

## **British Imperialism in the Punjab, 1845-58: An Appraisal**

### **ABSTRACT**

*The British came late to the Punjab and stayed there for almost a century. After the first Anglo Sikh War (1845) the Trans-Sutlej territories of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur were annexed by the British. A Regency Council was established under a British Resident in Lahore to govern the remainder of the Sikh Kingdom. The collapse of this arrangement led to the Second Anglo-Sikh War (1849) and decisive victory of the British in the battle of Gujrat paved the way of British annexation of the Punjab. The Punjab in the years to come provided a firm foundation to the British imperialism in India. The Punjab episode under the British rule is considered comparatively a period of relative peace and stability. When the British, after a century of turbulence, took the control of the Punjab they brought political and socio-economic transformation. Dalhousie's scheme of administration in Punjab at the time of its annexation was combined with the advantages of both the civil and a military government. The triumvirate (Board of Administration) laid the foundation of effective governance and imperialism in the Punjab and later on the Punjab as the Chief Commissioner's province (from 1853 onwards) consolidated the imperial structures in the Punjab. Peace and reforms in the initial years earned popularity and goodwill for the British in the Punjab.*

**Keywords:** Regency Council, Board of Administration, British Resident, Anglo-Sikh wars, imperialism, East India Company.

### **Introduction**

In 1600, the British East India Company obtained the charter of exclusive rights of trade in the Eastern seas from Queen Elizabeth. It had come to India as a trading company with commercial interests in 1609. It established its first factory in 1612 at Surat and soon started building factories and keeping armed personals for its protection. Trade monopoly became the

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reason for rivalry among the Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, French and British East India Companies (Wheeler, 1986). The rival companies started making alliances with the Indian rulers for subduing the competitors (Hassan, 2011).

The Anglo-French struggle for supremacy lasted for long, resulting in the establishing British East India Company as the vanquisher. The character of British East India Company thus transformed from a commercial enterprise to a military organization with political interests (Hassan, 2011). The involvement in the Indian political affairs started with formation of a sphere of influence for securing and maintaining its trade monopoly but by 1756, the company started exhibiting the imperial designs.

The expansionist policy of the company was checked by Nawab Siraj ud daula, the ruler of Bengal. Nawab was killed in the battle of Plassey. Victory in Plassey raised the confidence of the company to the level that it defeated Mir Qasim, the ruler of Bengal, Nawab Shuja ud daula of Oudh and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II in the battle of Buxar. This victory established its prestige as a sovereign power in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. British extended their control over different regions; the involvement in the political affairs made them the *de facto* rulers of various principalities or independent states.

The British Residents exercised the dual functions of a plenipotentiary and agent to the Supreme government as well as interfered in the state affairs by influencing the local ruler (Rahim, 1963). In the vicinity of some states, there was a British force, which could at any time come to help the Resident if the local ruler defies their wishes. In Hyderabad, Qudh, Travancore, Nagpur there were British Residents who influenced the state affairs. Sambalpur and other states in that quarter of India were under the Bengal Agency which asserted a strong British influence over them (Rahim, 1963). For the same purpose, there were British Residents at Gwalior, Indore and Baroda, Jhansi, Orchha, and other states in the neighbourhood were placed under the political agent for Bundelkhand and Rewa who promoted British interests there (Rahim, 1963). Harlow & Mia, 1999 emphasises that expansionism and increased involvement in the company's domestic politics engaged in the manufacture of political theory and governmental policy (as cited in Sarwar, 2012).

The imperial dream envisioned by Robert Clive was made a reality by Dalhousie who succeeded Lord Harding as the Governor General of India in 1848. Lord Dalhousie annexed many territories to the British Empire through one pretext or another. He employed methods of war, Doctrine of Lapse and the ground of misgovernment when and where needed. Lord Dalhousie was the first Governor General who effectively applied this Doctrine for the expansion of British Empire in India. Mahajan (2010) quotes Lord Dalhousie,

I take occasion of recording my strong and deliberate opinion that in exercise of a wise and sound policy, the British Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue as may from time to time present themselves, where they arise from the lapse of subordinate states, by the failure of all heirs of every description whatsoever or from the failure of natural heir where the succession can be sustained only by the sanction of the Government being given to the ceremony of adoption by Hindu law.

