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## Sample Chapters of This Booklet

### Nature And Causes For The Rise Of National Movement

**Ques. 1 : Briefly discuss the causes responsible for the rise of Indian freedom struggle?**

**Ans.** At the beginning of the 19th century India was regarded as one of the few countries with least possibilities for the rise of nationalism or the growth of national movement. The main reason for such assumptions was that the vast population of India was not only politically and backward but also disunited by barriers of language, religion, culture etc. The dearth of unifying sense of nationalism and patriotic feelings was one of the cogent contributing factors to the foundation and consolidation of the British rule in India. Certain colonial scholars did not even regard India as a nation. But India, throughout the course of her history had enjoyed inherent unity in diversity. This unity in diversity greatly helped in the rise and growth of Indian National Movement. The 19th and early 20th centuries were an age of democratic, liberal and nationalist ideas. The American War of Independence, the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution of 1917 etc., greatly inspired the rise and growth of the National Movement in India. No doubt all these external events, internal turmoils and self-realisation together inspired the rise and growth of the Indian National Movement.

India's National Movement was truly Indian in the respect that it was world's first struggle for freedom based on truth and non-violence and its foundations was laid by the socio-religious reform movement of the 19th century.

### **Causes**

Among the many causes responsible for the rise of the national movement the following deserve special mention:

1. The Macaulavian system of education though conceived in the interests of efficient administration opened to the newly educated Indians the floodgates of liberal European thought. The liberal and radical thoughts of European writers inspired the Indian intelligentsia with the ideals of liberty, nationality and self-government. The spread and expansion of the English language gave to the Indians living in different linguistic regions a common language-lingua franca.
2. In the nineteenth century the development of vernacular languages was also phenomenal. The neo-educated class conveyed their ideas of liberty and equality to the masses through the media of these vernaculars. The vernacular literature greatly helped in arousing Indian nationalism.
3. Socially, British Imperialism destroyed the old, order of society in India. After the Rebellion of 1857 and the British administrators realised that the reactionary and feudal elements of society could serve as strong props of Imperialism. This change in policy exposed the hollowness of British professions and drove the English Administrators and the progressive elements in opposite camps.
4. The development of the various socio-religious movements prepared the ground for the growth of national movements and watered the plant of patriotism. The reform movements sought an all-round improvement of the Indian society. They gave the people a sense of pride in Indian culture and heritage and taught them the gospel of patriotism.

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5. The economic policy pursued by the British in India had resulted in a lopsided development of Indian economy and impoverishment of the people. The economy of India was geared to the production of raw materials needed for the developing machine industry of England. Such a policy also made India as a growing market for English manufactured goods. The cumulative effect of British economic policies had resulted in chronic misery and found expression in mass unrest. Periodical famines became a regular feature of Indian economy.

6. The natural process of conquest and consolidation brought the whole of India under a single political set-up. A network of roads and railways linked the bigger towns and the country with the world market. The setting up of an efficient posts and telegraphs system and the accompanying developments gave India the appearance of unity and fostered the spirit of one-mindedness.

7. The growth of the modern press and with it the public opinion was an offshoot of the English rule in India. Despite the numerous restrictions imposed on the press from time to time, Indian journalism made rapid strides. The Indian press created a strong public opinion opposed to imperialist policies, and played no insignificant role in fostering patriotism and developing nationalism.

8. The short-sighted acts and policies of Lord Lytton acted like catalytic agents. The maximum age limit for the I.C.S. examination was reduced from 21 years to 19 years, thus making it impossible for Indians to compete for it. Lytton put on the statute book two obnoxious measures the Vernacular Press Act and Indian Arms Act (1878). Lytton's unpopular acts provoked a great storm of opposition in the country and led to the organisation of various political associations for carrying on anti- Government propaganda in the country.

9. One unfortunate legacy of the Rebellion of 1857 was the feeling of racial bitterness between the rulers and the ruled. The Anglo-Indian bureaucracy developed an attitude of arrogance and contempt towards the Indians. The Indians were dubbed as belonging to an inferior race and no longer worthy of any trust. This narrow approach evoked a reaction in the Indian mind and put the educated Indians on the defensive.

10. ILLBERT BILL (1883 CONTROVERSY)

In 1880, there was a change of Government in England, and the Liberal Party under Gladstone came into power. He was known for his liberal ideas and was a believer in moral principles. "Good Government" he pronounced, "was no substitute for self-government", "It is our weakness and calamity", he said that we have not been able to give India the blessing of free institutions". He sent Lord Ripon, a close friend and follower, to "reform the structure of the Indian Government. The new Governor-General repealed the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, commenced industrial legislation by passing the first Factories Act, and took steps to promote local self-government in big cities and towns.

Ripon also sought to remove the individual distinction existing at that time between the European and Indian members of the judiciary. Indian sessions judges and magistrates were not re-empowered to try European offenders, and this was a cause of great annoyance to the educated community of the country. In 1883, the Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, Sir Courtenay Illbert, introduced in the Imperial Legislature a Bill, known after his name as Illbert Bill, designed to remove 'The disability of Indian judges. The Anglo-Indian community opposed the enactment of the Bill vehemently, and asserted that the Indian judges were not fit to administer justice to a White offender. The European Defence Association, with branches in important cities of India, was formed to organize a campaign against the Bill. There were protest meetings and agitation, and it was proposed to kidnap Ripon and hold him to ransom. Even in England, the Government was under fire, Ripon had to bow to the storm and a compromise was made which

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provided that European and British subjects were to have a right to claim trial by Jury of twelve, atleast seven of whom, must be Europeans or Americans.

This manifestation of the British sense of racial superiority acted as a spark to the power magazine; it acted as an eye-opener to Indians. They learnt the lesson that they would have to undergo a long period of sacrifice and discipline if they wanted justice and equality in their own country. The educated class of people noted the extra-ordinary force of a minority when organized and directed by a single aim, and they applied the inference to their own situation. Demands began to arise for a national organization by means of which the grievances of the people against the British rule could be ventilated. A few thoughtful men, both Indians and English were not slow to measure the trends in the country and they took steps to organize the mass discontentment into a peaceful channel.

11. Certain external factors like home-rule movement in Ireland, Unification of Germany, Italy; Victory of Japan over an European power Russia in 1905 also produced nationalist and revolutionary feelings among the Indians.

12. Repressive and Reactionary Policies of Lord Curzon virtually made the Indian National Movement Militant. Some of his most denounced utterances and actions were:  
a) Curzon went back on Queen Victoria's proclamation.  
b) Calcutta Town Hall speech of Curzon "Indians are cheats" greatly injured the Indian conscience.  
c) Bitter speeches at Dacca and to divide Hindus and Muslims.  
d) Partition of Bengal in 1905, became the basis of militant nationalism in India. The nationalist came to the conclusion that the constitutional agitation will not help in undoing the wrongs.

It is from here that Swadeshi and Boycott became political weapons. It is here that the Bengali youth learnt the cult of Gita and Grenade 'to live in bondage is negation of life. We want end of British Rule'.

The beginning of the Indian National Movement is rightly regarded with the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885, which united the Indian nationalists of all shades and opinions into a common front of the nationalists and soon the roots of national struggle for freedom spread to all parts of the country.

## **National Movement from 1885 to 1947, may broadly be divided into four parts:**

- (a) 1885-1905 - The moderate Phase of the Congress.
- (b) 1905-1915 - Extremist and Home Rule Movements.
- (c) 1916-1942 - The Gandhian Era and Militant Phase of the National Movement
- (d) 1942-1947 - India's march towards the attainment of freedom.

**Ques. 2 : Critically examine the factors leading to the birth of Indian National Congress?**

**Ans.** Factors leading to the birth of Indian National Congress

By late nineteenth century, several trends were observed that made possible emergence of a political culture ad public opinion. Various sections of the society gradually realized that they were suffering on account of the policies of the British Government.

- Through deindustrialisation, drain of wealth and commercialization of agriculture we saw how the Indian economy was made compliant to the needs and demands of the British economy. India was made into a supplier of raw materials and a market for cheaply mass

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- produced English goods. The protective tariffs hampered the growth of Indian trade. The Government followed various discriminatory policies against Indian business community.
- In the revolt of 1857, we looked at the wide spectrum of discontent that was prevalent clue to the various policies followed by the British. The post-1857 period was marked by conservative stand being taken by the British. Conscious attempts made by the British to garner support of the landed aristocracy.
  - Increase in the number of educated people with no corresponding increase in employment prospects
  - Presence of the British is felt by all people- common and privileged. The racial discrimination was unavoidable at every turn.
  - Better communication means easy access to information from different parts of the world Dissemination and exchange of ideas made possible which is further aided by print media Though Press often faced repressive measures it continued to develop By 1870s, there were about 62 Indian owned newspapers in Bombay Presidency and 38 in Bengal People across the country could share news and connect with each other. This gave them coherence and fostered a sense of unity.
  - The reach of the social reform movements was widespread and affected a whole range of people, from Northern India, to Bengal to Southern India. They helped to increase the political and social consciousness amongst the people. It also fostered growth of identity based on community, language, religion and so on. They made people aware of their rights and possibilities. There was a slow awakening of Indians.
  - Changes in the land revenue system affected majority of the people under the British territories.
  - You have a lot of Indians who become familiar with the working of the colonial rule through their engagement as doctors, lawyers, intellectuals, social reformers and so forth. They are slowly exposed not only the racial basis but also to the true nature of the British policies implemented in India.
  - With the growth of awareness amongst the Indians, like we explored under education and rise of economic nationalism, there is a growing political consciousness. There is a desire to take greater part in governing their own country.
  - Racial arrogance of the British towards the Indians was manifested in their attitudes in various aspects of life. Indians were discriminated against in jobs, education, promotion, train compartments, places of public entertainment and so on. An Indian irrespective of his high stature was mistreated. This attitude of the British was a thorn in the side of many Indians.
  - It gradually becomes clear that the British were interested in maintaining their stronghold and interest at the cost of not only common man but also those Indians who were loyal supporters of the British.

With the growth of political consciousness, what you have in the late 19 century is the development of associational politics which were quite different from the association of the early and mid nineteenth century. The later associations were precursor to an All-India level organization as manifested in the formation of Indian National Congress in 1885.

**Ques. 3 : Briefly discuss the politics of Association in Bengal, Bombay and Madras?**

**Ans.** Associations were not novel to India in the late nineteenth century. But there were some distinct characteristics that differentiated them from the earlier ones. Religious zeal or caste solidarity, etc were the prime motivators of associations prior to the late 19th century. But those of the late nineteenth century brought India across the threshold of modern politics. While many continued to be limited by language and interests there was an increasing tendency towards a more secular approach, drawing support from various sections of the society or at least trying to.

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These associations formed by the new Western educated groups who used modern means for mobilization and disseminating their ideas- Journal, newspapers, and public meetings. Most of them tried to reach beyond their respective regions and penetrated the mufassils. These organizations attempted to represent public opinion.

Social reform societies and caste societies did not completely disappear; the new associations tried to build along political issues and attempted to represent their region at a higher platform. Increasingly they sought to voice extension of representation, Indianisation of Civil Services. These organizations received an impetus in 1851 when the charter of the company was due to expire. It was a perfect moment for these organizations to influence the Westminster through petitions. Most of these organizations came to be focused in the three presidencies and their trajectory was shaped by their respective economic, social, historical and political circumstance. The history of associational politics oldest in Bengal centered around Calcutta, then Bombay and last in Madras. Common to all associations in these presidencies was the role of the Western educated people influenced by ideas of political parties, parliamentary representation system, and public opinion, etc.

## Bengal

In Bengal, though the perpetuation of colonial rule was more recent when compared to other presidencies, the modernizing changes were most vocal and visible. The new class of bhadralok formed the nucleus of intelligentsia, especially the upper class of bharalok. Between 1858 and 1881, 19.2% of Calcutta graduates and 23.5% from Bengal proper were employed. The upper caste dominated land and education. The early associations of Bengal were primarily concentrated in Calcutta where educated individuals from other parts had migrated and in course of time tried to bring their respective domicile in associational circuit. The earliest societies included Young Bengal, Derozians, and Society for Acquisition of General Knowledge. All these societies were dominated by the students and leaders like R G Goshe, P C Mitra, Debendranath Tagore. With changes under the colonial state, the new elites tried to form their own associations.

One such earliest association was British Indian Association founded in 1851 and dominated by the zamindars with the primary aim of defending the landed interests (though they claimed a national forum). With the growth in education and the rise of the bhadralok, B.I.A. was losing its appeal and its new rival was The Indian League which in turn was overshadowed by the Indian Association, especially under the leadership of Surendranath Banerjee. It claimed to be a political society representing the middle class and the ryots and aimed for education and political activism. They were active during the Ilbert Bill controversy, the Saligram idol case and Surendranath Banerjee contempt case. The constitution of Indian Association was more democratic than others. It also made efforts to step outside Calcutta and had dreams of establishing networks throughout India. Its main demand comprised of changes in the regulations with regard to the entry in the Civil Services, local self-government and peasant rights. The latter cause led to disassociation with the British Indian Association.

Another important society of Bengal was that of Brahmo Samaj which mainly attracted the new intelligentsia and then later spread to other districts. The members comprised of Brahmans, Kayasthas, and Baidyas. Gradually it branched out in Gaya, Balasore, Cuttuck, Dacca, Faridpur, Chota Nagpur, etc. The other important society was the Theosophical Society founded in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky. Its aim was to form in India, the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of Humanity, study Aryan Culture and to explore mysteries of nature and latent powers of man. There have been claims of some indirect connection between the Theosophical society and INC.

## Bombay

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In Bombay, the associations were shaped by its specific economic and social conditions. There was trade, commerce foreign and domestic, rapid expansion of industrial activity, accumulation of capital and a closer connection between the government and the traders and merchants. Its populace was more cosmopolitan- Parsis, Gujaratis, Muslims, Ahirs, etc. About 70% of the population was educated. However, in spite of this cosmopolitan character it was strangely conservative and less sectarian. The societies were concerned with improving social conditions and religious practices. Also, the dominance of commercial interests set the tone of its politics. The associational front gradually came to be formed by eminent leaders such as Dadabhai Naoroji, Sorabjee Bengalee, and Ranade, etc. The earliest associations included Religious Reform Association founded by Naoroji, and Bengalee to revive the Zoroastrian religion and the Parsi community. The educated Maharashtra Brahmins took the lead of a vigorous reform movement. The Prarthana Samaj founded in 1867 by Ranade, regarded itself as being firmly rooted in Hinduism. There were fewer societies amongst the Muslims.

This does not imply that Bombay lacked political activism but the political alliances tended to cut across communities and were along the lines of wealth, education, and interests. A new society the Bombay Presidency Association was reflective of the change where the new intelligentsia was making headway. The leaders comprised of P. Mehta, B Tyabji, K. Telang, Naoroji, and Ranade. The main target was municipality, it included professional classes and men of property. Mehta after 1881 tried to build inter-communal alliances amongst the intelligentsia and to win control over the city of Bombay. Thus, it was difficult to maintain the distinction between purely secular or communal issues. Its programmes had to consist of issues that united all of them. This also meant that the Association had to be moderate and restricted to professional interests. They rejected the idea of extending their politics of the municipality to the Presidency as a whole. However, the parochialism of the Bombay leader ensured that the political initiative of the western India rested with the Madras presidency.

