarding the causes and the character of the Sepoy War. Indeed, as we shall see, one of Kaye's aims as the historian of the event was to resolve the fundamental divergence in the understanding

1. Kaye to Mountstuart Elphinstone, 10 August 1857, MSS. Eur. F.88. Box 5.C. For Kaye's illness, see Kaye to E.A. Reade, 4 January 1870, MSS. Eur. E.124.

2. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War (London, 1876), vol.iii, Preface, p.v.

of the Sepoy War by his contemporaries.

All his life Kaye had a particular interest in the study of the history of his times. Although the set of biographies which he had written were primarily guided by a desire to erect suitable memorials, they contained his views on the developments of the time that had been explicit in his previous writing. Thus, his longstanding opposition to further territorial expansion in India continued as before. The present work was, in particular akin to his Afghan War. It was motivated, in a similar fashion, by a desire to interpret the historical sequence of an event in such a way as to reinforce the validity of the ideas he supported. The spirit of optimism and the conformity to a view of historical progress which characterised his thinking in the elucidation of the administrative history of the Company had greatly diminished. Kaye, like many others, thought that the disaster had clearly demonstrated that the progress of westernization in India had been attended by excesses. Implicit in his criticism of the speed of westernization was his desire to stress the need of resuscitating the old values which characterised the government of the Company in the past. This accorded with the views of those who thought that the mutiny had come as a disconcerting reminder that there was something fundamentally wrong with the system of British rule in India during the years proceeding the outbreak.

On the whole, the importance of the event had been well recognised by everyone familiar with the Indian empire. For the first time, the government had faced a rebellion covering a large part of the upper portions of the country. As a landmark in the history of British rule in India, the Sepoy War, like the Afghan War, aroused widespread interest and became a topic of perennial appeal.

Under such circumstances, the ambition which led Kaye to undertake the enquiry was the logical corollary^{of}/that ingrained habit of his mind - to try to construct a history which could make people aware of the realities surrounding the event in its unique individuality.

Since any historical work reflects the vision of the man and the influences of the major views and opinions on the creation of the work, it may be argued that the present attempt to look at his explanation of the event can be satisfactorily resolved only by trying to understand the background which supplied the direction of the work. After all, Kaye was a contemporary observer too. A question which may arise, therefore, is: How did Kaye become the historian of the Sepoy War? The answer lies partly in the wide dramatic response to the event, and partly in the development of his own ideas and motivations.

The realisation that the outbreak of 1857 demanded a detailed enquiry was widespread from the very beginning. The feeling of initial shock was succeeded by excitement and ultimately, by jubilation. These, in effect, produced that background against which there was a general demand for information. In the face of such clamours, it was necessary for the Press to satisfy the public demand. Initially, however, it provided merely a summary of the events without highlighting the question of full-fledged enquiry.

In general, the newspapers shunned a discussion of the causes and probable consequences. During the month of June 1857, the overall view was that there was no cause for alarm and the Indian developments were dismissed as mere military affairs. According to The Times, few mutinous soldiers, or even some of these

stray incidents, would never be able to produce a general and instantaneous disaster: "India never has in a moment thrown up its Lords, and then looked for others. It has not originated a spontaneous rebellion like that of China".¹ The Times was, however, critical of the attempts made by the Conservatives in Parliament to depict the mutiny as a great political disaster. To The Times, Ellenborough, who had taken up the issue in the House of Lords, was not to be regarded as better informed upon the topic, for he was himself "a contributor to the misfortunes of which he boasts himself to be a prophet".²

In the month of July, however, the public were astounded by a series of sensational disclosures which brought home to them a new temper and a feeling that the empire was in danger. Despite a ground for alarm, The Times thought that the need of the crisis was "to possess a just confidence in character".³

Like The Times, many other newspapers agreed that what was necessary was not to repeat the danger, but to offer suggestions for the immediate remedy. Thus, The Examiner viewed it as a purely military affair and hoped that it would be satisfactorily resolved by introducing some changes in the composition of the native army.⁴ The Observer was of the opinion that the need was to placate the ruffled sentiments of the people: "The news from India is certainly serious. But it will probably not turn out to be so alarming as it looks".⁵ The Illustrated London News attempted

1. The Times, 10 June 1857.

2. The Times, 30 June 1857.

3. The Times, 3 July 1857.

4. Examiner, 4 July 1857.

5. Observer, 12 July 1857.

to dispel the fearful anticipations of the people by making a vigorous plea that the present state of affairs would certainly evoke the courage and wisdom of the English in India.¹ No sooner had news of the loyalty of the Madras and Bombay armies reached England than The Globe emphasised that the rumours were wholly groundless and that it was a "matter for congratulation".²

It is thus evident that initially public opinion did not favour a full-fledged enquiry, because of the general view that the magnitude of the crisis demanded the British people's undivided support for the suppression of the mutiny. But this attitude of caution and circumspection was gradually replaced by one of criticism and enquiry. Reports regarding the progress of the rebellion created a deep and painful interest and confirmed many of the apprehensions which had been aroused in the public mind.

Parliamentary debates soon provided a new dimension to the whole issue. The Conservatives took the initiative by demanding a thorough enquiry from the Palmerston Government.³ In his speech to the House of Commons on 29 June 1857, Disraeli emphasised that the government must not make any further delay in telling the causes of the "great disasters". "This calamity", Disraeli said, "has not been of a sudden nature; there have been and for no inconsiderable period, dark rumours from India, which have made men anxious and thoughtful".⁴

The government rejected the opposition's demand for a fuller enquiry on the

1. Illustrated London News, 4 July 1857.

2. Globe, 13 July 1857.

3. On 9 June, Ellenborough, in his speech in the House of Lords, drew attention to the events in India. The Times, 10 June 1857, quoted his speech in full.

4. Hansard, 3rd series, CXLVI, 19 June to 17 July 1857, Cols.538-539.

ground of public interest. On 13 July, Palmerston reiterated that the government was keen to maintain silence "for the advantage of the 'public service'".¹ On 27 July, Disraeli challenged the government's handling of affairs and raised the fundamental question: "It is a military mutiny, or it is a national revolt".² He emphasised that it was only when the causes of the War were known that the government could take suitable measures to cope with the situation. He argued that the measures adopted by the government were inadequate because the country was confronted not with a military mutiny but with a national revolt. He claimed that general discontent was the result of abandoning those principles on which British rule in India was founded.³

In view of the news regarding the escalation of the disturbances, the English press gave great attention to Indian news. Much of the discussion was in emotional terms. The London Illustrated News observed: "Never within memory, not even at the darkest period of the Crimean Campaign, have the homes of Great Britain been filled with such misery and mourning as have been caused by the events of which from day to day we read the progress".⁴

There was a cry for indiscriminate vengeance. There were two points upon which the majority of the newspapers were agreed - namely, that a severe punishment must be inflicted upon the mutineers, and that the East India Company must be swept away. Criticising the "short-sighted" policy of the East India Company in refusing

1. Ibid., 13 July 1857, Col.1369.

2. Ibid., 27 July 1857, Col. 442.

3. Ibid., Cols. 442-472.

4. London Illustrated News, 5 September 1857.

Dalhousie's remonstrances for extra European regiments, The Observer suggested: "In the meantime, mutiny must be sternly suppressed and the jarring humanitarians who were all smug themselves, must be silenced".¹ Like The Observer, The Spectator also held that the immediate task was to firmly deal with the crisis. It further argued that the East India Company had grossly mismanaged the affairs of India and therefore, the "double government" must go.² The sound and fury which characterised Press reactions gradually diminished, especially in view of the news of the relief of Lucknow. There were more demands for explanations of the crisis.

Side by side with the response in Parliament and the Press, books and pamphlets were produced on the spur of the moment. While some attempted to diagnose the causes, others suggested remedies which could ward off any future recurrence of such disturbances in India.³ A common theme was the defect of the existing administration, especially with regard to the composition of the Indian army. On the one hand, there were the writers of reminiscences who were mainly concerned to relate the events as they had seen them. As Rees himself observes, the majority among such writers had been "accustomed to a sword" and were therefore "little skilled in authorship".⁴ Most of them shared the belief that it was mutiny and

1. Observer, 9 August 1857.

2. Spectator, 8 August 1857.

3. For a survey of some of these, see 'Literature of the Rebellion', Calcutta Review, vol. xxxii, Jan - June 1859, pp. 106-121. Also, Sen, S.N., 'Writings on the Mutiny'; Phillips, C.H. (ed.), Historians of India, Pakistan & Ceylon (London, 1967), pp.373-385.

4. Rees, L.E. Rutz, A Personal Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow, from its Commencement to its Relief by Colin Campbell (London, 1858), p.viii.

not a rebellion and consequently, focussed attention on British military action.

But as eye-witness accounts, they were deserving of consideration. Since their purpose was mainly to narrate facts, or state facts and insinuate arguments, their contribution was a valuable addition to the mutiny literature.¹ The other category of writers included those who had addressed themselves to the task of commenting on the causes as well as suggesting the remedies. J.B. Norton, a Madras lawyer, attempted to treat the past as well as the future by both dealing with the causes and highlighting the question of the transfer of the Company's government. Norton criticised the Company's rule by referring to its treatment of the native states. At the same time, he was particularly critical of Canning's restrictions on the Press. The "Gagging Act", as he called it, was "a screen to shield the cowardice and incapacity of the real authors of the revolution".² Finally, Norton suggested direct control by the home government of the administration in India.³

Unlike Norton, G.B. Malleson, an officer in the Bengal Native Infantry, wished to present the episode in a historical perspective by tracing the rise, progress and termination of the revolt of the Bengal army. Perhaps Malleson's design was

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1. Their records consisted principally of those happenings which passed under their observation. For instance, McLeod Innes related the events of which he was a witness from the time of the siege of Kanpur to those preliminary measures which Sir Henry Lawrence had taken to defend Lucknow. See McLeod Innes, J.J., Rough Narrative of the Siege of Lucknow (Calcutta, 1857).
 2. Norton, J.B., The Rebellion in India: How to prevent another (London, 1857), p.ix.
 3. Norton had written another pamphlet. See Norton, J.B., Topics for Indian Statesmen (London, 1858).

too comprehensive to be compressed within the limits of a pamphlet.¹ At best, he succeeded in providing a survey covering his own estimate of the causes and character of the disaster which ended with an account of the operations against the mutineers. Malleon saw the mutiny primarily as the result of deep-seated hostility of the Hindus and the Muslims. The vast majority of the Bengal army, he continued, was "under the spiritual guiding of the Brahminical clique".² After referring to the effects of the annexation of Oudh on the feelings of the Muslim Sepoys, he severely criticised the government's handling of the situation. Canning, in his view, "was a man of excellent disposition, but weak and vacillating to a degree scarcely to be imagined".³ Malleon's immediate aim was reflected when, after tracing instances of neglect of duty by civilians such as Dorin, J.P. Grant and John Colvin, he asked whether the people of England would "allow India still to remain an appanage of the Civil Service".⁴ As he further observed: "this noble country has been under the rule of that Service for a century: the present insurrection is the inevitable result of that domination".⁵ Implicit in Malleon's remark was the same view that Sir Charles Napier put forward at this

1. Malleon, G.B., *The Mutiny of the Bengal Army - an historical narrative* (By one who has served under Sir Charles Napier) (London, 1857). For Malleon's authorship, see Sen, S.N., *op.cit.*, p.382. It is pointed out that the pamphlet gained the widest circulation.

2. *Ibid.*, p.7.

3. *Ibid.*, p.16.

4. *Ibid.*, p.44.

5. *Ibid.*

time.¹ Indeed, as one who had served under Napier, Malleson was convinced that India should be ruled by the military power. Moreover, it may be noted that Malleson was in Calcutta at this time when a section of public opinion was of the view that the government of the day had failed to rise to the occasion and punish the mutineers. He shared this resentment, and his main aim was to show the rise and progress of an insurrection which "had certainly been mismanaged".²

At the other extreme, those who regarded it as a religious question attributed the mutiny to a failure of the British government to evangelise the people;³ others who viewed it as a mere military outbreak argued that it arose because of the grievances among the native Sepoys.⁴ It is thus apparent that the mutiny had come to assume different appearances to different people.

These books and pamphlets formed but a small portion of the large number of publications which testified to the deep interest which was revealed on the subject. Evidently, there was an intense debate on the causes of the crisis. Theories were not wanting. But the great bulk of writing concentrated mainly on the military aspects of the mutiny. At the same time, these interpretations were too recent to be treated as sound historical explanation. In general, it was assumed that there was a need for a scholarly exercise in analysis and synthesis by placing the evidence

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1. Napier, Charles James, Defects, Civil and Military, of the Indian Government (London, N.D.), pp.219-235.
 2. Malleson, G.B., op.cit., Part II, Advertisement, p.54.
 3. Wilson, John, The Indian Military Revolt (Bombay, 1857).
 4. Orlich, Leopold von, The Military Mutiny in India: its Origin and Results (London, 1858).

In a historical perspective. As the heat of the moment of initial reaction receded, the demand for a detailed historical enquiry which could draw a consistent picture became preeminent.

Like many of his contemporaries, Kaye had entered the field of mutiny-studies even when the event was in the process of transforming itself from politics to history. Although he was greatly shocked and, in general, considered that it should not have taken place, he was not inclined to treat it on the familiar path as a mere military affair. On the other hand, as a critic of further territorial expansion and excessive westernization, Kaye was anxious to prove that the mutiny had its roots in the policies of the government which produced an atmosphere of widespread discontentment. Thus, from the very beginning, Kaye saw the mutiny in political terms and insisted that it had raised many important questions concerning the nature of the relationship between India and Great Britain. As one with an uneasy conscience about British rule in India, he was concerned to emphasise those views which seemed to him important, although he knew that there was evidence to be collected in order to support them. Hence, it is necessary to look at his immediate reactions and the comments he made at this time.

His close identification with the event was clearly manifest in the editorial remarks which he made in the columns of The Homeward Mail. As an editor, Kaye, was expected to produce a summary of the events for general information. But in so doing, he also passed his own remarks on the developments as he viewed them.

The most striking point arising from a consideration of his editorial remarks in The Homeward Mail was the prognostication about the magnitude of the crisis

which was manifest only a fortnight later in the mutiny of the Third Bengal Cavalry at Meerut on 10 May 1857. This prognostication reveals the same viewpoint that he brought forward in his History. Thus, in the editorial column of 28 April 1857, Kaye wrote:

It was a remark of Sir John Malcolm, that 'in an empire like that of India we are always in danger, and it is impossible to conjecture the form in which it may approach'. There are warnings which it behoves the authorities at home and abroad not to lose sight of.¹

The aforesaid remarks were passed in connection with the question of the reorganisation of the Indian army. Kaye was of the view that despite the courage and loyalty which the Sepoy army had shown in the past, it was necessary to maintain a just proportion of the European troops.²

It is noteworthy that hitherto the magnitude of the crisis had not assumed such importance in others newspapers. Kaye's emphasis reflected his own conviction that there was an underlying failure in the course of policy which had been pursued in India. He preceded his observations by quoting a remark from Sir John Malcolm, for a distinct influence on the development of his views in recent years had been those of men such as Tucker, Metcalfe and Malcolm; whom he had closely studied as a biographer. On the one hand, he had selected them as his subjects because their views agreed with his own. On the other hand, it is also true that their utterances reinforced and modified his own assumptions. Thus, his study of their lives had come to confirm his own anxiety regarding the safety of the British

1. Homeward Mail, 28 April 1857.

2. Ibid.

empire in India which he had revealed while dealing with the First Afghan War.