According to this Doctrine, Satara was annexed in 1848, Jaitpur and Shambalpur in 1849, Baghat in 1850, Udaipur in 1852, Nagpur in 1853 and Jhansi in 1854 (Bandyopadhyay, 2007). Berar and Oudh were annexed on the pretext of misgovernment. The areas annexed by the means of war included Martaban, Rangoon, Bassein, Prome, Pegu, Sikkim, and the Punjab.

### **British Policy towards Punjab till 1849**

The Sikh Empire was an imperial power based around the Punjab region, during 1799 to 1849. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the empire extended from the Khyber Pass in the west, to Kashmir in the north, to Sindh in the south, and Tibet in the east. It was based on the foundations of the Khalsa, under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh from a collection of autonomous Punjabi Misls. Ranjit had raised himself from a petty chief to a conqueror (Lawrance, 1845). He started with the conquest of Trans-Sutlej in July 1799, when Shah Zaman granted him the governorship of Lahore and ended with the absorption of Kanhaya in 1820-21. After establishing his position as the leader of the Trans-Sutlej states, he turned his attention to the Cis-Sutlej states. The territorial expansion over Cis-Sutlej states brought him in contact with the British for both the powers advanced historical claims to supremacy over this region (Latif, 1891).

Ranjit carried out three expeditions, first in July, 1806; he crossed the Sutlej River and occupied the territory of Ludhiana, for the second time in September, 1807, and for the third time in October, 1808. This alarmed the other leaders of Cis-Sutlej states and the British. As a result, Lord Minto, the English Governor General sent Charles Metcalfe to Ranjit Singh to negotiate a settlement but he was not taken seriously and Ranjit started preparations for war with the British. In January 1809, Governor General sent Sir David Ochterloney with a contingent, who was welcomed by the chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind (Cunningham, 1853). A. C. Banerjee in *Anglo Sikh Relations* states that in February 1809, Ochterloney issued a Proclamation that any aggression on Cis-Sutlej states would be resisted with arms (as cited in Cunningham, 1853). Ranjit now realized the gravity of the situation and the treaty of Amritsar was signed in 1809 (Younas & Parmar, 2006). According

to this treaty, Ranjit Singh promised not to interfere in the affairs of other Cis-Sutlej states. A Political Agent was stationed at Ambala, and a British cantonment was established at Ludhiana (Rahim, 1963). From 1809 to 1823 the relation between Ranjit and the British remained satisfactory and both the powers were busy with their own affairs of extending and consolidating their own powers.

S.S. Thorburn (1970/1883) is of the view that from Marquis Wellesley (1789-1804) onwards, no Governor General had actively intended a conflict with the Sikhs, yet each in turn had contributed towards it.

Lord Wellesley had sanctioned the pursuit of Holkar to within a march of Amritsar (1804-5): Lord Minto had confined Sikh expansion Delhi wards to the right bank of the Sutlej, and had established a British garrison at Ludhiana, on the left or British bank of that river (1808-9): Lord Auckland, taking advantage of the doctrine of escheat, had made Ferozepore a British Cantonment (1838), thus directly threatening Lahore: Lord Ellenborough had used the Punjab as a military highway for Afghanistan (1838-42), and in 1843 had nefariously seized Sindh, thereby anticipating the Sikhs and extending southwards the British coils about the Punjab from Ferozepore to the Indus.

In 1839, Ranjit signed a tripartite treaty along with the English and Shah Shuja of Afghanistan who was aspiring to recapture his throne (Wasti, 1971). Ranjit Singh during his reign managed the relations well and averted any direct confrontation but his successors were incompetent rulers. There was a state of chaos and anarchy in the Punjab. The rulers were assassinated and changed in quick succession. In the meantime, Sikh Khalsa became very powerful and started demanding dismissal of European officers. The rivalry between the two powers led to the outbreak of Anglo-Sikh wars.

In 1845, the conditions were so insecure that even Lal Singh the Sikh Wazir was forced to conspire with the Lahore Darbar to weaken the Sikh Khalsa (Younas & Parmar, 2006). The Sikh army attacked the British territory in December 1845. The First Anglo Sikh War (1845-46) was won by the British (four pitched battles of Mudki, Ferozeshah, Aliwal and Sabraon were fought).