In the Bombay Presidency, the nucleus of the associational politics was Poona and led by Ranade. The Chitpavani Brahmins who had gained prominence under the Peshwas dominated the associational politics. As a result of this the Poona politics is often termed as Peshwai politics (Anil Seal). While it was more backward, it had the highest literacy rate. The dominance and adaptability of the Brahmins furthered the growth of education and gradually the remnants of Maratha tradition were reshaping in the form of constitutional politics and press. In 1870, The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was formed and it aimed at representing Indians. It demanded Indian representation in Parliament, protested against the Vernacular Press Act and the Bombay Forest Regulations, the License Tax, Ilbert Bill; demanded reforms for legislative council, recruitment in the Civil Services and local self-government. It was also involved in agrarian measures. To counter the domination of the Brahmins, a reform movement was started by Phule. While it was not successful at undermining the Brahmin dominance, the younger Brahmins who were not satisfied with the old leaders were gradually challenging it. With the coming of Tilak, however, the Sabha faced threat.

## Madras

The politics in Madras after the demise of Madras Native Association founded in 1862 were at low ebb. It was only in 1884 with the foundation of Madras Mahajan Sabha that the interest in-politics was rekindled.

Ilbert Bill Controversy of 1883, Saligram Idol Case, Imprisonment of Surendranath Banerjee for Contempt of Court. With the increasing changes at all levels- increase in the number of educated, growing political consciousness, gradual dissatisfaction with lack of governments response to the voices of the societies for increasing representation level political platform was being felt.

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Three events however set the process of forming an all-round association. The Saligram idol case and the subsequent imprisonment of Surendranath Banerjee for contempt of court raised an outcry, especially amongst the educated masses of Bengal. The Ilbert Bill Controversy of 1883, which brought out the permanence of the racial bias of the colonial state, has often been credited with giving a direct impetus to the formation of an All-India society. It was during the course of this controversy that Indians too learnt the use of public platform in all its glory.

## Saligram Idol Case

The main gist of the case- The case was regarding the inheritance of the family idol of Saligram between two brothers. One of them took the idol home and when the other brother protested in court, the English judge ordered the production of the idol in the court. Surendranath Banerjee questioned the right of an English judge to bring an Indian idol to court and interfere in Indian religious and cultural spheres. This led to imprisonment of Surendranath Banerjee for contempt of court.

**Ques. 4 : Critically evaluate the policies of Lord Lytton?**

**Ans.** Lord Lytton during his viceroyalty enacted certain acts that were biased against the Indians and gave stimulus to public opinion which in turn fostered the growth, of national consciousness.

- War in Afghanistan during Lytton's time which was imperialist in nature was funded out of Indian revenues and was severely criticized by Indians as it added to their burden.
- The 5% duty imposed on manufactured cotton goods imported to India from England was abolished in 1879 under pressure from British textile manufacturers. For Indians this was a proof of the policy of British to ruin the growing cotton industry in India.
- Arms Act of 1878 which sought impose restrictions on possession of arms by Indians was yet another proof of British attempt to emasculate Indians.
- Vernacular Press Act of 1878 by imposing restrictions on regional language newspapers in order to hinder the growing criticism of the policies of the Government sought to muzzle the growth of public opinion.
- In 1878, a regulation reduced the age for appearing in the Indian Civil Services to 19 from 21 which made the entrance tougher for Indian candidates due to their late familiarity with English and gaps in education when compared to the English.
- The timing of the Delhi Durbar of 1877 to proclaim the assumption of the imperial title by the Queen corresponded with a famine and instead of providing much needed relief; money was spent on the extravagant Durbar.

**Ques. 5 : Write short notes on :**

- 1) Ilbert Bill controversy
- 2) The safety-valve thesis

**Ans.**

## Ilbert Bill Controversy

Sir Courtenay Ilbert, Law Member in the Viceroy's Council in 1883 introduced a bill in Governor-General's (Ripon) Legislative Council which sought to remove the previous practice of disallowing Indian judges and Magistrates to try Europeans in India courts. While it was a positive step, it led to a huge protest amongst the white community, which questioned the ability of the Indians to try whites and these protests were based on the issues of supposed inferior race, baser morality and

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questionable intent of Indians. Under the pressure of the white mutiny, the final Bill as introduced by Ripon, was an amended one which required that in cases where the European British subjects were accused of criminal offences, they had the right to claim trial by jury of which no less than half the number had to be European or American. This amended bill brought to the fore the farce of equality as expressed in Queen 'Victoria's Proclamation and created rupture in White-Indian relationship.

## **The Foundation of the Indian National Congress (the safety-valve thesis)**

In 1883, the government held an international exhibition in Calcutta and invited people from across the country. Taking advantage of this the Indian Association decided to hold its first Indian Conference in Calcutta at the same time. But it was just a dress rehearsal. Throughout the next two years there were various efforts at forming a single platform that would represent India as a whole. In March 1885 the Indian Mirror called for a national assembly for India. In April, National Telegraph Union was formed to keep the English press informed about India. By now some European sympathizers were also working along with the Indians to form a common platform. The vision turned to reality in December of 1885 in the form of Indian National Congress. Interestingly in its first session, Calcutta was largely kept out. But the Bengal policies could not be ignored for long. This lack was resolved by holding the second session of INC in Calcutta. INC was soon to overshadow other political organisations.

It is important to keep in mind that there were some European sympathisers who were working with the Indians to form a common platform. This was directly manifested in the person and role of A.O. Hume, a retired British civil servant. He played a very intrinsic role in the formation of INC by communicating and talking to the political leaders of the three presidencies. THIS INVOLVMENT GATE RISE TO THE THEORY OF SAFETY-VALVE according to which the Congress was formed in order to provide an outlet for the increasing discontent amongst the Indians and in the absence of such an outlet, the discontent would have led to eruption of the anger which in turn would have posed a serious challenge to the British supremacy in India.

Indian National Congress was finally formed in December of 1885 under the presidency of W. C. Banerjee, as a common platform and to bridge the regional differences in terms of participation, leadership and demands. The history of INC is divided into two broad phases- Moderate Phase (1885-1905) and the Extremist Phase 1905-1914.

While India did gain freedom under the broad aegis of INC, it was not a balanced and unbiased organisation and its history is riddled with various conflicts which cover a broad spectrum of issues- class, interest religious, social, personnel, regional and economic. By the twentieth Century two strands were noticeable the Moderates and the Extremist. The differences finally led to a split between them, an event which is popularly known as the Surat Split of 1907.

**Ques. 6 : Briefly discuss the moderates phase (1885-1905) of Indian National Congress?**

**Ans.** W.C. Banerjee's presidential speech at the first Congress session put forward its aims as (a) promotion of friendship and personal intimacy amongst the countrymen, (b) eradication of all possible prejudices relating to race, creed or province, (c) Consolidation of the sentiments of national unity, and (d) recording the opinion of educated classes on pressing problems of the day. These mild and constitutional demands reflect the nature and the composition of the Moderates. The moderates were the early intellectual of India who had benefited from western styled education and were feeling the strain of Government red-tape. To be radical was not in their

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nature. The Indian National Congress in its earlier years, maybe till the very end, expressed the aspirations of educated middle classes. Main leaders - W.C. Bannerjee, Ananda Mohan Bose, Lal Mohan Ghose, A.C. Mazumdar, Ras Bihari Ghose, S N Banerjee, R C Dutt from Bengal; Dadabhai Naoroji, M.G. Ranade, Gokhale, Ferozshah Mehta, Telang, Tyabji from Bombay, R R Naidu, Subramaniya Iyer, Anand Charu from Madras and Flume, Wedderburn and Henery Cotton from England.

## Ideology and Methods

Believed in the justness of the British rule hence professed complete loyalty to the British. They believed that India was yet not ready to stand on her own legs and needed the British for empowering them.

- Believed in the efficacy of peaceful and bloodless means and constitutional methods.
- Press was used as the platform to discuss various British policies and disseminating them thereby creating awareness.
- Sessions were also used as platforms to pass resolutions or to discuss/protest against the discriminatory laws.

## Demands

- Aimed at educating the masses and create an organized public opinion which would make people aware of their rights, the true conditions of India.
- To create a reservoir of national political leadership and people trained in the art of representative governance.
- Wanted self-rule under the British along the lines of a Dominion Status like Canada or Australia.
- Full control over finances and legislation. After 1892, INC raised the cry of 'No taxation without representation.
- Appointment of a Royal Commission for enquiring into the Indian affairs with adequate Indian representation.
- Indian representation in Indian Council in London and in the Executive Council at the Center.
- Reduction in the expenditure on army
- Development of modern capitalist industries in India parallel to those in Britain through tariff protection and direct government aid.
- Opposed to large scale import of capital in railways plantations and industries and to allow it only in areas where Indian capital was unavailable
- End of Indian economic drain developed the economic criticism of the British rule- three areas covered- trade, finance and industry.
- Abolition of the salt tax.
- Indianisation of the Indian Civil Services and simultaneously conducting the examinations in India and London.
- Separation of judiciary and executive
  - Extension of trial by jury
  - Repeal of the Arms Act of 1878.
  - Higher ranking jobs for Indians in the army.
  - Increase in the money spent on education.
- Opposed to any restriction imposed on the freedom of press and speech.
- Cut in the Home charges.

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## Limitations

From the time of its inception, INC had some limitations. The foremost limitation, which also led to the split and uneven curve of its popularity, was the exclusion of the non-elites from its membership. Professional groups- journalists, educationists, reformers doctors, lawyers, religious men, merchants and bankers, were included in its membership. INC was not yet anti-British government or rule. In its initial phase, INC sought to widen the governing base by increasing the number of Indians in it. It was geared towards rectifying the un-Britishness of the British rule in India. The moderates expected the British to guide India, help her conquer the cultural and social backwardness and then transform into progressive country which would lead to establishment of representative government. For them the interests of the British and Indians were similar rather than opposites.

An important limitation was that majority of the moderates were Hindus. Between the period of 1892-1909, Hindus comprised 90% of the delegates attending the Congress. In spite of its claim as representing all communities, ironically, it has been accused of being a Hindu party by some from its very inception. This was primarily because of the fluidity of the members. e.g. many members of the Congress were also involved in cow protection Movement or Nagri movement. Some held simultaneous membership of the Hindu Mahasabha and Congress.

Lacked confidence in the ability of the uneducated masses to participate in the political affairs. It had limited social appeal.

Was dominated by the English educated so drew most of their ideas from Western political tradition hence alienated from the masses.

Did not envisage an end of the British rule.

### **Ques. 7 : Briefly discuss the British reaction to congress movement?**

**Ans.** The birth of the Congress was hailed by some English Parliamentarians and other men of eminence. Hume has been described by many as the “father of Congress”, though this assertion has been questioned by a few. Wedderburn presided over the Congress at two of its sessions in Bombay (1889) and at Allahabad (1910). Other Englishmen of note also sympathized with India’s cause and advanced it in one form or another.

Although individual Congress leaders continued to proclaim their faith in the British rule and even though quite a few of them were bestowed with titles and honours, the national movement in general evoked hostility of the authorities.

The pinpricking started by the Congress and the growing strength and popularity of the national movement made it a suspect in the eyes of the foreign rulers, and they began to decry it. Dufferin called the demands of the Congress as “eminently unconstitutional” unacceptable to the people in England. He described the Congress as a “seditious body” representing the “microscopic minority” of educated Indians, and declared the minority would not be allowed to control the Administration. Shortly after its inception, the British Government in India began to act in opposition to Congress and to create obstacles in the progress. The fourth Congress found it difficult to get grounds in Allahabad whereon to put up the tents. In 1890, the Bengal Government issued to all Secretaries and Heads of Departments subordinate to it a circular pointing out that “under the orders of the Government of India the presence of Government officials, even as visitors, at such meetings is not advisable, and that their taking part in the proceedings in any such meetings is also

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prohibited". On 25 June 1891, the Government of India issued a notification restricting the rights of free press in native states.

In order, to arm the Government with sufficient power to deal with "seditious speeches and activities" sections 124(A) and 153(A) were added, in 1897, to the Indian Penal Code. Next year, a kind of thinly-veiled censorship was put on the Press through the Secret Press Committees. The five years of Lord Curzon's rule (1900-1905) were full of many reactionary measures that shocked the entire country and marked the beginning of a new phase in the nationalist, movement.

**Ques. 8 : Critically examine the British Policy of 'Divide and Rule'?**

**Ans.** The Congress movement began to appear to the British authorities, in the opening years of the twentieth century, a challenge to their rule, and they began to think of weakening it before it sent out of control. They thought of putting up a strong counterpoise to check the progress of the national organisation. Weaning away the Muslims from the mainstream of nationalism was considered a convenient device. Mountstuart Elphinstone advised the British Government thus: "Divide et Impera (divide and rule) was the old Roman motto and it should be ours". The authorities took up the cue and utilized it to their full advantage. They had already divided the country into princely India and British India. The Uprising of 1857 made the British realize that they had gone too far in the policy of direct rule and annexations.

After 1858, the princes had begun increasingly to pose into the fold of the Government, and they identified their existence with the continuance of the British rule. After the formation of the Congress and its increasing strength and popularity, the foreign masters decided to weaken the nationalist movement. Here, the division was sought to be brought about between the Muslims and the Hindus. The authorities in London decided to utilize the racial, religious, and economic differences of the two communities to their own advantage.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Muslims, under the leadership of Sir Sayed, were stirring with thoughts of national unification and emancipation. This added to the anxiety of the British bureaucracy. An alliance of the Hindus and Muslims, it was felt, would be too formidable for their dominance and this alliance was due, the British realized, to their own policy of rendering the Muslims too weak for independent rebellion. The days of Hindu Anglo alliance, it was thought, were gone and the days of Anglo-Muslim alliance should begin. The necessity of such a reversal of policy was brought home to the British, particularly, by the publication of Sir William Hunter's book, 'Indian Musulmans', as early as 1871. He pointed out how the Musulmans, especially in Bengal, had been suppressed under the British Government; how they had been deprived of power and position, how they had been impoverished; and how they were denied facilities of education and economic betterment. Hunter urged that the chronic sense of wrong which had grown in the hearts of the Muslims under the British rule must be removed. The Muslims if contented and satisfied, he noted, would become the greatest bulwark of British power in India.

Hunter's urgings became the precursor of change of attitude towards the Muslim community. The Mohammedan Anglo-oriental College at Aligarh was patronized, and it became the agency for fermenting communal passion and schism. An Englishman, Beck, who became its Principal in 1883, carried forward the policy of befriending the Muslims almost with a missionary zeal. He impressed upon Sir Sayed that the educational uplift of the Muslims had not reached a stage when they could be trusted to confine themselves to constitutional agitation, and that if they were roused they might once again express their discontent in the way they did in 1857. Sir Sayed was convinced that the participation of the Muslims in the political agitation would be to their detriment. He was made to believe that the Anglo-Muslim alliance was more to the advantage of the Muslim community than cooperation with the Hindus in the national movement.