As he advanced in years, his anxiety had increased:

Empires are not built in a day - neither do they fall in a day. We are apt, however, when a Kingdom succumbs to overlook in the greatness of the shock a thousand circumstances which prepared the coming disaster, stunned by the crash, we forget the past.¹

Kaye saw the first soundings of the mutiny as similar to those that had echoed in France on the eve of the revolution. The French revolution had taken people by surprise, yet the fires that led to that outbreak had been kindling for years.²

The point of view which Kaye reflected in his remarks was essentially that which had concerned many of those who had been cautioning the government against the dangers of the recent developments in India.³ These apprehensions were present in the minds of many of those who had lived long in the country and closely studied its people. Sir Henry Lawrence was prominent among those who entertained such fears: "How unmindful we have been that what occurred in the city of Kabul may some day occur at Delhi, Meerut and Bareilly".⁴ Kaye shared this view. The problem of the causes of the mutiny was present in his mind from the very beginning.

Just a year after the troubles had subsided, Kaye published a book entitled

1. Homeward Mail, 30 June 1857.

2. Ibid.

3. In Parliament Disraeli and Ellenborough were outspoken in expressing such views. See Hansard, op.cit. For Ellenborough's speech, The Times, op.cit.

4. Lawrence quoted. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, vol.I, p.453.

Christianity in India. Few questions had generated more controversy in England and among the British in India than the extent to which the religious policy of the government contributed to the uprising. One section argued that the mutiny was the natural outcome of social and religious innovations and urged the immediate discontinuance of all efforts for the evangelisation of India. Others viewed the mutiny as a chastisement which was inflicted owing to the neglect of Christian duties and emphasised the need for atoning for the remissness of the past by greater activity in this direction in the future. The debates revealed such intolerance that it became annoying for those like Kaye who had earlier supported the cause of Christianity in India. As Kaye observed in the preface:

The Indian question has become so largely a religious question, that many have ceased to regard it in any other light ... But, with this interest, it has appeared to me that there has been mingled much error. 1

What really troubled him was the growing tendency to take extreme views, i.e. views with which he disagreed, for he believed that the solution actually lay in following a middle course which would ensure both the safety of the empire and the progress of Christianity in India. Thus, although Kaye saw no ground for the discontinuance of missionary efforts, he emphasised that there was no need for a bolder Christian policy: "The religious neutrality of the British government in India has been proclaimed by the Queen in Council, and it must ever be a substantive article of our political faith".² And, indeed, he further added: "In the neutrality of the government lies the hope of the missionaries".³

1. Kaye, J.W., Christianity in India, An historical narrative (London, 1859), Preface, pp .xi-xii.

2. Ibid., p.488.

3: Ibid. p.491:

Thus, the main ideas underlying his enquiry were, in the first place, to show how from the very beginning the government was cognizant of the need for neutrality in religious affairs and, secondly, to emphasise that as long as the individual efforts of missionaries as well as laity could achieve remarkable results with progress of Christianity in India, it was unwise to directly involve the government in this direction. He adopted a biographical treatment for his work and provided sketches of the lives and achievements of some of the well-known Indian missionaries in the first few chapters. The last three chapters and the concluding remarks of the book were devoted to a discussion of the practical problems which demanded serious attention in view of recent developments. Thus, in the former portion of the book, Kaye was mainly a religious biographer, writing with some vivacity and reflecting much of the zeal of a religious enthusiast. But in the latter portion of the book, he changed his tone and calmly defended the policy of toleration and patience. To use his own words, he aimed "at the production of an exhaustive, but of a suggestive work".¹

Although Kaye began with the earliest history of the arrival of Christianity in India, he concentrated mainly on tracing the efforts made by the Protestant churches. To begin with, he found no evidence regarding the apostolic origin of Christianity in India, and dismissed the legend associated with Thomas, The Apostle, as a mere fable.² The Syrian churches, Kaye argued, knew nothing about the Papacy.³ The Portuguese established monasteries and built churches, but they

1. Ibid., Preface, pp. xiii-xiv.

2. Ibid., pp.3-4.

3. Ibid., p.14.

made few "genuine converts".¹ Similarly, Francis Xavier was a great man, but his successes had been "greatly magnified".² On the whole, Christianity under the Jesuits, Kaye asserted, was "undisguised idolatry".³ The Dutch did not rejoice in ceremonies and processions like the Portuguese, but they neglected their Christian duties.⁴ On the other hand, Kaye also found it necessary to explain the conduct of the early English settlers in India. It was clear, he said, that "there is no great merit to be claimed for them".⁵ But the ideas and beliefs of the English in India were influenced by society in England, where the contemporary atmosphere was not such as to promote the ideas of the diffusion of civilization and the propagation of Christianity. However, from the very beginning the Company "sent out chaplains in their ships; and commonly despatched their ventures with prayer and thanksgiving".⁶

The phase symbolising "energetic religious action", Kaye argued, began in the early 18th century with the arrival of the Danish Protestant missionaries - Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutsch: "They went forth with the truth in their hand; and they sought the aid of no shams and disguises".⁷ Meanwhile, great changes were taking place in the life of the English in India. In Bengal,

1. Ibid., p.16.

2. Ibid., p.21.

3. Ibid., p.33.

4. Ibid., p.35.

5. Ibid., p.38.

6. Ibid., p.39.

7. Ibid., p.67.

the first Protestant mission was established by John Kiernander. On his departure, the services in the mission church were taken up by the Rev. David Brown. However, things did not much improve under Clive and Hastings.¹

Kaye emphasised that signs of a new interest in religion and of an improvement in social morality became clearly discernible from the time of Cornwallis. What began under him, Kaye said, progressed rapidly under his successors.² But he also asserted that Sir John Shore was:

of opinion that the toleration of the government imparted both security and efficiency to the Christian efforts of private individuals and religious societies; that it was because authority never sought to interfere, that the missionaries would be enabled to prosecute their efforts in perfect safety and with good success.³

Needless to say, what Kaye said here was meant to reinforce his standpoint that missionary activities took place from the early 18th century without provoking mutinies.

The next stage, in his view, began in 1814 with the establishment of a State-church - the introduction of an outward and visible form of Christianity. Kaye asserted that, although the policy was demonstrably just, "the new epoch which commenced after the passing of the Act of 1813 was distinguished at the outset by new manifestations of experimental boldness on the part of the British government".⁴

1. Ibid., pp.89-124.

2. Ibid., pp.117-154.

3. Ibid., pp.156-157.

4. Ibid., p.484.

The first Protestant Bishop of Calcutta, Middleton, he said, esteemed the church before the Gospel: "His zeal as a bishop shot ever in advance of his fervour as a Christian".¹

Unlike Middleton, Heber appealed to Kaye as a true missionary: "It had been from the first his ambition not to be the head of the Anglican Church in India, but to be "the first missionary in the East".² But Kaye also applauded his caution: "He recognised the expediency of emphatically declaring that nothing was further from his thoughts than a violent crusade against the religions of the country".³ Here, then, we see that Kaye had another example of some one who supported his argument against asserting Christianity too boldly. Indeed, although Kaye emphasised that no special animosity had been exhibited by the rebels against the missionaries during the mutiny, he was convinced that the apprehension of the destruction of their religions was one of the many "concurrent sources of irritation" among the people.⁴

In short, Kaye laid great emphasis on caution in the religious sphere. The progress of Christianity, he emphasised, had hitherto been gradual and accomplished only by disarming the fears of the native population. He urged, therefore, the British people to show more patience and charity: "What we have to do is to possess ourselves in faith, and with faith to have a patience, doing nothing rashly, nothing

1. Ibid., p.314.

2. Ibid., p.360.

3. Ibid., p.347.

4. Ibid., pp.487-488.

precipitately lest our own folly should mar the good work".¹ Though it is difficult to say how far he was successful in calming the atmosphere, the fact remains that his view represented the sober reaction which prevailed among many of his contemporaries, especially in official circles.

Meanwhile, Kaye was writing articles and reviews for some of the British periodicals of the time. The immediate question, Kaye argued in an article written a few months after the outbreak of the mutiny, was to devise means which could guarantee the safety of British rule in India. But he also argued that the means should not be such as to provoke defiance:

We cannot permanently hold India by force alone. We may break down a native power; we may crush the rebellion of an army, although it carries the arms we have provided, and moves in accordance with the lessons we have taught. But we cannot do this in defiance of the active wishes of the great mass of the people. 2

At the same time, Kaye had already reached some conclusions about the errors of past policies:

Every new principality wrested from native rule has increased the exacerbation against us, and rendered them peculiarly susceptible to impressions adverse to the victorious race of their successors. Their secret hatred lost none of its intensity. It is a marvel and a mystery that so many years should have passed away without an explosion. 3

On the other hand, in his next articles on 'The conquest of Oudh', Kaye held that the annexation of Oudh was justified on the ground of the chaotic condition

1. Ibid., pp.500-501.

2. Kaye, J.W., 'India', Edinburgh Review, vol.106, July - October 1857, p.545.

3. Ibid., p.568.

of the province and the plight of the peasantry, and quoted several passages from Sleeman to support his argument. Kaye asserted that Sleeman's testimony regarding the condition of Oudh was all the more important, for he had been always opposed to annexations.¹ Thus, it was, Kaye emphasised, "that as a very necessity of the assumption of the administration, the government of India had arrayed in hostility against itself the territorial aristocracy of the country".²

One important question arising out of the crisis at this time was the extent of support shown by the native aristocracy of the country. This had given rise to debate whether and how far Indian rulers remained loyal to the British government during the outbreak. Kaye drew attention to examples of princely loyalty. He made this point in one of his articles in Blackwood's Magazine. Kaye argued that the history of the mutiny showed that the whole structure would have toppled down, but for the "support rendered to the British government by some of the most powerful of the native princes, and for the wise neutrality of others".³ Indeed, the question of the British government's relationship with the Indian states was one of those areas in which Kaye had long been interested. His view of the wisdom of conciliating Indian rulers was closely related to his argument against further territorial expansion. Thus, Kaye was critical of annexation because he believed that a friendly native rule was the most certain way of ensuring the safety of British rule in India.

Kaye had long been thinking of writing on the native states, but when he heard

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1. Kaye, J.W., 'The Conquest of Oudh', Edinburgh Review, vol.107, January - April 1858, p.517.
 2. Ibid., p.527.
 3. Kaye, J.W., 'What we have done for the Princes of India', Blackwood's Magazine, vol.87, April 1860, p.497.

that Henry Lawrence had a similar idea and he withdrew:

It is strange that we should have had the same proposal in our minds - I have long been thinking about & collecting materials for a work on the native states & have had my copy of Sutherland underlined for the purpose - but I am glad to think that the work is in better hands - I only wish that we could spend a year together - that I might make my materials and my literary experience available to you. 1

Although the idea did not finally materialise, Kaye, like Henry Lawrence, was convinced that the Indian rulers were a source of strength to the British rule. It is clear from the praise that Kaye bestowed here on the services rendered by the Indian rulers that his conviction was strengthened as a result of the mutiny.

Under such circumstances, it is hardly surprising that Kaye should have advocated the inauguration of a new policy with regard to the Indian rulers. It may also be noted here that as the Secretary in the Political and Secret Department at the India Office, Kaye was playing an important role during this period in shaping the post-mutiny British policy towards the native states.

In 1861, Kaye wrote:

The Sepoy War of 1857 is a fine subject for the historians. But its treatment is far from easy. There are abundant materials of the best kind; incidents, numerous and exciting - records of doing and of suffering, almost unparalleled in their magnitude; varied characters of every shade - from the brightest chivalry to the darkest villainy; and copious food for philosophical investigation into the motives of human action, national and individual - all these are there to render the subject an attractive one to the workman and to beguile him with a flattering promise of success. 2

1. Kaye to H.M. Lawrence, 30 August 1854, MSS. Eur. F.85, 37A.

2. Kaye, J.W., 'The Punjabs in 1857', Blackwood's Magazine, vol.89, April 1861, p.501.

Thus, from making off-hand remarks, Kaye had gradually shifted to look at the mutiny as a remarkable topic for historical discourse. It was characteristic of Kaye's contributions that most of them were topical. He wrote history not to reveal the distant past but to record his own views on the present for the future. Characteristically, from the very beginning of the crisis, Kaye had shown his eagerness to find evidence to support his views.

Kaye saw many causes for the mutiny, but his periodical contributions at this time, also indicated that he was trying to establish a correlation between them. With the fuller knowledge of the event which he came to possess in the course of time he became further convinced that he could not approach the subject by treating it on the familiar path as a mere military mutiny.

An important consideration was to select an appropriate term which could approximate to his own view of the event. The term which was commonly used to describe the phenomenon was mutiny. But whether the word mutiny was sufficient was a question which attracted his attention. In the end, he selected a new term - the Sepoy War - as the title of his work. Presumably, he thought that the word "War" would resolve the problem. It would imply that the significance of these events was more than merely military.

Kaye's History, when it appeared in 1864, established his fame. The volume was applauded for making a comprehensive study of the causes of the mutiny, and the reviewers encouraged Kaye to complete the project. The two subsequent volumes, appearing in 1870 and 1876 respectively, consolidated his reputation as the historian of the Sepoy War. It was regarded as the best known among the histories of the event. The remarkable popularity of the book is shown by the fact that by 1878

the first volume had gone into eight editions. The second and third volumes respectively, went into four and three editions.

Kaye began with a reference to Francis Bacon. This was partly because Kaye found in Bacon's interpretation of "seditions" an apt illustration to support his own ideas concerning the origins of the Sepoy War. Indeed, Bacon's explanation was that "seditions" were the logical sequel to discontentment arising from sweeping changes in religion, taxes, laws and customs, etc. But the collection of illustrations as a help to support his own ideas was only one part of Kaye's task; the other was to provide his own views for the future. Thus, it was that there was something more deeper in this reference to Bacon. Kaye saw that Baconian analysis, above all, served as an example that all policies were capable of rational explanations, and it was on the basis of such an explanation that the future course of British policy in India could be shaped. No wonder, then, that Kaye picked up the threads of Baconian analysis while dealing with the situation in Oudh:

There was a dynasty extinguished - a regal court erased - a territorial aristocracy demolished - an army disbanded. Out of any one of these might have come 'Votes for troubles'. Out of all combined it would have been strange, indeed, if mighty mischief had not arisen to disturb the 'tranquillity' of which the English boasted at the dawn of their dominion in Oude". 1

Among the original sources, Kaye's emphasis lay on materials of a private character. He had used them extensively in his first historical work - History of the War in Afghanistan. He was convinced of their usefulness as an aid in reinforcing the views he wanted to put forward. Already, as a biographer, he had

1. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, vol.III, p.418.

studied a vast mass of private correspondence of his subjects and had made skilful use of them in highlighting his own ideas. So far as his present task was concerned, it was the same as that which guided him in his Afghan War. His aim was to examine the developments surrounding the Sepoy War in such a way as to impart his own views. He wrote: "Those opinions, whether sound or unsound, are my own personal opinions - opinions in many instances formed long ago, and confirmed by later events and more mature consideration".¹

At the same time, there is no doubt that underlying his emphasis on private papers, was his assumption that private papers were more trustworthy as evidence than official documents. Perhaps his reason was that people talk more frankly and truthfully in their private letters than in their official papers. As an official, he might have also noticed that official records might tend towards justifying government's policies. In addition, one of his objects as a historian here was to focus attention on the role of individuals and to "bring the reader face to face with the principal actors in the events of the Sepoy War".² Naturally then, Kaye hoped that private papers would be of great help in portraying individual people, as well as in adding colour and vitality to his narrative. It is not surprising, therefore, that Kaye considered private papers as both authentic and helpful in the process of a historical understanding of the event.

In view of Kaye's official position, it has been inferred that he wrote an official history of the mutiny.³ But, as has been seen, Kaye had emphasised

1. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, vol. I, Preface, p.xi.