After their victory the British forces occupied Lahore in February 1846. The treaty of Lahore was signed in March 1846. According to this treaty; the British got Jullundur Doab (regions between Sutlej and Beas) along with Hazara district and control of rivers Beas, Sutlej and some portion of Indus (Rahim, 1963). The Sikhs had to pay huge war indemnity, Kashmir was given to Gulab Singh and Maharaja Dalip Singh was recognized as the ruler of Punjab. A Council of Regency was set up to look after the state affairs till the maturity of Dalip Singh. That Council was merely one part of the machinery instituted by the Governor General and kept in perfect subordination to the

British Authority (Bell, 1882). A British Resident, Henry Lawrence was appointed at Lahore with the declared intention of not interfering in the internal administration of Lahore, except by offering advice and good offices on request. The Trans-Sutlej states (Jullundur Doab and Kangra district) that were ceded to the British in 1846, were formed into a Commissionership, and were divided into three districts of Kangra, Hoshiarpur, and Jullundur, under John Lawrence as Commissioner who was to be assisted by five assistants (Ghai, 1986). Smith (1883) summed up the services of John Lawrence as;

He paid attention for the restoration of peace and stationed two regiments of local infantry, and one of irregular cavalry. Police was distributed all over the region, courts were established and summary settlements were made. He substituted a land-tax paid in money for one in kind.... the middlemen and tax-farmers who preyed on the agricultural class were swept away forever, and it was calculated that a relief from 15 to 20 percent had been made on each man's payments, while the income of the state was nearly the same. Female infanticide was suppressed.

Rani Jindan was initially recognized as the Regent but was soon excluded for the excluded from the government and was allocated annual pension to maintain herself and her dependents. A subsidiary treaty called Treaty of Bhairawal was concluded in December 1846, giving the British Resident full authority to direct and control all matters in every department of the state, thus British tightened their grip on the Punjab (Roseberry, 1988).

By this revised arrangement Henry Lawrence became the sovereign of the Punjab and was to be assisted by subordinates. A British contingent was to remain at Lahore at cost to the Durbar of Rs. 2.2 million annually (Roseberry, 1988). Henry at first, attempted to curb the corruption and oppression. After the death of Ranjit, the governors were unbridled, violence and crime were increasing and justice was hard to find. The revenue department also needed attention. Henry formed a council consisting of eight leading Sardars of the Kingdom, as an advisory body under the guidance and control of the Resident.

He set up highly centralized administration, which was lacking after Ranjit. Every detail of administration passed through his hands. Daily receipts of income and expenditure were recorded by him. Mofussils, treasures, Kardars and other government official were asked to furnish weekly accounts. Diwan Dina Nath was put in charge of the revenue, Sher Singh was in charge of the Fort, Tej Singh was made Chief-in-charge of the regular Sikh forces and Fakir Noor ud din was given charge of the public works (Ghai, 1986).

Some of the major measures taken by Henry Lawrence included; overgrown army was reduced; discharged soldiers were paid up; loyal and efficient soldiers were maintained, regularly paid, ... finances were scrutinized, and arrears justly due from the tax-gatherers were demanded with rigour; and economy was introduced (Foreign Consultation: 29 December, 1852: Nos. 140-144: Para 33). Some other measures included the abolition of custom duties and most obnoxious taxes, and those which retained were moderate and equalized. Land revenue was limited to one-third of the gross production. The demand on the people and remuneration of the officers were fixed (Lee-Warner, 1904).

Furthermore, Summary settlements were made, and a liberal salary was given to the Kardars, making people paid less and state receiving more. Individuals of character and repute were appointed as separate administrators of the civil and criminal justice. Under Henry, European officers were deputed to visit various districts, resources of the kingdom were examined and their development was studied. In 1847, a superintending British engineer was appointed, and three lakh rupees were set apart by the Council for the works of public improvement (Foreign Consultation: 29 December, 1852: Nos. 140-144: Para.33).

With regard to the welfare, plans were formed for the construction of new canals, the repair of old ones, the reopening of ruined well, and the re-peopling of district villages. The Sikh soldiers appeared to be contended with their lot and tranquillity had been restored, and confidence and order were fast returning (Kaye, 1880). Henry then along with Lord Hardinge left for England (in November 1848) and the machinery of the State was handled by John Lawrence and Frederick Currie.