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The love of the community prevailed over the love of motherland, and Sir Sayed adopted an openly hostile attitude towards the Congress movement. Aligarh College became, the centre of Muslim Powers and the English principals there, allegedly, poisoned the minds of young Muslims, creating a schism between them and the national organisation. One year after the establishment of Congress, the Muslims were led to organize themselves into a separate organizational, called the Mohammedan Educational Congress (MEC) that latter came to be known as the Muslim Educational Conference. The Muslims began to secede from the Congress. Although a few enlightened and open-minded Muslims, such as Abdul Rasul in Bengal Comurduddin Tyabji and Badruddin Tyabji in Bombay never served from their allegiance to the national cause, the bulk of the Muslim community were led astray. The MEC held its session at almost the same place and time as the Congress and diverted the attention of the Muslim masses. Of the seventy-two delegates who came to the first session of the Congress, only 10 were Muslims; at the second session, there were only 33 Muslims out of 440. When in 1890, the Muslim fraction increased to 156 out of 702, Sir Sayed began to feel that their betterment lay in separation from, and not in unison with, the Congress.

**Ques. 9 : Briefly discuss the foundation of Muslim league?**

**Ans.** In the meantime, the Congress movement was assuming a militant tone, and the sense of loyalty to the British Crown was being replaced by that of disgust and resentment. Towards the end of 1903, Lord Curzon announced a plan to partition Bengal, and this led to an out-burst of public indignation all over the Province. The Congress adopted, resolutions against the proposal in 1903 and 1904. In 1904, direct representation in the House of Commons was demanded and a plea was, also put in for the appointment of Indians to the Council of the Secretary of State and to the Executive Councils in India. When the Government of India announced, on 7 August 1905, finally the scheme of partition, there were public meetings and demonstrations all over the country. One month after the announcement, Congress launched the Swadesh movement against the British and a very tense situation developed. It pressed for reforms, and in 1906, on the insistence of Tilak, particularly, a resolution was passed to ask for self-government for India on the pattern of the self-governing British Colonies. The resolution urged that the reforms be carried out "immediately".

The situation in India was deteriorating and the viceroy, Gilbert Minto, who assumed office in November 1905, felt seriously concerned about it. Shortly, after the Viceroy began to devise plans to wean the Muslims away from the Congress movement. He started working on a scheme of reforms to satisfy, at least the moderate elements in India. This spurred the Muslim communal minded leaders into action. A deputation of about 35 Muslims, representing different parts of the country and led by His Highness by Aga Khan met Lord Minto on 1 October, 1906 in Simla, and put before him two points; first, at all elections, whether for the Legislative Councils or for local bodies the Muslims must be separately represented and their representatives separately elected by purely Muslim electors; the extent of the Muslim community's representation must be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength but with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire. The attitude of Minto, it was reported, was quite sympathetic.

Apparently encouraged by the Viceroy, Nawab Salimullah, one of the members of the delegation, issued on 9 November 1906, a circular in which he suggested that an organization to be known as All-India Muslim Conference should be established. In the following December, a Conference was held at Dacca, and was attended by representatives and leaders from all over India. On 3 December 1906, The All-India Muslim League was established with three major objectives:

- (a) to promote among Indian Muslims feelings of loyalty towards the British Government;
- (b) to protect the political and other rights of Indian Muslims and to place their needs and

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aspirations before the Government in temperate language; and  
(c) Without prejudice to the objects mentioned above, to promote friendly feelings between Muslims and other communities.

The formation of the Muslim League was a great success of the British policy of “divide and rule” and it introduced an element of communalism in the Indian National Movement.

**Ques. 10 : Write short notes on:**

- 1) The charter Act, 1853
- 2) The Indian Council Act, 1861
- 3) The Indian Council Act, 1892

**Ans.**

From the nineteenth century the Government under the financial pressure undertook steps to increase the participation of Indians in the governance of the country. The British also realized that it was imperative to grant some degree of concession to the educated Indians. To these ends following steps were undertaken.

## The Charter Act of 1853

made following changes:

- The Board of Control was authorized to make rules and regulations connected with governing appointments to the services in India.
- Indian Civil Services was open to public through competitive exams;
- BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT concession was: It extended the Executive Council of the Governor-General for legislative purposes and the Council became almost like a petty Parliament. It provided for six additional salaried officials. Four represented the three presidencies and one the Government of North-Western Province and two were judges. Non-official members were not included. Non-official member referred to a person not employed in Civil or military services of the crown. However, This Act could not materialise and the outbreak of The Revolt of 1857 soon after changed the political equations.

## Indian Council Act of 1861

The Viceroy at this time was Lord Canning- This was a turning point in the development of the constitutional history of India. WHY?

- The Act provided for the establishment of Legislatures in the Presidencies and extension of Viceroy's Council.
- Indians could be nominated to the Supreme Legislative Council for legislation. This was the first time where non-official Indians could participate in legislation.
- Numbers of appointments- Not less than six and not more than 12. Non-officials had to comprise not less than half of the appointees- This was a change from Act of 1853.
- The members were to be nominated by Governor-General and
- Local Legislations to be set up in Madras and Calcutta

Its significance- It transformed the Viceroy of India's Executive Council into a cabinet run on the portfolio system. This Cabinet had six “ordinary members” who each took charge of a separate department in Calcutta's government: home, revenue, government, law, finance, and (after 1874) public works. The military Commander-in-Chief sat in the council as an extraordinary member. The

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Act gave Indians a chance to participate in governance of the country. Also, it meant a prestigious job. It established a space for contact between the rulers and the ruled.

Limitations- But the Viceroy was allowed, under the provisions of the act, to overrule the council on affairs if he deemed it necessary.

The Council's functions were limited to legislation. It could not take part in execution. Usually the British selected those Indians like the landlords or the rulers/ministers of the Princely States who could provide support to the crown rather than oppose it.

Because the role of the Indians was limited and their number too few, the INC from the beginning demanded reform and expansion of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils.

## Indian Council Act of 1892

- It enlarged the Legislative Councils and extended their functions. In the Imperial Council, the number of additional members was fixed between 10 and 16, of whom not more than six were to be non-officials.
- In the Legislatures of Madras and Bombay, the additional members were to be not less than 8 and not more than 20. The number of members of Councils of Bengal and North-Western Provinces was to be raised to 20 and 15 respectively.
- The Act allowed the members to discuss the budget and offer suggestions for its improvement.

## Limitations

- No elections were introduced in the selection of non-officials;
- Governor-General invited different bodies in India to select, or elect their own representatives. And this lack of election process was criticized in INC sessions. However, Gokhale, Lalmohan Ghosh, W C Banerjee, Surendernath Banerjee and Ferozshah Mehta entered legislation.
- There was provision for INDIRECT ELECTION.
- The official majorities were maintained in Supreme Legislative Council and Provincial Councils. Again the Governor-General and in the case of Provincial Legislative Councils, the Governor or Lieutenant- Governor would have the final say in the selection process.

## Limitations of the Legislative System

- The Legislative Councils had no control over administration, finance or foreign policy.
- The size of the Legislative Councils was too small to be effective in a country as populated as India. The official members had no real say. They simply had to follow the instructions of the Governor-General.
- The non-official members of the Legislative Councils were too few and they were from the upper, privileged sections- feudal and educated and thus could not really be expected to voice the grievances of the Indians masses. THIS IS WHY THE MODERATES ALSO FAILED. Their demands were focused on increasing the number of seats for non official Indians. They were elitist in their outlooks and most of them had benefitted at the cost of old zamindars or peasants! They were the beneficiaries of the opportunities provided by the colonial government. They were always afraid of the mass participation.
- Eminent Indian leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Ashutosh Mukherjee, Ras Behari Ghosh and Surendrarath Banerjee entered the legislatures on account of the Act of 1892.

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## Indian Renaissance and Reform Movement

**Ques. 1 : Briefly discuss the Nature and features of the Indian renaissance and reform movement?**

- **Ans.** The introduction of western education and ideas had far-reaching impact on the Indian society. The nineteenth century was a period of dynamism in Indian social and cultural history. The British conquest not only marked a change in the political frame of the country but it brought in completely new sets of ideas and social world. The exposure to post-Enlightenment rationalism that came to signify modernity brought a change in the outlook of a select group of Indians. Through the prisms of utility, reason, justice and progress these individuals began to explore the nature of their own-society. There was a gradual emergence of public culture and public opinion. The debates between the Orientalists on one side, and the Utilitarian, liberal and Missionaries on the other also enabled permeation of ideas, at least amongst the upper sections of the society. The resultant cultural change led to introspection about Indian traditions, institution and culture. The introduction of western education too fostered a new arena of learning, literary trends and ideology. While a strong literary and cultural tradition has always been a hallmark of India, the exposure to the colonial culture and ideology ushered a slightly different reaction. The socio-intellectual revolution that took place in the nineteenth century in the fields of philosophy, literature, science, politics and social reforms is often known as Indian Renaissance. An important part of this Renaissance was reforming Hinduism from within on the basis of post-Enlightenment rationalism. The Renaissance was especially focused in Bengal and is popularly known as the Bengal Renaissance. However, the use of 'renaissance' is slightly problematic as in European history it is used to refer to the 'rebirth' or revival of Graeco-Roman learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries after the long winter of the "dark" medieval period. But in India "renaissance" implied rediscovering rationalism from within India's past.
- In Bengal a select group of people, having taken the advantage of western styled education, fashioned themselves along the lines of European middle class that was created out of Renaissance. Reformation, democratic revolution and Enlightenment, and formed the bhadralok. As Sumit Sarkar points out their social roots lay not in industry or commerce but in government service or the 'profession of law, education, journalism or medicine' combined with connection with land on account of introduction of Permanent Settlement in Bengal. Some rapidly acquired fortunes by working as partners with the British. This group included such individuals as Rammohan Roy (1772-1833), Radhakanta Deb, and Dwarkanath Tagore. Later in the course of the nineteenth century individuals like Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884), Bankim Chandra Chattopadyay (1838-1884), Kedarnath Datta Bhaktivinoda (1838-1914), Sisir Kumar Ghosh and Michael Madhusudhan Dutt (1824-1873) to name just a few, comprised the later bhadralok.
- Social reforms were an intrinsic part of the renaissance and covered almost the whole of India. The religious outlook in this period was based on humanism and there is a marked lack of preoccupation with Otherworldliness and salvation. The focus was on worldly existence. A. K. Dutt and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar being agnostics refused to take part in discussions related with the supernatural world. Rammohan Roy, on the other, hand was willing to consider the possibility of the existence of otherworld but only due to its utilitarian value. Given the nature of emphasis on this-world existence, social reforms were an essential part of the programme. Then again given the interconnectedness of the religious beliefs and social practices, reformation of religion was equally essential. It was commonly agreed that Hinduism had fallen in the trap of ritualism, blind-faith, superstition and every kind of evil over the years. Worship of God had lost its real value amidst the ritualism. The priests were identified as being responsible for the current corruption of the religion. The

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- priests, it was believed, with their monopoly over scriptural knowledge and rituals stood to benefit from imparting ritualism and blind faith to the people. Thus, to break the power and hold of the priests over the people was an important agenda. There were attempts to establish a direct connection between men and God.
- Raja Rammohan Roy and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar were, the earliest pioneers of Bengal Renaissance. Rammohan Roy is infact identified as the Father of Modern India. He was an erudite scholar who worked for the regeneration of the society. He was fluent in several languages including Bengali, Hindi, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. However, he understood well that access to new ideas emanating from the West is necessary for regeneration. Therefore, Raja Rammohan Roy fought for the introduction of English in Indian schools and for the teaching of modern subjects like Human Anatomy, Chemistry and Mathematics. But the western education Was to be blended with Eastern learning He extended the application of reason and utility to religion This formed the bases of his first philosophical work, Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin in 1805 After his migration to Calcutta in 1815 he was exposed to Christian Unitarianism Claims of superiority of Christianity by the missionaries led Rammohan Roy to reform Hinduism in light of reason which he found in the Vedanta texts. Given his rationalistic approach to religion, he condemned idolatry, polytheism and mediations of the priests. To support the claim that monotheism was characteristic of Hindu scriptures he translated Upanishads into Bangla.
  - Narendra Nath Datta or Swami Vivekananda was another figure head who stirred the Hindu society. His spiritual guru was Ramakrishna Pramhansa. Vivknnda gained international fame as well. He condemned preoccupation with rituals and superstitions and the caste system. Ramakrishna Mission was established by him in 1896 to forward the humanitarian and social work. He emphasized social services and opened schools, hospitals and orphanages in many parts of the country. In 1817, people like Dwarkanath Tagore, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, and other members of the bhadralok took a major step along the path of modernization by establishing the first institution of Western education in Asia, Hindu College. English was used as the medium of instruction. The teaching of Western sciences, philosophy, English literature and grammar, and other Western subjects was the hallmark of Hindu College.
  - While the importance of western contribution in the emergence of this renaissance cannot be denied it is equally necessary to emphasis that individuals like, Rammohan Roy, Akshay Kumar Dutt and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar on their own account responded to the new influences. Their response was not demanded by the English but was a continuation of a strong intellectual tradition present in India. The colonial state was not interested in imparting scientific education. It was thus left on these individual to take steps to introduce in India an education system that would focus on Western Sciences. Society for Translating European Sciences was set up in Calcutta in 1825 and in 1838 the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge was established. Mahendra Lal Sircar a Bengali intellectual established the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science in 1876. Development of printing press played the most important role in the dissemination of ideas and knowledge. It made possible exchange of ideas. It was responsible for revolutionizing the readership. The scientific discourse spread to other parts of the country. In 1861 Benaras Debating Club was formed and Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan founded the Aligarh Scientific Society in 1864.
  - The gap between the scientific rationalism and common public was bridged by the Young Bengal, a rather controversial group of students who were influenced by a Eurasian teacher of Hindu College in Calcutta, Henry Vivian Derozio. They were responsible for the establishment of Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge. Derozio imbued the spirit of free thinking in his students. This group became infamous for their social rebellion. Their rebellion extended to the religious sphere and bitterly condemned kulin polygamy, caste taboos, child marriage, and ban on widow remarriage. They' posed an intellectual challenge to the religious and social orthodoxy of Hinduism. However, their very radicalism

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and complete faith in everything. British and Western learning alienated them from the masses.