2. Ibid., p.xii.

3. Joshi, P.C., '1857 in Our History', Rebellion in 1857: A Symposium (ed. P.C. Joshi, New Delhi, 1957), p.161.

that the views he had expressed were his own.¹ The emphasis he laid on private papers accorded with his aim of reinforcing his own opinions. Indeed, his practice of assigning relative weight to materials drawn from private correspondence was clearly expressed in his own remarks in the preface: "And here I may observe that, as on former occasions, the historical materials which I have moulded into this narrative are rather of a private than of a public character".² He added further:

I have made but little use of recorded official documents. I do not mean that access to such documents has not been extremely serviceable to me, but that it has rather afforded the means of verifying or correcting statements received from other sources than it has supplied me with original materials.³

In view of his own position as an official, Kaye seems to be emphasising that he was not making much use of documents available to him as such.

Of the individuals whose papers Kaye used, the important ones were Lord Canning, Sir John Lawrence, Sir Herbert Edwardes, Colonel Baird Smith, Sir James Outram, Sir Robert Hamilton, Lord Elphinstone and E.A. Reade.⁴ Kaye was the first writer on the mutiny who had used Canning's private papers.⁵ There are extracts in Kaye's handwriting from Lord Elphinstone's letters on the subject of the meeting and the measures he took in sending reinforcements from Bombay.⁶

1. See infra, p.263

2. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, Vol.I, Preface, p.x.

3. Ibid., pp.x-xi.

4. Ibid., pp.xiii-xiv.

5. MacLagan, M., Clemency Canning (London, 1962), Preface.

6. Lord Elphinstone's Papers, MSS. E ur. F.87. Box 4G.

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In a letter to John Lawrence, Kaye talks of using his private papers for "historical purposes" and explains the reasons for a delay in returning his volumes of correspondence.

Unlike his other works, some manuscripts of the Sepoy War have survived, which are preserved under the heading 'Kaye's Mutiny Papers' in the India Office Library. There are several narratives, letters, diaries, and memoranda on different aspects of the mutiny.² Most of these materials were utilized in his work. The letters from Mohan Lal, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, General Jacob and Captain Mortimer, however, deserve our attention, for they provide evidence to show how careful Kaye was in eliciting the opinions of those who had witnessed events at close quarters. For instance, Mohan Lal's letter was written in compliance with a request from Brigadier Chamberlain asking his opinions as to the causes of the mutiny.³ His analysis was similar to that given later by Syed Ahmad Khan in a letter to Kaye.⁴ Although we do not have Kaye's letter, the reply which Syed Ahmad Khan gave indicates that Kaye had asked him how far the mutiny had grown into a popular rebellion in the north-west provinces. Syed Ahmad Khan took the view that it had not.⁵ Captain Mortimer's letter was important for the information it provided on Azimullah Khan.⁶ Also, in Kaye's 'Mutiny Papers', there

1. Kaye to John Lawrence, 10 January 1868, MSS. Eur. F. 90/63.

2. Mutiny Papers of Sir J.W. Kaye, Home/Misc/725-727.

3. For Mohan Lal's letter, see Home/Misc/725.

4. Syed Ahmad Khan to Kaye, 14 December 1864, Home/Misc/725.

5. Ibid.

6. Captain Mortimer to Kaye, 20 June 1874, Home/Misc/725.

were some pamphlets which he had collected on topics such as the *Siege* of Delhi, and the activities of the mutineers.

Another example of Kaye's concern for checking and consulting the nearest witnesses and collecting their personal reminiscences was evident in his correspondence with E.A. Reade. This exchange of letters began in 1864 and continued until 1874.¹ As Reade had served in the north-western provinces from 1829 up to his retirement after the mutiny, he had an intimate knowledge of the developments of the time. Reade's reply shows that Kaye had asked him for information about the circulation of chapatis, the hundred year's prophecy and the activities of Nana Sahab.² Kaye also sought Reade's opinion regarding the proclamation of martial law in the rebellious districts, and the effect that the rebellion had on the daily lives and habits of the English families at Agra.³

Kaye's main sources thus included the private papers of the leading figures of the time, as well as the scattered correspondence down to 1876 which he carried on with many of the surviving participants. His other sources included the published reminiscences of eye-witnesses and published official records. It may be correct to say that there was hardly any important available source, except official records, which were not published, which Kaye did not utilize for his study.⁴

1. E.A. Reade Collection, MSS. Eur. E. 123-124.

2. E.A. Reade to Kaye, 10 March 1864, MSS. Eur. E.124.

3. Kaye to Reade, 11 January 1869, MSS. Eur. E.124.

4. This might also seem obvious from S.B. Chaudhuri's remarks where he mentions that Kaye did not use the 'Narratives' which were published in 1881. See Chaudhuri, S.B., Theories of the Indian Mutiny (Calcutta, 1965), p.3.

Kaye realised that an important problem in a work of this nature was to provide a theoretical framework. But his argument seems ingenious: "If I have a predominant theory it is this: Because we were too English the great crisis arose, but it was only because we were English that when it arose, it did not utterly overwhelm us".¹ Not since Disraeli's speech in Parliament had any one attempted to reconcile the conflicting arguments in a new synthesis. Kaye was, in this sense, a leading representative of the Conservative reaction against the excessive zeal for change that characterized the developments in India. His theory reflected his view that the discontent was the result of abandoning those principles on which British rule in India was founded. In other words, it was intended mainly as an introduction to the study of excessive Westernization as the fundamental cause of the Sepoy War, which Kaye wished to show more clearly than anyone had before.

It provided the foundation on which Kaye erected a structure suggestive of a classic work. He attempted to do two things: the first was to explain why the event occurred; the second, was to present a narrative of major events as well as highlight the nature of the event. After all, to understand the history of the Sepoy War, it was necessary not only to understand the causes, it was necessary also to understand how the conflagration developed and escalated into different places and classes.

Since the first volume was devoted mainly to the problem of analysing the causes, Kaye's plan was straightforward. It was while coming to the narrative portion of the history that he discovered the problem of treatment. His difficulty

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. I, Preface, p. xii.

was, in the first place, to identify the nature of the events, and secondly, to maintain consistency in his narrative for the sake of the convenience of his readers. He wrote to E.A. Reade: "So many series of events going on contemporaneously, it is not easy to determine which should take precedence of the other or how to tell the whole story without distracting and confusing the readers".¹ Ultimately, he decided that "it will be best to carry through each separate series of events if not to its conclusion, at least to some special and striking landmark".² There was thus a fundamental kind of historical understanding which provided him with a basis from which he could see a number of events as a whole - as constituting a trend of some kind. No wonder, then, that "an episodic treatment of the subject" solved Kaye's difficulty and gave that harmony which he looked for in his work.³ Again, it was true that Kaye's emphasis on individuals as the makers of history found a clear expression. Individual exploits, Kaye sensed, were necessary to add vividness to the course of the narrative. Thus, the work had two distinct parts: analysis and narrative, which though being unequal in approach and content, were successfully blended together to give the appearance of a splendid creation. Once Kaye had resolved his initial difficulties, he advanced at an easy pace for the remainder of the way.

Kaye's understanding of the causes that led to the Sepoy War was indeed striking. The first book of his Sepoy War began with an elaborate introduction

1. Kaye to E.A. Reade, 4 January 1870, MSS. Eur. E .124.

2. Ibid.

3. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.ii, Preface to the second volume, p.x.

setting forth the principal features of Dalhousie's administration. It ended with a chapter on the progress of Westernization, while the introductory chapter dealt with the political and social factors, ending with a firm note that it was because of the progress of Westernization that indications of the coming storm were not noticed. The second book was taken up with a consideration of the causes that prepared the background of discontent in the army. In the last book, he examined those issues which formed the immediate background of the outburst. Thus, through this classification, Kaye not only built a framework for his own enquiry of the causes, but also helped to join the variety of minor causes into distinct categories.

Much as Kaye criticised Dalhousie's policies, he made it clear at the outset that Dalhousie's period of administration, like that of Wellesley's, was one in which "Peace and war had yielded their fruits with equal profusion".¹ Thus, to Kaye's way of thinking, there was no reason for an outright criticism of Dalhousie's administration, although he was at the same time convinced that its practical results were not welcomed by the Indian people and consequently, they were not beneficial to the interests of British rule in India. Kaye selected the Panjab to show the results of war and peace. In fact, his interest in the Panjab was not new. The question of British relations with the province had attracted his attention earlier when he was reviewing Cunningham's History of the Sikhs for The Calcutta Review. There, Kaye had defended Lord Hardinge's policy and pointed out that the British government was justified in protecting the state against the lawlessness of its soldiers.² Later, he

1. Ibid., vol.i, p.1.

2. See Kaye, J.W., 'Cunningham's History of the Sikhs', Calcutta Review, vol.xi, January - June 1849, pp. 523-558.

had praised the administration under the Lahore Board in his The Administration of the East India Company.¹ He seemed to retain those views and consequently, he explained the developments here in such a way as to support his own earlier assertions.

Kaye argued that Hardinge had shown merely "an experimental forbearance" when he left the internal administration of the Panjab to continue under the Lahore Durbar.² But it was soon apparent that the Darbar was unable to get over its difficulties and end provocation. Lal Singh was found to be secretly plotting against the British government.³ Kaye emphasised that it was under such circumstances that the native government was placed under the control of a British Resident. Henry Lawrence was appointed as the Resident and Kaye referred to his manifold qualities in which his own personal liking for him was also quite evident. Henry Lawrence, Kaye asserted, was sagacious and had "studied well the oriental character", but at the same time, he was so eminently just that he could not allow injustice to perpetuate itself.⁴ Here, then, we find that Kaye was inclined to view the Panjab policy on moral grounds. This it was that led him to argue that Lawrence "thought that British power might be exercised for the protection of the oppressed, and British wisdom for the instruction and information of their oppressors".⁵ At the same time, Kaye stressed that Lawrence always knew that the country was not

1. Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.448-461.

2. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, vol.1, p.2.

3. Ibid., p.5.

4. Ibid., p.9.

5. Ibid.

settled and the spirit of insurrection was only at rest.¹

Under such circumstances, hardly had the new arrangements continued for a year, Kaye argued, when it was apparent that the Panjab was on the brink of another crisis. Kaye insisted that Mulraj's revolt was not merely a local outbreak, but it actually marked the beginning of the second Anglo-Sikh War.² He declared that Mulraj was simply looking forward to the right moment to pursue his plans, for as he said, "it was known that the hearts of the soldiery were with Moolraj".³ The defection of Sher Singh to his camp, Kaye asserted, merely removed the veil for those who maintained the fiction of a local rebellion.⁴ It is thus apparent that Kaye saw no peaceful way of solving the question. He stressed that it was clear after the war that no middle course existed for the British government: "The Sikhs had staked everything on the issue of the war, and they had lost it in fair fight".⁵

Already Kaye had praised the administration under the Lahore Board, and emphasised that it had carried on a principle of divided labour and common responsibility.⁶ All this Kaye reiterated here, but he also seems to be suggesting that the project of the Board of three arose in Dalhousie's mind because he did not want

1. Ibid., p.11.

2. Ibid., pp.20-22.

3. Ibid., p.33.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p.46.

6. See Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.448-461.

Henry Lawrence to be in sole charge in view of his opinions expressing dissent from the policy of annexation.¹ Similarly, Kaye also argued that despite similarities as regards "honesty" and "intrepid manliness", "there were great characteristic differences between the two Lawrences".² Although Kaye did not explain these differences, it is implied in his arguments on the question relating to the new revenue settlements in the Panjab that it was one of those areas where Henry Lawrence and John Lawrence differed from each other. Henry Lawrence, Kaye argued, believed in generous treatment of the native aristocracy and "laid a lighter hand upon their tenures than higher authority was altogether willing to sanction".³ But Kaye also stressed: "John Lawrence, it was said, better understood the art of raising a revenue".⁴ He went on to say that "Lord Hardinge would have chosen Henry Lawrence. Lord Dalhousie chose John".⁵ Already, Kaye had highlighted the necessity of harmonious relationships with the native aristocracy.⁶ And so, on this question his views were implicitly the same as those of Henry Lawrence. Perhaps this was the reason why he was concerned to point out that there existed a fundamental difference of opinion which "as time advanced became more and

1. Kaye, J.W., Sepoy War, vol.1, pp.50-51.

2. Ibid., p.52.

3. Ibid., p.59.

4. Ibid., p.61.

5. Ibid.

6. See Kaye, J.W., 'What we have done for the Princes of India' Blackwoods' Magazine, April 1860, pp.497-510.

apparent".¹

Thus, it was that, although Kaye approved of the conquest of the Panjab, he spoke critically about the government's policy towards the native states. Interestingly enough, the grounds on which he blamed the "right of lapse" were similar in nature to those with which he had supported the absorption of the Panjab. In other words, he saw that the policy of "Peaceful invasion" was neither morally sound nor politically expedient.²

Taking a cue from Indian history, Kaye argued that acquisition by conquest might have been perhaps understood by the natives of the country, but the extinction of loyal native states was unheard of, and so, it was bound to fill their minds with alarm and fear. He emphasised that the right of adoption was one of the most "cherished doctrines of Hinduism" and its sanctity lay in the sanction which it enjoyed from the law of the land.³ Its validity in respect of private property was undisputed, but in the case of the transmission of political powers and dignities, it required the consent of the paramount power. Under the Mughals, it had never been withheld on the payment of regular succession duty. But Dalhousie, Kaye asserted, was determined to abridge the extent of the native states. Therefore, he substituted the right of adoption by the "right of lapse".⁴ Kaye pointed out that the question first arose on the issue of the adoption of a male heir to the throne of

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. I, p.62..

2. Ibid., p.69. Also see, p. 270 of this chapter.

3. Ibid., pp.69-70.

4. Ibid., p.71 .

Satara in Western India. Despite George Clark's view that the adoption should be upheld, Dalhousie ignored it and rejected his idea of looking into the contents of the previous treaty. Thus, Kaye tried to show that those opinions, the practical expression of which subsequently was the policy of annexation, were formed by Dalhousie at the very outset of his career as the Governor General.¹

Characteristically, Kaye quoted the views of Colonel John Low who was a member of the Supreme Council at this time on the question of the proposed annexation of Nagpur. Kaye argued that Low had dwelt on the "bad moral effect" which the annexation of Satara had already produced while counselling his protest against the injustice in this particular case.² The annexation of the Panjab was brought on by the people themselves, but the extinction of the loyal native states, he continued, drew Low's attention as a measure which would shake people's confidence in the good faith of the British government.³ It hardly needs to be emphasised that this was how Kaye himself viewed these annexations. Kaye contended that Dalhousie advanced "the Cotton-growing qualities of the Berar country" as one of his several arguments and annexed it.⁴ Unlike the previous occasions where the treaties relating to succession were ignored, Kaye asserted that in the case of Jhansi it was misinterpreted to demonstrate the right to resume.⁵ On the other hand, he

1. Ibid., pp.71-73.

2. Ibid., p.80.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.86.

5. Ibid., p.91.

was clear in his mind that there were other measures, too, which produced disturbing effects without involving any territorial gain. He viewed the cases of Karauli, Tanjore, Carnatic and Nana Saheb as important examples of them.¹

So far as Kaye's view on the annexation of Oudh was concerned, one can see a change in his arguments here from those he had made earlier.² Thus, in the final reckoning, he blamed the government's policy and asserted that, although the situation in Oudh demanded immediate British interference, there was no justification behind the decision to take its revenues.³

Kaye related the effects of the annexationist policy to his analysis of socio-economic discontent. Thus, the apprehension aroused by the 'right of lapse' was joined by the evils of the new settlement operations which were carried out at this time. As Kaye observed:

Doubtless we started upon a theory sound in the abstract, intent only on promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number, but if we had allowed ourselves to understand the genius and the institutions of the people, we should have respected the rights natural and acquired, of all classes of the community instead of working out any abstract theory of our own.⁴

What Kaye said was no doubt his personal reflection on one of the basic intellectual concerns of the times. The way he put it suggested that he was convinced that the

1. Ibid., pp.92-111.

2. See Kaye, J.W., 'The Conquest of Oudh', Edinburgh Review, Vol.CVII, January - April 1858, pp.513-540.

3. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.1, pp.136-138.