John Lawrence reformed the customs and excise systems, in judiciary appointed best men available as judges, appointed a Postmaster General and introduced the penny post (Ghai, 1986). He also set aside the Sikh Law which forbade the Azan (Thorburn, 1970/1883). He focused on the reforms in the land revenue system; the whole province's assessment was completed. He abolished custom duties on many articles, and not only increased the revenue but revived the trade and increased the purchasing power of the people (Thorburn, 1970/1883). For the improvement of living conditions, he made roads, schools, introduced uniform weights and measures, affected a saving of £6000 a year by discharging a number of superfluous regimental accountants (Ghai, 1986). He toured the Punjab and treated the Sardars and Khalsas as his subordinates, for him the Sikhs and the Muslims Sardars and the peasants should be treated alike. This move was perceived as humiliation which no true member of Khalsa could tolerate. Kardars were asked to settle their accounts and if they failed, they were imprisoned. Lord Hardinge had cautioned him before leaving for England that the position of the English was not that of the active agents, but of friendly

advisers (Thorburn, 1970/1883). He brought peace and prosperity in Punjab by the blood and iron policy, the political situation had grown tense.

His new fiscal policy offended Diwan Mulraj, and he resigned, his resignation was initially not accepted by John Lawrence but soon Lawrence realized the Diwan should be relieved from his office (Edwardes, 1851). Patrick Vans Angew and Lt. W. A. Anderson who were sent to receive the resignation were murdered. John Lawrence was reverted to his Jullundur Division and Frederick Currie took over as the Resident. The Mulraj upheaval in Multan led to the Second Anglo Sikh War, 1848-49 (battles of Ramnagar, Chillianwala and Gujrat were fought) (Bell, 1882). The Sikhs were routed in this battle and laid down their arms in March 1849 (Younas & Parmar, 2006). On March 29, 1849, Maharaja Dalip Singh and the Council of the Regency signed their submission to the East India Company and a Board of Administration was set up to run the state affairs. (Malik, 1970).

### **Punjab under Board of Administration**

Dalhousie established a Board of Administration with Henry Lawrence as its President, John Lawrence and Charles Mansel (Mansel was replaced with Robert Montgomery in 1851) (Malik, 1970). The functions of the Board were divided into political, revenue and judicial, and each member had the charge one of the departments, though all were jointly responsible if any question of more than ordinary importance arises (Foreign Secret Consultation, No. 73, April 28, 1849). This triumvirate was to be assisted by George Christian, the Secretary and Meelvi as Assistant Secretary (Nijjar, 1974). The executive staff included; Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, Extra Assistant Commissioners, and a number of other subordinate staff.... (Rahim, 1963).

Punjab was divided into several divisions (Gough & Innes, 1897). According to the *General Report up on the Administration of the Punjab Proper for the Years 1849-50 and 1850-51, being the First Two Years of Annexation: With a Supplementary Notice of the Cis & Trans-Sutlej Territories* (1854), the initial divisions were four, each under a Commissioner. Lahore was the most important division as it was the capital of Sikh Kingdom, other divisions included; Jhelum, Multan, and Leia. The introductory measures were taken to restore law and order. All the district officers were immediately stationed at their districts and were asked to organize an efficient police force. A proclamation for the general surrender of the arms was issued, Khalsa and the civil population were prohibitive to keep or carry arms. The liquidation of Khalsa army led to unemployment on a large scale, they were encouraged to exchange sword with plough. Extensive tracks of land in Shahpur, Jhang, Pakpattan, Montgomery and Lyallpur came to be

cultivated. These tracks later on developed into canal colonies, and became richest colonies of the Punjab (Ghai, 1986). Irrigation system was improved, Bari Doab canal started functioning in 1852, thus facilitating the cultivators and improving their work conditions.

With the establishment of the order in government and continuation of development policies, the commercial and agricultural middle classes of the Punjab were emerging, showing the signs that the state was recouping its economic imbalances (Ghai, 1986). Muslims of the region were now in a better condition thus they cooperated with the new rulers. Public works and development projects had given employment to many. A frontier force was raised consisting of Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs for the protection of borders (Nijjar, 1974). The British had raised five regiments of cavalry, and five infantry for the protection of Frontier line along with three horse field batteries, two companies of Sappers and Miners, a camel corps and a guide corp (Rahim, 1963). With this force, peace was restored and not a single emeute had occurred within the province (Foreign Consultation: 29 December, 1852: No.: 140-144: Paras 112). According to the *Punjab Administration Report* (1851-52, & 53), Guide Corps were given high rate of pay, endurance, courage, sagacity, local knowledge, presence of mind, were the qualities which marked a man out for the Guide Corps.