- Study of the Oriental literary works under the likes of Hastings, Halhed and William Jones renewed the interest in Sanskrit. The tracing of the connections between the Indo-European languages and Sanskrit gave a very good boost to Sanskrit studies. The efforts of the Christian Missionaries in translating the Bible into the vernacular led to the development at the vernacular nomenclature.
- Western India did not lag behind the developments in Calcutta and social reforms were had a greater stronghold. Infact, the social reform movement has an older history in Bombay than in Calcutta. This was due to the efforts of the Maratha rulers of the eighteenth century who adhered to the old Hindu tradition of regulating social affairs. They displayed their reforming tendencies in allowing readmission to Hinduism of converts, intermarriage, prohibition of sale of girls, and enforcement of temple entrance to cite a few. In Bombay young rebels were produced by Elphinstone Institution founded in 1827 for the promotion of English education. The intellectual revolt movement was started in the early decades of the nineteenth century by Bal Shastri Jambhekar (1812-46); Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar (1814-82); Bhasker Pandurang Tarkhadkar (1816-47); Gopal Hail Deshmukh also known as Lokahitwadi (1823-82) and Vishnu Bhikaji Gokhale (1825-73).
- Jambhekar was a pioneer in the intellectual movement in Maharashtra and wrote extensively in early 1830s. Dadoba gave the movement a more organizational shape by founding Paramhansa Sabha in 1840. Bhasker Pandu rang Tarkhadkar was a militant nationalist critic of the colonial rule in India. In all probability he formulated the, first economic critique of the exploitative character of the British rule in India Lokahitwadi is famous for the famous collection of letters 'Shatapatren' written by him in the period of 1848-50, which touched upon almost every aspect of the society.
- The reform movement in western India in the second half of the nineteenth century was dominated by the likes of Vishnu Parashuram Shastri Pandit (1827-76), Jyotiba Phule (1827-90); Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar (1837-1925); Narayan Mahadev Permanand (1838-93), M.G. Ranade (1842-1901), K.T. Telang (1850-1893) and so on. Vishnu Parashuram Shastri Pandit began by advocating against the ban on widow remarriage and became a leading figure in female emancipation. He started Vidhawa Vivaha Uttejaka Mandal (Society for Encouragement of Widow Remarriage) in 1865. He married a widow in 1875. Born in a Mali caste, he also advocated upliftment of the depressed sections of the society and was the first Indian to start a school for untouchables in 1854. In 1851 he and his wife started a girl's school at Poona. Ramkrishna Bhandarkar due to the extent of his scholarship was also known as 'the Maharshi'. He advocated widow remarriage and arranged the marriage of his widowed daughter in 1891 in face of tough criticism. He was also a strong promoter of Hindu-Muslim unity. Narayan Mahadev Permanand was a strong constructive critic of the British administration aside from being a social reformer. Ranade, a product of Elphinstone College, was a judge of the Bombay High Court during 1891-1901. He combined social reform movement with the religious reform movement. To this end he reorganized Paramhansa Sabha into Prarthana Samaj in 1867 which preached monotheism and denounced the domination of the priests and caste distinctions.
- The nineteenth century was marked by the transformation of the Indian society and the initiative for such reforms came from individuals who revolted against the prescribed rules of the society. These reformers though gained from western education were not West-sponsored but they themselves created the reforms and promoted them. It is also undeniable that the reform movements had a strong intellectual base which kept them aloof from the masses and were thus confined to the educated sections of the society. The reforms were not meant to structurally reorganize the whole society for the benefit of the underprivileged or the depressed sections of the society. The aim of the reforms was to infuse a new life into the existing social structure. As Heimsath points out 'society would be preserved while its member would be transformed'.

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- It has been noted by most historians that the issues dealt with by the social reformers in the early part of the nineteenth century were applicable and common to the higher classes of the Hindu society and had no meaning for the lower classes. The movements of the later part of the nineteenth century along with those of the twentieth century were the ones that reached across to the wider society including the lower and depressed sections of the society.
- Emancipation of women was another common plank in agenda of almost all social reformers. The sad plight of women in society seemed to have stirred all social reformers. The women were subjected to every form of limitation on their free movement. They had no rights so to speak- no property rights, lacked a voice in choice of marriage and consummation, lacked education, their status was recognized by the identity of their husbands and they were also badly treated. Child marriage was a widely prevalent practice and the age difference between the husband and child wife was often profound. The kulin polygamy was a widely prevalent practice in Bengal. Kulin comprised certain castes amongst the Brahmans and Kayasthas of Bengal who were considered to be the purest and hence few in number. Often fifty or sixty kulin girls were married off to just one person. Widow's life was rather miserable and sati was commonly observed though more for the reasons of property settlement and to escape the social stigma than virtue. Female infanticide was quite rampant. Influx of western ideas highlighted the low position of women. By nineteenth century the position of women in the society was a marker of the overall development of the society. This parameter was the contribution of the western ideas. The social reformers thus realized that emancipation of women had to be at the heart of any attempt at reforming the society at large. This is why emancipation of women was a common feature of all the social reform movements. Interestingly, the emancipation of women was confined within particular parameters. For example, as no reform could be really effective without changes in the domestic domain as it was the first sphere of socialization for men. Even the emancipated woman continued to work within the patriarchal fold. The hold of the male member over the woman was in no way lessened by the social reforms.
- Denunciation of the caste system and discrimination on its basis was another common feature of the social reforms. Action against the prevalence of the caste system was in fact seen to be of utmost importance. It was not only morally and socially abhorrent but was also seen as against the democratic ideals. While Rammohan Roy did raise a voice against the caste system it was carried forward in action during the course of the nineteenth century, especially towards the closing of the century. In the twentieth century the movement for the emancipation from the caste system reached new heights to include participation of the depressed classes in the political workings of the Government.
- The gap between the masses and the social reformers, who were essentially rooted in Western thought, was bridged by the tendency from the second half of the nineteenth century of the social reformers to deny the Western culture. The movements this time were not only influenced by Western post-Enlightenment rationalist ideas (though this influence was often denied) but were formed in response to challenges posed by the Western civilization to the Indian society and their criticism of Hindu civilization. This contradictory approach was matched by an equally one-sided understanding of Indian historical development. To rise to the occasion, social reformers towards the late nineteenth century looked into India's past and generated a sense of pride in everything Indian. This, as Heimsath has pointed out, led to revivalism marked by conceptualization of a glorious Hindu past which had degenerated under the Muslim rule and was threatened by the British rule. The reforms of this time had strong revivalist tendencies. The most important backlash of the revivalist predilections was denunciation of Islamic contribution of India and over-glorification of Hindu civilization over Islamic and Western. This led to attempts at rationalizing certain Hindu practices and institutions to such a degree that voices were raised against positive reforms. For example, while the first Act passed against child marriage in 1860 was

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welcomed but during the passing of Age of Consent Act in (1891 huge uproar was voiced from Hindu orthodox sections. Sasadhar Tarkachun-damoni, to cite another example, began to find, rather invent, precedents in ancient India for every scientific discovery by the West. This he undertook in order to evoke 'respect for Hinduism among a Western-educated middle class devoted to the goddess of reason'.

- The revivalism was not confined to hindering social development mentioned in the above example, but it had very strong political overtones. This combination was to create inter-religious tensions as the Indian National Movement evolved. The revivalist tendencies were largely responsible fostering the identification of India with Hinduism. The group known as the Extremist-in the Indian National Congress was infact, of this mould. Their brand of nationalism was based on the pride of Indian culture and drew inspiration from India's ancient past. For this reason they can be alternatively called Neo-Nationalists.
- The revivalist trend was most vocal in the formation of Arya Samaj by Dayanand Saraswati in 1875 He claimed Vedas as the most authentic Indian religious text and then set about to purge all post-Vedic additions to Hinduism. He attacked idolatry, polytheism, caste system, child marriage, ritualistic Hinduism dominated by the Brahmans and advocated widow remarriage, inter-caste marriage and female education, all on the basis of Vedas. While he denounced caste system, he did not disclaim the four-fold varna system. In 1882 Dayanand Saraswati established Gaurakshini Sabhas which gained foothold in Bihar, Benaras division, eastern Allahabad, Awadh, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, Sind, Rajputana and the Central Provinces. The cow protectionist sentiments were now organised at an all-India level by the Gaurakshini Sabhas. It is worth noting that in this context protection of cow was primarily aimed at the beef eating English and also to a degree at the muslims. Part of their aim was to petition government to stop cow slaughter. These efforts received a new burst of energy when by the decree of High Court of NWP in 1888 cow was not recognised as a religious object and thus its slaughter could not be held as violation of the law.
- There were spurts of attacks by non-Muslim on Muslim during the celebrations of Baqr-id starting from 1893 in Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Ballia, Shahabad and Gaya etc. As Rafiuddin Ahmad noted the question of the ritual slaughter of cows came to occupy the politics of the late 19th century not so much because the Muslims loved to sacrifice cows as because the militant Hindus made it an issue. What was unique about the issue of a 'cow' was that it formed a common ground for personal activism and personal religious practice and in Dr. Sandria Frietag's words 'it bridged the gap between Great and little traditions, between urban searches for community identity and rural values. The cause was further taken up by smaller communities like Ahirs in their struggle to upgrade their status. Like a fire that feeds itself, the over-emphasis on the ban of cow slaughter produced a counter reaction from the Muslim groups. The movement solidified the boundaries of various communities and succeeded in alienating the Muslim sections. At the level of upper class politics what later complicated the issues was that some members of Congress were also part of this cow protection movement.
- Another example of revival trend was the adoption of Hindu religious and historical symbols by leaders for public mobilization. The most important example at the popular level is of Lokmanya Tilak who used the festival from 1893, formerly a private festival, to strengthen the community. Set up as a challenge to the commonly participated Mohorrum so that the Indians (Hindus) could have a festival of theirs, it added, to the process of carving out spaces by different communities. Similarly, Tilak evoked the image and patriotism of Shivaji from 1895 onwards. Another example is that of Aurbindo Ghosh who believed that the masses are not only disconnected from the elites but also are capable of being formed, as politically viable options but need an accepted medium to round-up support. And the most basic medium that can call upon the inner string of the people was identified as religion. What one observes here is how the revivalist strain corresponded with the desire of nationalism to carve out a sphere of sovereignty and that this desire was necessary as it provided the means of challenging the colonial state and its policies.

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**Ques. 2 : Critically examine the rise of middle class in India?**

**Ans.** Due to emergence of British rule in India a number of changes came about in the structure of India Polity. The rise of the middle class in 18th century represents one such change. Since their emergence was connected with the spread of British rule, the middle class came up in different areas at different times. Its character and composition also differed somewhat in certain areas. But they shared certain values and attitudes which they had got from English education and legal system.

- The modern Indian middle classes came up in response to changes in the system of law, education and public administration than to economic factors. Again technological changes also gave birth to a nascent industrial bourgeoisie particularly in western India. But, the largest part of the body of Indian middle classes belonged to Government Service and professions, rather to business and industry; profession of doctors, lawyers, teachers and journalists. The introduction of new economy and English Education produced the classes that aspired to places of pre-eminence in society. There was a class of Indian adventures who had offered their services to the English company as interpreters and Agents. Their Golden Age began in Bengal with the Battle of Plassey. The Company needed men who could help the English officials in the ever growing task of administering law and collecting revenues. These people who were there to help the white superior officials took full advantage of the situation to become rich. They came to be known as Bengali Babus. As the Company's territories were extended westward, the Bengali Babus also moved alongwith their benefactors.
- It is important to note that in Bengal the Zamindars and the missionaries promoted English Education. Therefore, Bengal had an ever increasing number of clerks, lawyers, doctors, teachers and journalists, which formed the middle class. In Bombay the middle class grew up from the ranks of the workers of the Company- As brokers, the Parsees and the Gujaratis made a lot of money because they had a tradition of business behind them. In course of time these brokers become independent industrialists. Just as the Jute industry was emerging in Bengal, the textile industry made its appearance in Bombay. Helped by a railway system and cotton growing areas. In this way a powerful middle class came up in Western India. The equilibrium between the upper classes and the middle classes was constantly being disturbed due to their ideas of freedom, equality incompatible interests. In Bengal for e.g. the Zamindars were a privileged class which could not be liked by the educated middle classes with their and democracy. There came a time when the ground for Government Service became narrower due to our oppeanisation of services in the post-mutiny era. The middle class which had flocked to professions like teaching and law or which had always sought jobs under the British became restless. It began to express itself through organisations and newspapers: In this way nationalism became linked with the new middle classes. By 1880s the educated middle classes had emerged as leaders of the society. They began to speak on behalf of the Society. At this stage even Surendranath Banerjee in his famous work 'A nation in making' took notice of this factor. He said "You have a middle class, you have freedom and prosperity". One may not agree with this theory of the rise of Indian nationalism but one cannot reject it altogether. The leaders of the socio-religious reform movement of the 19th century and also leaders of the early phase of the national movement were from the middle class, which was first to derive benefits of western education. The middle class among the Muslims was a late development comparatively. It became one of the factors of communalism with other ranks. The growth of middle class, therefore, was a very significant development in British India.

**Ques. 3: Give a brief description of the Indian Society in the early nineteenth century?**

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- **Ans.** Society and, religion in India have passed through numerous phases of change. In the long and chequered history of India there had been periods of progress regeneration and reform, as well as periods of decay, dissolution and degeneration. The eighteenth century witnessed the latter tendencies. While in Europe it was the age of enlightenment, but in India, it was a period of stagnation.
- Indian society, as a whole remained detached from and indifferent to the political developments. The innumerable village communities over the length and breadth of the land led their self-contained and more or less secluded life as before. Social rigidity and irrational social practices became conspicuous feature of the eighteenth century India. The disease was more aggravated by the outer aspects of contemporary religions which became even more dogmatic.
- In the eighteenth century, idolatry and fatalism had been extended to extremes Islam, too, had become an intolerant religion in the heyday of Islamic glory, the Sufi preachers preached tolerance, but from the later part of the seventeenth century the Muslim rulers assumed religious bigotry as a part of their State Policy.
- With religions attaching more importance to external form than to inner reality, religious superstitions, began to pervade all aspects of social life. Infanticide, child marriage, polygamy, the burning of widows and other social evils, were all interpreted as religiously valid, and hence there was no qualm of conscience even in most horrible performances. Similarly, such social systems as caste, untouchability, seclusion of women and slavery were all considered as sanctified by the shastras, and therefore, absolutely valid and estimable. Thus the eighteenth century was an age of intolerant institutions and irrational customs.
- That was the last great epoch of social inequality in India. With the impact of western ideas and the rise of Hindu reform movements in the subsequent century, caste was assailed and there began a slow slackening of rigid attitudes towards untouchability. However, in spite of reform movements, throughout the nineteenth century the caste inertia continued without any spectacular improvement in the position of the untouchables.

**Ques. 4 : Critically examine the impact of west on Modern India?**

- **Ans.** In the eighteenth century, Indian society was rigid within itself, but not closed to external influences. By the first half of the eighteenth century, the Europeans had become a definite factor in Indian politics. By way of a historic accident the eighteenth century was an age of unusual mental and physical activities that Europe came nearer to India. During the second half of the eighteenth century and the early decades of the nineteenth century the effects of that impact became manifest.
- European influence operated in three spheres economic, religious and political. The trade and commerce which the Europeans carried on ruinously influenced the total Indian Economy It was through their religions and political activities that the Europeans, on necessity, came very close to the Indian ways of life. Or, more precisely, they broke through the seclusion of the Indian society for the purpose of preaching their own religion as well as introducing their own political and legal systems. India, too, had to understand the West. The impact was not merely on imposition. It was also in the nature of an accommodation.
- The religious activities of the European missionaries brought Christianity to a direct confrontation with Hinduism. For India it was a blessing in disguise that the Christian missionaries felt so strongly against some of her socio-religious customs. Practised through ignorance they were required to be exposed by an external agency. Indirectly, the Christian crusade against Hinduism inspired higher Hindu minds a sense of inwardness to discover in the inner core of their own religion, concepts of monotheism, and all other higher philosophies to feel proud of thus the impact of Christianity led to external and internal change.