4. Ibid., p.154.

situation in India was not responsive to the practice of Benthamite ideals. As the enquiry which he undertook to demonstrate this point revealed, his basic concern was the safety of the British power in India. Thus, he affirmed that the mutiny at Vellore had clearly shown the necessity of maintaining an intermediary class of landed nobility which could be a source of strength to the empire. This, he argued, was not taken into consideration and in the course of time, a growing dislike for the "Native Gentlemen" convinced many English officers that the immediate task was "the contentment of the lower agricultural classes".¹

Kaye argued that a dislike for the landed aristocracy and a favourable predilection for the class of peasant-proprietors found a clear expression in the revenue settlement of the north-western provinces. He contended that there were two modes by which the native aristocracy was gradually obliterated: settlement and resumption.² The question, he maintained, first arose when the government took possession of the ceded parts of Oudh and the territories conquered from the Marathas. After a series of brief engagements with the holders of different tenures, an attempt was made during the time of William Bentinck to remedy the wrongs of the past and revise the settlements on the basis of a detailed survey.³

Kaye argued that "in the pursuit of right, the framers of the settlement fell into wrong".⁴ His explanation was that, although the idea of protecting the rights of the villager as well as the talukdars was sound in principle, the settlements which

1. Ibid., p.155.

2. Ibid., p.155.

3. Ibid., pp.156-158.

4. Ibid., p.158.

were carried out showed that in practice the claims of both classes were not treated with equal justice. But the government defended its decision on the plea that in this province the proprietary rights of single families and village communities survived in more recognisable forms than anywhere else. Kaye insisted that as a result of this, the recognised claims of the talukdar were set aside and he was "written down as a fraudulent upstart and an unscrupulous oppressor".¹

"The grand levelling system", as Kaye termed it, was carried out by the Board of Revenue where "the old and new schools alternated like the Black and White of a chess-board".² Whereas the men of the old school such as Edmonstone, Tucker and Sleeman regarded it as an unsound policy to convert friends into enemies, the adherents of the new school like R.M. Bird, R. Hamilton and J. Thomason considered it as the only way to conciliate the peasantry.³ Thus, Kaye was not merely critical of the new settlement policy, he also asserted that the government had proceeded with this policy despite warnings to the contrary.

Though not as extensive as the settlement operations, Kaye emphasised that the process involved in resumption was harsher.⁴ A number of people had been granted alienations of revenue on account of the services they had rendered to the government in the past. These rent-free tenures included old as well as new grants and were regarded as perpetually secure tenures by their holders.⁵ But the admini-

1. Ibid., pp.158-160.

2. Ibid., p.162.

3. Ibid., pp.162-167.

4. Ibid., p.168.

5. Ibid., p.169.

strators of the new school, Kaye argued, came to see in it an analogy to the practice which prevailed in France before the revolution. Hence, it was decided that all such tenures should be taxed unless the holders could prove a valid title to exemption. Kaye stressed that as it was not easy to produce such proofs after the lapse of so many years, so it resulted in "wholesale confiscation".¹

To complete the picture of the collision between English and Indian ideas and practices, Kaye turned to other measures which were effective during this time. Thus, following these attacks on the native aristocracy, came those innovations which caused alarm in the minds of the priestly class.² Kaye argued that gradually a belief had gained ground among them that the flood of changes which were being introduced would end their traditional influence and privileges.³ Kaye's view of the suspicions among the 'priesthood' was informed by his assumptions about Hinduism. He regarded Hinduism as based on ignorance and superstition and the Brahmins, as the class which directly upheld them. Hence, the resentment in the priesthood, Kaye implied, was due to a fear of losing that position which they enjoyed as the sacerdotal leader of the Hindu society. This suspicion, Kaye stressed, received further confirmation from the recent annexations and led many of them to believe that the government was bringing the native states directly under their control with a view to spreading Christianity.⁴

Nevertheless, it is true that as a historian of the Company's administration,

1. Ibid., p.170.

2. Ibid., pp.180-181.

3. Ibid., p.181.

4. Ibid., p.183.

Kaye had recorded as well as praised the efforts made for the moral and material improvement of the native people.¹ But here his ideas had been modified. This modification was largely due to his own experience of the events during 1857-58. Conscious of this change in his views, Kaye at the same time wished to integrate his earlier and later views in such a way as to present them as a normal development of thought. Thus, progress and enlightenment were good in themselves, but in India, he implied, they should have been slower so as to minimize the apprehensions of important sections of society. Kaye argued that the earlier exertions in the direction of improvement were neither systematic nor strong-headed. Education was secular and the functions of a school teacher and the Christian priest had never been united in the same person. But the guiding principle behind the government's policies had changed in recent years in view of the growing emphasis on Westernization.²

At the same time, it may be noted - as against the view that Kaye emphasised Western innovations as a fundamental cause of the uprising³ - that there is nothing in Kaye's arguments here to suggest that he viewed these innovations in this light, or as more provocative than the annexations and the new settlement proceedings. Indeed, what Kaye argued was that, although these innovations were sound in principle and welcomed by the people of the new generation, the speed with which they were introduced aroused a vague sense of fear in the minds of the priestly class among

1. See Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.1-10.

2. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.1, pp.184-186.

3. See Das, M.N., 'Western innovations and the rising of 1857', Bengal Past & Present, vol.lxxvi, 1957, pp.70-73.

the Hindus and the Muslims.¹ If Pundits, Kaye emphasised, acted as the promoters of such suspicions among the Hindus, the Moulvis did this work among the Muslims.² Thus, as the Hindus were alarmed, so also the Muslims.

Kaye sensed that the feelings of alarm which characterised the minds of the aristocracy and the priesthood found a receptive ground in the discontentment of the native army. He argued that the army was organised as a class and consequently, more powerful than the others. It had, he continued, played a vital role in the expansion of the British rule in the country. What then led to their discontent was the question which absorbed his attention in some of the succeeding chapters. He observed: "Outwardly, there was only a great calm; and it was not thought that beneath that smooth surface there were any latent dangers peculiar to the times".³

Kaye saw the dangers inherent in the rise and progress of the Sepoy army. Founded in the middle of the 17th century, the Sepoy army proportionately shared power, responsibility, honour and reward with European colleagues.⁴ But the status of the Sepoy army changed in the course of time. Kaye stressed that, although this change was an inevitable result of the increase of British power in India, it happened that "the gentry of the land" no longer saw any prospect in the Company's military service.⁵

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.1, pp.181-183.

2. Ibid., p.196.

3. Ibid., p.204.

4. Ibid., pp.204-205.

5. Ibid., pp.210-212.

Already Kaye had argued, in his characteristic way, that the Vellore mutiny was full of lessons.¹ Here, he discussed the events in detail and asserted that there was something more than the grievances of the Sepoy against his service conditions and the innovations of dress. He emphasised that the members of the old ruling family of Mysore, with the object of restoring the rule of their dynasty, were active in inciting the Sepoy to mutiny.² Thus, in Kaye's view, the mutiny at Vellore was the result of a combination of adverse political and military influences.³

Kaye argued that, although the mutiny of Madras Officers in 1809 must have made a bad impression on the Sepoy's mind, there was no disturbance for many years after the outbreak of Vellore.⁴ Meanwhile, the officers, he suggested, came to care for his Sepoy and to find all his prospects in his regiment. The Sepoy was also proud of his notable commanders. In addition, unlike England, his position as a soldier was highly prized both for the sake of the pay and for the sake of the privileges attached to it.⁵

But the tie of cordial relationship between the Sepoy and his English officer, Kaye declared, was short-lived. He explained several factors which came to widen the gulf between the two. First, due to increasing centralization, the English officer lost his power and consequently, that interest which he had for

1. Ibid., p.155.

2. Ibid., pp.222-230.

3. Ibid., p.248.

4. Ibid., pp.252-253.

5. Ibid., pp.255-257.

making his battalion a distinguished one. Secondly, the increased contacts with home gave a far more European complexion to his society. Kaye thought that this might have been beneficial for the improvement of his moral values, but its effect on his relationship with the Sepoy was far from satisfactory. As the officer had his own families, interests and preoccupations, he cared less for the gossip and the affairs of the lines. Finally, there was a hankering after staff-appointments and other civilian positions, and this made the officer look more to achievements beyond his regimental work.¹

He maintained that the Burmese War provided the Sepoys with an opportunity to express their grievances. As they had enlisted for service only to countries to which they could march, they refused to cross the sea. Later, some battalions of the Bengal army were persuaded to march to the frontier, but others still refused to move. The insurrection was suppressed by dispersing the regiment.² He emphasised that the remedy was too stern and consequently, it "created a bad moral effect throughout the whole of the Bengal army".³

It is clear that Kaye had shown a willingness to reinforce those views which he had expressed earlier. The question of the grievances among the native army also gave him an opportunity to do so. He related the issue of growing dissatisfaction in the Sepoy army to his own expressed views regarding the baneful effects of the expansionist policy. Thus, he contended here that it was the failure in the Afghan War which had taught the Sepoys that the British power was not invincible.⁴ But

1. Ibid., pp.258-261.

2. Ibid., pp.265-268.

3. Ibid., p.269.

4. Ibid., p.274.

Kaye also implied that on the other hand the lesson of the Afghan War was not learnt by the government: "And when, after the British army had been disentangled from the defiles of Afghanistan, war was made against the Ameers of Scinde".¹ Indeed, apart from criticising the annexation of Sind, Kaye had consistently held that wars and annexations undermined people's faith in the rulers. He further reiterated his view here by looking at the results of annexations on the fidelity of the Sepoy army: "the direct and immediate result of well-nigh every annexation of Territory, by which our Indian empire has been extended, may be clearly discerned in the shattered discipline of the Sepoy army".²

Kaye argued that the growing unrest among the Sepoys in Bihar and the Panjab attracted Charles Napier's attention. Napier had been a soldier all his life and, therefore, could fully realize the gravity of the situation. It is noteworthy that, although Kaye criticised Napier's conquest of Sind, he regarded Napier's suggestion for increasing the allowances of the Sepoys as a just one.³ He thought that it was unfortunate that the suggestion was not appreciated by the Governor-General and, on the other hand, led to "a memorable conflict between Napier and Dalhousie".⁴ Kaye stressed that the contest was an unseemly one and generated the impression that "even the chief members of the government were at war among themselves".⁵ Thus, he sensed that this, too, might have shaken the Sepoy's faith in the strength and the

1. Ibid., p.276.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp.311-315.

4. Ibid., p.316.

5. Ibid., p.320.

stability of the British power.

Kaye thought that the Sepoy was "a paradox".¹ He observed:

He was made up of consistencies and contradictions ... He was simple and yet designing; credulous and easily deceived by others, and yet obstinately tenacious of his own inbred convictions; now docile as a child, and now hard and immovable in the stubbornness of his manhood.²

As the Sepoy's outburst did not come like a thunder-clap in a cloudless sky, Kaye emphasised that what was needed was to look into his psychology. He regarded the fears of the Sepoys for their religion and personal^{al} honour as a problem of mass psychology.

Kaye argued that there was a wide area of controversy relating to several aspects of army reform and administration. The views broadly fell into two categories. There were those questions which related to the composition of the native army and intermixture of European troops. And there were questions about promotion, the relative advantages and disadvantages of localisation and distribution. Kaye stated that whereas Henry Lawrence and Jacob objected to promotion by seniority, Charles Napier and Sleeman were its strong advocates.³ Kaye stressed that, although the question of army reform was most vital at this time, no effective steps were taken in this direction. He also emphasised in his characteristic way that the lesson that "prevention is better than cure" was ignored and consequently, the number of European troops was not proportionately increased.⁴

1. Ibid., p.327.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp.332-336.

4. Ibid., pp.338-341.

Kaye argued that events such as the Crimean War and the annexation of Oudh had magnified the Sepoy's suspicions and multiplied the number of his grievances. As regards the effects of the Crimean War, Kaye declared that "we deceive ourselves, when we think that European politics make no impression on the Indian public".¹ He suggested that since the War was with Russia, it fitted in well with the vague rumours that Russia would some day contend with the English for the rule of India. Kaye assumed that the effective remedy for combating these fears lay in the sufficiency of European troops in India. The same idea was implicit in his arguments regarding the defence of Oudh. He insisted that it was all the more necessary to maintain a strong European force in Oudh in view of the threats from the disbanded soldiers and the discontented landlords. After all, he continued, a very large number of the Bengal army was drawn from this province.²

Thus, Kaye saw that a series of adverse circumstances had shaken the confidence of the Sepoy in his master. He insisted that it was not proper to look at the Sepoy discontent as though it were all a natural consequence of his grievances against his service conditions, and leave out of consideration those "external events" which directly or indirectly excited his feelings. He argued that, after all, the Sepoy was not just a soldier, he was also "the embodiment of feelings and opinions shared by large classes of his countrymen".³

Kaye emphasised that this was the political situation in India when Dalhousie departed and Canning succeeded. He saw Dalhousie as a great ruler who had

1. Ibid., p.342.

2. Ibid., pp.345-346.

3. Ibid., p.349.

triumphantly pursued his policy and stamped the imprint of his individuality on his rule. But Dalhousie's assertion of his individuality was a unique phenomenon. And this, he stressed, was at the root of that "intense Englishism" which so much distinguished Dalhousie's period of rule. Ideas of reform and improvement were good in themselves, but, in recent years, they had risen to their utmost height. Gone were the days, he continued, when men like Metcalfe, Malcolm and Elphinstone ruled the destinies of the Indian empire.¹ Dalhousie, he also contended, had not inaugurated this transition; it was, in fact, implicit in the times and he found it very much in the process when he began his reign as the Governor-General: "He had appeared among them and placed himself at their head, just at the very time when such a coming was needed to give consistency to their faith, and uniformity to their works".² Kaye did not question the validity of his ideas, but he was critical of Dalhousie's policy which sought to introduce changes with unusual rapidity. This it was that led him to argue that Dalhousie was not perceptive as a ruler. His main defect, in Kaye's view, was that he failed to understand the temperament of the people: "He had but one idea of them - an idea of a people habituated to the despotism of a dominant race".³ Kaye also added: "He could not see with other men's eyes, or think with other men's brains, or feel with other men's hearts".⁴ From Kaye's portrayal of Dalhousie's character and policy, it follows that he saw in them all those attributes of excessive westernising tendency

1. Ibid., pp.353-354.

2. Ibid., p.355.

3. Ibid., p.356.

4. Ibid., p.357.

which permeated the atmosphere at this time. Thus it was that he saw Dalhousie as the embodiment of the collective spirit of the times which had prepared the background of the outbreak.

Kaye argued that it was against this setting that the advent of the year 1857 was awaited with great expectations by the natives of the country. Popular opinion influenced by the dissatisfied aristocracy and the priesthood had circulated a prophecy that after a century of its rule, the English dominion was to end before a national uprising. As the year of the centenary of the victory at Plassey drew closer, the popular excitement became greater.¹ Thus, in Kaye's view, even though the Sepoy War was not produced by the stories and sayings of the prophet, they became the rallying point of the outbreak.