Detective vigilance, effective police and judicial severity eliminated crime rate.

Within three years of annexation, the Board reported to Dalhousie that “all violent crimes have been repressed, all gangs of murderers and robbers have been broken up, and the ringleaders brought to the justice” (Thorburn, 1970/1883). Among the social sector, maltreatment with women and widows was checked, and domestic slavery was suppressed. Infanticide was suppressed by the registration of birth; by a periodical muster of children; by an appeal to maternal feelings; and by denouncing it as a murder (Arnold, 1865).

Civil and criminal courts were established, summary settlements were made, system of excise and taxation was introduced, municipal and conservancy arrangements were gradually withdrawn, new currency reforms were introduced and all old currencies were gradually replaced, in short, construction of British system and its institutions were thoroughly introduced (Foreign Consultation 29 December, 1852: Nos. 104-144: Paras 100-101). A Punjab Code, consisting of customary civil law was prepared, and for criminal law the code of Residency period was adopted (Malik, 1970). The Board wisely preserved the institution of *panchayat* along with framing of legal codes (Thorburn, 1970/1883). This helped the British in earning goodwill of the village community.

Grand Turk Road was constructed which linked Peshawar with Lahore. For Punjab it was very beneficial, it was the main passage for passing through the upper districts and the chief cities, as commanding the entrance to Hazara, and giving access at several points to Kashmir. This road became the great channel for the land commerce and the import and export trade between India, Central Asia and the West (Nijjar, 1974).

The striking feature of the Board's administration was comprehensiveness. It entailed the establishment of a strong central government: the embodiment of all law into a set of scientific code; a total reorganization and expansion of the judicial system; a complete overhaul and reshaping of the administrative service; the survey and registration of land holding; and elevating of several social obscurantism (Edward, 1967). The achievement of the Board is that within a short period of four years, the Singh warriors were not only demobilised without any outward incident but converted into peaceful and loyal subjects.

The working of the Board was smooth till 1851 but during 1581-53 the difference of opinion on the question of jagirdars and taxes on jagirs grew high among the Lawrence brothers (Gough & Innes, 1897). Henry Lawrence was sympathetic towards the old Darbar people but John Lawrence was opposite to it. Henry "deemed it crucially important that an image of British moral and racial superiority always be preserved in their Indian subjects' eyes; otherwise, they feared, Indian loyalty and tacit support might be endangered" (Sramek, 2011).

Both the brothers offered their resignation to Dalhousie on this matter; Henry's resignation was accepted by offering him the Residency in Rajputana. He had been in Punjab service for fourteen years and his treatment with the natives had earned him respect and had a significant role in the pacification of the Punjab. John Lawrence was made the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab in 1853. Lawrence after assuming the charge continued the previous Punjab School of Administration without any drastic changes. Mostly, projects initiated by the Board were organized and expanded.

### **Punjab as the Chief Commissioner's Province**

The new administrative set up in the Punjab was depending on John Lawrence as the Chief Commissioner, who had inherited all the powers and functions hitherto vested in the Board (Malik, 1970). He was to be assisted by the Judicial Commissioner and the Financial Commissioner. The other administration was continued on the same old lines laid down in 1849 (Rahim, 1963) except for demarcation of new districts.

*In General Report up on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, Comprising the Punjab Proper and the Cis & Trans-Sutlej States for the Years*

1851-52 & 1852-53, the Punjab was later constituted of seven divisions comprising of Cis-Sutlej State Division, Trans-Sutlej State Division, Lahore, Jhelum, Multan, Leia and Peshawar. Each division was subdivided into small districts for an efficient contact between the people and the Deputy Commissioner (Malik, 1970). All the district officers were directed to establish personal contact with the people of all classes for a direct communication, making people realize that the rulers are in their access and could be approached when required and also to give them the feeling that any anti-British activity could be checked and fixed immediately. The districts were further divided in to Tehsil under the Tehsildars.

The North West Frontier region was inhabitant by the fierce and freedom loving people. Though some checks were made by the Guide Corps that they could not attack other divisions but the Pathan and Baloch tribes still needed attention. *General Report up on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, Comprising the Punjab Proper and the Cis & Trans-Sutlej States for the Years 1851-52 & 1852-53* states that John Lawrence maintained the conciliatory policy of the Board and won over the tribals by confirming the grant of “cash allowances to the influential chiefs, thereby giving them an interest in the Government” and by “Sandeman System” through encouraging friendly contacts between the district officers and the tribal chiefs (Ghai, 1986). Because of this tactical move the tribes remained inactive during the 1857 crisis.