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- Bengali literature, too, began to develop under the patronage of the missionaries. The missionaries established a printing press at Serampore. The press also caused the birth of journalism. The impact of the west was also felt politically. The leader of the new administration could not, of necessity, have been composed only of Englishmen; its lower rungs had to be filled with Indians. The people, long accustomed to dealing with foreigners in trade, felt attracted to join their administration. There was the necessity for them to learn English. Early in the nineteenth century, Calcutta led the way in the new desire to acquire knowledge of the English language. In other parts of India, a similar desire was awakened. In 1817, the famous Hindu College was founded in Calcutta with encouragement from David Hare, Rammohan Roy and Radhakanta Dev. In 1818, some Christian missionaries, with the help of some influential Indians established an English School at Banares. In any case, the greater impact of the West was bound to percolate through education, with far-reaching consequences.
- There was yet another platform on which West-East understanding took shape. At first, to the leaders of Indian thought, Englishmen either as traders rulers or missionaries were enemies of the Indian culture, religion and traditions. But such an antagonistic attitude began to subside because of the unique role of some notable Englishmen who dedicated their Indian careers to discovering India. William Jones founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. With earnest compatriots like Charles Wilkins and H.T. Colobrooke, he initiated the, great movement of discovering India. The history and literature, and many facets of Indian civilization began to emerge steadily out of the limbo of oblivion. The more Western scholarship threw light on India, the greater research and learning.
- The nineteenth century in the history of India possessed the same characteristics which the eighteenth century possessed in the history of Europe. It was an age of enlightenment and awakening, of renaissance and reforms, of rationalism and progress, which all ultimately culminated in a growing consciousness of the need for liberty and unity.
- Throughout the nineteenth century there followed phase after phase of various reform movements in India to renovate the society and rationalise religious thoughts. The first in the series was the movement initiated by Raja Rammohan Roy.

**Ques. 5 : Briefly discuss the causes of social and religious reform movements of the nineteenth century?**

- **Ans.** The British rule in India acted as a catalyst to deep seated social changes in India. Western culture also influenced the Indian life and thought to several ways. The most important result of the impact of western culture on India was the replacement of blind faith in current traditions, beliefs and conventions by a spirit of rationalism. The rationalising effect of English education at first manifested itself in religious and social ideas, but it was not long before it also profoundly affected the political consciousness of the people. Western knowledge gave rise to movements whose ebb and flow, with their currents and under-currents, have affected life in modern India. On the one hand western humanitarian and rationalist thought helped in germination of such cosmopolitan socio-religious movements as the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj and the Theosophical Society. On the other hand, orthodox Indian opinion and anti- British influences crystalised in the formation of Arya Samaj.
- If we analyse these developments during the 19th century, it will appear that there was hardly any aspect of life and society which was not deeply affected by the impact of the British rule. Side by side with the rise of new religious sects, we find a profound change in the orthodox Hindu religion. There were persistent demands for removal of social abuses and introduction of social reforms on modern lines. The ideals and methods, of education underwent a revolutionary change. Equally revolutionary was the change brought about in the domain of literature, which reflected the spirit of the socio-religious movement as well as of the modern age.

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There were many causes responsible for the reform movement of the 19th century. First and foremost was the establishment of the British rule itself. The British administrative system had a few distinctive features. Since it had been established by a commercial Company its administrative practices were of mild nature. From the very beginning the Company had adopted the council form of government which ensured mutual discussions and decisions by a majority vote. There was supremacy of the civil over the military authority on the administrative hierarchy. All these factors created condition favourable to intellectual growth.

- Another contributory factor was the painstaking efforts of the Orientalists to bring into limelight India's past. The pioneering work in this field was done by Sir William Jones, Charles Wilkin and R.H. Wilson.
- A third reason for the spread of the reform movement was the determined bid of Christian missionaries to convert India to Christianity. The East India Company in its political career refrained from entering in the socio-religious life in the Indians. The Company had expelled William Carey, the earliest leader of Christian missionaries, in 1793 when he declared his intentions of carrying on propaganda work. After the passing of the Charter Act of 1813, restrictions on the immigration of missionaries to India were removed and a horde of them carried here. They were filled with the zeal of reforming the Indian society of what they regarded as its backwardness and barbarism. In the process they used vile language to denigrate Hindu gods and religious practices. In the first flush of their activities, many immature youngmen were drawn towards Christianity. Indian intellectuals now felt the need of meeting this onslaught. On their religion and social customs by attempting to reform it by removing some of the evil practices. The leader of this awakening was Ram Mohan Roy.

**Ques. 6 : Briefly discuss the contribution of Raja Ram Mohan Roy?**

- **Ans.** A pioneer religious, social and political reformer, Ram Mohan Roy is best described as the father of modern India. He was born in an orthodox and well-to-do family at Radhanagar, in the Hooghly district of West Bengal. The family surname was Banerjee 'but the title of Roy-Rayan', conferred by the Nawab of Bengal, had become hereditary. As he grew up, Ram Mohan acquired a good knowledge of languages, Bengali was his mother-tongue; Persian and Arabic he acquired at Patna, Sanskrit at Banaras, English came early on and, later in life, he was to gain a working knowledge of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Ram Mohan was a prolific writer and the author of two books in Persian, three in Hindi, thirty two in Bengali and forty seven tracts, letters and books in English.
- As was then customary, Ram Mohan was sent to Patna to study Persian and Arabic and the extensive reading he did there was responsible for the great influence of Islam on his religious thinking. He also stayed at Banaras where he studied the Hindu scriptures and found a 'Brahmanical equivalent' of certain features of Islamic faith that he so admired. He moved back to Murshidabad after his father's death and taking advantage of a local press, published his Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin (literally, 'A gift to the Unitarians') which derives inspiration from Islamic thought and is a protest against idolatry and superstition. In 1822-23 he published a weekly journal Miat-UI-Akhbar.
- In 1797 he joined the Company's service in the revenue department. During his years of employment with the Company. Ram Mohan had undertaken a serious study of Tantric and Jain literature as also Christian theology and Muslim Sufi and mutazillite thought. He had, as a result, come to the conclusion that there was a basic unity underlying the Hindu, Muslim and Christian religions. His contribution, it is said, lay in separating the 'essentials of religion from non- essentials' and in presenting a 'positive and rationally sound system of ethic- religious thought'. To him religion was an all-embracing principle operating in every sphere of individual, social and national life.
- After moving to Calcutta, Ram Mohan formed the short-lived Atmiya Sabha (1815-19) to propagate the monotheistic doctrine of Hindu scriptures. He believed in God as being

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Omnipresent, Omnipotent, formless and unseen. First and foremost a religious reformer, he accepted the truth of all religious texts and their teachings. A pioneer in the comparative study of religions, he undertook a serious study of the Bible with the help of one William Adam and drew upon them originals in Hebrew and Greek. As a result, his "The Precepts of Jesus (1820)" proved highly polemical and caused unending controversy with the Serampore missionaries. In 1826 he established the Brahma Sabha, later the Brahma Samaj.

- Initially using the platform of the Atmiya Sabha, Ram Mohan launched a programme of social reform and expressed himself boldly against Sati, child marriage, polygamy and the cast system. Though he preferred reform from within rather than through legislation, he deserves credit for creating a strong public opinion against these social evils, thereby making the task of British administrators (who were to implement reform) relatively easier. He was a relentless crusader against the rigidity of the cast system and held that a democratic society was possible only if the system were completely eliminated.
- Ram Mohan had implicit faith in mass education as the sole means of eradicating pernicious social and religious practices and elevating individual character. He pressed for the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the country and for the introduction of a Westernized system of education. Simultaneously, he advocated a more scientific approach to the study of the eastern classics, establishing the Vedanta College (1825) to teach the Hindu monotheistic doctrines and foster a proper study of Sanskrit. Nor did he ignore the vernaculars which he rated an ideal vehicle for disseminating modern knowledge. He wrote text books in Bengali on grammar, geography, astronomy and geometry, for use in the Anglo-Hindu school that he had established. For the impetus thus given to the language he is considered the 'maker' of the modern Bengali prose; it was on foundations he laid that Bankim Chandra (1838- 94) and Vidyasagar (1820-91) later built the edifice of Bengali literature.
- Ram Mohan viewed British rule as beneficial. He felt it would prepare the people for a constitutional and democratic form of government and expedite the process of modernizing the social and economic life of the country. He was among the first to launch a spirited protest the Jury Act (1827) and the Press Act (1828). In his weekly journal Sambad Kaumadi he suggested improvements in the British system of administration and an increasing association of Indians in Policy making. As a realist, Ram Mohan was conscious that the country was not immediately ready for freedom and therefore, argued strongly in favour of organising the Company's rule on more rational principles. He urged respect for a free press, the rules of law, civil liberties, individual rights and sanctity of ownership of private property.  
It is necessary to remind ourselves that many generalizations about Raja Ram Mohan Roy have no objective relevance to events during the age in which he lived but were formulated after his death for various reasons. Recent assessments have brought out the realisation that a sharp tradition modernisation dichotomy is not conducive to an appreciation of the complex processes of change in' the colonial situation of which the Raja was merely a part. The three main influences in the Raja's thought were Vedantic, Islamic and Christianity.
- Saumyendranath Tagore has cited with approval R. Venkata Ratnam's fulsome tribute, the Raja was distinctly different from the other great men of India before his day. In range of vision, in reach of sympathy, in versatility of power, in variety of activities, in coordination of interests and in coalescence of ideals (he) is a unique figure in the history of India, if not in the annals of the race.
- In the field of religion, Ram Mohan Roy's achievements was two-fold-to separate the essentials of religion from non-essentials and to propagate a rationally sound system of ethico-religious thought. He cut down the jungle of noxious weeds and poisonous plants, which were choking the life of the Hindu Society. He looked at idolatry as a type of worship "which destroys the texture of society". He believed in the worship of the heart, not of the hand. He took from Hinduism the great principle that man is in essence divine. He asked

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the Hindus to reaffirm the old creed of the unity of god as contained in the Vedic literature. He laid emphasis on the love of mankind, irrespective of colour, race or creed and upon the service of man as the highest rule of life.

- **Social Reform:** He desired to rid Hindu society of irrational observances and evil customs. He pleaded for the conditions where women could lead a life of dignity and freedom. He wanted to change the law of property in their favour and to abolish the barbarous and inhuman practice of Sati, which was abolished in 1829 as a result of his untiring efforts. The legislation prohibiting Sati was the first great landmark in the history of social legislations in India. He also pleaded for the remarriage of widows, prohibition of polygamous marriages and pressed for the education of women. He was opposed to caste system and other forms of social discriminations.
- **Political Ideas:** Religious and social reforms occupied much of his time and energy, but he did believe in certain political ideals. He showed the way of conducting political campaigns for redressing wrongs. He believed intensely in freedom for India and for other countries, but he was weighed down by the consciousness of the weaknesses and ills of the Indian society. He put his faith in the power of the rulers. He hoped that under the tutelage of a liberal, progressive and reformed England, India would gain in moral stature and public spirit and become fit for independence. He was a believer in the separation of powers, the right of property and national integration. He approached the Hindu Muslim relations in an unprejudiced and fraternal spirit. He was also a firm believer in internationalism.

**Ques. 7 : Write a short note on Brahma Samaj.**

**Ans.**

## **Brahmo Samaj (1828)**

- Initially called the Brahma Sabha and later the Brahma Samaj, the movement was started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Calcutta on 20 August 1828. A new building for the samaj was constructed in 1830 and the Trust deed of the Samaj gives complete idea of its philosophy. It laid down that no "graven image, statue of sculpture carrying painting, portrait of likeness of anything shall be permitted within the building". No sacrifice was permitted or was to be any object of worship reviled.
- Ram Mohan Roy assailed the strongest part of the citadel of Hindu religion and society. He opposed the worship of images of gods and goddesses, denounced Sati, polygamy and abuses of the caste system, favoured remarriage of Hindu widows, and set at naught the prohibition on crossing the sea by his voyage to England. By these successive shocks he galvanised the dormant Hindu society and set in motion that liberalism in thought and action which enabled it to shake off the fetters of bygone ages. Although the Brahma Samaj was the visible embodiment of the new spirit, it never became a powerful movement.
- Thirteen years later, Debendra Nath Tagore (1817-1905) assumed charge as Acharya and infused new life into the movement. He introduced initiation, norms for membership and a form of prayer and worship called 'Brahmopasna'. Though he and his young followers questioned the infallibility of the Vedas, he took relevant excerpts from the Upanishads and compiled them into a text called Brahma Dharma, which served as a guide for prayer and devotion. Earlier on, he had established a 'Tattva Bodhini Sabha' to propagate the Brahma faith and the Tattvabodhini Patrika to carry its message far and wide.
- The Samaj became much more live and dynamic under Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84) who joined it in 1857. Religious and social problems were discussed in the Sangat Sabha which he formed three years later. Soon, the Brahma Samajists gave up idolatory and caste symbols, devoting more time and effort to social service and educational activities. Preachers were sent out and as a result of Sen's own tours throughout the country (1864-

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- 1868) organised groups such as the Veda Samaj in Madras and the Prarthana Samaj in Bombay came into being.
- Debendra Nath could not reconcile himself to Keshab Chandra's 'radically reformist ideas; in 1865 there was a split when Sen and his followers broke away. They established what was called the 'Brahmo Samaj of India'. Debendra Nath's more orthodox group now came to be known as the Adi Brahmo Samaj.
  - The Sen group, while enthusiastic supporters of the emancipation of women, the education of girls and re-marriage. Through its efforts, the government legalized Brahmo marriages by the Native Marriage Act II of 1872 which laid down twelve (12) as the minimum (marriageable) age for girls. School for girls and vocational institutions for boys were opened too. The daily Indian Mirror and weekly Sulabh Samachar were started to disseminate knowledge. Thus under Keshab Chandra, social reform assumed a wider, all India character. Doctrinal changes too brought about a 'very rich and comprehensive synthesis of religions' which he called Nave Vidhan.
  - There was a second schism in the Samaj on the issue of radical social reforms being preached by Keshab Chandra Sen. The schism came to a head in 1878 when he performed the marriage of his 13-year old daughter to the Prince of Cooch Behar in accordance with Hindu rites. Both the bride as well as the bridegroom were under age and the marriage was in clear violation of 1872 enactment which Sen himself had so zealously advocated. In the result, a powerful and influential section under Sivanath Sastri and Ananda Mohan Bose seceded from the main body to form the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, organised on more democratic lines. Sen, still the undisputed leader of his group, however, continued to be active until his death in 1884.
  - Even while Sen was active, the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj made steady progress, sending out missionaries from time to time. Its work was directed by a general committee of 100 members elected from Calcutta and the provincial units; it published two newspapers, the Indian Messenger and Tattva Kaumudi. The Samaj had, over the years, moved away from its Hindu moorings and was based on 'abstract principles like reason, truth and morality'.
  - The role of the Brahmo Samaj as, the 'first intellectual movement which spread the ideas of rationalism and enlightenment in modern India' cannot be over-emphasized. Its liberal approach to social and religious questions won the approbation of Europeans and Indians alike. Its educational and social reform activities instilled a new confidence which, in turn, contributed to the growth of national movement. A number of Brahmo Samajists were later prominent in the struggle for independence.