Consistently with his view of widespread dissatisfaction in which the Sepoy was merely a representative of the feelings of other classes, Kaye emphasised that the greased-cartridge affair was nothing more than "a story of most terrific import".² He pointed out that greased cartridges had not been issued at Dum-Dum.³ In the light of the evidence he had collected, he further asserted that "the 'patches' were greased with mutton fat was altogether a mistake".⁴ It may be noted here that J.A.B. Palmer regards Kaye's explanation as unsatisfactory. He is of the view that the instructions given in the memorandum of the Military Board related to the

1. Ibid., pp.484-486.

2. Ibid., p.488.

3. Ibid., p.490.

4. Ibid., p.656.

greasing of the patches, not of cartridges.¹

Of the rumours, those which drew Kaye's particular attention, were the stories of the bone-dust flour and of the chapatis. In view of different explanations about their genesis, it was not easy to ascertain their objectives.² What Kaye regarded as clear was that they had been instrumental in arousing panic into the people's mind. Referring to the circulation of the chapatis, Kaye observed: "But whatever the real history of the movement, it had doubtless the effect of producing and keeping alive much popular excitement in the districts through which the cakes were transmitted".³

Next, Kaye projected the question of political intrigues with the deliberate aim of ousting the British from the country. The point was relevant to his view of the resentments prevailing among the native aristocracy. He regarded Nana Sahib and his agent, Azimullah Khan, as the leading figures of this conspiracy.⁴ As evidence of this, he referred to those visits which Nana had made along with Azimullah Khan to Lucknow and Amballa in the months of March and April 1857. Kaye's argument was that as Nana was not given to distant travelling: "there was something in all this strange and surprising".⁵ It seems that to suggest that Nana was not accustomed to journeyings was not sufficient to point to his active participation in the conspiracy.

1. See Palmer, J.A.B., The Mutiny Outbreak at Meerat in 1857 (Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp.10-11.

2. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. I, pp.569-570.

3. Ibid., p.572.

4. Ibid., pp.575-575.

5. Ibid., p.575.

It may be noted here that in his editorial remarks in The Overland Mail of 10 July 1855, Kaye had hailed Canning's nomination to the Governor-Generalship on the ground of his being a man of "moderate caste",¹ His admiration for Canning went beyond this brief remark here. Kaye quoted Canning's speech which was delivered on the occasion of the farewell banquet in London, and in the course of which he observed that there were many who had been struck by the "deliberate gravity" of Canning's utterances.² Canning, he quoted, had remarked: "We must not forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst, and overwhelm us with ruin".³ As has been seen, Dalhousie's main defect, in Kaye's view, was a lack of imagination. Thus, it is clear from the manner in which he portrayed Canning here that Kaye saw him as the antithesis to Dalhousie. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Kaye's praise for Canning ran as a persistent note in his History.

Kaye emphasised that the symptoms of widespread discontent were too obvious to escape the attention of the Governor-General: "There was little before the eyes of Lord Canning but the one naked fact of the junction of the Meerut and Delhi troops, and the proclamation of the restored empire of the Mogul".⁴ But because of the diversity of opinion on all sides, it was not easy for Canning to arrive at a clear decision. The news of the outbreak at Meerut, argued Kaye, which initially

1. See Overland Mail, 10 July 1855,

2. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. I, p.379.

3. Ibid., p.378.

4. Ibid., p.597.

reached Calcutta was also of such a fragmentary character that it was difficult to immediately ascertain the actual facts.¹

Kaye closed the first volume of his History by raising the question whether it was a mutiny or a rebellion.² It is noteworthy that not since Disraeli's remarks in the House of Commons had any scholar attempted to answer this question.³ Hitherto Kaye's main concern was to analyse the roots of discontent. He had briefly alluded to this point towards the end of the volume only to show how there was no longer any confusion on this question in the mind of the Governor-General.⁴ It seems as though the examination of this question was the main aim of the volume he had now undertaken.

Kaye knew that it was not enough merely to trace the causes of the Sepoy War. To understand the event as a whole, it was necessary to integrate the disturbances which had taken place at Barrackpur and Berhampur with the outbreak at Meerut and the seizure of Delhi, for he regarded it as the most significant development symbolising the aim of the mutineers to capture the imperial city. "If the empire of Delhi", observed Kaye, "had passed into a tradition, the tradition was still an honoured one".⁵ Thus, Kaye saw a direct link between the political significance of the city and the aims of the mutineers.

1. Ibid., p.596.

2. Ibid., p.617.

3. For Disraeli's remarks, see p.244 of this chapter.

4. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.i. , p.617.

5. Ibid., vol.ii, p.2.

In order to explain the question why was this rush towards Delhi, Kaye thought it necessary to begin with a brief account of its history. The idea implicit in his enquiry was to indicate the possibility of a connection between the inmates of the Palace and the mutineers, especially in view of the accumulated nature of their grievances. In his view, disaffection in the Mughal Palace had been sown successively by the measures which had been taken from the time of Wellesley. As he observed, the King of Delhi "was to be a King and yet no King - a something and yet nothing - a reality and sham at the same time".¹

Kaye emphasised that this paradox helped the English government, but it was also not without its inherent dangers. After all, the name of the Mughal King was a source of recollection and strength to the Muslim community. Kaye stated that Charles Metcalfe had suggested a straightforward remedy: "Let us treat him with the respect due to his situation ... but, unless we mean to re-establish his power, let us not encourage him to dream of it".² In the years which followed, the diminution of the imperial fiction of the Mughals came as a natural sequel to the growth and stability of the British power and the changed outlook of its rulers. He stressed: "There was no longer any reluctance to assert our position as the paramount power".³

Kaye took the view that the diminution of Mughal privileges was generally recognised as a political necessity. His explanation was that the Mughal Palace had of late become a nest of conspiracy and consequently, it was dangerous to the

1. Ibid., p.5.

2. Ibid., pp.7-8.

3. Ibid., p.9.

safety of British rule in India.¹ Here, then, Kaye agreed with the views which Dalhousie held on this issue. He also viewed Dalhousie's suggestion for making the Palace a British fortress as a wise one.² It was against this background that Canning, he argued, decided that the title of the King should end with Bahadur Shah. As the next heir to the throne was to surrender his ancestral title and remain only a prince, this came as a blow to the aspirants. Kaye argued that it particularly hurt the ambition of Zeenat Mahal, the King's favourite queen, who was already dissatisfied in view of British government's refusal to acknowledge the claims of her own son, Jewan Bakht.³ Under such circumstances, the inmates of the Palace, with countenance from the King and the Queen, not only incited the countrymen against the British rule but also sought the help of the Persian King who was at war with the English.⁴ From what Kaye said about the restlessness within the walls of the Mughal Palace, it can be clearly premised that, as on the former occasion, he wished to present the picture of a conspiracy which aimed to restore the Mughal rule in the country. Apart from the opinions of James Outram and Ashanullah, the physician to the Palace, Kaye referred to the proclamation from the Persian King pasted on the Jama Masjid as evidence of the existence of a plot.⁵

Kaye argued that, although there was widespread unrest among the Sepoys, the outbreak at Meerut was not the result of any planning in advance on the part

1. Ibid., pp.10-13.

2. Ibid., p.17.

3. Ibid., pp.29-33.

4. Ibid., pp.35-37.

5. Ibid., pp.36-40.

of the Sepoys. He observed: "the proofs of this general combination for a simultaneous rising of the Native troops are not so numerous or so convincing as to warrant the acceptance of the story as a demonstrative fact".¹ Thus, Kaye once again reiterated his view of a political conspiracy. He emphasised that what aggravated the crisis at Meerut was the sentences given to the Sepoys.² He argued that it was the suddenness of the eruption that left the English officers high and dry. Nevertheless, he contended that had the authorities at Meerut immediately decided to pursue the Sepoys on their march to Delhi, they might have succeeded in preventing them reaching the imperial city.³ It may be noted here that in his study of the mutiny outbreak at Meerut, J.A.B. Palmer takes a different view. He argues that the outbreak was premeditated and planned in advance among the Sepoys at Meerut.⁴

Kaye stressed that it was generally believed that the recapture of Delhi would check the troubles from spreading elsewhere. The expulsion of the rebels and the recovery of the city, therefore, became the need of the hour. To realise this object, troops from different corners of the country were ordered to march to Delhi.⁵

Kaye emphasised that another important issue was to curb the panic and minimize the apprehension among the English people. Canning, in his view, concentrated

1. Ibid., p.110.

2. Ibid., pp.44-60.

3. Ibid., pp.63-81.

4. Palmer, J.A.B., op.cit., pp.129-131.

5. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.ii, pp.120-121.

his attention on this twin-task and in so doing, displayed a remarkably calm and confident demeanour.¹

He asserted that the fall of Delhi was followed by uprisings at several places in the north-western provinces and in Oudh during the months of May, June and July. He affirmed that if Delhi was the centre of Muslim discontent, Benares, the sacred city of the Hindus, provided the rallying ground for the dissatisfaction among the Hindus.² It seems clear that by focussing attention on Delhi and Benares as the main centres of discontent, Kaye wished to indicate how the Muslims and the Hindus had joined their hands against the government. He supported his view by making a reference to the targets of the mutineers.³

It may be noted here that Kaye had all along shown his preference for a policy of maintaining the native aristocracy as a privileged class. His reason was that this intermediary class would stand as the bulwark against popular eruptions. He had not only expressed his favourable view of Cornwallis's permanent settlement in his The Administration of the East India Company,⁴ but, as has been seen, he also supported Henry Lawrence's policy of winning over the native gentry in the Panjab.⁵ In other words, Kaye saw the reduction of the privilege of native aristocracy as an important aspect of the westernizing policy. And so, he shifted his attention now to the class which had largely contributed to the prolongation of the

1. Ibid., pp.115-118.

2. Ibid., p.199.

3. Ibid., p.257.

4. Kaye, J.W., Administration, pp.200-201.

5. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. I, pp.57-58.

uprisings at Benares and Allahabad. He contended that it was the class of the dispossessed talukdars which was highly dissatisfied with the British rule.¹ He also added:

For not only in the districts beyond the Ganges, but in those lying between the two rivers, the ruler population had risen. The land owners there were principally Mahomedans, and ready to join any movement which threatened to drive the English from the land. It was there, too, in the Doab that Braminism was most powerfully enthroned. 2

At the same time, there was another point of historical significance which Kaye had professed to bring out prominently in his picture of the event.³ Was it not true, he asked, that the crisis which initially seemed foredoomed to failure, suddenly changed its appearance in view of a new realisation? On the one hand, Kaye was convinced that it was this realisation which had brought that confidence under which the dormant qualities of the English character awakened to full light and consequently, the challenges were fought to victory. On the other hand, he also stressed that the course adopted to bring this confidence at times resulted in "manifold errors".⁴ Thus, Neill, in his view, had made a notable contribution in restoring the confidence by showing that the English could do more than defend themselves.⁵ But, at the same time, the course that had been adopted was, nevertheless, such that it could not be lost sight of by the historian. Kaye observed:

1. Ibid., vol.ii, p.259.

2. Ibid., p.260.

3. See ibid., Preface, pp.xv-xvi.

4. Ibid., p.268.

5. Ibid., p.264.

Martial law had been proclaimed; those terrible Acts passed by the Legislative Council in May and June were in full operation; and soldiers and civilians alike were holding Bloody Assize, or slaying Natives without any assize at all, regardless of sex or age. 1

It is thus obvious that Kaye did not ignore that what happened when the question of restoring confidence in British rule became a major issue. Indeed, he emphasised it, for he believed that it related to what he had to say regarding the future course of British policy in India.

The two main centres which demanded immediate attention, Kaye stated, were Kanpur and Lucknow. Despite a valiant resistance, Hugh Wheeler could not hold out against the mutineers for long, and appealed to his neighbour Nana Saheb for help. Kaye stressed that Wheeler's decision to surrender was precipitated by the concern he felt for the safety of a large proportion of British women and children in the cantonment.² Nana, Kaye emphasised, had promised a safe passage to Allahabad on the condition that the British garrison would first lay down its arms.³ But the promise was tainted with falsehood. Nana, in his view, was actually awaiting a chance of revenge in the discontent of the Sepoys.

Kaye argued that the boats carrying the English troops had hardly reached the mid-stream of the Ganges when a dreadful massacre was perpetrated: "They had been lured to the appointed shambles, then to be given up to cruel death".⁴ The tragedy of Kanpur culminated, in his view, on the 15 July when Nana resolved to have one

1. Ibid., p.269.

2. Ibid., pp.313-317.

3. Ibid., pp.332-336.

4. Ibid., p.339.

more triumph. As he saw his hold over Kanpur slipping away in view of the news of Havelock's advance, emphasised Kaye, he ordered that the British captives including the women and children should be put to death.¹

Kaye contended that the killings at Bibighar had inflamed English sentiment to a "pitch of national hatred".² He suggested that it was against this setting that Neill decided to inflict a terrible retribution and avenge them.³ He sensed that Neill was right because he was fully assured in his own mind that the men punished by him were the real miscreants.⁴ A chastisement might have been justified in order to punish the evil-doers. But the failure to examine carefully the question of whether those selected by Neill to cleanse the slaughter house were the actual culprits or not, may be regarded as an example of Kaye's neglect as a historian. It may be noted here that Kaye had provided a similar instance of his tendency to look indulgently on the moral feelings of his heroes in his biography of Henry St. George Tucker.

Although in his "The Panjab and the Indian mutiny", Salahuddin Malik largely supplements Kaye's explanation of the situation in there, he makes no reference to Kaye's Sepoy War at all. On the other hand, he argues that hitherto it has been wrongly believed that the Panjab was quiet and stood aloof from the rebels.⁵

1. Ibid., pp.352-372.

2. Ibid., p.373.

3. Ibid., pp.386-398.

4. Ibid., pp.400-402.

5. Malik, Salahuddin, "The Panjab and the Indian mutiny", Journal of Indian History, vol.L, Part III, August 1972, pp.343-374.

It may be apparent from what Kaye said in this connection that he was not unaware of the discontent which prevailed in the Panjab. In fact, Kaye had made it clear while closing his account of the Panjab administration that the policy of conciliating the native gentry in the province had been discontinued in view of Henry Lawrence's retirement from the scene.¹ He argued here that what Canning dreaded in the Panjab was "the enmity of the people".² He further added:

But the general knowledge that there was a spirit of mutiny in the Bengal army might not have induced the authorities at Lahore to take the initiative, and might not have justified them in doing it, if there had been no particular knowledge of local disaffection among the Punjabee troops.³

Thus - as in Malik's view⁴ - Kaye was convinced that the comparative calm which ultimately prevailed in the province was mainly due to the steps taken by the government under John Lawrence. This it was that led Kaye to assert that it was a happy coincidence for England that John Lawrence was the ruler of the province.⁵

Kaye began his last volume with a description of the state of affairs at the seat of the government in Calcutta. The main question of the day was whether the rebellion would threaten the very existence of the British empire in India. Canning thought that the mutiny had escalated into a popular uprising, but could do nothing

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. I, pp.57-58.

2. Ibid., vol. II, p.417.

3. Ibid., p.426.

4. Malik, Salahuddin, op.cit., p.349.

5. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol. II, p.463.

except to collect all the resources with vigour and promptitude. As Canning's defender, Kaye pleaded that he was neither indifferent to the Press, nor to the European community. On the other hand, the calm, courage and magnanimity displayed by him were deserving of full praise. Kaye contrasted Canning with Dalhousie when he asserted that Canning was right to disregard views which oscillated between vengeance and groundless panic. Under the prevailing circumstances, Kaye also regarded Canning as justified in imposing censorship on the Press, which had become a cause of extreme vexation.¹

Kaye argued that the outbreak of Barrackpur and Berhampur had already produced a stir in the neighbouring province of Bihar, and the dissatisfied sections were looking forward to defying the government. The return of the mutinous Sepoys to their homes in this province further aggravated the situation. In addition, there was the ferment created by the Wahabi movement which had spread its network to many important centres in the northern part of the country.² It is true that while dealing with the Patna Conspiracy of 1845 in the earlier portion of his work, Kaye had only briefly touched on the question of Wahabis' role behind the Conspiracy.³ And, indeed, this has been recently pointed out by Qeyamuddin Ahmad.⁴ But, at the same time, one cannot fail to notice how distinctly clear he had become on the question of the activities of the Wahabis when he took up

1. *Ibid.*, pp.12-25.