Means of communication were improved for the trade purposes and for the mobilisation of imperial resources, material, as well as the military at the time of trouble (Malik, 1970). He built-up the network of railways in the entire region; the Indus was made navigable; this scheme also helped the reinforcement in the 1857 crisis. An effective electric telegraph foundation was laid and telegraph officers were stationed at important places (Ghai, 1986). This telegraph system enabled the British to take timely measures to disarm sepoy regiments before their plans were ripe for execution (Thorburn, 1970/1883).

In 1856, he focused on the education. Lawrence wrote that he had arranged 30 schools at district headquarters, 100 village schools in rural tracts, four normal schools and a Central College at Lahore, the whole to be supervised by one director and two inspectors, and the annual cost to be £30,000, plus £1500 as grant-in-aid to missionary and other private schools, with vernacular languages as the medium of instruction (Thorburn, 1970/1883).

Small Causes Courts were established all over the provinces, first one being established at Lahore in 1853 (Ghai, 1986), this brought the justice near to the peasant's door. Simple and quick procedures in the Central Courts were introduced for speedy justice. According to *General Report up on the*

*Administration of the Punjab Territories from 1854-55 & 1855-56*, Inclusive (Calcutta: Calcutta Gazette Office. 1856), the average duration of a suit in 1854 was twenty-eight days and in 1855 it was reduced to twenty-three days. Professional advice was free for the people of Punjab. The efficiency and promptness displayed by the Courts did much help to win popular goodwill (Malik, 1970). In 1854, Punjab Civil Code was enforced for the transfer of land and related matters (Van Den Dungen, 1972). The Census of 1854 was taken during the night of December 31, with the acquiescence and even ready help of the people themselves, a fact proving the confidence and good understanding existing between the subjects and the Government (Nijjar, 1974).

John Lawrence devised the policy of light taxation for the agriculturalists during 1852-56; he focused on the construction of the roads to supply the peasantry with an outlet for their surplus produce (Malik, 1970). Because of the reforms in agriculture sector there was good harvest ever before, this also prevented the peasants in participating the crisis of 1857. Under the British rule the new influential chiefs were enjoying the benefits and were not ready to jump into war sacrificing their prosperity. Trade was flourishing and a psychological impact of the British superiority created a class of loyalist.

To sum up, the British introduced colonial modernity with the introduction of contemporary technology and institutions in the Punjab. Roads and canals were constructed that enabled the transformation in the character of middle class, it brought economic prosperity. Reforms in jails and health sector changed the societal dynamics. Uniformity in criminal and civil codes and their implementation in all the districts along with effective judiciary made people realize that everyone was equal before law and the criminal would be punished harshly and according to law. Thus, the crime rate dropped and peace prevailed.

The people of Punjab had been longing for peace and order for long, though during the times of Ranjit Singh there was an effective administrative set up but the conditions of non- Sikh communities were not good, especially the Muslims they felt themselves deprived of their rights as an equal citizen. After Ranjit, the Punjab saw a period of anarchy and warlordism, when the British annexed the Punjab all the three communities, the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims were included in services and the living conditions of all the communities raised. The development and welfare works were meant for all the inhabitants of the Punjab.

The British parliament appreciated the role of Lawrence brothers bringing the Punjab in order and turning the turbulent race into a loyal and peaceful population. During the time of Board of Administration, the foundations of a strong administration had been laid, which was developed,

organised and consolidated under John Lawrence during his commissionership. The relationship among the ruler and the ruled was of mutual benefit. The Punjab episode under the British rule is considered a period of relative peace and stability. When peace prevailed attention was paid towards prosperity. Education, Railways, secured borders, justice, and agricultural reforms marked a new beginning in the Punjab and earned popularity and goodwill for the British.

The working of the Company during 1849-58 made the Punjab a beneficiary of British modernity and thus laid the genesis of the class of loyalist for the British crown which helped them in crushing the unrest of 1857 and making them the sovereign of India. The Punjab served as the greatest recruiting ground for the British and facilitated the establishment of Crown rule.

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