**Ques. 8 : Evaluate the contribution of Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samaj?**

- **Ans.** Mul Shankar, later known as Dayanand Saraswati, was born into a Brahmin family in Kathiawar, Gujarat. He renounced his home at the age of 21 and for 15 years he wandered all over India as an ascetic visiting temples, discoursing with learned Brahmins and studying religious texts and yoga. His quest remained unsatisfied until, in 1860, he met Swami Virjananda, a blind sanyasi, at Mathura. A 2½ year stay and study under the latter cleared most of his doubts and he launched a movement against the distortions of the true Hindu faith and the pretensions of the Brahmins.
- Through these years Dayanand had acquired a mastery of the Sanskrit language and its grammar. He was also well-versed in Hindu philosophy—and religious literature. Virjananda interpreted the Vedas for him and changed him with the mission of purifying Hinduism of its ugliness and impurity.
- From 1863 onwards; Dayanand devoted himself to preaching his new gospel as embodied in the teachings of the Arya Samaj he had founded. His active missionary life began in 1865 when he travelled up and down the country - Calcutta (1872-73), Poona and Bombay (1875) though most of his time was taken up in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Punjab.

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- Keshab Chandra Sen, the Brahma Samaj leader counselled the Swami to speak in the language of the people, in Hindi, rather than in Sanskrit. The Swami was the first to publish religious commentaries on the Vedas in Hindi.
- A man of great intellectual honesty, a learned scholar of Sanskrit, a forceful speaker and a doughty debator. Dayanand soon made a powerful impact, particularly at a celebrated disputation at Banaras in 1869. It has been said that 'his choice of the dogmas and doctrines concerning the unity of God, the rejection of the plurality of the Hindu gods and the doctrines of metempsychosis and law of action (Karma), the relations of man, nature and god, were the result of a process of his own analysis and rationalisation, in which he was not guided by tradition or history.
- In 1875, he founded branches of the Arya Samaj in Rajkot, Ahmedabad and Bombay. Here members would worship according to Vedic Sanskaras, and subscribe to a set of prescribed rules. These were elaborated two years later when, after attending the Imperial Darbar, the Swami was invited to Lahore, a town that was soon to emerge as the headquarters of his movement.
- Dayanand's aim was to reclaim and reconvert those who had been lost to the Hindu fold, as well as to revive pride in India's cultural heritage its glorious past and its Vedic religion. He spent the rest of his life, till his death in 1883, touring India, opening new branches of the Samaj and propagating the tenets of his faith. The Satyarth Prakash, published in 1877 from Banaras, offers the sum and substance of his teaching.
- The Swami taught that there is one God that the Vedas are his utterance that there is no incarnation, all divine names being the epithets of the one and only God. His doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas was a challenge to the supernatural revelations of Christianity and Islam. He maintained that social customs had no religious sanctions and denounced shraddha, pilgrimages and child marriage while favouring widow-remarriage. The study of Hindu scriptures was to be open to all, irrespective of caste, class or creed. He, however, accepted the doctrine of Karma and transmigration of soul, and the sanctity of the cow. Though he decried the caste system, he believed in the four varnas resting on merit and occupation, not birth. He laid stress on the uplift of the depressed classes to prevent, inter alia, their conversion to other faiths.
- Satyarth Prakash has been called the Arya Samajists Bible. Its purport is to offer an exhaustive treatise on Hinduism, defining its attitude to all questions — be they religious, social or political. It discusses the most abstruse religious and philosophical issues, an exercise hitherto available only in Sanskrit. A whole chapter in the book is devoted to a discussion on the best form of Government. The Swami believed that 'good government is no substitute for self-government'.
- To him government was the agent of a community in promoting the good of society, besides defending the latter against external dangers. He, therefore, held compulsory education and social reform to be a state responsibility.
- Dayanand disliked alien control and was convinced of the impermanence of British rule. None the less he was sensible enough to realize that the country was as yet disunited and unprepared to challenge their mastery. He, therefore, contented himself with spreading the message of liberalism and nationalism among the masses. What was essential, he maintained, was a common religion and language. His attitude to the world was quite revolutionary, for he placed the goal of active social service as the duty of the individual.

## **Aryasamaj**

- Rates as one of the most powerful revivalist movements in modern India, the Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati at Rajkot (Saurashtra) in 1875; another body answering to that name was set up at Ahmedabad and Bombay later that year. The

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principal objective of the organisation was to counteract the proselytizing activities of Muslims and Christians, and to launch a programme of a social reform.

- The Samaj does not believe in caste based on birth, but in one resting on function or work; nor in inequality of man to man or between the sexes. Arya Samajists regard the Vedas as infallible, eternal and divine. The Samaj, maintains that the Vedic religion alone was true and universal. Aryans were the chosen people, the Veds their gospel and India their homeland. It followed that all other religions were a shade less perfect. One way or another, Dayanand's call was: "Back to the Vedas".
- Elaborately organized at the village level on a democratic basis, the Samaj graduates through a hierarchy to the general assembly which is the top policy making body. Some of the workers who preach its tenets are paid; others work in an honorary capacity. Apart from the main body, its front organisations include the Arya Kumar Sabha, the Shri Samaj and a tract society responsible for publications.
- The Samaj's message resulted in changed attitudes towards prevalent practices and the Depressed Classes. Idolatry was condemned, as was untouchability and child marriage. The subjection of women was decried, inter-caste marriages encouraged as well as the remarriage of widows. Members involved themselves actively in such social work as famine relief, running orphanages and widow homes.
- From the purely defensive, the Samaj soon veered round to the offensive. Dayanand's Satyarth Prakash (1879), in so far as it underlined the weaknesses in Islam and Christianity, became highly polemical. So also did such movements as protection of the cow and 'Shuddhi', re-conversion to the faith of those who willingly, or under duress, had renounced it earlier.
- The Samaj aimed at achieving 'social, religious and political unity', created great interest in the initial stages but later provoked rabid controversies. While it succeeded in a 'national awakening' restricted to a narrow Hindu base, it also encouraged retaliatory measures of other religious groups (viz. 'Tabligh' among the Muslims.). Similarly, the protection of the cow, for most part unexceptional, became a subject of controversy for some Muslim theologians and their followers among the poor and uneducated sections of the community. All this led to an upsurge of communal tension inspired by religious jealousies which continued especially in the Punjab, until the partition of the country in 1947.
- The Samaj's greatest contribution lay in the field of education, although the choice of the system to be followed became a matter of some controversy and debate. The Gurukula school was a hark-back to vedic times the rival college group recognised the value of English education and spread a network of Dayanand Anglo Vedic Schools and Colleges throughout the country. The premier Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College established in 1886 at Lahore with the Principal served as a model for similar institutions all over northern India. The curriculum attempted to achieving synthesis between modern and traditional learning.
- Because of its unrelenting opposition to alien rule, the British accused the Samaj of being a political body. Assuredly some leading Arya Samajists like Lala Lajpat Rai and Bhai Permananda were political activists, but the Samaj per se had no political affiliations. None the less the contrary impressions somehow persisted during the extremists agitation (1907-11) and some known Samajists were dismissed from government service.
- The Arya Samaj is not merely a society which from the time of its inception has initiated drastic reform in Hindu society, customs and practices; it also stands for a cosmopolitan religion and a precise, and profound philosophy derived from the Vedas and its founder. Its religion and philosophy are in a true sense, the religion and philosophy of the Vedas, God, Soul and Matter are the dominant factors in the metaphysics of the Arya Samaj, while its theory of knowledge is based on the knowledge of two - the knower and the knowable.
- Swami Dayanand's programme was practical; he insisted on' the .superiority of practice over belief and devotion. The field of service of the Arya Samaj included all — women and untouchables ,among the Hindus. Indeed all afflicted people without distinction of caste or creed. Dayanand's followers rejected idol worship, scoffed at contemporary belief in

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astrology and refused to concede that heavenly bodies were either interested in human affairs or could be propitiated.

- Dayanand's presentation of India's past made the Arya Samaj a revivalist body. The golden age that he pictured was certainly a thing of the past but he believed and inspired millions to believe - that it could be recaptured.
- Unlike the Brahmo Samaj the Prathana Samaj and several other 19th century reformist movements, the Arya Samaj never cut itself aloof from the mainstream of Hindu thought. Even as Dayanand had done, its members rather claimed to be true Hindus, basing themselves as they did on the Vedas which every Hindu equally respected.
- In bringing about a national awakening in the country, the Samaj played a dual role at once progressive and retrogressive: Thus in attacking religious superstition, propagating mass education, inculcating equality of man to man as well as between man and woman, it acted as a catalyst for progressive reform. Yet in proclaiming the Vedas to be infallible, it denied the individual the exercise of his own independent judgement and substituted one supremacy, that of the Brahmins, by another. In its formative phase the Samaj made a signal contribution to the nationalist upsurge, yet after the twenties it contributed, however, unwillingly, to the growth of what has been called a 'belligerent religio-communal atmosphere'.

**Ques. 9 : Write Short notes on;**

- **A) Ramkrishna Paramhansa**
- **B) Swami Vivekanand**
- **Ans.**

## **A) Ramkrishna Paramhansa**

- If the Brahmo movement of Rammohan was an outcome of external influences emanating from the, enlightenment and nationalism of the modern West, the movement represented by Ramakrishna and his disciples was the result of an inner resurgence of the Hindu spirit to recover and reassert itself. Ramakrishna was born in 1836 in the Hooghly district of Bengal. At about the age of twenty, Ramakrishna became the priest of the temple of Kali at Dakshineswar near Calcutta. In his intense devotion to the Goddess he saw the Supreme Divine Mothers representing that Absolute Force which brought into existence the universe and creation. Kali became an avenue for Ramakrishna to attain further realisations. That realisation can be summed up as follows. Devotion to God was the supreme goal of the mind. The devotion could be expressed through unbounded love. The God to be attained through love could be very personal, and conceived in any image yet, he was beyond any perception, conception, form quality or character. Thus God could be formless or in forms. It was for man to realise Him in any manner he liked. True religion accommodated any amount of freedom in the true love of God Religion was just a path towards the supreme goal Ramakrishna searched for a universal synthesis of all religions. If diverse faiths in Hinduism had one common meeting ground, the different religions of the world could also be regarded as veritable rivers merging in the ultimate sea. In the nineteenth century India, Ramakrishnas spiritual cosmopolitanism brought to the Indian mind a new vision of the spiritual unity of mankind.
- Many were attracted to Ramakrishna from all ranks and positions. Among those who became his disciples, the most celebrated was Narendra Nath Dutta, famous in history as-Swami Vivekananda.

## **B) Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)**

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- Narendranath Dutta, better known as Swami Vivekananda was born in a well-to-do middle class Kayastha family of Calcutta in January 1863. Educated in a mission school and college, he distinguished himself in philosophy. For a time he was a member of the Brahmo Samaj but after 1882 came under the influence of Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-86). The latter instinctively saw in the youth the one man destined to propagate his message far and wide.
- Gradually, Narendranath came to accept Ramakrishna's teachings, to become his spiritual successor on the master's death in 1886. In accordance with the latter's wishes, he founded a monastic order in a rented house later known as Barananganore Math, the humble beginnings of what later came to be known as the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.
- On a pilgrimage that took him all over India, Vivekananda was a pained witness the decadent state of Hindu society caused by the apathy and ignorance—of the people. Ruthlessly exploited by the Brahmins, they invariably succumbed to the proselytizing activities of Christians and Muslims. At the same time, he became conscious of the potentialities of the Hindu religion as a binding force to unite the whole of India. To be able to perform the role, Vivekananda felt Hinduism would need a reinterpretation and reinvigoration. In the result, he set out to demonstrate that a belief in Vedanta was to incompatible with the study and practice of scientific knowledge. More he restated in simple language India's ancient metaphysical thought 'in terms of modern science and philosophy'. As a representative of Hinduism to the Parliament of Religions convened at Chicago in 1893, he made a powerful impact by his personality and exposition of the faith. He introduced Vedanta and its spirituality to the west in a series of brilliant lectures in the United States and later, in England (1893-95).
- In due course, Vivekananda planned a programme for the regeneration of his people. They must be taught to rebel, he argued, against malpractices, social, and religious customs which weakened individuals as well as society, and established new social order based on freedom and equality. The education of the masses, with special stress on that of women, as well as borrowing western technical know-how, would, he felt, speedily usher in the modernizing process. He had no faith in a social reform programme that catered to an elitist group. He argued that education, with all that it implied, would automatically rid society of its ailments, thereby dispensing with the necessity of a formal movement. Reform, he believed, could be brought about only by uplifting the masses in whom lay embedded the vitality of a nation. He projected the image of a classless society in which the Brahmins would help elevate the Shudras.
- Vivekananda declared that he would talk of religion only succeeded in removing poverty and misery from the country, for religion could not appease hunger. People must first be properly fed and made physically strong. The poor should be considered equal to God and service to them should rate as the best form of worship. A keen sense of patriotism is evident in all the Swami's writings. His dream was to restore to India the glory of its bygone days; to achieve this, he exhorted the youth to dedicate themselves selflessly to the service of their country, to do away with dissensions and come together on the basis of a common spiritual heritage for a great cause - the freedom of India from alien yoke. The young revolutionaries of Bengal were inspired by his teachings and one of his disciples, Sister Nivedita (originally, Margaret Noble), later served on the executive committee of the Revolutionary Society.
- Vivekananda applied his philosophic principles of Vedanta to the affairs of everyday life. Salvation, he insisted, comes not through the life of a recluse but by serving God in man. Though essentially a savant, Vivekananda also unwittingly made a signal contribution to the nascent nationalism of India which he 'largely created' and whose 'highest and noblest elements' he embodied in his own life. His ideal of nationalism rested on four solid rocks; the awakening of the masses who form the bases of the nation; development of physical and moral strength, unity based on common spiritual ideas and a consciousness and pride in the ancient glory and greatness of India. His ideal of reform was based on improving the

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condition of women; overhauling the educational system; abolishing caste distinctions. He offered a synthesis between the old and the new.

- Religion, Vivekananda averred, consists of a personal encounter with the Supreme and cannot be defined in any precise terms. This view leads to an appreciation of every form, description and approach to the Divine. He called himself a socialist, not because that system was perfect but 'because half a loaf is better than no bread'. His idea of religion was one that will give us faith in ourselves, a national self-respect and the power to feed and educate the poor and relieve the misery around.
- Ramakrishna Mission. The Ramakrishna monastic order and Mission, formally registered in 1909, had been officially established in 1887 by Swami Vivekananda, the chief disciple of Swami Ramakrishna Parmahansa (1834-86) of Dakshineswar. A year after his death, about a dozen young men, including Vivekananda, had taken monastic vows at Barangore and dedicated themselves to propagating the gospel of the-master. The latter had preached the equality of all religions which point the way to achieve God. A practical Vedantist, Ramakrishna realised divinity in humanity,' viz in the service of man, and thereby found communion with a loving and vibrating humanity. The Ramakrishna Mission is not religious order but a Social Service Mission based on Ramakrishna Paramhansa's concepts of: 'worship God in Men' and the Universal unity of all religions'.