2. *Ibid.*, pp.61-63.

3. *Ibid.*, vol.1, pp.304-305.

4. Ahmad, Qeyamuddin, The Wahabi Movement in India (Calcutta, 1966), p.159.

the issue of dissatisfaction in Bihar here. He observed:

Then there was the great city of Patna, which had for long years been a not unreasonable source of suspicion and mistrust to the ruling authorities. Mahomedanism was strong and rampant at Patna; and it was the most active kind of Mahomedanism, for there we saw the followers of the Prophet in the rejuvenescence of Wahabism. ¹

Kaye emphasised that the twin-tasks of maintaining peace and suppressing the dissatisfaction were efficiently handled by the Commissioner of Patna. He vindicated Taylor's orders for disarming the native regiments and urged that the city of Patna and the surrounding districts could be saved from open manifestation of rebellion, largely because of the vigilance and resolution shown by the Commissioner.² The way Kaye praised Taylor and vindicated his orders, shows that he, in his characteristic way, saw Taylor as a hero of the true stamp.

Kaye asserted that Kunwar Singh had precipitated the convulsions because of his personal dissatisfaction with the government.³ It may be pointed out here that the recent explanation of the circumstances with which Kunwar Singh was confronted at the time, supports the validity of Kaye's treatment in outline.⁴ Nevertheless, what is noteworthy in this is that Kaye saw heroes only in Englishmen. Thus, Kunwar Singh, in his view, became "a hero and a deliverer" only because

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.iii, p.63.

2. Ibid., pp.64-66.

3. Ibid., p.99.

4. Datta, K.K., Biography of Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh (K.P. Jayasbal Research Institute, Patna, 1957), pp.36-58.

of a reaction of sentiment.¹

On the other hand, Kaye saw Vincent Eyre's defence of Arrah as a memorable example of gallant relief. With two hundred and twenty men, and three guns, Eyre, he emphasised, not only relieved the besieged European residents of Arrah, but also followed that up by attacking Jagdishpur, the stronghold of Kunwar Singh.² Thus, Kaye assigned the credit for suppressing the rebellion in Bihar to the actions of William Taylor and Vincent Eyre.

Kaye argued that at no other place there was such a close relationship between the military class and the rest of the population as in the case of the north-western provinces. The provinces, he continued, included the three important divisions of the army - Meerut, Kanpur and Sagur, and comprised "warlike population". Any movement among the former was, therefore, likely to draw the support of the latter.³ He stressed that it was this alliance between the army and the agricultural classes that provided the basis for a popular uprising in the province. He emphasised that the outbreaks at Aligarh, Etawa, Mynapur, Mathura, Bhuratpur, Muzaffarnagar and several other places in the Rohil Khund division, bore clear manifestation of the defiance of British authority.⁴ As he observed: "It was soon apparent throughout the districts that there was an uneasy restless feeling among the people and that the national heart was turned against the English".⁵ Over and

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.iii, p.97.

2. Ibid., pp.124-125.

3. Ibid., pp.194-195.

4. Ibid., pp.211-291.

5. Ibid., p.251.

above this, he was keen to emphasise that the sources for these remarks were "derived from the official reports of our own civil officers".¹

But the situation in central India and Rajputana, Kaye held, was different from that of the north-western province. This was, in his view, largely because of the loyalty shown by the native princes in those regions.² The ruler of Gwalior, Sindhia was one of the first native rulers to pledge his loyalty to the government.³

Kaye took the view that Holkar of Indore was another pillar of strength and maintained his allegiance even amidst the threats from the Insurgents.⁴ He also stressed that the friendly attitude of the prince and the magnitude of the crisis demanded an unflinching support from the British agent in the Court. But Colonel H.M. Durand, who was officiating as the agent, showed a lack of foresight and sound judgment. Thus, Durand, in Kaye's view, was not justified in abandoning the Residency, especially when the succours from the adjoining area were about to reach him.⁵

Kaye asserted that the tranquillity in Rajputana was the result of the good faith with which the Rajput states viewed the British influence. Moreover, unlike H.M. Durand, Pethic Lawrence, as the agent, took every opportunity to placate

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1. *Ibid.*, p.305. See Chaudhuri, S.B., *op.cit.*, pp.3-4. Dr. Chaudhury observes that the accounts of the contemporary Government officers were not utilised by Kaye.
 2. Kaye, J.W., *The Sepoy War*, vol.iii, p.309.
 3. *Ibid.*, p.313.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp.340-341.
 5. *Ibid.*, pp.342-347.

the suspicions and win over promises of friendly support.¹ It is of interest to note that his view of the sense of security which prevailed in the minds of the Rajas, as well as the comparative peace in this province, seems valid in the light of recent research on the subject. Thus, R. K. Mathur holds that the Rajput princes felt secure against the external and internal dangers under the British paramountcy, and consequently, thought it prudent to cast their lot with the British.²

So far as Jhansi was concerned, Kaye expressed the view that the State had been seething with discontent in view of its unjust annexation. As he remarked: "It was, perhaps, the worst of all his (Dalhousie) annexations".³ Another point which drew Kaye's attention, side by side with his appraisal of the situation, was that of the failure in proper handling of the crisis by the Lieutenant-Governor, John Colvin. To put it in his own words: "He saw district after district, under his government, passing away from him ... But he could do little to save the country or to rescue our people".⁴ Kaye attributed Colvin's indecision and lack of promptitude of action to his failing health.⁵

As has been seen, Kaye had all along concerned himself with the question of Oudh. He had argued that the problem of misgovernment in Oudh could have been

1. Ibid., pp.350-358.

2. Mathur, R.K., 'Indian mutiny and the States of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaipur', Journal of Indian History, vol.xlviii, Part II, August 1970, pp.357-376.

3. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, vol.iii, p.360.

4. Ibid., p.414.

5. Ibid., p.415.

solved without amalgamating its revenues with those of the empire. His reason was that this would have given a "sort of integrity of its own" to the province.¹ Implicit in Kaye's assumption was his dislike for sweeping change, and this, indeed, guided the whole gamut of his enquiry. It was against this background that he argued here that the authorities in Oudh had shown no patience for the slower processes of change. As he observed: "We are in too great a hurry to do good after our own fashion. And so we introduce sudden changes, which the people rarely understand, and often resent, until resentment grows into a resistance".² At the same time, he saw clear linkage between these changes and the grievances of the aristocracy in Oudh. The analysis of the grievances which he made here was typical of that which he had made earlier while describing the new settlement operations in the north-western provinces. In fact, he made it clear at the very outset that not only the new administration of Oudh was entrusted to "experienced civilians" from the north-western provinces, but they were also instructed to introduce the system of north-western provinces in Oudh.³ Thus, as on the former occasion, Kaye asserted that it was not realised that the people in India have no voice: "What our Statesmen, in such a case, should have considered was, not the feeling engendered by the revolution in the rural population, but the resentments which it was likely to arouse in the breasts of the influential classes of the community".⁴ He maintained

1. Ibid., vol. I, p.145.

2. Ibid., vol. III, p.427.

3. Ibid., pp.417-418.

4. Ibid., p.418.

that if James Outram had continued in his office, or if a man of Henry Lawrence's temperament had been placed at the head of the new administration, "they might have gradually accommodated the scheme to the changing habits of the people".¹

But it was only when the situation had considerably deteriorated that Henry Lawrence was called upon to take the charge of the office of Chief Commissioner, and to conciliate those dissatisfied with the government. Lawrence, Kaye urged, knew that he had come too late.² Kaye emphasised that, although Lawrence was clear in his mind about the dangers which surrounded the province, he did not precipitate the crisis by unnecessary exhibition of fear and suspicion. Indeed, Lawrence, Kaye stressed, showed great caution and moderation while dealing with the precautionary measures.³

Kaye saw the revolt in Oudh as pre-planned.⁴ Thus, the uprising in the capital provided the signal for similar outbreaks elsewhere in the province. Several cities such as Sitapur, Faizabad, Sultanpur followed Lucknow one after another.⁵ He stressed that there was evidence of "general design and consistency" and the mutineers aimed at the end of British rule in the province.⁶ He observed: "Oude, so lately annexed by the British, had now to be conquered by them".⁷ The only

1. Ibid., p.428.

2. Ibid., pp.428-429.

3. Ibid., pp.430-438.

4. Ibid., pp.440-443.

5. Ibid., pp.452-482.

6. Ibid., p.452.

7. Ibid.

course left after the battle of Chīnhat was to concentrate in the Residency.¹

During the *siege* which followed, Henry Lawrence never betrayed any sign of diffidence, and gallantly faced the challenges. Despite ill-health, Kaye emphasised, he personally looked after every arrangement and visited all the posts.² Lawrence was mortally wounded by a shell which burst in his room while he was engaged in transacting the normal business.³ Thus, Henry Lawrence, in Kaye's view, had died mindful of his duties even until the last moment. His death came as an irreparable loss and cast a gloom over everyone in the Residency.⁴

It was in the remaining two chapters of the work that Kaye resumed the narrative of the *siege* operations in Delhi, which he had left at the end of the second volume of his History. The preparations for *storming Delhi* had been nearly completed with the arrival of the succours from the Panjab. Kaye argued that the *siege* was now pressed with greater vigour and determination, under men like Neville Chamberlain, Baird Smith, Alexander Taylor and John Nicholson. The arrival of the *siege* guns, Kaye asserted, had created such an enthusiasm that if General Wilson had wavered at this time, his subordinates would have gone to the extent of electing a new successor.⁵ Again, Baird Smith was no doubt the chief brain behind the operations, but the project would not have been satisfactorily executed if there was a less able officer than Alexander Taylor.⁶ Thus, Kaye regarded both Baird Smith

1. Ibid., pp.503-509.

2. Ibid., pp.510-515.

3. Ibid., pp.515-516.

4. Ibid., pp.519-521.

5. Ibid., pp.545-550.

6. Ibid., pp.557-575.

and Taylor as the architects who were responsible for finalising the plans of storming Delhi.

The capture of Delhi marked the climax of the event, as well as the last chapter of his Sepoy War. Kaye implied that the object was very great, for it was not so much the fate of Delhi as the fate of British rule in India which hung in the balance on its results. In his characteristic way, Kaye saw John Nicholson as a true hero.¹ John Nicholson, like his other heroes, "knew how to do the right thing at the right time".²

Another point which drew Kaye's attention was that which followed the capture of the city. Kaye thought that the retribution would have been logical and just, if only those guilty were made to suffer. But this was not the case. As he observed: "Many innocent men were shot down or otherwise massacred".³ The slaughter was followed by plunder and spoliation during the first few days of the English occupation. It is noteworthy that Kaye saw no defence whatever for the murder of the Mughal princes. He regarded Captain Hodson's summary execution of the princes as unjustifiable and inhuman. He wrote: "But after a full consideration of the incident as thus recorded and accepted, I cannot resist the conviction that Hodson, in thus stripping and shooting the Princes, committed an act which no good man can, at this distance of time, approve".⁴ Implicit in Kaye's criticism of Hodson's conduct was the view that one wrong would not however, justify another.

1. Ibid., p.658.

2. Ibid., p.660.

3. Ibid., p.636.

4. Ibid., p.651.

Though the house of the Mughals might have intrigued against the British, it was equally wrong to execute the suspects without any satisfactory proof. Kaye was keen to emphasise that the lesson to be drawn from the historical experience of the Sepoy War was not to become overbearing and merciless, but rather to reflect with cool temper on a moderate course of action which could put an end to the mutual distrust between the ruler and the ruled. Kaye was, as in his other work, concerned to suggest courses of action for the future. Thus, as the historian of the Sepoy War, Kaye aimed to serve two masters - the past and the present.

It will have been seen that Kaye started with the theory that the mutiny was the result of mistaken policies, policies which he had previously criticised in his writings; the mutiny was defeated by Christian heroes of the sort he had praised in his other writings; the mutiny contained lessons for the present and the future. His work, in short, reflected his characteristic approach. He took the phenomenon of "excessive Englishism" as the starting point of his analysis, because he wished to convey that this was the main cause of the event. Other factors were, therefore, of limited significance. He showed a remarkable skill in tracing the history of increasing tensions between the privileged classes and the English rule. It was because of this that the link of social communion that formerly existed between the English and the Indian aristocracy gradually disappeared. A similar spirit of exclusiveness had, in course of time, come to characterise the attitude of the English officers towards the native Sepoys in the army. Again, there was a failure to understand the psychology of the Sepoy, whose pay and prospects did not compare favourably with those of his English colleagues. As was inevitable, the Sepoy, who knew that the government depended on his allegiance for the stability of the

empire, came to lose his confidence in the good faith of the government.

Therefore, when it was rumoured that the government aimed at spreading Christianity at the cost of their religion, the Sepoys were no longer in a mood to listen. The issue of the greased cartridge only added fuel to the smouldering fire. When the crisis began, it became a fight between the new and the old order trying to reassert itself. In other words, one may say that it would be difficult to deny the plausibility of his analysis of the causes of the uprising.

Between the inherent difficulties of the task enhanced by the multiplicity of events, and his conscious desire to omit nothing worthy of record, Kaye produced a vivid picture through an episodic treatment of the subject. Needless to say, ever since the outbreak, there had been no such attempt to present a comprehensive picture by fusing analysis with the narrative. In fact, if an analysis of the factors of discontent was necessary to determine the genesis of the event, a narrative was also necessary, to explain its nature in the light of the actual occurrences.¹ In particular, as mentioned earlier, Kaye regarded this explanation as central to the understanding of the whole of its history.

He did not regard the outburst as a mere military affair. He had, in fact, subjected developments to a minute and dispassionate analysis in order to find out their true nature. Thus, at the outset, he found the revolt a military affair prompted indirectly by vague apprehensions among the people. But, later on, it had changed its character and assumed the shape of popular rebellion in certain

1. For narrative in history, see Dray, W.H., 'On the nature and role of narrative in historiography', History and Theory, vol.X, 1971, pp.153-171.

places such as the north-western provinces and Oudh, owing to the widespread nature of the dissatisfaction among the people. Strangely enough, it is seldom appreciated that Kaye was the first writer on the topic to have advanced this view on the basis of the evidence drawn from the reports of the contemporary officials in these provinces. The title of the work - A History of the Sepoy War - was thus not euphemistic, but suggestive of the picture that Kaye had striven to present.

It is true that if Kaye was clear about the causes and the extent of the crisis, he was also equally clear about the glory that surrounded its suppression. It provided a running theme for the narrative portion of his History, and linked the subsequent developments with the earlier part without destroying the overall harmony of the work.

Thus, once the realisation about the crisis came in the English mind, dormant qualities were awakened. The struggle which initially seemed foredoomed to failure gradually changed its direction, and the superiority of the English character gallantly fought the challenges to victory. This combination of caution and praise was basic in his interpretation, and provided a source of unity to his History. As an experienced writer, Kaye was perhaps aware of the fact that unless the story was told with full dramatic force, it would not be generally listened to. The root of his success lay in his ability to combine both these aspects as an interpreter and a narrator. Nevertheless, as the canvas Kaye had opened was made up of a balance, there was never too much colour in any part of the work.

