Question-6
What were the new clothing styles in India?
Solution:
During the colonial period there were significant changes in male and female clothing in India. On the one hand this was a consequence of the influence of Western dress forms and missionary activity; on the other it was due to the effort by Indians to fashion clothing styles that embodied an indigenous tradition and culture. Cloth and clothing in
fact became very important symbols of the national movement. A brief look at the nineteenth century changes will tell us a great deal about the transformations of the twentieth century. When western-style clothing came into India in the nineteenth century, Indians reacted in three different ways:

1. Many, especially men, began incorporating some elements of western-style clothing in their dress. The wealthy Parsis of western India were among the first to adapt Western-style clothing. Baggy trousers and the phenta (or hat) were added to long collarless coats, with boots and a walking stick to complete the look of the gentleman. To some, Western clothes were a sign of modernity and progress. Western-style clothing was also especially attractive to groups of dalit converts to Christianity who now found it liberating. Here too, it was men rather than women who affected the new dress styles.
2. There were others who were convinced that western culture would lead to a loss of traditional cultural identity. The use of Western style clothes was taken as a sign of the world turning upside down. The cartoon of the Bengali Babu shown here, mocks him for wearing Western-style boots and hat and coat along with his dhoti.
3. Some men resolved this dilemma by wearing Western clothes without giving up their Indian ones. Many Bengali bureaucrats in the late nineteenth century began stocking western-style clothes for work outside the home and changed into more comfortable Indian clothes at home. Early- twentieth century anthropologist Verrier Elwin remembered that policemen in Poona who were going off duty would take their trousers off in the street and walk home in 'just tunic and undergarments'. This difference between outer and inner worlds is still observed by some men today.

Question-7
How did the British react to Indian ways of dressing?
Solution:
In different cultures, specific items of clothing often convey contrary meanings. This frequently leads to misunderstanding and conflict. Styles of clothing in British India changed through such conflicts. Consider the case of the turban and the hat. When European traders first began frequenting India, they were distinguished from the Indian 'turban wearers' as the 'hat wearers.' These two headgears not only looked different, they also signified different things. The turban in India was not just for protection from the heat but was a sign of respectability, and could not be removed

at will. In the Western tradition, the hat had to be removed before social superiors as a sign of respect. This cultural difference created misunderstanding. The British were often offended if Indians did not take off their turban when they met colonial officials. Many Indians on the other hand wore the turban to consciously assert their regional or national identity. Another such conflict related to the wearing of shoes.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was customary for British officials to follow Indian etiquette and remove their footwear in the courts of ruling kings or chiefs. Some British officials also wore Indian clothes. But in 1830, Europeans were forbidden from wearing Indian clothes at official functions, so that the cultural identity of the white masters was not undermined. The turban on the head The Mysore turban, called peta, was edged with gold lace, and adopted as part of the Durbar dress of the Mysore court in the mid-nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, a wide variety of officials, teachers and artists in Mysore began wearing the turban, sometimes with the Western suit, as a sign of belonging to the princely state. Today, the Mysore turban is used largely on ceremonial occasions and to honour visiting dignitaries.

Question-8

How did Indians react to British attitudes?

Solution:

At the same time, Indians were expected to wear Indian clothes to office and follow Indian dress codes. In 1824 - 1828, Governor-General Amherst insisted that Indians take their shoes off as a sign of respect when they appeared before him, but this was not strictly followed. By the mid-nineteenth century, when Lord Dalhousie was Governor- General, 'shoe respect' was made stricter, and Indians were made to take off their shoes when entering any government institution; only those who wore European clothes were exempted from this rule. Many Indian government servants were increasingly uncomfortable with these rules.

In 1862, there was a famous case of defiance of the 'shoe respect' rule in a Surat courtroom. Manockjee Cowasjee Entee, an assessor in the Surat Fouzdaree Adawlut, refused to take off his shoes in the court of the sessions judge. The judge insisted that he take off his shoes as that was the Indian way of showing respect to superiors. But Manockjee remained adamant. He was barred entry into the courtroom and he sent a letter of protest to the governor of Bombay.

The British insisted that since Indians took off their shoes when they entered a sacred place or home, they should do so when they entered the courtroom. In the controversy that followed, Indians urged that taking off shoes in sacred places and at home was linked to two different Questions. One: there was the problem of dirt and filth. Shoes collected the dirt on the road. This dirt could not be allowed into spaces that were clean, particularly when people in Indian homes sat on the ground. Second, leather shoes and the filth that stuck under it were seen as polluting. But public buildings like the courtroom were different from home. But it took many years before shoes were permitted into the courtroom.

Question-9

Describe the Swadeshi movement in India.

Solution:

The British first came to trade in Indian textiles that were in great demand all over the world. India accounted for one-fourth of the world's manufactured goods in the seventeenth century. There were a million weavers in Bengal alone in the middle of the eighteenth century. However, the Industrial Revolution in Britain, which mechanised spinning and weaving and greatly increased the demand for raw materials such as cotton and indigo, changed India's status in the world economy.

Political control of India helped the British in two ways: Indian peasants could be forced to grow crops such as indigo, and cheap

British manufacture easily replaced coarser Indian one. Large numbers of Indian weavers and spinners were left without work, and important textile weaving centres such as Murshidabad, Machilipatnam and Surat declined as demand fell. Yet by the middle of the twentieth century, large numbers of people began boycotting British or mill-made cloth and adopting khadi, even though it was coarser, more expensive and difficult to obtain.

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