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## Civil Services Commissions

### The Aitchison Commission (1886)

In 1886, Lord Dufferin appointed a "Public Service Commission" under Sir Charles Aitchison to investigate the problems of the civil services in India. The commission made the following decisions:

(i) It rejected the idea of simultaneous examination for covenanted service and advised the abolition of the statutory civil service.

(ii) It proposed the setting up of provincial civil service, the members of which would be separately recruited in every province either by promotion from lower ranks or by direct recruitment.

(iii) It suggested that the terms 'covenanted' and 'uncovenanted' should be replaced by the terms 'imperial' and 'provincial' respectively.

(iv) It suggested 19 and 23 as the minimum and maximum age limits for Indians at the open civil service examinations.

The recommendations of Aitchison were accepted and the covenanted

civil service came to be known as Civil Service of India. The provincial service was called after the particular province.

## **The Islington Commission (1912)**

Following more Indian pressure for greater share in public services, the British Government set up a Royal Commission on Civil Service under Lord Islington in 1912. It recommended:

(i) 25 per cent of the posts in the superior civil service should be filled from among Indians, partly by direct recruitment and partly by promotion.

(ii) the examination for the recruitment of civil servants should be held in India.

## **The Montagu-Chelmsford Report (1918)**

The Montagu Chelmsford report, which took a more liberal and sympathetic view on Indians missing the civil service proposed that (i) India should be the venue for conducting examination for 33 per cent of the superior posts and that this percentage should increase by 1.5 per cent annually;

(ii) There should be no racial discrimination in matter of appointment; and

(iii) There must be a system of appointment in India for all those public services for which there was recruitment in England, open to Europeans and, Indians alike.

These proposals were accepted and became the basis of appointment for about ten years.

## **The Lee Commission (1923)**

A Royal Commission under Lord Lee was appointed in 1923. The Lee commission submitted its report in 1924. Its major recommendations were as follows:

(i) 20 per cent of the officers should be recruited by promotion from provincial civil services and of the remaining 80 per cent, half should be British and half Indian; and

(ii) a Public Service Commission with five full-fledged members should be appointed immediately. (Such a commission was appointed in 1925.)  
The government accepted most of the Lee Commission recommendations.