1. For a recent example of this tendency, see Chaudhuri, S.B., op.cit., pp.3-4.

The recognition accorded to Kaye, though enduring in nature, was hard-earned. The subject was too popular to escape notice by contemporary reviewers. As the three volumes had appeared at an interval of several years, they engaged the attention of the critics on different occasions during a period of twelve years. It appears that the reviewers comprised men of different shades of opinion. Consequently, they took up their task from the point of view that they cherished. On the whole, they were at one in regarding the work as one of the most remarkable attempts which had hitherto been made towards writing the history of the event. They also agreed that the work had produced grave materials for reflection.

The reviewer of The British Quarterly Review hailed the rich information, captivating style, and candid spirit of the work that had presented a graphic picture of the event. He believed that no other writer could have had access to such abundant materials. In his opinion, the book displayed "such delicate reticence combined with such fearless outspokenness".¹

Like the British Quarterly reviewer, the reviewer of The Westminster Review was emphatic in his eulogy. He began by emphasising Kaye's superior qualifications for the task he had undertaken. As he observed:

To us he appears admirably qualified for the task - qualified by experience and knowledge - qualified by sobriety of judgment and enlightened impartiality - qualified, finally, by ample command of material and ability to shape it into narrative vigorously written, clearly arranged, sustainedly interesting. 2

1. British Quarterly Review, Vol. XLI, January - April 1865, p.37.

2. Westminster Review, Vol.83, January - April 1865, New Series XXVII, p.316.

He welcomed the volume and hoped that "a trustworthy" and "authoritative" account of the Sepoy War would be available as soon as the work was completed.¹

The reviewer in The Saturday Review began by reminding the readers that contemporary history should be judged upon the word of the person who narrated it. This was because whether what he had narrated was true or false could be ascertained only in the light of subsequent researches. For the present, "Kaye's testimony", he observed, "is the best evidence".² He admitted that there was no other book which contained so much information on the subject of recent Indian policy. The root of the reviewer's scepticism regarding the work lay in Kaye's delineation of Dalhousie's character. However, as he had emphasised himself, he left the question open for ascertainment in the light of the researches to be made in the future.³

On the other hand, the reviewer of the Edinburgh Review, took a view that despite much time and labour which Kaye had devoted to tracing back the causes of the outbreak, he had not been successful in arriving at the truth regarding the character of the uprising. With few exceptions, said the Edinburgh reviewer, Kaye's analysis revealed an attempt at "ingenious word-painting" without the slightest real groundwork.⁴ The reason why the reviewer was critical of Kaye was that the ^{reviewer} did not regard the outbreak to be anything more than a military mutiny.

1. Ibid., p.317. For a review of the second volume, see Westminster Review, Vol.94, July - October 1870, New Series XXXVIII, pp.514-515.
2. Saturday Review, 24 December 1864, p.778.
3. Ibid., p.779.
4. Edinburgh Review, October 1866, p.331.

As he observed: "Mr. Kaye, in short, regards the rising as a rebellion of the people of India; to us, it appears to have been merely a military mutiny".¹

The Athenaeum's reviewer regarded it as gratifying that a topic of such a vast importance as "the great Indian mutiny" had found an able historian. He compared Kaye's efforts to that of Gibbon who had written the history of the decline and fall of the Roman empire.² He emphasised that Kaye had chosen the right time to publish his History, because the passage of the hour of immediate reaction was necessary for an objective treatment. He accepted the author's contention that English policy had of late greatly separated the people from the government. He suggested, therefore, that the work was worthy of careful attention.³

Like the English press, the book attracted wide notice from the Indian press. It is interesting to note that the Calcutta Review, which had hitherto favourably reviewed all of Kaye's work, regarded the present work as marred by a want of plain speaking. The reviewer took the view that Kaye's aim was merely to narrate and not to teach. He thought that the account of the causes which prepared the way for the mutiny was clearly set forth, but, at the same time, Kaye had shrunk from critically examining the conduct of the Governor-General. Kaye, the reviewer argued, proved that Canning was aware of the danger, but, on the other hand, he could not show that Canning acted better when the time came.⁴

1. Ibid., p.300.

2. Athenaeum, 5 November 1864, p.596.

3. Ibid., p.598.

4. Calcutta Review, vol.XLI, 1865, pp.95-113.

The Friend of India, on the other hand, viewed the work as a memorable one. The reviewer suggested that there might be scope for difference of opinion, but, on the whole, the conclusions were beyond dispute. He contended that no one was better fitted than Kaye to write a history of the event. In his view, the labour and patience which Kaye had bestowed on the work could be favourably compared with those of Macaulay and Alison.¹

Thus, despite some criticisms regarding Kaye's eulogy of Canning and the nature of the outbreak, the general view with regard to the first two volumes of the work was that they were remarkable productions.² Most of the reviewers opined that Kaye had broken new ground by revealing stores of information hitherto inaccessible to the public.

The last volume of the work aroused much controversy. This was not surprising. Kaye had remarked in the preface that some of his assertions might appear unpleasant. He consoled himself with the reflection that "the historian who shrinks from controversy has mistaken his vocation".³ His statements, he emphasised, were supported by evidence which had come to the surface in the course of his enquiry.⁴ It is clear, therefore, that Kaye had knowingly ventured into the field of controversy.⁵

1. Friend of India, 22 December 1864.

2. For reviews on the second volume, see Contemporary Review, Vol.15, August - November 1870, pp.293-296; British Quarterly Review, Vol.LII, July - October 1870, pp.510-515; Edinburgh Review, Vol.CXXXIII, January 1871, pp.90-91. Also Friend of India, 8 September 1870.

3. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, Vol.III, Preface, p.vii.

4. Ibid., pp.vi-vii.

5. Ibid., pp.v-vi.

The controversy mainly centred around criticisms which Kaye had made about the conduct of Henry Durand in Indore, and about Hodson's actions against the Mughal princes. The criticism against Kaye's remarks on H.M. Durand were set forth in a pamphlet entitled, 'Central India in 1857', which appeared in 1876.¹ The writer, Henry Durand, son of Col. H.M. Durand, regarded Kaye's allegations that Durand had shown unwanted haste and did not extend support to Holkar, as baseless. On the other hand, he argued that the retreat from Indore was made in view of political considerations. Durand also contended that Kaye should not have relied on Robert Hamilton's information, because he was not a safe guide as he had been H.M. Durand's immediate predecessor.

Apart from these criticisms,² there was a note of disapproval in a section of the press both in England and India over the treatment which Hodson had met at Kaye's hands. Hodson's defenders argued that by punishing the Mughal princes who had been intriguing against the Government, Hodson had actually advanced the cause of justice.³ They pleaded that Kaye was unjustified in denigrating Hodson as an inhuman killer.⁴

Due to serious illness,⁵ Kaye was not in a position to answer these criticisms

1. Durand, Henry, Central India in 1857, Being an answer to Sir John Kaye's Criticisms on the Conduct of the late Sir Henry Marion Durand whilst in charge of Central India during the Mutiny (London, 1876).
2. For a discussion in the press on Durand's allegations, see 'Central India in 1857', Calcutta Review, Vol.LXII, 1876, pp.353-359; Times of India Overland Weekly Edition, 1 September 1876.
3. Standard, 20 January 1876.
4. Examiner, 1 April 1876; Also Times of India, 31 January 1876: 'Letter from the Military Correspondent'.
5. For Kaye's illness, Homeward Mail, 22 May 1876.

himself. His brother, Ernest Kaye, however, sent a letter to the Times asking those not satisfied with his brother's remarks to be patient and wait until he had recovered and could reply. Though not denying the need for revisions in the writing of contemporary history, Ernest Kaye argued that such revisions could be made only when the assertions were not substantiated by facts. He alluded to Kaye's authorities and suggested that their evidence could not be given up merely because they had excited controversy.¹

Side by side with these criticisms came the usual chorus of praise, which characterised the earlier two volumes. No wonder, then, that the critics had expressed their dissatisfaction with some particular remarks, but not with the book as a whole. The reviewer of the Examiner, in fact, suggested that Kaye had no bias against any individual.² Allen's Indian Mail's reviewer went further "those who remember the circumstances of Sir H. Durand's flight from Indore will thank him for his just vindication of Holkar and Captain Hungerford at Sir Henry's expense".³ What Kaye had produced was a sufficient proof of his "praiseworthy conviction of what he owed alike to himself and the public".⁴ The reviewer of Home News was unequivocal in his praise. He held that Kaye had been successful in giving a very clear picture of the developments which were at once characterised by horror, pathos,

1. The Times, 21 June 1876, also Allen's Indian Mail, 11 July, 1876.

2. Examiner, 25 March 1876.

3. Allen's Indian Mail, 3 January 1876.

4. Ibid.

and grandeur.¹ He believed that the last volume was the "most interesting of the three".² Like Home News, the Homeward Mail saw no reason to doubt that it was the "most brilliant volume of the three".³

A striking contrast with the praise accorded by such reviewers was provided by the observations of G.B. Malleson, who was later asked to continue and complete the work.⁴ It appears that Malleson was able to appreciate only the first and the second volumes of Kaye's work. As he had begun his account from the close of the second volume of Kaye's History, he wished to explain why he had ignored the third volume of the work. His argument was that he differed from Kaye on some "essential points".⁵ Though Malleson himself stressed this, in the course of his remarks in the preface he referred only to Kaye's views on the wisdom of the actions taken by the Government in India during the early days of the mutiny as a point of disagreement. It seems that Malleson carefully avoided any further explanation, because he thought that this might raise doubts of the propriety of his continuing the work of an author with whom he disagreed on many general assumptions. As, however, it would be only by looking at their differences, that one could understand the respective nature of their contributions, it is necessary to briefly examine them here. As has been seen, the manner in which Malleson had summed up his assessment of the

1. Home News, 28 January 1876.

2. Ibid.

3. Homeward Mail, 3 January 1876.

4. Malleson did not explain who asked him to undertake the project. See Malleson, G.B., History of the Indian Mutiny, 1857-1858, Vol. I (Second edition, London, 1878) Preface to the first edition, p.vii.

5. Ibid., p.viii.

uprising in his pamphlet, not only reflected the excitement of the moment of immediate reaction, but also showed how he ignored the fact that there were some vital questions, such as the dominant spirit of westernization and the policy of annexation which characterised the atmosphere at that time.

At the same time, Malleon had selected a pseudonym - "One who has served under Sir Charles Napier" - which revealed that his predilections were strikingly in accordance with those who had supported the policy of annexation and westernization.¹ Thus, it is not difficult to see that Malleon, unlike Kaye, only partially recanted when he criticised the annexation of Oudh. As one who sympathised with Ellenborough and Napier, Malleon's attitude was bound to be different from that of Kaye, who criticised them. What is remarkable is that it determined Malleon's approach as a historian and made him disinclined to try to assimilate the whole picture as it developed in India during the years before the mutiny. As a result, Malleon looked at the event mainly through the eyes of the present and judged the main actors and their actions according to those assumptions which he shared with others at this time. Kaye, on the other hand, saw the crisis primarily as the result of past policies based upon a belief in westernization and territorial expansion, and judged the men largely according to whether they helped or hindered these processes. In addition, of course, Kaye tried to analyse the progress of these events in a proper historical perspective and the insight which guided his enquiry certainly reflected a more sober understanding of events than that of Malleon.

1. Malleon, G.B., The Mutiny of the Bengal Army - By One who has served under Sir Charles Napier (London, 1857).

As a contemporary, Malleſon knew of the favourable reception of Kaye's earlier volumes. But he alſo knew of thoſe criticisms which had been viewed by a ſection of the Preſs regarding the laſt volume of hiſ work. It is clear that Malleſon agreed with ſome of theſe criticisms, becauſe they were in conformity with thoſe points which he had made earlier regarding miſmanagement and the government's failure in handling the ſituation during the early phaſe of the mutiny. At the ſame time, there were other reaſons, too, for Malleſon's diſagreement. Thus, unlike Kaye, who regarded the annexation of Jhansī as "the worſt of all hiſ (Dalhouſie) annexations," and ſuggeſted that the Ranī was drawn into rebellion becauſe of her unjuſt treatment at the hands of the Britiſh authorities,¹ Malleſon ſaw neither any injuſtice in the annexation of the State nor any other ground for the Ranī's conduct, except that "the perſonal indignity was that which rankled the moſt deeply in the breaſt of thiſ high-ſpirited lady, and made her hail with gratitude the ſymptoms of diſaffection".² Similarly, on the queſtion of Colonel H.M. Durand's actions in Central India, Malleſon, unlike Kaye, ſupported Durand's conduct in Indore and juſtified hiſ deciſion to leave the city.³ Againſt the background of theſe differences, it is hardly ſurpriſing that Malleſon ſhould have choſen to re-write the laſt volume of Kaye's History.⁴

One the whole, the appeal of the work was apparent. Kaye wanted to be

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War in India, Vol.III, p.360.

2. Malleſon, G.B., History of the Indian Mutiny, pp.181-183.

3. Ibid., pp.225-237.

4. Malleſon's attempt was viewed as an act of ſupererogation. See Showers, C.L., Indian History and Colonel G.B. Malleſon, Being a Correspondence between the author of "Kaye Re-written" and Major General C.L. Showers (London, 1881); Alſo ſee Friend of India, 8 February 1878, p.131.

read and he was. A work of exacting and scrupulous scholarship as it was, it ushered in a new era of writings on the mutiny and set that pattern which mutiny-historians later, consciously or unconsciously, followed. The vast mass of mutiny literature produced on the spur of the moment, by and large, represented a vague immediate reaction to the event. Kaye was the first historian to attempt a calmer appraisal of different aspects of the outbreak on the basis of a systematic and critical use of published and ^{un}published sources. As a contemporary, Kaye was aware of the imperfections of the picture that had been hitherto painted of the event. He had, therefore, begun his enquiry only when he became convinced in his mind that he could pursue it more objectively.

Admitting the primacy of objectivity for the purpose of a historical understanding, Kaye preceded his analysis by a methodological introduction. It was here that he set forth those principles on which the work was based. It is true that as he lived into the era of scientific history,¹ his basic approach followed the patterns of the historical thought of the age. He had grappled with a vast range of sources, and the lasting value of his contribution as a painstaking researcher has been confirmed by the subsequent researches on the subject.

If his successes as a researcher provided the foundation of the work, his outlook and assumptions determined the framework of the analysis he made. The tragic experience of the event through which he had lived could not but affect his view of the progress of the Company's rule in India. Though not abandoning his appreciation for the old Company, Kaye was convinced that the history of its rule during the

1. Stern, Fritz, The Varieties of History, from Voltaire to the Present (London, 1970), p.16.

years preceding the outbreak was such that it could not ^{be} resuscitated without expressing a note of disapproval. He regarded the Sepoy War as the natural conclusion to the measures of socio-political intervention. As he observed: "It was in the over-eager pursuit of Humanity and Civilization that the Indian Statesmen of the New School were betrayed into the excesses which have been so grievously visited upon the nation",¹

Ever since the publication of his History of the War in Afghanistan, self-criticism and a desire to inform the British public towards India by elucidating its past were central to Kaye's conception of the functions of an Anglo-Indian historian. The implicit idea behind his emphasis on self-understanding was the concern for the safety of the empire. This subjective realisation was linked largely with his own experience of India and its administration and the affinity which he had developed with the views and the opinions of the Indian administrators of the "old school".² Like his idols of the old school, Kaye held that the native polity had an intrinsic merit of its own. His view was further reinforced by the findings he had made in the course of his researches. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that during his career as an official at the India Office, Kaye was consistently opposed to a line of policy which preached annexation and disregard for native rights and customs. For instance, he vigorously supported the restoration of native rule in Mysore.³ There is no

1. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, Preface to the First Volume, p.xii.