**Ques. 10 : Briefly discuss the role of Theosophical society in the national awakening?**

- **Ans.** The Theosophical Society was founded by Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-91) and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907) at New York in 1875. Later, in correspondence with Swami Dayanand who founded the Arya Samaj that very year, a union of the two movements was planned, but this proved very short lived.
- The two theosophist leader reached India in January 1882 and set up their headquarters at Bombay before moving to Adyar, in Madras. By 1884 the Society had 100 branches in India, apart from several in Europe and America. Four years later, it started an esoteric school to initiate young theosophists into the practice of occultism.
- In matters of religion, theosophy essentially believes in the unity of god, his three-fold emanations, viz a hierarchy of angels, human spirits and sub human intelligences and universal brotherhood Philosophically, it supports the schools of idealism, asserts the primacy of consciousness and maintains that the human soul is a kin to the divine Theosophists aim at achieving a universal brotherhood of man by restoring faith in ancient religions and philosophies Understandably, in India they asserted belief in and defended the entire gamut of Hindu practices This included the worship of various gods and goddesses, thereby rescuing Hinduism from the derogatory criticism of Western missionaries. Educated Indians who had come to believe that socio-religious customs and polytheism were incompatible with modernization flocked to its meetings. Madame Blavatsky relayed messages. She claimed to have received from servants residing in Tibet and frequently demonstrated miraculous powers to convince her followers.
- Theosophy purports to be the final truth of the universe taught in different lands and at different times by various founders of religion and teachers of philosophy, but revealed a new to Madame Blavatsky by certain masters or mahatmas said to live in Tibet and elsewhere. The system and the society are both of great interest because of the large literature which has sprung up from the movement.
- The movement was revived and revitalized by Annie Besant, Who came out to India in 1893, after the death of Madame Blavatsky. She succeeded Olcott as President of the Society in 1907 and endeared herself to large numbers of people by preaching the wisdom of Krishna and the Gita, thus turning theosophy 'into something specifically Hindu'. In fact, that would largely explain the uniqueness of this movement it was inaugurated by a non-Indian who was a great admirer of Hinduism.

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- Theosophy's contribution lay in restoring among Indians a faith in Hinduism, a pride in its ancient cultural heritage and a desire to revive its glorious past. It also popularized oriental books and study in foreign countries. The movement won great popularity for its work in the education of the youth. Its most successful venture was the establishment of the Central Hindu College at Banaras in 1898, which proved to be the nucleus for Banaras Hindu University two decades later. The college apart, the society opened schools for boys, for women, for the Depressed Classes and took part in the Boy Scouts movement. All in all, it proved to be a powerful force awakening pride and self-respect among Indians.
- Thanks to theosophy, Mrs. Besant, later an acknowledged leader in the national movement, commanded a respectable following before she was embarrased on her political career. For under the aegis of the Society, a social and religious reform movement had taken root all over India, especially in the south.

**Ques. 11 : Briefly discuss the role of M.G. Ranade and Prarthna Samaj in the Social reform Movement?**

- **Ans.** An eminent social reformer who rose to be a judge of the Bombay High Court. Mahadev Govind Ranade is widely accepted as the 'father of the renaissance' in Western India. After a brilliant academic career in India he was sent on a scholarship to Edinburgh to complete his education. On returning home, he joined the civil service and was appointed a sub-judge in Poona. He stagnated in minor posts all through Lytton's regime, but subsequently obtained higher positions through successive promotions and retired as a puisne judge of the Bombay High Court.
- A man of varied interests, an economist, politician, historian and social reformer, Ranade did not let his official work interfere with his duty to the country and its people. He sketched out a policy that would make India progress economically; a keen historian, he took a special interest in reinterpreting Maratha history. He was also an active member of the Poona Sarvojanik Sabha, the Deccan Education Society and the Prarthna Samaj.
- Ranade's principal force was social and religion reform. He relied upon legislation to do away with social ills and worked unceasingly for the eradication of child marriage, the purdah system and the prohibition of widow remarriage. To encourage consideration of social problems on a national scale, he inaugurated the Indian National Social Conference, which for many years met for its annual sessions alongside the Indian National Congress.
- On questions relating to religious superstition and orthodoxy, Ranade believed in reformation from within as against the revivalism that was then popular in many parts of the country. While official duty prevented his engaging in political activity, he exercised a tremendous impact on the Congress in general and its policy-making in particular. A moderate, he decried militancy and advocated peaceful progress through Constitutional means. He believed with some reservations, in the benevolent nature of British rule and tried to convince his compatriots that they had much to learn from their alien masters. Though never a spectacular figure on the Indian political stage, Ranade is credited with arousing national consciousness among the people and guiding them into responsible political roles.
- Tilak has talked of Ranade's 'unique greatness', in breathing life into that cold lump of flesh and bones' that was Maharashtra before him and he did it 'by all possible remedies in all possible ways'. Gokhale recalled his 'great, massive intellect an earnest and dauntless spirit, an infinite capacity for work, and an humble faith in the purpose of providence that nothing shook'. Gokhale said of him that he had been born two centuries earlier 'Ranade would have found his place by the side of saints like Tukaram or Eknath'.

## The Prarthana Samaj

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- The Prarthana Samaj was founded in Maharashtra in 1867 with inspiration from Keshabchandra Sen. Mahadev Govinda Ranade was its chief leader. It aimed, like the Brahma Samaj, at socio-religious reforms. The main difference between the two was that whereas the Brahmas assailed Hinduism by forming an organization more or less outside the Hindu orbit the members of the Prarthana Samaj remained Hindus and started progressive reforms within Hinduism as Hindus. They were much attracted to the ideals of the modern West, and proceeded to imitate Western methods of education. M.G. Ranade soon became the main strength of this movement in Maharashtra. He pointed out that most of the evil customs which then prevailed in the Hindu society ran counter to the practices observed in earlier times and cited, as instances, the dependent status of women, child marriages, prohibition of remarriage of widows, restriction of marriage to the narrow circle of the sub caste to which one belonged, ignorance and seclusion of women, prohibition of foreign travel, various kinds of abstentions enforced upon women, restrictions as to interdining among various castes, untouch-ability, etc, which ran contrary to ancient precepts and practices. Ranade also launched a purity movement comprising anti-dancing and temperance agitation, admission of converts from other faiths and reduction in extravagant marriage expenses. The greatest contribution of Ranade was that his movement soon became an all India movement for social reform.
- The social reform movement inaugurated by M.G. Ranade, was successfully continued in the 20 century. Two other champions of the social reforms movement with him were Dhondo Keshav Karve and Vishnu Shastri, Ranade and Karve launched the widow remarriage movement and started Widow's Home Association, to provide education to widows. The widow's Home aimed at making the widows self-supporting by giving them training as teachers, mid-wives or nurses. In no other part of India the social reform movement worked so successfully and created so profound influence as in Maharashtra under the auspices of the Prarthana Samaj.

## Minor Reform Movements

- Besides the above reform movements, there emerged many minor reform movements in the 19th century in various part of the country some of these movements such as Dharma Sabha and Bharat Dharma Mahamandal were reactionary and supported orthodoxy. But all these reform movements, progressive and conservative both, supported reforms in the society. Some of the minor reform movements are being described here:
- **Mahima Movement:** It was founded in Orissa by Mahima Goswami, who laid sufficient stress on disciplined habits to control the body and mind. It did not recognise any caste, creed colour or any narrowness that divided human beings.
- **The Deva Samaj:** This Sect was founded in 1887 at Lahore by Shiv Narain Agnihotri, who was earlier a follower of Brahma Samaj. The teachings of the Samaj were compiled in a book called 'Deva Shashtra', which emphasises on the Supreme Being, eternity of soul, the Supremacy of the Guru and emphasis on good action. The Samaj prescribed ideal social conduct and moral ethics, such as not accepting bribe, gambling, consuming intoxicants and non-vegetarian food and indulging in violence.
- **The Bharat Dharma Mahamandala:** This was an all India Organisation of the orthodox educated Hindus who rose in defence of orthodox Hinduism against the teachings of the Arya Samaj, the Theosophists and the Ram Krishna Mission. The beginning of this organisation was made in 1890 in Punjab by Pandit Din Dayal Sharma to counter the teachings of the Arya Samaj. In 1895 the Sanatan Dharma Sabha was founded in Haridwar, the Dharma Maha Parishad in South India and Dharma Mahamandali in Bengal to defend orthodox Hinduism. In 1902 these various bodies united under a single organisation called Bharat Dharma Mahamandala, with headquarters at Varanasi. The only progressive reforms proposed by this orthodox organisation were to introduce useful

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reforms into Hindu society, proper management of Hindu religious institutions, to establish Hindu educational institutions etc. With the emergence of this movement got divided into two broad sects – the Santana Dharma (which believed in the idol worship and authority of Hindu scriptures) and Arya Samaj.

- **The Madras Hindu Association:** Two such Reform Associations were founded in Madras. In 1892, the Madras Hindu Social Reforms Association was founded by Viresalingam Pantulu (1848-1919), whose efforts were concerned with the Plight of widows and R. Venkat Ratnam Naidu (1862-1939), who started social purity movement advocating temperance and combating the devadasi custom.
- **Dharma Sabha :** It was an orthodox society founded by Radhakant Deb (1794- 1876) in 1830 The members of the Dharma Sabha were the defenders of the socio-religious status quo against both reformers and radicals. Through its newspaper it fought the reformers every inch of the war for the protection or orthodoxy. They even opposed the abolition of sati. But they played very active role in promoting western education, even among girls.
- **Lokahitawadi:** Gopal Hari Desmukh (1823-1892), popularly known as Lokahitawadi was a product of the Western learning in India. He worked as Judge and a member of the Governor General's Council in 1830. He was a great social reformer and rational thinker, who asked the people to be self-reliant and seek the western learning to cultivate rational outlook and to solve country's problems. He supported the cause of women and advocated female education, Lokahitawadi deplored the ignorance, old social values, over-dominance of religion in social life, selfishness of the upper classes etc. in his essays. He pleaded for the humanitarianism and social service as the two driving forces in India.
- **The Radhaswami Movement:** This movement was founded in 1861 by a banker of Agra Tulis Ram, popularly known as Shiv Dayal Saheb or Swamiji Maharaj. The Radhaswamis believes in one Supreme Being, the supremacy of the Guru, a "company of the pious people (Satsang), and simple social life. They believe that there is no need for renunciation of worldly life for spiritual attainments. They further hold that all religions are true. The sect recognises no temples, shrines or sacred places. Works of faith and Charity, the spirit of service and prayer, are laid down as necessary duties.
- **The Seva Sadan:** This social reform and humanitarian organisation was founded in 1885 by the famous Parsi social reformer Behramji M. Malabari, who relentlessly fought throughout his life against child marriages and 'enforced widowhood'. The Seva Sadan founded by him specialised in the care of socially discarded and exploited women of all castes, providing educational, welfare and medical services.
- **The Servants of Indian Society:** It was founded in 1915 by Gopal Krishna Gokhale to build a dedicated group of people for social service and reforms. In the field of famine relief, union organisation, cooperatives and uplift of tribals and depressed, the Society did a very commendable work.
- **Indian National Social Conference:** It was founded by M.G. Ranade and Raghunath Rao. The Conference, which met annually from its first session in Madras in December 1887, at the same time and the same place as the Indian National Congress was held, focussed attention on matters relating to social reforms It launched the famous 'Pledge Movement' to inspire the people to take oaths to prohibit child marriage. The conference also advocated the inter-caste marriages, and opposed kulinism and polygamy.
- **The Social Service League:** Narayan Malhar Joshi, one of the leading members of the servants of Indian Society, founded the Social Service League in 1911, "to collect and study social facts and discuss social problems with a view to forming public opinion on questions of social service' and to make efforts to secure for the masses better and reasonable conditions of life and work. In pursuance of these ideals the league opened a number of day and night: schools libraries, dispensaries and started Boy's clubs and Scouts Crops.
- **The Rahanumai Mazdayasanan Sabha or Religious Reform Association:** This was a social-religious reform organisation of the Parsis in India. The western educated and progressive Parsis like Dadabhai Naoroji, J.B. Wacha, S.S. Bengali and Naoroji Furdonji

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founded in 1851, the Rahanumai Mazdayasnan Sabha or Religious Reform Association, which had for its object “the regeneration of the social condition of the Parsis and the restoration of the Zoroastrian religion to its pristine purity”. They insisted on the education of the Parsi Priests and made great efforts for the spread of Western education among the Parsis, including girls. The age of marriage was increased and the Parsi women achieved their emancipation.

**Ques. 12 : Briefly discuss the role of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his Aligarh Movement?**

- **Ans.** Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98) and His Aligarh Movement. The Aligarh Movement of Sir Saiyad Ahmad Khan was the foremost movement for social reforms among the Indian Muslims.
- Syed Ahmad was born in Delhi in April 1817, the scion of a well established family that had migrated to India in the seventeenth century and held high positions at the Mughal court. He received no formal education but developed an early acquaintance with the world of letters by contributing regularly to an Urdu journal, founded and edited by his elder brother.
- Convinced that British rule in India had come to stay Syed Ahmad preferred service under the Company At the time of the Rebellion of 1857, Syed Ahmad was at Bijnor and earned the government’s gratitude for his work in saving the lives of many Englishmen during those days. In 1858 he wrote his famous Pamphlet on the Causes of the Indian Mutiny, published in 1863, and later translated into English by Auckland Colvin, a former Governor of U.P.
- The alleged repression suffered by Muslims in the post 1857 period resulted in Syed Ahmad’s dedication to the cause of uplift and rejuvenation of his community His plans were designed to serve a dual purpose to reconcile and promote understanding between the English and the Muslims on the one hand and to disseminate education among his community, so as to release it from the clutches of obscurantism, on the other. He also initiated a programme of liberalisation - reinterpreting Muslim religious beliefs and practices and advocating a more progressive, westernized approach to education. His ideal Muslim community that could maintain steadfast loyalty to Islam, without sacrificing the rewards of worldly progress. His programme of educational reform took concrete shape with the establishment of the Muhammandan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in January 1877. It rested broadly on the Oxbridge pattern and was the result partly of an earlier visit (1869-70) to England where Syed Ahmad had studied the functioning of English educational institutions. The Muhammadan Educational Congress was formed in 1886; after 1890, it came to be known as the Muhammadan Educational Conference. While propagating his ideas of liberal education among Muslims, Syed Ahmad favoured both technical education for the community as well as higher education for women. These measures, for most part unpopular, swelled the ranks of his detractors among the orthodox, culminating in a dastardly attempt on his life.
- Convinced like many of his Muslim and Hindu contemporaries of the usefulness and necessity of British rule in India, Syed Ahmad along with Raja Jaikishan Das took the lead in establishing (1866) at Aligarh ‘the British Indian Association, North-Western Provinces’. Though superficially it would appear to be a branch of the British Indian Association, in fact, it was not. The ‘Leading aim’ was ‘to improve the efficiency’ of the British Indian every legitimate means”. The Association was short-lived-surviving a bare four years and proved to be a far from active body.
- Syed Ahmad’s opposition to the ‘Indian National Congress and his formation in 1888, of the Indian Patriotic Association stemmed largely from his conviction that the activities of the former smacked of sedition. The latter body presently split - a development, that led eventually to the formation of the United Indian Patriotic Association. His sense of loyalty to his community, the experience of British distrust of that loyalty and his desire to remove that distrust led him to rule that Muslims should not be associated with the Congress, even in

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their individual capacity. In the result, he skirted the idea that Hindus and Muslims were members of one 'Indian Nation'. It may be added that he was convinced that the Congress ideology of open competition for jobs and elected legislative councils would be detrimental to Muslim interests. The centre of Sir Syed's activities was Aligarh, and therefore, the liberal movement launched by him came to be known as Aligarh movement.

