



HIGHLIGHTS OF 19TH CENTURY FOREIGN POLICY

- 1828-35 William Bentinck**
Bentinck became the first Governor General of India. He ended the Hindu tradition of suttee (which meant that a widow had to throw herself onto her husband's funeral pyre) and stopped the thugs (who strangled travellers as sacrifices to the goddess Kali). He gave India schools, and a new, fair system of laws.
- 1839-42 The Opium War**
The Chinese government, trying to stop drug addiction in China, dumped into the sea opium owned by British merchants. Britain sent a fleet. The Chinese were forced to accept the opium trade, to hand over Hong Kong, and to pay for the British expedition.
- 1841-73 David Livingstone**
A Scottish missionary who went to Africa in 1841. He explored the continent and helped to end the slave trade there. His body was buried in Westminster Abbey, but his heart was buried in Africa.
- 1850 The Don Pacifico Affair**
Don Pacifico was a Portuguese money-lender living in Greece who claimed he was a British subject. In 1850, the Greek government burned down his house. Palmerston, the British Foreign Secretary, said that a British citizen anywhere had a right to receive help, and sent a gunboat to attack Greece.
- 1853-56 The Crimean War**
Britain and France invaded the Crimea after Russia had attacked Turkey and tried to get free passage for its warships into the Mediterranean Sea. The fighting ground down into terrible trench warfare. Disease killed more men than the fighting. The war is famous for Florence Nightingale and the Charge of the Light Brigade.
- 1857-58 The Indian Mutiny**
The Indians rebelled. They massacred British men, women and children at Cawnpore, but failed to capture the town of Lucknow. The British army took a terrible revenge. Before hanging the rebels, they forced them to lick the British blood from the blood-stained walls.
- 1875 The Suez Canal**
Disraeli, the British Prime Minister, bought the shares belonging to the ruler of Egypt, thereby gaining control of the Suez Canal. Britain used the canal as an excuse to gain control over the affairs of Egypt.
- 1877 Empress of India**
Queen Victoria loved India. She was proclaimed Empress of India in 1877. She insisted that 'there is no hatred to a brown skin, none'.
- 1879 The Zulu War**
In South Africa, the British government attacked the Zulu tribesmen. The Zulus destroyed a British army at Isandhlwana, but a small British force held out heroically at Rorke's Drift. Eventually, British machine guns defeated the Zulu spears.
- 1884 The Berlin Conference**
The powers of Europe, meeting in Berlin, agreed to split Africa between them. Each power agreed to stay within its own 'sphere of influence'.
- 1890-96 Cecil Rhodes**
Rhodes was Prime Minister of Cape Colony (South Africa) from 1890 to 1896. He tried to establish a British empire which stretched 'from Cape Town to Cairo'.
- 1898 Fashoda**
A British army, trying to capture Sudan, met a French force trying to do the same. The French army, which was smaller, backed down.
- 1899-1902 The Boer War**
British forces attacked the Transvaal. The local Boer (Dutch) settlers resisted. They fought a guerilla war against the British, who put them in concentration camps.