2. For Kaye's views on the Old School, see Kaye to John Law, 26 September 1871, MSS. Eur. A.71; Also Kaye to John Lawrence, 26 October 1873, Kaye's Confidential Letter Book, L/PSC/Misc/19.

3. See Kaye's memorandum on Mysore, 10 October 1862, L/P&C/8/10; Also his memorandum on the Chiefs of Rajputana, 28 December 1861, L/P&C/6/274.

doubt that the scepticism which formed the background of the work and mirrored the whole framework of his enquiry, was one which he shared with many of the prominent Anglo-Indian administrators of the day.¹ Thus, history in Kaye's eyes was not merely a conglomeration of facts, but a coherent whole in which the author's imaginative insight played an equally vital role.

As a supporter of the principles of non-intervention and moderation in Indian affairs, Kaye was naturally keen to prove that the Sepoy War was the result of widespread discontent and that its roots lay in the policies and the methods which the government had adopted in the past. In other words, the "excesses" of the new school had made its outbreak inevitable. In this sense, the significance of the work also lay in its being a comprehensive essay on the conflicting tendencies of the period which characterised the last years of the Company's rule in India.

It was, indeed, typical of Kaye to approach the world of history by way of a study of individuals. He wrote: "If it be true that the best history is that which most nearly resembles a bundle of biographies, it is especially true when said with reference to Indian history".² In this respect, his view of history was an analogue of Carlyle's.³ His interest in the biographies of the leading Anglo-Indians of his age was a clear reflection of the seriousness of this attitude. As part of this view, Kaye made much use of character portrayal in his study of the Sepoy War.

1. See Metcalfe's views on the instability of the empire. Kaye, J.W., Life of Metcalfe (revised edition, 1858), vol.ii, pp.73-74.

2. Kaye, J.W., The Sepoy War, Preface to the First Volume, p.xii.

3. Stem, Fritz, op.cit., pp.90-107.

The result was most apparent in his delineation of Dalhousie's character and policy. If Dalhousie, in his view, was distinguished by a lack of far-sightedness, Canning was portrayed as the practical man of affairs whose main quality was his clear-sightedness. A similar emphasis on character portrayal could also be seen in his treatment of other actors on the scene, such as Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence and John Nicholson. It would indeed be difficult to find any occasion when he had failed to convey his impression of the leading characteristics of the individuals who drew his attention. Nevertheless, if he paid attention to the "individualities" of these men, at the same time, he never yielded to the temptation to concentrate on individuals to the exclusion of general forces. Thus, his Dalhousie was but a representative of the age which was characterised by "excessive Englishism". It would seem, therefore, that the clue to his understanding of the Sepoy War lay in this balance with which he viewed the interaction between the leading personalities and the events of the day.

There is no doubt that as the most skilful and patient of all the writers who had hitherto approached the subject, Kaye made a pioneer contribution of enduring value to mutiny studies. He had distilled his extensive study and careful analysis of the event into a compact and up-to-date account of the Sepoy War. In addition, he wrote in an interesting style.

Recently, A.T. Embree argued that Kaye saw "the War as a Brahmanical protest".¹ This was because Kaye, in his view, believed that the main cause of the rebellion in 1857 was fear on the part of the Brahmans of the innovations intro-

1. Embree, A.T. (ed.), 1857 in India. Mutiny or War of Independence? (D.C. Heath, Boston, 1963), p.27.

duced by the British." ¹ But this is a very limited view and fails to convey the wider explanation that Kaye offered in his book. As a matter of fact, none of the contemporary writers had aimed at describing all the factors leading to the episode as clearly and systematically as Kaye did. In so doing, Kaye had, in fact, provided a basis for the future reappraisal of the event. As has been seen, Kaye took up the point of the disaffection among the Hindus and Muslims only after he had given a detailed picture of the resentment which prevailed among the aristocracy of the country, in the wake of the expansionist policy of the government at this time. Again, if one looks at the other side, one may clearly see that Kaye never believed that only the Brahmanas had grievances against the government. What Kaye emphasised was that the socio-religious policy of the government had aroused apprehension both among Hindus and Muslims. The Brahmanas and the Moulvis, Kaye stressed, were particularly concerned about these changes, in view of the positions they occupied as religious leaders in their communities. ²

On the other hand, the manner in which Kaye summed up the causation of the Sepoy War has remained largely unchallenged. The nature of the outbreak has continued to be variously approached by the scholars in recent years. R.C. Majumdar takes the view that what began as a mutiny ended in certain areas in an upheaval among the civil population. He rejects the view that it was a war of independence and finds no signs of political motive behind the people taking up arms against the government. ³ Harprasad Chattopadhyaya holds a similar view

1. Ibid.

2. See supra, pp.278-279.

3. Majumdar, R.C., The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857 (Calcutta, 1963), Preface to the Second edition, pp.1-iv.

and sees no evidence of a popular upsurge among the people.¹ A sharp challenge to Majumdar and Chattopadhyaya came from S.B. Chaudhuri. S.B. Chaudhuri emphasises the popular character of the outbreak and adduces evidences to prove his contention from the contemporary official records.² S.N. Sen, unlike Majumdar and Chaudhuri, considers that the mutiny assumed the shape of a popular rebellion only in Oudh and Sahabad.³

Kaye's significance as a historian of the subject lay in the fact that he provided a basis on which later researchers could expand their findings and build up their interpretations. It is not surprising, therefore, that J. B. Harrison notes that "Kaye's work - continued by Malleson, is still a standard authority".⁴ We may also accept his comment: "in Kaye's part noted for the care with evidence".⁵ Indeed, one has only to look at the works of some recent scholars to realise how Kaye's analysis has been used with profit both by those who regarded the upheaval as a mutiny, and by those who emphasised its popular character. R.C. Majumdar praises Kaye as "the great historian of the mutiny",⁶ and S.B. Chaudhuri is also much impressed by Kaye's work.⁷

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1. Chattopadhyaya, Harprasad, The Sepoy Mutiny, 1857. A Social Study and Analysis (Calcutta, 1957), pp.157-199.
 2. Chaudhuri, S.B., Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies (Calcutta, 1957), pp.xviii-xix.
 3. Sen, S.N., Eighteen-Fifty-Seven (New Delhi, 1957), pp.399-412.
 4. Harrison, J.B., "The Indian Mutiny", The Historical Association (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), p.12.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Majumdar, R.C., The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857 (Calcutta, 1962), p.77.
 7. Chaudhuri, S.B., Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, pp.xviii-xix.

Despite his emphasis on Kaye's failure to critically examine Nell's actions, S.N. Sen, too, considers his contribution as the most comprehensive one.¹ We may also note Colin Welch: "It is not often that the most thorough, judicious and profound account of an event like the mutiny is published within six years of its close. Kaye's work is an exception"²

Kaye's own testimony, as revealed in his letter to General G. Jacob, written during the year of his death, might be quoted here to show how the work was the natural outcome of his thought. He wrote:

I feel with you that it is a real evil that so great a (reputed) authority as The Times should be led so grievously astray in the path of error. I have often stated that I have reserved my summing up for its proper place in the last volume of the history. Nothing can be more weak than all that has yet been written about the purely military mutiny and if God gives me life and my present clearness of brain, I will do my best to smash it ... 3

Thus, Kaye broke new ground not merely by his massive research, but also by the ideas he offered in his work. Despite an emphasis on individuals and a love of overstatement, as displayed in his eulogy of their conduct, Kaye never subordinated history to biography. As has been seen, none of the earlier writers had studied the event in its historical context. Kaye was the first to make an attempt in this direction. He was, in fact, best suited to do this. Besides his own observations as a

1. Sen, S.N., 'Writings on the Mutiny', Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, (Oxford University Press, 1967), p.382.

2. Welch, Colin, Encounter, May 1957, 'The Indian Mutiny', p.17.

3. Quoted Homeward Mail, 14 August 1876.

contemporary, he succeeded in laying his hands on sources which had not been hitherto used, and whose trustworthiness could not be denied. At the same time, forceful and clear-sighted as he was, he displayed a rare vitality and vividness in his descriptions. At no time did the work lack that clarity and elegant style which were characteristic of him as a writer. On the other hand, the importance of the work lay in the fact that it marked the summation of Kaye's outlook and views on the history of British rule in India. Following the outbreak of 1857, Kaye was convinced that the work of restoring confidence among the Indian people was far more important than anything else that England could hope to achieve in India. In this sense, Kaye shared the uneasiness of a generation of Anglo-Indian administrators who believed in maintaining a harmonious relationship between the rulers and the ruled. In short, Kaye's view of the event was conservative, yet characteristically individual. His work expressed his critical nature and his protest against the policies of the time.

CONCLUSION

The outstanding impression of Kaye was that he was a prolific writer. Quite early in his life he made writing his life work. The relevance of the early part of his life, as has been seen, lay in what it gave him by way of a training for his subsequent career as a historian. His scope was wide - essayist, poet, novelist and journalist, as well as historian. Both as a poet and as a novelist, he reflected patterns of feeling and thought which were typical of his Anglo-Indian contemporaries. But just as his political assumptions had an important influence on his historical writing, so also do we find them in his novels, together with an autobiographical element. Indeed, the theme of India as a field for careers open to talents of young men struggling against early difficulties is apparent in his biographies, as well as in some of his novels. His main interest in his novels set in contemporary India was to point to the changing character of Anglo-Indian society - changing in a manner that accorded with his own moral assumptions - a theme he often highlighted in his subsequent articles and books. His novel set against the background of the First Afghan War likewise demonstrated his concern with a topic which he later developed in his historical work. On the other hand, the establishment of the Calcutta Review was a remarkable achievement of his career as a journalist. While serving as founder-editor, he also wrote a number of reviews and articles for the Calcutta Review. Apart from his major historical and biographical works, he frequently contributed articles to British periodicals. Judging from the numerous articles he published on Indian topics, it is evident that his articles and books were united by a common purpose: to influence policies. In the forty years of his writing

career, he was constantly engaged in the publication of one work or the other. What he produced was impressive in quality and large in quantity. Indeed, none of his Anglo-Indian contemporaries could equal him in his astonishing output.

At the same time, though Kaye was influenced by the ideological currents that formed part of the intellectual climate of his time, he did not claim himself to be an original thinker. In fact, he never explained his own conception of history. The general outlook underlying the whole gamut of his enquiry was practical and immediate. Thus, history, in his view, was mainly of use for its lessons and it was the duty of the historian to draw useful lessons from the events of the past. In other words, it was characteristic of him that he used history to teach lessons.

It was the nature of the pragmatic view of history guiding his historical endeavour that it could be the basis of criticism as well as praise: he was at the same time a critic and an admirer of the Company. The unifying idea underneath this apparent contradiction was that criticism, like praise, was a necessary precondition for the success of British rule in India. Hence, the prevailing spirit of his work was one of unity.

As much as any other Anglo-Indian writer of his generation, Kaye was involved in the continual debate that centred on the question as to how Britain should rule India. Thus, he had his own views to impart of what Indian policy should be and of how people should behave. This, as has been seen, provided the criteria for his selection, and he selected appropriate topics for his task. In general, however, there were two distinct policies enunciated throughout his writings. The first

opposed the expansionist policy on moral and financial grounds. The other criticised the speed of Westernization on the ground that it could endanger the safety of British rule. The former was the focus of his study in his Afghan War; the latter provided the framework of his enquiry in his Sepoy War. In this way, he interpreted events and the consequences of events in such a way as to reinforce the validity of the ideas he wanted to support. Thus, policies of which he approved were "successful". Those of which he disapproved were "unsuccessful". It was clearly the way which Kaye followed in his works. The Afghan War, in his view, was a "failure". He wrote to demonstrate this and discourage such policies in the future. His argument was that wars and annexations undermined people's faith in their rulers, and entailed unnecessary expenditure of public money. He wrote the Administration of the East India Company to defend the Company against the risk of its abolition. So he showed it as "successful" in its economic and social policies. He saw the Sepoy War as the result of policies of which he disapproved, and consequently focussed attention on the baneful effects of the annexationist policy and the new settlement operations in the North-western Provinces, which he thought had obliterated the native aristocracy.

However critically Kaye may have treated some of the policies followed under the Company, he was never wanting in praise either of its excellence as an administrative organisation, or for the heroic qualities of its officers. He made his mark as a defender of the Company's rule when he published his Administration of the East India Company, in which he tried to demonstrate that there had been a progressive improvement in the condition of the people under the Company's administration. Above all, he was convinced that the Company had produced a galaxy of distinguished public servants - hence his biographical studies. Herein he affirmed the

Company's progress as an institution, but at the same time, emphasised that the course of its progress was studded with the achievements of individuals. In later years, he became increasingly aware of the importance of "the old East India Company" and its men, and he gave evidence of this awareness in his preface to the Lives of Indian Officers, which appeared in 1867.¹

At the same time, Kaye was concerned to portray his subjects as supporting those principles and policies in which he himself believed. Throughout his writing career, he remained primarily interested in influencing policies, and both his historical studies and his biographies were directed to this purpose.

On the other hand, it was characteristic of Kaye as a biographer that he saw his subjects as heroes. The result of this tendency was that he sometimes overlooked their weaknesses. In his Life of Tucker, he ignored the fact that Tucker was tried and sentenced on a charge of rape. Similarly, he ignored Metcalfe's marriage with a Sikh lady, presumably because this offended against his idea of Christian marriage. Despite these omissions, Kaye made a substantial contribution to Anglo-Indian biography.

One of the most interesting and valuable features of his biographies was their use of private papers. He was able to secure a vast collection of private documents, comprising autobiographies, diaries, journals and letters, and also made contact with some of the contemporaries of his subjects for additional information of an anecdotal nature. Compared to him, his predecessors, Malcolm and

1. Kaye, J.W., Indian Officers, Vol. I, Preface, pp. xiii-xiv.

Gleig, were lacking in such a command of original sources. At the same time, he made a better use of his original sources than did Malcolm or Gleig in that he avoided quoting full letters in his text. And this served a useful purpose in maintaining a flow in his narrative. On the other hand, in comparison with his biography of Tucker, he showed signs of developing his technique of portrayal in his later biographies on Metcalfe and Malcolm in that he tried to look at Metcalfe's feelings of loneliness as well as Malcolm's want of caution.

The enduring value of Kaye's work, indeed, lay in a combination of didactic aim and scholarly techniques. A didactic aim was typical of many British writers of this period. This meant that Kaye's work was valuable for its own sake in illuminating a particular aspect of British historical writing of the time. But what distinguished him from his contemporaries was that in so doing, he also set out to discover new techniques of historical investigation. In other words, he did not abandon scholarship for the goal of his historical endeavour. He showed a great regard for evidence. He made careful search, and collected his evidence from original sources of a private as well as an official character. The wide range of his sources enabled him to improve the quality of his work. In general, he preferred private papers to official sources. The main reason was that he thought that private papers would help him to illuminate the events in a better way than the official records which he saw as directed mainly to justifying the government's policies, at least insofar as these records were made available to Parliamentary Papers.

He came to see this in his first historical work on the War in Afghanistan,

where he undermined the official version with the help of private papers. The high praise that was bestowed on his Afghan War because of his use of private papers gave him confidence in his practice, and he continued to hold to this in his subsequent works. In general, he used private papers in three ways: to add authority to his account; to provide picturesqueness; to reinforce the ideas he wanted to put forward. Thus, the secret of both his immediate success and lasting influence lay in the techniques he used for his study. In short, it was this distinctive blend of practical purpose with scholarship which made Kaye's work so influential. Though not a professional historian, he provided subsequent researchers with a basis for the study of the events and the men of his own times. How far this was true of other Anglo-Indian historians of the period is a question that emerges at the end.

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