## • **Aligarh Movement**

- The genesis of the Aligarh movement may be traced to the combined efforts of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his junior partners, and the foundation of the Muslim Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh.
- Essentially, it was a cultural movement with the objective of 'regeneration of liberal values in literature, social life, education and religion'. Aiming at the modernization of the Muslim community, then allegedly trapped in the vice of medieval, obscurantism, it appealed mainly to the well-to-do classes through whom, it was hoped, it would filter down to the masses. Its main objectives were the popularization of education and rationalization of religious tenets.
- In pursuance of its educational programme, an Indian Scientific Society was formed in 1863, the MAO College established in 1877 and the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference in 1886. Stress was laid on the learning of western science and literature, besides the traditional study of Islam. The Urdu language received, encouragement.
- Some members who adhered to the movement questioned Islam's age old dogma and refused to conform to orthodox custom. This brought upon them the wrath of the Ulama and less educated masses. The movement-however soon gathered momentum and gained adherents as more and more Muslims were educated.
- The movement eschewed active politics to ensure continued British support for its programmes. It assiduously supported all government legislation with a view to stamping out the stigma of disloyalty with which the entire Muslim community had been branded since the Rebellion of 1857. Additionally, the aim was obtain for the Muslims an equal share of representation in the future administration of the country. Muslims, were to avoid all participation in agitations sponsored by the Indian 'National Congress.
- The objective was not merely to bring about the modernization of Indian Muslims but also to make them play a dominant role in the religious, political, economic and cultural life of the country. With this end, 'it was deemed-essential to introduce them to the western system of education and civilization, besides imparting to them some knowledge of Islamic theology, history and culture. In sum, western education and British patronage were the principal means for the attainment-of these objectives.
- Broadly, the movement aimed at Muslim regeneration it emphasized the historical superiority of the Muslims in India and resolved on a different line of action for them. Muslims were not to be equated with Hindus, much less dominated by them; special safeguards were advocated for the protection of their rights and interests. Even as the All-India Muslim League was the outcome of the Aligarh Movement so were many leaders of the League and of the community. They employed every conceivable device-separate electorates, special weightage and reservation of seats - to safeguard Muslim interests.
- In 1887, when. Badru-ud-din Tayyabi was elected President of the Indian National Congress. Sayyed Ahmed Khan emerged actively in opposition to it. In his view a Hindu-Muslim alliance, could only be disadvantageous to the Muslim Community, which was much smaller in number, educationally backward, politically immature, and economically insecure. Alliance with the Hindus against the British could only lead to the loss of the British patronage and its substitution by the exploitation and subjugation of the Muslims by the overwhelming Hindu majority. Thus began modern Muslim political separatism in India.

**Ques. 13 : Give a brief description of the Minor Muslim reforms movements?**

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- **Ans.** But the Aligarh movement in spite of its strong appeal and a large following among the Indian Muslims, was not the only Muslim Reform Movement. There were a number of minor Muslim reform movements which were either opposed to this movement or developed independently, purely as socio-religious reform movements.
- **The Faridi or Fara'idi Movement:** About the same time, in East Bengal, there spread another fundamentalist reformist movement known as the Faraidi because of its emphasis on the Islamic pillars of faith (fara id). Its founder was Haji Shariat-Allah, who affirmed strongly the unity of God and aimed at the eradication of social innovations current among the Muslims of Bengal, many of them borrowed from Hinduism. The Fandis suspended the Friday and Id prayers, thinking of India under the British rule as daral-harb (enemy territory) where these prayers are not required. though the Faridi movement clashed with the interests of the landed gentry of Bengal and he was suspected and persecuted it remained a religious and social rather than a political movement. Under Haji's son Dudu Miyian, from 1840 onwards, it became revolutionary. This hierarchical organization was almost like a parallel government embracing all the Fara'idis, their affairs and disputes. They organized a para-military force, armed only with clubs, to fight the henchmen of Hindu landlords or even the police. He was arrested and released a number of times; but the-Fara'jdi movement, which could once count one-third of the Muslim population of Dacca among its adherents, became weak after his arrest in 1847. After Dudu Miyan's death in 1862 it survived merely as a religious movement without any political overtones.
- **Titu Mir's Movement:** This movement was organised in West Bengal by Mir Nithar Ali (1782-1831), popularly known as Titu Mir, one of the disciples of Syyed Ahmad Raebareli, the founder of the Wahabi movement. Titu Mir organised the Muslim peasants against Hindu landlords and British indigo planters. Some Hindu landlords imposed a beard-tax on his followers and persecuted them in other ways. Titu Mir's organization and his movement were not really as militant or revolutionary as the British records make out; only during the last year of his life was there confrontation between him and the British police. Finally he was killed in action in 1831 by a British regiment of native infantry.
- **The Ahmadiya Movement:** The Ahmadiya movement was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadiyan (1839-1908) in 1889, who began his work as a defender of Islam against the polemics of the Arya Samaj and the Christian missionaries in 1889 he claimed to be Masih (Messiah) and Mahdi, and later also to be an incarnation of the Hindu god Krishna as well as Jesus returned to earth. The movement was really a heresy well within the bounds of Islam, as Ghulam Ahmad, though he called himself a minor prophet, regarded Muhammad as the true and great prophet whom he followed.
- The Ahmadiya movement was more or less based itself, like the Brahma Samaj, on the principles of a universal religion of all humanity. The founder of this movement was greatly influenced by western liberalism, theosophy, and religio-reform movements of the Hindus. The Ahmadiya movement opposed Jihad or sacred war against non-Muslims and stressed on fraternal relations among all people. The movement spread western liberal education among Indian Muslims had started a network of schools and colleges for that purpose.
- **The Deoband Movement:** The Islamic Seminary at Deoband Was founded in 1867 by two theologians Muhammad Qasim Nahautavi (1837-1880) and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi. The Deoband school of Islamic Theology was a poor man's school and its teachers and students lived hard lives in the most economical conditions. The followers to this school were concerned with the problems of education and character, the questions of 'society and State' were as important for them as those of belief and practices of individual'. Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, the founder of the movement, advised the Muslim community in India to cooperate with the Congress in its activities. The Deoband School declared in unambiguous terms that the concept of nationality was based upon the unity of all religious groups did not contravene any Islamic Principle. This decision created a gulf between Deoband and Aligarh movement.

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- Among the supporters of the Deoband School was Shibli Numani (1857-1914) a profound scholar Persian and Arabic and a prolific writer in Urdu. He founded the Nadwatul Ulama and Darul Ulum in Lucknow in 1894-96, where he tried to give effect to his educational ideas Shibli admired the Congress for its high idealism and for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people. He believed that Muslims were citizens of India and they owed loyalty to their mother land. He was convinced that the Muslims could, jointly with the Hindus, create a state in which both could live honourably and happily.
- As a result of these reform movements, the Muslim urban society started taking to modern ways. The modern awakening among the Muslims led to decline in the practice of polygamy and widow remarriage was encouraged. The great political upheavals, of this period thus helped in bringing about a renaissance of Indian Islam and re-orientation of the Muslim society.

**Ques. 14 : Briefly discuss the nature of caste movements in Modern India?**

- **Ans.** As a result of the socio-economic changes introduced by the British rule in India; there was an emergence of the caste consciousness. These caste - movements may be divided into three categories:
- **(a)** The movements of the intermediate castes, which emerged as result of the process of Sanskritization, claimed a higher status for themselves through borrowing customs, manners and taboos from groups traditionally superior to them. The Justice Movement - Later on known as Justice Party was one of such movements, which was against Brahmin predominance in education, government service and politics. In order to secure better representation in government jobs and legislatures it also expressed loyalty to the British Government.
- **(b)** Second Type of caste movements were those which tried to arouse caste consciousness and solidarity through organising caste associations. These caste associations sought to mobilize support from their caste-brethren in their usually quite parochial and selfish struggle for social recognition, jobs and political favours - a process greatly encouraged by the gradual introduction of electoral politics from the 1880s onwards.
- **(c)** The Lower Caste Movements: The Lower Caste Movements which attacked Brahmanic domination caste discriminations taboos, and demanded equal status for this lower castes in the social and cultural life were, most vocal caste movements. These lower caste movements 'greatly influenced the course of social reform and national movements in the first-half of the 20th century.

**Ques. 15 : Give a brief description of the major caste movements in India?**

- **Ans.** Jyotiba Phule, who organised a powerful non-Brahmin movement, was born in 1828 in a Mali family. His education, his personal experiences and association with the Christian missionaries made him critical of the prevailing Hindu religion and Customs. In 1854, he opened a school for the 'untouchables' and started a private orphanage to help widows. Jyotiba Phule had a violent dislike of the Brahmin priesthood. He made no distinction between the non-Brahmin and untouchables Jyotiba Phule with his book 'Ghulamgiri' (1872), and his organization, the Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873) proclaimed the need to save the lower castes from hypocritical Brahmins and their opportunistic scriptures'.
- **Aravippuram Moment** : This movement was launched in 1888 by Shri Narain Guru, a great socio-religious reformer of Kerala. He was opposed 'to the Brahmin or priestly domination' and was of the view that even a person of the lower caste could consecrate an image and act as a priest in the temple. On the Shivaratri festival of 1888, Shri Narain Guru, in spite of belonging to a lower caste, installed the idol of Shiva at Aravippuram, which was the beginning of this movement. The Aravippuram Pratishtha was a unique event of historical importance because a person

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of the lower caste, forbidden from entering the temple had himself consecrated the Shiva image in a temple. On the wall of the temple he inscribed the following words: "Devoid of dividing walls of caste or race, or hatred of rival-faith, we all live here in Brotherhood". Shree Narayan Guru soon became the famous saint, seer philosopher, poet and social reformer for millions of people. Education and organisation were amongst his many slogans for freedom and strength. He held that the, essence of all religions is one and the same, and advocated the comparative study of all faiths. This movement was of far-reaching importance in the history of modern South India. Taking inspiration from the success of this movement a number of socio-religious reform movements were launched in the South the most important being the Self-Respect and Temple Entry Movement.

- **Self Respect Movement:** It was a radical movement founded in Tamil Nadu in 1925 by E.V. Ramaswarni Naicker popularly known as 'Periyar', who opposed Brahman domination and advocated simple marriages without Brahman Priests and rituals, forcible temple entry, burning of Manusmriti etc. Under the British encouragement this movement emerged as a kind of Dravidian or Tamil separatism'.
- **The Temple Entry Movement:** In various parts of South India, particularly Kerala the disabilities imposed on the avarnas or people of depressed classes were most inhuman and degrading, against which the struggle was being waged since the end of the 19th century under the leadership of several reformers and intellectuals such as Sri Narayan Guru, N. Kumaran Assan and T.K. Madhavan. In 1924, another beginning was made for opening the doors of the temples for the avarnas or depressed classes. After 1924 the anti-untouchability programme became a part of the Gandhian constructive programme and gained great popularity. The temple entry movement used all the techniques developed in the course of the nationalist struggle In November 1936, the Maharaja of Travancore issued a proclamation throwing open all Government controlled temples to all Hindus irrespective of caste. Madras followed suit in 1936. The temple entry movement. was the Gandhian or nationalist approach to fight caste oppression.
- There were number of other lower caste movements in the early 20th century - the most important of them .being the Depressed Classes movement launched by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

**Ques. 16 : Give a brief description of the social legislations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?**

- **Ans.** In the early decades of the nine-teenth century there began internal movements within Hindu Society against its own customs and practices. In the light of the changing consciousness among the people, the Government too changed its policies. It was a coincidence that the British initiated social legislation when the Indian reformers created an opinion in their favour. The East India Company proceeded very hesitantly and cautiously against the abolition of the custom of sati till Ram Mohan Roy represented the view of rational Indians against the evil. On 4 December 1829, by Regulation XVII of the Government the custom of sati was declared illegal and punishable by the Criminal Courts.
- A less Significant social measure than the abolition of sati was the introduction of Widow marriage Opinion-in its favour developed very slowly though no widespread interest was noticed. The abolition of sati indirectly brought into prominence the problem of the fate and future of the young Widows who were saved from destruction but thrown into a pitiable state of existence, the middle of the nineteenth century, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar launched a campaign for widow marriage.
- Such justifications had no meaning unless law came to the help of the widows for their marriage and subsequent legal status. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar therefore presented a petition to the Government on behalf of about one thousand prominent persons.

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Accordingly on 26 July, 1856, the Act XV was passed legalizing widow marriage and giving the status of legitimacy to the children of the married Widows. After the Widow Marriage Act 1856, the Bengal reformers became desirous of abolishing polygamy by legislation. Vidyasagar was the mastermind behind this move as well. In June-July 1856, petitions signed by fifty thousand men and Women were submitted to the Government to abolish Polygamy. In spite of the Act, the cause of remarriage of Hindu Widows did not make much headway. Pandit Ishwar Chandra and Vishnu Shastri in Western India put their head and soul into propagating this reform. A Widow Remarriage Association was started in Bombay in 1866. Prof. D.R. Karve founded the Widow Home in Poona in 1896. Several legislations starting from 1807, forbade slavery and slave trade and keeping slaves or trafficking in them became an offence under the Indian Penal Code, enacted in 1860. Another brutal custom of "hook-swinging" was suppressed in 1865. Another Act passed in 1872, at the instance of the Brahmo Samaj, abolished polygamy and marriage of minor girls (below 11 years) and sanctioned inter-caste marriages and remarriages of Widows.

- Several important measures were also taken in the cause of female education. The initial efforts in this direction were made by the Christian missionaries. But the social reformers also greatly contributed towards the growth of female education. A mention ought to be made in this regard of the efforts of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar who opened nearly 35 girls' Schools in 1857-58 in Bengal, Prof. Karve founded several educational institutions in Maharashtra, the most notable being India's first Women's University in Bombay in the early 20th century. The spread of female education led to several other social reforms of great consequences, such as, the abolition of purdah, which further led to the participation of Women in the freedom struggle.
- But there came a sudden turn in the social policy of the British India. The Rising of 1857 swept over the country and prolonged discussions were held in England on the possible causes of Indian discontent. Rightly or wrongly, one of the causes was supposed to be British interference with the socio-religious habits of the people. The new administration wrongly decided not to interfere in the social affair of the Indian people.
- Before the transfer of power, the Government of the East India Company had to their credit two more meritorious works, namely, the suppression of human sacrifice among the Khonds of the Orissa-Madras hill tracts, and the abolition of infanticide among the Rajputs and Bedis in the north and north west.
- In the twentieth century, policies regarding social change mainly resulted from Indian opinion rather than from British interests. The progress of western education and the growth of political consciousness created a new atmosphere in the country affecting various socio-economic problems. The press played a useful role in giving appropriate prominence to these issues.
- The Child Marriage Restraint Act XIX of 1929 (popularly known as Sarda Act) was a long awaited social measure in favour of which opinion had been growing for many years. It came into force on 1 April, 1930. 'No Marriage to which a child i.e., male under 18 years of age or a female under 14 years of age, is a party may be solemnized.

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